

"Normal speech"

'Thought'

(Silent magic)

[Normal magic]

{Change of location, time or POV}

Yo! We are finally back with some TWTS! Honestly, this chapter was kind of cursed by fate. I mean, I was ready to publish it on the 27th and then we got hit by a random snowstorm coming from Russia. With me not living in a big city, of course we got a general blackout for the entire night, and the next day, while we had electricity we had no wifi since it continued snowing like crazy. Everything got fixed this morning tho, so there is that.

On a positive note, since I was forced inside, I made a lot of progress with next chapter and that's good, since I don't want this arc to last forever.

But enough from me, without further ado, enjoy the chapter!

Chapter 92: Song of the Sky-Riders and the Black Rose (part 2)

The frigid wind cut across his face violently, prompting him to lower his head against the ice-blue scales of his friend. He thought that once he had survived the climb on the Azerlisia Mountains, he would never have to worry about finding worst cold weather than that.

He was a fool. The freezing temperature of the Azerlisia Mountains were child play compared to this. Oh, how he wished his master would have left them those rings that could nullify ice damage... No, that was not how he wished to live his life, he was reaching his adulthood, he could not expect for others to solve his problems like he was still that useless child rotting away in a bed and being only a source of misery for his family!

He raised his head again, trying to fight against the sharp wind to at least witness their destination with his own eyes. Something he had been pretty excited about before the reality of the nearby weather literally froze his enthusiasm.

He felt a hand pull him down by his robes before he could get a good look.

“Don’t move you idiot, I am trying to not freeze here!”

The one who reprimanded him was none other than the blonde noble from the empire, and his fellow apprentice, Arche, who was currently busy shielding her face from the cutting wind using his chest as her shield.

It could be said that if Rayne suffered the cold poorly then, the girl currently snuggling against him, could not stand it at all. He could not blame her, the empire was quite warmer than the kingdom, rarely seeing snow even during winter on its eastern and central side where the girl grew up and lived for most of her life.

“You two are just so excessive! It isn’t that bad!”

The cheerful voice came from none other than their leader and surrogate big sister, Lakys, who was currently eating a bowl of rice and shrimps, curtesy of the Draconic Kingdom, and seemingly uncaring of whatever was going on around her, as if

the wind that threatened to split his face open was nothing more than a light breeze.

‘Damn warriors and their training’ he lamented in his head as he was sure the girl before him had her skin hardened by the countless times Leinas hit her, or she cut herself trying to execute one move or another, for that was the only logical reason for how she could not feel the same cold they were.

“Wait, you two did put on those charms I bought for you back in E-Rantel, didn’t you?”

The words cut across his train of thought like a sharp magical dagger, his jaw slightly falling as the memory of a shopping evening in the fortress city resurged from the depths of his mind where he stored it, never to see the light of day again for the horror that was accompanying girls shopping.

“Uff... sometimes I don’t get how you two are so smart you can figure out 3rd tier spells at thirteen and yet so dumb to forget basic survival measures.”

The blonde warrior put down her bowl as she rummaged through the traveling sacks of the two casters anchored to the scales of the Frost Dragon.

“Here, put them on.”

Lakyus said, seemingly exasperated by her companions’ forgetfulness, as she handed over two brooches. Now that Rayne saw the metal snowflake-shaped brooch again, he could not help but mentally facepalm at how he could have forgotten it seeing how it costed him half a month worth of work to afford it. He understood it was runecraft work, but those prices were kind of absurd... to the point he almost wanted to question his master’s

commercial ethics, only to realize he actually knew nothing of commerce and how it worked.

He shook his head as he just anchored the brooch to his cloak, doing the same for the poor blonde haired beauty next to him who looked almost catatonic by now, only for everything to shake all of a sudden sending him on top of the girl who groaned in protest but also snuggled against the heat source.

“NO!”

Rayne immediately turned his gaze toward their leader, recognizing the despair in her voice, and fearing the sudden movement might have made her lose her balance and fall.

