

200 THE MONSTER

Xaden followed her like an innocent child, and then she led the way for them. 1

"Where is this place?" He asked.

"Just a bit far ahead." She replied. "Not so far. Only perhaps two minutes away."

He looked back at where he was coming from.

There was silence except for the gentle wind that blew across.

Then his eyes went back to her as she led the way, her hand firmly in his.

Then he pulled her back to him and resumed kissing and caressing her.

Touching her neck and blessing them with sweet and hungry kisses.

"We do not need to go anywhere." He said through the kisses as his hands went over her breasts and rummaged them.

He rubbed the tip of her nipples and trailed his tongue down her neck.

"I desire you here as you desire me here." He said.

She managed a smile. "But Xaden, be patient.

What I wish to show you is magical. Let me take you there."

He was not happy as he felt her withdraw again.

What game was she playing?

He frowned, and then she retook his hand, dragging him upwards towards the dark trees.

He stopped, and she realized that he had lagged.

"What is wrong, my love?" She asked him, seeing that he was uncertain of her.

"Let us just remain here." He told her.

She breathed in. "It is not far. It is a magical lake, and we could swim inside and make love."

He remained standing even though it was very alluring and seductive to him.

"Come with me." She said.

Something told him, deep down, that all was not well, but then, whenever he tried to reason or question all of this, his mind would become a fog, and he would see her.

"Come, my love." She said. "Come, let me show you."

And then it seemed like her voice had a gravitational pull to him.

Endearing him to pay heed to her words.



Then just as he was about to retake her hands and let her lead him onward, he heard Erik's deep, loud voice.

"Xaden no!"

He turned, and then he saw Erik shoot an arrow.

Xaden watched it from his very front as it went past him and targeted Jasmine.

It hit her chest and sent her down to the floor.

She screamed, and then her luminous essence, the light that surrounded her like she was the daughter of the moon, began to dim!

"NO!" Xaden screamed.

And then it began to feel like Deja vu.

It began to feel like all of this was happening again and again.

As he grabbed her in his arms, she bled and her body began to shake and tremble with vigor.

"Do not leave me again, Jasmine." He pleaded. "Stay with me. I can not lose you again. I will let everything go. I will never take you as I did. I would never make you suffer. I promise to protect you from any harm that comes your way. Just wake up for me."

His voice was breaking down.



He did not hear Erik race behind him and drag him away.

"Xaden, stay away from her!" Erik commanded.

Xaden now remembered who had done this great evil.

It was Erik, and then his eyes went red with fury.

"How dare you!" Xaden barked.

Erik held onto him and said. "That is not Jasmine! Take a look!"

Xaden heard a noise, and then he slowly turned around to face where Jasmine had been, but what he saw was not Jasmine.

It was a dark, harrowing monster with lots of tentacles, and its teeth were sharp.

The monster screamed, then drew the arrow.

Xaden just stared in shock. 2

"Jasmine?" He said.

The monster screamed, and just before it was about to lunge at the two of them, it fell to the ground at their feet.

And all was silent.

Xaden could hardly breathe, nor could he understand what had actually just happened.

He just stood in shock.



"What the fuck was that?" Xaden questioned.

Erik went past Xaden and crossed over the dead creature.

He checked through it to be sure it was dead.

"It is a Ryilat," Erik said as he pushed its dead body.

Prodding it here and there.

Then he bent down and tried to lift it, but he did not do so thoroughly. He turned to Xaden. "Here, help lift it."

Xaden took a second to recollect his thoughts, then Erik repeated. "Come on, man. I need help here."

Xaden then went over and assisted Erik in lifting the creature, and together they flipped it over.

It then landed on its back with a heavy thud.

Then Xaden took a closer look at the monster.

"It is a creature of the dark forest," Erik said to him as he went over the monster. "They feed off of your greatest desires and use them to manipulate."

It still had not hit him until now what had just happened.

"So Jasmine was not real?" He asked.



Erik shook his head. "God no. It just played with your thoughts and wanted to use you for dinner.

Xaden felt violated.

"What did it say to you?" Erik asked.

"I-t... uhmmm.... I... Uhmmm." He stuttered, unable to even speak, as what had just happened shocked him to the core. "She wanted me to follow her somewhere. A magical lake."

Erik nodded. "It was going to lead you into the dark forest. That was why I said we had to sleep outside the dark forest. They get really dangerous at night."

"Is it dead?" Xaden asked. "The arrow you used?"

Erik picked out his sword and said. "It was only laced with some harmful poison. They only die when you actually have it-

The creature screamed a terrifying shriek, and then Erik plunged his sword over the head, severing it.

And then the monster went cold still.

"Cut off their head." Erik finished as he stared at the decapitated head of the monster.

