

Dream Trap

Dream Trap

By : **FyresydeHerbalyst**

Madalyne is your typical girl until the day she is thrust away from everything that she knows and into not just one world but multiple worlds where she has to adapt or die. What will happen to Madalyne in her travels and can she survive.



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Dream Trap : Chapter 1

"Lyne get your ass back over here.½ This drama queen act of yours is getting old.½ You know I only told you a million times that you needed to get you act together before I shipped you off.½ Now you want to sit here and act like you never knew.½ Madalyne Phaedra Phoster get your ass back in this house before I kick it all the way back."

I closed my ears then, those sounds had become all too familiar of late.½ My mother had lost her marbles when it came to me.½ I was in my rebellious years and the more I fought the louder she got.½ She never took anything out on my other two siblings, no, of course not on my perfect sisters who could do no wrong.½ For the middle child though, I was nothing but a hassle to her.½ I tried for the longest of times to do what she wanted only to have it thrown back in my face that I could never do it right.

I walked out the door with my bag on my back with just the essentials that I would need to get me by, then set out to who knew where.½ As I walked I remembered the bad things that had happened to me lately, my abusive ex boyfriend (who thought we were still together), my mother who used to be my hero and I looked up to her so much, and then of course there was the fact that the only saving grace from my mother (my father), up and left us without a word.½ I sighed as I walked until I heard a familiar sound pull up next to me.½ It was Culver's truck and I knew that I was in for it.½ I kept walking like I didn't hear until I felt pain radiating in my arm.

"You know Lyne, when I tell you to stop moving, you listen.½ That is what a girlfriend is supposed to do.½ Now be a good girl and get in the truck before I have to hurt you.½ You know I don't like to do that Lyne."

I froze.½ I didn't want to go with him, I didn't want to get in that truck for fear that I would never be seen alive again.½ I felt his hand leave my arm and I took my chance, I ran.½ I felt each step as my feet slammed hard into the pavement trying their hardest to propel me forward away from my certain death.½ I didn't look back as I ran, but I knew that if I could make it to Jenn's house I would be safe.½ I stumbled and knew that I wasn't going to make it the next six blocks.½ I felt the tears run down my face as I tripped and knew that he would be on me in mere seconds.

"Lyne, if you would have just listened I wouldn't have to do this.½ I will teach you to listen to me like you are supposed to."½ I felt a kick on my side and knew that he had cracked something.½ The onslaught continued until I blacked out.

It was times like these that I wished I was already dead.

It seemed like just moments had passed from the time that I had passed out, but I knew better.½ I was sprawled out on the all too familiar bed and knew that he was just waiting for me to wake.½ I tried so hard to pretend that I was still unconscious, but I was scared, horribly scared even though I knew what was

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coming.½ I moved slightly and pain shot through every inch of my body.½ I heard a snicker come from behind me and quickly shrank into myself.

"You know my dear, from this angle you look more alluring than you usually do.½ I could have any woman I want, screw the ass off of anyone, and yet here I am with plain old you.½ You should be happy that I took pity on you, of course in that time I have come to love you so I won't lose you Lyne.½ Now be a good girl and do for me again what you did last week, that was something special.

Hours later he was asleep and I was sore.½ I forced myself out of the bed quietly and put my clothes on.½ I grabbed my bag and made my way out of the house.½ I wasn't going to stay there any longer.½ After I quietly closed the door I walked as fast as the pain would let me.½ I was done, broken and tired.½ I walked to the bus stop and waited.½ Each noise I heard made me jump until I was a raging ball of nerves.½ As soon as the bus got there I hopped on and sat as far away from everyone as I could.½ I knew at this point what I had to do, the one thing that would make everyone leave me alone.

I pulled my Zune out of my bag as I waited for the bus to make it into the city.½ The trip was long and I prayed that Culver wouldn't wake so I could make my final escape.½ As soon as the bus pulled to my stop I launched off and headed for my final destination, the one place that would set me at ease.