He was already prepared to cast [Fly] when he noticed Lakys was not fighting for her life to remain atop Vulmitar but was instead desperately stretching her arm toward something falling.

“My lunch!”

The despair in her tone made Rayne almost sigh in exasperation. He never took Lakys for a glutton, but apparently that side of her was just waiting to be discovered since the girl tasted those fried shrimps back in the Draconic Kingdom.

“Hey Vulmitar! What’s the big deal?! You were going perfectly straight!”

Their leader shifted her despair to annoyance directed at the Frost Dragon currently acting as their ride.

“Something is coming! Flying directly at us from below!”

Those warning words from the dragon were all it took for the swordswoman to turn from disappointed glutton to serious warrior.

“I see! EVERYONE STOP!”

The loud shout made Rayne wince, but he understood there was no other way for her to be heard by the rest of their team using Floating Boards to keep up with Vulmitar.

The whole group slowly decelerated to the point they were now hovering in the air.

“Can you get off me?”

Rayne blinked at the mutter coming from under him, he almost jumped out of his skin as he realized he had forgotten he was no longer laying atop Vulmitar, but instead fell on a very much embarrassed Arche. Not that the two of them never shared this closeness before, but all those occasions were private and in the dark.

“Are those flying demi-humans? They are a big too big to be birds.”

He heard Zaryusu ask from atop his Floating Board as he looked below.

With his train of thought interrupted, Rayne just moved toward the edge to look down himself. He blinked as he could clearly see at least seven large dots growing larger by the second as they made their way toward them.

“No, those are not demi-humans, they are too big, if they were, we shouldn’t even be capable of seeing them from this distance... whatever is coming is large, and they are many.”

Leinas was the most experienced in the group when it came to different races, so they deferred to her knowledge, still, there was only one who could make the call on what to do.

“I say we wait and see, in the worst case scenario they could turn out to be hostile, but we still need to know whatever they are if we have to plan around them inhabiting this mountain range... best case scenario, we can get a guide.”

Rayne almost felt the need to smile at their leader’s undying optimism. She also framed it as a suggestion, even though she perfectly knew they would go along with whatever she said, she still didn’t want to order them around... it was so Lakys to do that.

“Whatever you say boss, just don’t expect me to fight in the air, these claws are made for the ground.”

Riyuro said even though his fanged smirk and posture indicated otherwise. For all Rayne had come to know the demi-human during this year of adventuring together, he still could not get used by how eager the former king was to pick fights. Maybe it was just the way his kin was, looking back at the Quagoa, he would not put it beyond them to have some sort of territorial instinct built into them.

Be it as it may, he returned his attention to the dots that now revealed a more distinct shape the closer they got. He knew that if a confrontation was to ensue, him, Arche, and Vulmitar would be the best assets their group had up here.

They waited in silence as the flying group approached them. Rayne felt tense as he wondered if he could even hold his own in a fight with foes such as these. After all, till this time, all the battles he had to face were against demi-humans living next to human territories, which meant they were not nearly as strong or organized such as those living so far away from human civilization and instead very close to demi-human kingdoms such

a the Troll and Minotaur Kingdoms, demi-humans intelligent enough to being capable of administering land as large as Re-Estize or Baharuth.

Not counting the lack of information they had on any possible foe around here while any average adventurer will tell you how to hold your own and the weak points of demi-human like goblins or ogres, here they were not as lucky as to have a guide on how to face their foes. For all he knew he might blast them with a Lightning only to discover they were immune to lightning magic.

He should have asked master Satoru for information, or a book on the local fauna. His master always drilled in his and Arche's head the importance of gathering information before facing anyone! Why in the world did they not apply it now that they needed it the most?!

No, he was panicking, he had to calm down.

He took a deep breath, the chilling air managing to help in decelerating his furiously pumping blood.

Rayne focused his gaze on the approaching foe, there was much he could discern from seeing their form or, even better, understanding which race they belonged to.

His eyes almost popped out of their sockets when he finally was able to distinguish form and color of those approaching his group.

Pale scales shining against the sun as if they were made of metal, wings spanning wide the likes he only witnessed while observing dragons, and to complete the image, humans armed with strange lances atop their necks.

Were these... the Wyvern-riders tribes he had so much heard about in the stories of his childhood and that were said to inhabit the region?

“Remain where you are trespassers! Not another wing forward!”

The youthful voice was not what he expected, the boy shouting at them could not have been much older than him or Arche.

Though, the boy had barely the time to look satisfied with himself before a fist descended on his head, curtesy of the middle-aged man riding the wyvern and sitting behind him.

The wyvern, with the man and boy aboard, approached their group till they were a handful of meters apart.

“This young one might have been to eager, but those words still stand true! You are trespassing into the territory of the Arashi Tribe, turn around and leave this instant or face the consequences!”

For all the wyvern was barely half of Vulmitar’s size, Rayne could not help but feel intimidated by the man’s words and tone. There was no doubt he meant every last word he spoke. Luckily for him, it was not his place to speak, unluckily for him, if it came to violence, it would be his responsibility to fight.

“Hi there, sorry for the intrusion, my group and I are new to the area, and I had no idea we were intruding on your territory, we are adventurers from the Re-Estize Kingdom, Seven Own Goal, I am the leader Lakyus.”

The swordswoman introduced them, the expression of the wyvern rider remaining unchanged by her words.

“I heard of you lot, adventurers, more like hunters for hire... begone! There is no beast to be slain here in the land of the forgotten and the accursed.”

The man retorted clearly not having a great opinion of their profession.

“There must be a misunderstanding, we didn’t come here to harm anyone, we just need to retrieve an artifact and will be on our way, we don’t mean you or anyone else any harm.”

Lakyus tried to clarify their peaceful intentions but apparently it was no use as the man just scowled.

“This is my last warning, turn around and go back for whence you came.”

At his words the wyvern’s maw opened revealing a couple lines of sharp teeth and, much to Rayne’s amazement, crackling lightning, ready to be unleashed.

“Please, if we just may talk! We can go down and introduce-“

Lakyus could not finish her sentence that a wave of lightning was unleashed from the wyvern’s maw only to be met by a wave of frost breath, courtesy of Vulmitar, who was clearly winning the clash of elemental breaths as the wyvern had to duck out of the way.

Still, Vulmitar was one and they were seven. Using their numerical superiority, the wyverns surround them easily.

““[Arcane Shield]!!””

Him and Arche cried out together as they blocked the lightning breath coming from left and right, leaving Vulmitar to fend off the rest.

“What do we do?!”

Asked Leinas, clearly distressed by their predicament.

“Fall back! There is no point in continuing this!”

Lakyus ordered as everyone around her received the message.

“Let me go up to one of that one boss, I won’t kill him, just a punch will be enough to knock some sense into that skull of his!”

Riyuro offered, clearly not having appreciated the poor manners of their host.

“If you knock him off his ride he will die from the fall, and if he knocks you off the board the same will happen to you... don’t do anything foolish Riyuro, we are leaving, we can set up camp and think about our next move later!”

The young leader doubled down on her choice.

“Easier said than done, I can’t find a clear path.”

Vulmitar said as he continued to fly up and down trying to find an opening, much to the inconvenience of his riders.

“I will open a path, don’t worry!”

Rayne blinked at Arche’s words, how would she even... His eyes widened, they had just started experimenting with the instruction of the book master Satoru lent them. She wouldn’t be so bold to-

“[Widen Magic: Fireball]!”

The staff of the blonde caster shined brightly as a fireball, easily double the size of a normal one, shot forward like a cannonball, prompting anyone in its path to get away or risk being roasted alive or plummet to their deaths.

Vulmitar wasted no time in taking advantage of the newly opened path as he flew out of the encirclement at full speed.

He barely managed to catch a falling Arche before she lost her grip on the scales of their friend.

“Damn it... I think that was a third, no, almost half my mana... how does master Satoru make it look so effortless... even with higher tier spells.”