Skyscrapers loomed in front of me and as I passed each one I knew that my course of action was the correct one.½ As I reached the tallest of the skyscrapers I walked through the front door and smiled at the security guard.½ I had been there so often that they knew me.½ I took the steps this time, enjoying the feel as each step led me to the roof.½ I could smell the fresh air before I even got outside, feel the cool night breeze like a comfort across my skin.

As soon as my hand was on the door I smiled.½ It would be the last time that I got to do this, so I was going to enjoy it, revel in the fact that as this was my last night on earth, I was in the only place I had ever called home.

I opened the door, took in the fresh night air, pulled the bottle of water out of my bag and drank deep before I moved over to the edge of the building.½ I looked down at all that was around me and smiled.½ It looked so small and insignificant, just like my life had become.½ I took that final step off of the ledge and felt myself fly as I fell.

I waited for the pain of the impact, but it never happened.½ I opened my eyes and looked around to see that, well for lack of better words, I wasn't in Kansas any more.½ I waited for the air in my lungs to come back when I felt something sharp pressed to the back of my neck.

Chapter 2: Revelations

I stood still, each second that passed felt like eternity. The sharp pain moved from the back of my neck all the way to the front. A small knife, that was what was pressed to my neck. Attached so delicately to the knife was a hand, slender and feminine. I followed that hand as my eyes scanned up the arm until I was looking into hostile eyes. I was stunned as I looked into those inhuman purple eyes that meant my death. I took a deep breath then I spoke.

"Um, Hi. My name is Madalyne. Can you tell me where I am?" I looked at her and tried to seem as harmless as possible.

She looked at me for a few more seconds before her eyes scanned my body. I was scared to look after the damage Culver had inflicted, but curiosity got the better of me. I gasped as I looked down, there was no bruises or cuts anywhere. I was completely healed, I looked up at her in surprise.

"I'm healed, there isn't any pain." I smiled and jumped up and down. She quickly took the knife away so I didn't hurt myself. "I know I asked you this before, but where am I?"

Again she looked at me confused. "Child did you fall and hit your head? How could you not know where you are?"

Her question sounded a bit strange to me. "Well to be honest with you I went to the top of a tall building to kill myself and then I felt your knife against my throat. I have never seen this place before."

The girl looked more than a little confused. "You sound crazy, there haven't been buildings here since the fallout over three thousand years ago. How about I take you to the healer, she will make you better." I turned around and opened my backpack to extract my hat when I remembered my cellphone and I smiled. "What if I could prove to you that I wasn't from here? What would you do then?"

The woman paused for a moment. "I would take you to the elders, I can't guarantee your safety after you see them, but until you do, I won't let anything harm you."

I nodded. "I have to know a few things, can you answer some questions for me?"

She nodded so I continued. "I am going to ask them all at once so I can process it all together. Where am I, what year is it, what is your name and are you an alien? I think that will cover it for now."

She smiled at me. "You are in Avernis, it is the year 6254, I am Kylese and what do you mean by alien?"

I thought for a moment. How would I explain Aliens to someone who had never heard of them. Her eyes scanned my face for a moment as I searched through my bag. I found my MP3 player before my phone and smiled. I grasped my earbuds in my hand before I placed them in my ears. I listened as my favorite song blasted in my ears, in that moment I felt so relaxed. I hopped my eyes to see the confusion on Kylese's face, I smiled at her and took the earbuds out of my ears. "Would you like to listen? I promise it won't hurt you, it just plays music."

She came closer to me and held out her hand hesitantly. Her frightened expression worried me a bit so I helped her out. I turned down the volume before I turned on one of my favorite celtic songs. I figured that would be better than the alternative that I listened to religiously. Her face became a picture as she listened to the soothing words of Nickelcreek.