He heard her mutter under her breath. He couldn't blame her, their master indeed made it look so effortless, that is why they asked to learn it in the first place.

Modifying spells was not something known in the kingdom and not even the empire. Maybe Fluder Paradyne knew something about the subject, but Rayne doubted anyone else had any idea from even where to begin. Master Satoru had given them the chance to learn it, but till now they barely experimented with first tier spells, trying to get used to the changes in the mana they had to use to reach the desired results.

And now this brazen girl had used the modification on a whim on a 3rd tier spell no less.

‘Wasn't I supposed to be the foolish and bold one?’ he asked in amusement as he made sure to keep a good grip on the girl just in case.

“Look out!”

He barely managed to turn around at Lakys' scream, he saw something descending upon them, getting ever closer. He had no time to dodge, nor space, as he would risk falling off. But before he could do anything, a wave of pure darkness tore apart the daylight and deflected the, now revealed, spear aimed for them.

“Everything okay?”

Lakyus, who now stood protectively in front of them, asked as she sheathed her blade.

Rayne didn't know how to answer, he felt like he was in shock as the reality of the events hit him. They were about to die, him or Arche would have been impaled if it wasn't for Lakyus. Fear took hold of him, but even stronger than fear, rage surged from the bottom of his stomach at the thought of his fellow apprentice being skewered.

Without thinking twice about his actions his eyes darted toward the wyvern and the rider in pursuit of them and clearly responsible for that last shot.

“[Lightning]!”

The mana answered his wrathful call as the spell erupted from his hand, shooting right for the wyvern in pursuit who clearly did not expect the shot as it didn't even move to dodge.

The spell hit the target, making it freeze over and spasm for a few seconds making it lose altitude before it caught itself and managed to regain control. He should have expected as much from a wyvern who clearly commanded his same element, that was a logical thought that in his wrathful state he forgot to consider.

“Damn it Rayne! The boy!”

He blinked at his leader's worried voice as he took an instant to realize that the wyvern might have recovered, but one of its two riders clearly lost their balance and fell off during the process. And that individual was none other than the boy slightly older than him he saw before.

He swore he would become a caster to save people, that was his goal, and yet, he had condemned an innocent boy to a gruesome death.

Without thinking twice, he let his grip on the sales go and flew off carried by the wind among the panicked shouts of his companions.

Luckily the boy had fallen from higher than his position, so he gained a little more time.

He tried to approach the figure of the boy as they both plummeted toward the ground, gaining speed every instant, he could barely keep his eyes open. But he had to! He had to save him!

“[Fly]!”

He casted the spell on himself seeing how he had to gain further speed or risk not reaching the boy.

“GIVE ME YOUR HAND!”

He truly hoped the boy could hear him, which seemed to be the case as the black-haired boy now was trying to reach for him with his hands like someone who was drowning and grasping for air.

As soon as their two hands touched Rayne immediately started using his spell to decelerate their fall. He was no fool, if he stopped them altogether at this speed, he would break both their necks. He just needed to hope they could decelerate enough before hitting the ground so to avoid death or fatal injuries, the snow piled on the ground should also help.

Sooner than he hoped but later than he expected, they both hit the snow and abruptly stopped. And everything turned black.

...

For a few seconds that was.

Rayne gasped for air. He was still alive, and considering everything ached but nothing hurt severely, he might live another day still.

He tried standing but one of his hands was unusable as the grip around it was still quite tight.

“Ah, you can let me go now... uhm, it’s everything okay?”

All he received in response was a groan as the boy’s grip did not relent as if his hand was the only thing stopping him from starting to fall again. Rayne did not have the heart to let go, not after being the cause of his fall in the first place, so with some difficulty they both raised from the small crater of snow they created with their fall.

Using their holding hands, he helped the boy come out of the snow, his heavy hood having fallen back revealing spiky black hair and a small face with a button nose and big cerulean eyes.

Rayne felt a tinge of color paint his cheeks. Damn, if he didn’t hear his voice he would have had problems telling if this one was a boy in the first place, he must have won the genetic lottery when it came to his mom’s genes.

Before any of them could say anything, a strong wind and sound of snow crunching announced the landing of Vulmitar and the rest of his team behind him. He soon found himself enveloped in a pair of arms as the sudden weight made him fall back on the snow.

“WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING?! YOU ABSOLUTE CRETIN! YOU SCARED ME TO DEATH!”

Arche's booming voice echoed in the frozen landscape as she rattled his body as if he had committed some sort of heinous crime.

"While I appreciate your courage, I find myself agreeing with Arche, that was stupid."

Yeah, no, that was not something he was willing to be reprimanded over by Lakyus no less.

"I don't want to hear what is stupid and what isn't from you Lakyus... or should I remind you of all the times--"

He couldn't even finish his protest that he received a finger flick to his forehead, curtesy of the older girl.

"Don't be an idiot, I am the leader, so I get to decide when to risk my life, I am responsible for you all, so you all don't get the same luxury unless I say so."

Well, that made an awful amount of sense in Rayne's mind, though he was unwilling to say as much and suffer her smugness for the next day, so he limited himself to silence.

"Just help me up, will you?"

He grumbled, still feeling his whole body aching, his case not being helped by Arche's sudden hug.

The caster grasped the offered hand of the warrior as she helped him up, only to discover his other hand was still stuck in the deadly grip of a certain boy who seemed to have no intention of letting him go.

"Listen, I get that you were... are scared and all, but holding my hand is not gonna--"

Rayne turned toward the boy to put an end to this ridiculous trend and regain control of his right hand when the words died in his throat, leaving place to a blush creeping up his face.

‘What the hell?!’ he could not help but wonder how was it possible for a guy to make such adorable puppy eyes, both of his hands wrapped around his like he was grasping the only anchor that would allow him to not drown at sea.

Luckily for him, before anyone could question him on the matter, several loud sounds interrupted the moment, announcing the landing of all the wyvern riders.

His whole group tensed up as the riders dismounted their scaly rides, though, here on the ground Rayne felt far more assured of their chances than up there in the sky. He very much doubted any of them had the slightest chance against Lakys, Leinas, Riyuro, or Zaryusu, to not talk about Vulmitar.

The man who addressed them before made his way toward their group, alone, and with only one of those weird spears, he previously used to skewer them with, in his grip.

He stopped at a decent distance, his eyes falling over the boy Rayne saved, for the first time something other than stoicism making its way to his eyes. Rayne could not judge what that something was, maybe apprehension?

“Trespassers! The tribe will soon be notified of your presence! Release the child this instant and you will be allowed to go free!”

His word echoed in the snowy valley, receiving no answer. Knowing Lakys, she was probably thinking how to deescalate the situation

Not receiving an answer, the man sighed and threw his spear aside, raising his hands in what could be considered a form of surrender.

“If you wish to take a hostage, take me and let the child go, you will find a head-hunter has far more value than a mere apprentice.”

The man all but surrendered to them, making Rayne almost question form where did he took out the humility on display, a total contrary to his previous disposition.

“Father! I-!”

For the first time, the boy tried to speak up, only to be silence with a glare by the man who apparently was now revealed as his father.

Lakyus straightened up before making her way toward the man, refusing to be accompanied by anyone who asked, much to the displeasure of Leinas and Riyuro.

The defiant glare of the man shifting from his son to the girl approaching him who only stopped once she stood a meter or so from him.

“Sir, I have no intention of harming you nor your child, I do not wish to take hostages and make an enemy of your tribe either... all I ask is the chance to speak with your leader so that we may come to an agreement on our short permanence in this area while we complete our task... nothing more.”

The emerald green eyes of Lakyus held the hard gaze of the cerulean eyes of the man, much similar to his son. Silence ensued as the man did not move an inch and seemed to evaluate Lakyus’ words for the first time since they met.

“I will offer you one chance, I will present you to our Stormclaw... if he does not wish to speak with you, you will leave, I assure you no safety in these lands, the only think I can assure you is not being harmed on the way to our camp... I am already risking much by endorsing you and presenting you to our Stormclaw, I shall not be responsible for anything that comes from your meeting.”