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I am a lighthouse worn by the weather and the waves
I keep my lamp lit to warn the sailors on their way
I'll tell a story, paint you a picture from my past
I was so happy but joy in this life seldom lasts

I had a keeper, he helped me warn the ships at sea
We had grown closer 'til his joy meant everything to me
And he was to marry a girl who shown with beauty and light
They loved each other, and with me watched the sunsets into nights

And the waves crashing around me
The sand slips out to sea
And the winds that blow remind me
Of what has been and what can never be

She'd had to leave us; my keeper, he prayed for a safe return
But when the night came, the weather to a raging storm had turned
He watched her ship fight, but in vain against the wild and terrible wind
And me so helpless, as dashed against the rocks she met her end

And the waves crashing around me
The sand slips out to sea
And the winds that blow remind me
Of what has been and what can never be

Then on the next day, my keeper found her washed up on the shore
He kissed her cold face, and that they'd be together soon he swore
I saw him crying, watched as he buried her in the sand
Then he climbed my tower, and off the edge of me he ran

And the waves crashing around me
The sand slips out to sea
And the winds that blow remind me
Of what has been and what can never be

I am a lighthouse worn by the weather and the waves
And though I'm empty I still warn the sailors on their way

Her body swayed to the music and made me smile even more. I didn't feel so odd for liking the song. As it ended she had tears in her eyes and I knew why. I hugged her as an unknown pain flowed over her and spilled out of her eyes. She clutched me, her nails dug deep into my shoulder and made me cry out.

She quickly pulled away and composed herself before she checked my shoulder. "I am so sorry, but the music brought back such painful memories of how much we have lost, but I believe you. You are most definitely not from around here. Come, I will get your shoulder checked and have you speak with the elders. It is the least I can do for hurting you."

I nodded and put my hand on her shoulder. "Don't worry about the blood, I have had much worse and have come out the other side stronger, though not by much. I come from a life of constant pain and torture. My mother punishes me for no reason, my father left when my baby sister was born and my friend of almost ten years turned into a woman beating sex fiend and I don't even know him anymore. He has been focused on

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hurting me for over two years now. The pain in my shoulder is just a scratch compared to the pain I have endured for five years now."

She paused and looked at me shocked. "Is this why you tried to jump off the tall building, to end your pain?"

I nodded. "If I am dead, they can't hurt me anymore. I haven't ever been able to defend myself and that lets people walk all over me. I am the middle child of three and I have no goals in my life because I don't think I will survive long enough to graduate from school."

Her hand rested gently on my uninjured shoulder. "Maybe that is why you came to us Madalyne. Maybe we are to make you stronger. A lesson or two that we can teach you to aid you in your life, a way to help you survive."

I thought for a moment. "Maybe it is, but I am still unclear as to how I got here in the first place."

Her ready smile made me laugh. "The elders will be able to tell you. They always just seem to know these things."

I smiled a genuine smile for the first time in a long time. "Well at least I will be able to get some answers. How long until we get there?"

She spread her hand wide to show me the expanse of civilization we had just stepped into. "We are here, now do you first want the healer or the elders?"

"The elders. The shoulder isn't bad and will heal on it's own. I really can't wait to get some answers and find out what will happen to me."

Kylese smiled at me. "Very well then follow me and stay close. It is easy to get lost here."

I followed as close as I could without invading her personal space. The more we walked the more scared I got. Everyone was looking at me, following me with their eyes. It was worse then going to a new school. At least there only small groups knew at a time. I felt my cheeks flush red and in that moment I was grateful for the darkness. I sotpped dead in my tracks as I bumped into Kylese which almost sent me sprawling to the floor.

She caught me quickly and helped me to steady myself It took a few minutes but when I got the chance to look around I was awed by the sight in front of me. Four individuals no older than myself sat on a dais in rich cream colored clothing. I bowed my head and went to my knees so taken with the beautiful pure sight in front of me.

"Welcome daughter we have been expecting you." A beautiful voice of bell-like music caused me to look up more than the implications of her words. Her smile was sweeter than sugan and kindness radiated from her every movement.

"Wha- What do you mean? How have you been expecting me?"

Each person on the dais smiled in turn but it was the creature with the musical voice that descended on me. "Come sit with us daughter for there is so much to tell. Let us have our healer look at you as we tell you what it is we know."

I nodded dumbly and took her hand. She led me to the foot of the dais and sat down with me as to protect me from what I might hear. I looked at her with a scared sort of interest. "So, where do we begin?"