Well, that was one way of saying that they would possibly die and he doesn't give a crap, but if Rayne knew Lakys as he thought he did, there was only one answer that brazen girl would give.

“I understand, though I hope it will not come to it, I have to warn you that if attacked, we will fight back.”

She rebutted his words stunning the man, as if the notion was not one natural to assumed. The man scoffed as he smirked down at the young swordswoman.

“You got some guts girl, I can already see my brother taking a liking to ya... but beware, for I will not hold back next time.”

The man lowered his hands as he recovered his spear.

“Neither will I, when it comes to my friends' lives... I fight with everything I have.”

A short, amused laugh was all she received as a response to her bravado.

“You are not half-bad for a warmlander, we shall see what your words are worth soon either way.”

‘Well, that sounded ominous’ Rayne thought to himself.

“Ash! Come back here, you rascal! Your mother will have you and me flogged if she learns of this!”

The boy still strangling Rayne's hand with his immediately let go as if he was scorched and ran back to his father, though Rayne could not help but notice how he turned around from time to time to glance back at the blue robed caster much to his nervousness.

'Damn it, what is up with me today? Did I hit my head too hard when I fell?' he just shook the weird sensation off of him. He turned back toward Arche to ask her if she could cast a diagnosis spell on him, only to find her scowling at him as if he had committed some sort of deadly sin deserving of a death sentence.

"What?"

He could not help but ask as he took a step back from the irate girl who seemed eager to cast a Fireball in his face. It had been quite a while since he saw her as pissed as this.

"Pervert."

She muttered, turning away from him in apparent disgust and outrage.

Rayne just blinked as he tilted his head, totally confused about where that came from. Only one question making its way to the front of his brain.

"Why?!"

{??? P.O.V.}

Kaelin was not made for this. She was made to fly atop Zephyra and to hunt down prey. Not to sit here and deal with paperwork that would put to sleep even the most zealous tribesman.

"If you want to be the next Stormclaw you need to learn this, he says..."

She lamented under her breath, parodying the words of her father.

“What will your brawns change when the tribe is starving during winter because you miscalculated the supplies needed and there is nothing to hunt, he says...”

She continued her solitary mockery.

She hated when he made sense. But more than that, she hated when he made sense but she knew this was a punishment for her previous transgressions and not a lesson as he makes it out to be.

If the Stormclaw really had to deal with all of this, why did her father, the current Stormclaw, leave the administration to his wife, her mother? While he went hunting nonetheless! And he had the galls to patronize her!

Worst thing was that if she tried to point this out, he would just wave her away saying that she was not married yet so she had to do it herself, or something like that...

Shit! She should not get distracted, if she messed this up she would not hear the end of it from her mother as well!

A horn blasted through the silence making her almost drop her ink and ruin her entire morning's work. She cursed under her breath, she recognized the sound, a group of scouts was returning, but wasn't it a little too soon? Evening was not due for at least four more hours, her father should have come back before them.

Then, as if to answer her questions, a second series of four blasts broke through the silence.

She blinked, four blasts? She remembered her father explaining to her the meaning of the various signals when she was younger, but this was the first time she heard four, was the maximum not three? Which symbolizes the return of her father? Did the man miscount?

Then, like a lightning splitting the sky, memories returned to her. there was a time when four blasts were sounded... It happened only once when she was barely capable of walking, but still, how could she have ever forgotten.

Four blasts... unidentified flying creature. She felt a shiver crawl down her spine. No, she had to keep calm, her father was away and it was her responsibility to keep everyone safe, no matter the cost.

She marched out of her tent making sure to secure her bow to her back. She found herself unsurprised to notice that many others had interrupted their activities to observe the strange phenomenon in trepidation.

With her gaze fixed on the sky, the first thing she noticed was their own riders returning, and right behind, impossible to ignore, a larger figure, not wyvern in nature and yet so similar. There existed only one race that could consider itself ruler of the skies even more than wyverns.

Dragons.

She waited in silence, her mouth completely dry, as the scouts descended further away than usual, followed by the dragon. She could only hope that was a good sign as she believed none of their tribe would ever willingly bring a foe to their camp where children and elderly resided, even less someone such as her uncle which he recognized thanks to this larger than usual wyvern.

“Every able man and woman with me!”

She ordered and felt proud as her tribesman armed themselves without hesitation at her command.

They marched out immediately directed straight for their scouts, much to her relief, the one to meet them was none other than her uncle.

“Uncle, what is happening? Why have you brought this one to our haven?!”

Kaelin would never usually be so disrespectful toward her uncle which she admired since her childhood, but right now she was the highest authority in the camp, and she could not afford to let familiar bonds interfere.

“Niece, we have intercepted these trespassers on the southwestern border, they refused to leave and we engaged in battle... once they fled back I pursued them.”

The man winced as he paused, which was strange for someone such as her uncle, who never seemed to falter in his duty.

“Your cousin fell from Silver and would have died if not for the intervention of one of them.”

Kaelin winced too at the thought of her cousin’s grim fate.

“A life debt.”

She muttered under her breath, receiving a nod from her uncle.

Life was sacred among these mountains and to save one meant having the chance to ask basically anything from the one who was saved. To owe such a debt to a foreigner...

“I heard their request for, if it was unreasonable, I would have offered my life instead... a life for a life... but they said they only meant to meet with the Stormclaw to discuss their business.”

Kaelin nodded, that was not something easily allowed, not to foreigners, and even less to dragons. But she would rather let them meet her father than have her uncle pay the debt with his life.

“Father is still on the hunt for winter.”

She informed her grimacing uncle.

“Then it is up to you, I will receive any punishment you see fit for the transgression.”

He said before escorting her toward the massive dragon, as large as her father’s mount. Though, for all her uncle continued to speak in the plural, she could only see one dragon.

Before Kaelin could voice her doubts, the dragon lowered himself to the ground as a... multitude of creatures varying from humans to various demi-humans dismounted him, taking Kaelin aback. What kind of monster was capable of taming a dragon of that size? Were there other exiles they were not aware of?

“Niece, I present you a group of adventurers from the Re-Estize Kingdom.”

Her uncle introduced much to her shock.

Adventurers? Weren’t they meant to hunt demi-humans? And yet, here she was witnessing the most baffling mixed group she ever laid her eyes upon, surpassing even her wildest imagination. Did human nation not despise demi-humans to begin with?

One of the humans, a blonde who seemed to be a couple years younger than Kaelin, marched toward them with a smile Kaelin was surprised didn’t split her face. The girl stopped in front of Kaelin and offered her armored hand.

“A pleasure to make your acquaintance! I am Lakyus, leader of the adventure group Seven Own Goal!”

She cheerfully introduced herself before starting to name off all of her companions who waved or saluted as their were named. Even the dragon offered a salute that made her almost jump out of her skin as she was not aware dragons could even speak.

“Well, for all I find the view pleasant, is there a place where we could discuss things in private?”

The girl continued to talk completely ignoring, or unaware, of Kaelin’s internal meltdown.

Curse her and the time she wished for something exciting to happen!

Paperwork sounded real nice right now.

A.N.

And cut! Okay, I know you guys have a lot of questions, but everything will be answered, as I said I am taking my creative freedoms with the inhabitants of the mountain. I know you are all curious to know if SOG will ever manage to not get in trouble wherever they go.

Or if Lakyus is developing a shrimp addiction.

Or if Rayne is really into cute femboys.

Or if Leinas brought any good smut to read.

Okay that is enough mysteries for now.

Jokes aside, I am curious to know what your questions are so far on the situation and what few crumbs I left around. I

doubt anyone will ever get the right answer, and if someone does, I would be impressed beyond words.

As usual let me now your thoughts with a comment / review, feedback is like life force for us authors. It gratifies us, but it also allow for good brainstorming when presented with ideas or critics.

Stay safe! Till next time!