Chapter 3

The three remaining figures on the dais descended upon me and sat at my feet. I felt so nervous and yet I could feel the relaxation spread through me. The woman who first spoke to me started to speak again.

"How about if we start simple Madalyne. We will start with our names. I am Celeste, the man beside me is Valence, to his right is Sulece and last but never least is Corbair. We are the Tribal Elders here in Avernis. The Goddess told of your coming and told us exactly what to tell you, so listen closely to Valence."

I looked over at him as he reached for my hand. "We were told the broken daughter would come, that she would seek our aid. You came here in search of a way to end your pain. We welcome the chance to teach you. We are unclear for how long you will be with us, until the goddess calls you to move on. She told us that we are to teach you to defend yourself and break you free of the hold others have on you. She said that in worlds to come you will need this aid. Broken Daughter, she will meet with you when the time is right to explain to you further."

He melted back into the pile of elders and then Sulece came forward. "Rest for tonight Madalyne for tomorrow you start your training and it will be grueling. We have so much to teach you in an indiscernable amount of time."

I nodded my head and moved from towards the door. I rolled my neck and shoulders and found there was no pain. I looked over my shoulder to see that the wounds were completely gone. I smiled as I left the tent. Kylese came forward and caught me before I fell. "Madalyne are you alright. You are white as a ghost. Come let's get you settled for the night. You have been through so much in such a short amount of time. Rest is what you are in need of. Come, you can bunk with me for tonight, we will figure out more tomorrow."

She took my hand and pulled me through the throngs of people. I felt a canvas flap close behind me and it was all I could do to stay upright. Kylese slowly helped me find the floor and it wasn't long until I was down for the count.

Morning came sooner than I had hoped but at least I didn't dread waking up this time. I stretched out and got up. As I moved to sit up I bumped into something hard. As I rubbed my head I heard a voice next to me.

"Ow ow ow. Oh I am so sorry. I didn't think you would wake so soon. None of us expected you up until about high sun."

I looked over and saw what livewire it was I bumped into. I smiled and put out my hand. "Hello, I'm Madalyne, but you can just call me Lyne."

I waited patiently for her to shake my hand. After a moment she clasped my hand. "Calysta, Lys for short. Very nice to meet you. I hear you are training with Kylese, is that true?"

I shrugged. "I guess that is who they set to train me."

She looked at me with both confusion and surprise. "Ky is the best warrior among us, it is a great privilege for her to take you as a student."

I looked at Calysta. "I am still new to this, I met her yesterday and I like her. I hope she is patient, I am not the

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athletic type."

The canvas flap moved and Kylese stood there. "I can be patient, but you had better be ready to work from sun up to sun down. We don't know how long you are here for. I have to give you a lifetime of training in about a week."

I got up and faced her all hints of my jovial mood gone. "Then let's get started. If the goddess is going to see fit to send me to other places, I am going to need every weapon I can get in my arsenal."

Kylese held out her hand and I took it so she could pull me to my feet. I followed her out of the tent and down to a grassy field. She looked at me for a moment before she walked over to me and kneeled down in front of me. "Your baggy clothes will hinder you Madalyne. I need to cut these pants up to your knees so that you don't trip. I also need to cut the sleeves on your shirt. tonight I will find clothes more suited to our training."

I didn't argue even though I wanted to. I hated the way I looked and I hid well behind the canvas bags I bought. She worked quickly to get my clothes the way she needed them. She then moved my stance and then moved back.

"This is your basic fighting stance, a good way to protect yourself. Since this is the easiest stance we will stick with it. Now I am going to attack you and I want you to block me."

She moved quickly and it was all I could do to keep track of her. She hit me full on in the chest and I flew backwards. She didn't move to help me and at that point I didn't want her to. I got up and moved back into position. Each time she attacked me I felt the fear of my mother beating me or Culver kicking me unconscious. As she got close to me I would flinch.

Hours later I hadn't improved much and I could feel the bruises that would be on my body by nightfall. We kept at it until the sun had sunk behind the trees. I could see in her eyes that she was getting fed up with my progress or lack there of. I stood up slowly as the pain seeped into my body, yet got right back into stance. Ky looked at me for a moment before she put her guard down.

"We are done for today Lyne, you need food and rest now."

I shook my head. "No Ky, again. I need to overcome my fear. Until I can do that I won't be able to move on. Now come at me again."

Everyone that had gathered gasped. I stood my ground in a position that had become second nature to me. I waited, not letting my guard down, I awaited her decision. I took a deep breath and let it out slowly. Even if I didn't fight back, if I could just get rid of my flight urge, today would be a success. Moments passed and she waited for a slip in my defenses and I saw her move. Even after making the same movements all day, her speed remained. She came at me and I could feel the panic start to build in me and I tried so hard to force it down. I felt Ky's hands against my chest and I grabbed her wrist. She came down with me and I smiled. I heard laughing around us and then felt bodies all around me.

"You did it Lyne, you finally did it. You fought the urge." Everyone got up off Ky and I to allow us to breathe. I smiled for a second more before I got back into position.

Ky shook her head. "No Lyne, you have improved and I think that tonight you really need to reflect on what your fears truly are."

I stood my ground and shook my head. "Please Ky I want to continue, I want to gain some ground not feel

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like I am always coming up short. I am tired of half assed attempts and I won't do it anymore."

She looked at me for a minute. "Just a few more times, you need both food and rest." She came at me quicker than ever and I held my ground. I felt her hands at my chest as I crossed my arms to block, I pushed her back and started forward. I felt so much rage that I kept trying to punch her and get back at an invisible pain that had built in me. It took three people to pull me back.

She got in my face and held it tight. "Let it out Lyne, let it all out. YOU have held it in for far too long. This, this is what I wanted. Let it all go so you can move forward. Cry, scream and fight if you have to. I know you need to let it all go, I am here for you Lyne."

I looked deep in her eyes and broke free of everyone. I ran, until my lungs hurt, eyes burned and every movement I made was agony. I screamed at the top of my lungs and didn't stop until I was out of breath. I fell to my knees and cried. I was done and I wasn't going to take it anymore. I put my head between my legs and tried to breathe, but I had cried too hard and felt myself lose consciousness. In the distance I heard a warm voice that sounded so familiar. I followed the voice in the darkness until I came to a warm light.

"Child I am here, you are safe now."

Chapter 4

My eyes got wide and I couldn't believe it, in front of me was my grandmother. I was breathless and crying silent tears.

"No need for that my dear, you aren't dead even though you tried hard to get there. I guess the Goddess has other plans for you child." She hugged me tightly and I felt a calm steal over me and hugged her just as tight.

"Gran I have missed you so much. Right now the way my life is, I'd be better off dead and safe with you."

I felt another presence come towards me. "Well my daughter, if that is how you feel, I can take this second chance back. I was hoping you would be more receptive."

I bowed my head to her. "No offense meant your Holiness, but my life was a living hell before from beating to the next. How can that be a life at all?"

She placed her hands on my shoulders. "My dear I understand how hard it has been for you and if you accept my deal it will get harder before it gets better and the things you will learn will be invaluable. This will be more physical pain than emotional and each moment will make you stronger. What do you say child?"

I thought for a moment and then looked at the Goddess. "If I accept there is no turning back is there? I mean if I decide to back down later I can't, can I?"

She shook her head. "No you can't bow out after you agree. IF you decide to go through with it there will be way to get help. Take Kylese for example, she will train you and teach you things. I am going to give you a few gifts as well, a couple of things to make it a bit easier. First of all I give you the gift of a quick perception. You will be able to learn fast by watching and observing. IF you see it, you can do it. The second gift I give you is that you will meet two people that will help you along the way, they will travel with you. Does that help you a bit?"

I nodded. It would help, but I would have agreed without the gifts. You don't have to waste your power on me. You are a Goddess and I am just a poor excuse of a mortal."

She pulled me close and held me tight. "You my dear are destined for important things in your life. I can't let you waste your life. Your grandmother begged me to spare you when you jumped. I looked ahead then, to what you are to become and I put you through this to see if you can become the wonderous person I saw in my vision. See if you can aspire to something most people would only wish to be."

I hugged her tightly. Thank you, Thank you so much. I will do my best to make you so proud." I looked at my grandmother. "Both of you. I guess I have to go now." I ran to my grandmother and held her tight. "I guess this is goodbye Gran. I Love you so much. I am glad that I finally got to say goodbye. All these years I have felt horrible."

She shook her head. "No need my dear I have heard you all these years. Live your life with no regrets Lyne, that will make me happy. Rememeber to keep talk to me love. I will always listen and who knows I might visit you every now and then. If your heart is heavy and you feel you are at the end of your rope, call to the Goddess and she will help you along the way. My love is always with you heart, now take care."

I woke up with someone splashing water on my face. I sputtered a bit and sat up. Kylese sighed with relief. "You gave me a scare you crazy girl. We thought we lost you for a minute."

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I hugged her tightly. "You didn't lose me, I just, well I just needed a different kind of rest. How about tomorrow we do a different kind of training. I would love to see the different fighting styles you use." She nodded.

"I think that is a great idea, you should be able to see what you will be learning. I will set up everything for tomorrow, eat and rest now you have been through a lot today."

I laughed. "I don't know if an emotional break down constitutes as going through a lot, but I learned how I got here. This is my second chance at life."

She looked at me surprised. "I knew you were touched by the Goddess, it is a wonderful thing. Now I will take you to get food, then we will get some rest. You know how to push past your limits, now you need to listen to your body. Tomorrow's another day and we have a lot to do."

I smiled and followed her to what looked like a mess hall. I looked at her questionably for a moment before she smiled. "We do cook for ourselves, but every now and then we all get together and celebrate. Your coming was a cause for celebration. So tonight we feast and tomorrow we have an exhibition just for you."

I was speechless. "Thank you all so much for this, I don't know what to say. I am not much to celebrate though." I grabbed a plate and sat down at a mostly empty table, which only lasted until my feet touched the floor. There were three other girls that sped over to me sit with me. I smiled as I took a bite.

"I'm sorry, I know it is rude of us to try and make conversation while you are eating, but we had to make sure you were alright. Ky was very worried when you ran off like that."

I swallowed my food as fast as I could without choking. "I am sorry if I scared anyone. I had just reached my emotional limit, my body couldn't take anymore."

They took a deep breath. "It seems so hard. We were just wondering if it is true that you are touched by the Goddess. We are so sorry to be forward but as the saying goes 'curiosity killed the cat.'"

I laughed. "Curiosity may kill the cat but once satisfied the fat finds it has another life. I spoke to the Goddess when I passed out, she told me that this is my second chance to live my life."

They sat with shocked looks on their faces and I smiled. The youngest of the three looked at me. "That is amazing, you must certainly be Goddess touched for her to come to you while you were unconscious. I am Deliah by the way. The other two with me are Evayne and Sasha. We have been training for about three years now."

I nodded to each of them in turn. As you have probably heard my name is Madalyne, but you can call me Lyne for short. Goodness knows everyone else has." They each shook my hand and smiled.

Dinner was animated and I had fun. I chatted with a few more people, but before too long my eyes started to water and my eye lids felt like lead weights. Ky came to my rescue then ushered me off to bed.

As soon as my eyes closed I was deep asleep. Again I got to see my grandmother and it brought me so much joy. We sat down at her kitchen table like we used to when I was younger and discussed the events that led to my being in a different world.

"I know it won't be easy to stand up to that which has haunted you for so long. Tonight we get it all out and

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wipe your slate clean. Tomorrow you walk onto that training ground a new person. Along the way you will have to adapt to new things or there is a chance that you could die. I know it sounds horrible, but I know you can do it. Now tell me everything my dear, let the pain out."

I took a deep breath and began at the beginning. The night was long and full of pain, but with my Gran by my side it was a healing like I had never had full of tears and hugs. By the time I was done I felt more alive than I had in many years. She gave me one last kiss then disappeared. The rest of my night was peaceful and without a single nightmare. It was such a wonderous feeling.

Chapter 5

When I woke I felt refreshed and so much more alive. I stretched and took in a deep breath. When I looked around I saw some clothes set out for me with a note attached.

-Lyne,

A new image to start your new life, a gift from the elders. I hope they are your size, if so I will find you some more. When you wake search out Evayne and shew ill fix up that long hair of yours. Afterward come join me on the practice field to see what you will be learning.

Ky-

I smiled and stood up. Beside me was a basin of water and I used it to wipe off the accumulated dirt and sweat. When I felt moderately clean I put on the clothes. They fit wonderfully and moved with me. I had never owned clothes that fit me so well. I put on my socks and sneakers before I let my tangled mass of hair down and ran my brush through it. Once I had the tangles out I noticed that my hair was a lot longer than it had been back in my world. I walked to the common area outside, but I couldn't find Evayne anywhere. I walked back to the tent that I shared with Ky to see Evayne worried and out of breath.

"I am so sorry I am take, I overslept. On such an important day too. I'm sorry. Ky told me to make sure that your hair didn't come loose while you were training, so sit while I work this out."

I sat down in front of her as I giggled at her apology. I didn't mind in the least that she was late. "You don't have to worry, I'm not had, not at all. Things happen and I think I woke a bit early this morning."

It took about an hour for her to do my hair and for as much as my head hurt I knew it was tight. I smiled and thanked her as I ran out to the training grounds. Her face looked stricken and it worried me. I had a low image of myself to begin with but the look on her face didn't help any. I made haste to the grounds as people stopped to stare at me. I felt more uncomfotable by the moment, I was starting to think I was a freak. As I reached the training ground I had hoped that they wouldn't look at me oddly, but I was wrong.

Ky came over to me and bowed her head in respect and I did the same. Her voice held a note of awe and it shocked me. "Wow Lyne, you clean up well. You look stunning."

I scoffed at her remark. "I think you are mistaken, I seem to be a freak of nature, everyone has stared at me like I am some kind of monster."

She grabbed me by the arm and pulled me to the bank of the creek. "Look," she told me and what I saw was a stranger looking back at me, a stunning beautiful stranger. I was awed by what I saw before me. I moved my hands to my face to be sure and her movements mimicked mine. I looked at Ky.

"That can't be me. I have never been this pretty." The disbelief in my voice made Ky laugh.

"Of course you have, you have just been hiding it well. You have worked so hard to go unnoticed that you forgot what was hidden underneath."

I looked at myself a moment longer before I nodded and headed back to the others. "Alright I am ready."

I watched each demonstration carefully and felt my mid and body breaking down the movements. It was an

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amazing feeling and I knew I could do it. I felt confidence spread through me like a wildfire. I smiled and stood up. The two fighters stopped immediately and looked to me. I moved forward and bowed to each of them.

"Do you mind if I try?" They both looked at me skeptically for a moment then over at Ky. She nodded with curiosity in her eyes. I smiled to her as one of the fighters left the field. "Don't go easy on me, I doubt any of my enemies will."

She got into position and so did I. I watched her carefully, each small movement of her body was a clue. As the signal to start came, she rushed me trying to surprise me. I blocked her and moved in for the attack. I used all of the moves I had seen until I finally had her pinned on the ground. She must have looked shocked as I felt, but it felt so good to not be helpless.

Ky came over to me with a similar shocked expression. "Alright, explain. The first day you couldn't even block me and now you fight like you have done this all your life."

I looked at her for a moment before I grabbed her arm and pulled her aside. "Remember when I passed out?" She nodded so I continued. "She gave me a few gifts that day. One of them was the ability to learn and master by watching. She figured it would speed my training along."

Ky looked at me surprised. "Why didn't you tell me?"

I looked at her for a moment. "I am already a freak by being here, I didn't want to add to the oddity that has become my life. I think you are all great, but I should get too attached if I am leaving."

Ky nodded. "I have to agree with you there, but you are doing wonderful so how about I show you group combat and then we start on weapons."

I smiled and hugged her, glad she understood.

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