

Excerpt

Twin Dragons

Dragon Lords of Valdier book 7

By S. E. Smith

The next day, Calo was standing outside the doors to the repair bay with his hands held out as if he was gripping something in between them. He wished he was, namely the human boy's neck on the other side of the door. If the kid came at him with a shovel one more time he was going to throttle the kid.

"What is wrong?" Ha'ven asked, raising his eyebrow at Calo. "You look like you are ready to kill someone."

"I am," Calo growled.

"Let me guess, the youngling?" Ha'ven said, folding his arms across his chest. "If it helps, I don't think you are in much danger from him."

Calo threw Ha'ven a heated glance. "I know that," he snapped before he released a deep sigh.

Ha'ven stepped back as Calo's symbiot walked between them followed by Cree's. Each of them held different items in their mouths. He tilted his head to

the side to see what Cree's symbiot was holding as it walked by them and into the repair bay.

"What is that?" Ha'ven asked when he couldn't figure out what it was before the doors closed behind it.

Calo sighed again. "It is called a Teddy Bear," he replied. "Cree had one replicated after talking to Carmen. She said that younglings like them and that even many adults have them. It is to give comfort. Carmen said that many times they are given to those that have suffered a great trauma."

"How can a piece of cloth cut into the shape of animal give comfort? It is not even alive," Ha'ven asked with a frown.

"I don't know," Calo growl in a low voice. "Carmen understands humans. If she says it will help, then it is worth a try."

"Why do you care if the boy has suffered great trauma? I wouldn't waste my time with the boy. Creon mentioned returning the old man and his grandson back to their world. If I were you, I would let the old man deal with the youngling's problems," Ha'ven said with a shrug.

“When is he thinking of taking them back?” Calo asked through clenched teeth.

“After we find Vox, I think. We have to rescue the hairy fur ball before he has all the fun of kicking the Antrox’s asses,” Ha’veen grinned. “I can’t wait to rub this in his furry face.”

Calo groaned and ran his hands through his hair. He stepped forward and leaned his forehead against the cold, metal doors. He felt like banging his head. This gave him and Cree even less time than they thought.

“Why do you care what happens to the youngling?” Ha’veen asked, resting his hand on Calo’s shoulder. “Is there anything I can do to help?”

Calo turned his head. “The boy is our true mate,” he admitted in a quiet voice. “Without him... without him, Cree and I will not make it much longer. Our dragons... it is harder for Twin Dragons... our dragons feel everything twice. The feelings of desolation are magnified twice as much as a normal dragon would feel. Our dragons are also naturally more aggressive, which is what makes us such great warriors in battle. Unfortunately, we need a balance, otherwise... otherwise we lose control of our dragons,” he finished in a low voice.

He didn't know why he was telling Ha'ven this. The Curizan wasn't a dragon shifter so he had no way of knowing what it felt like to have something inside you that was on the verge of being out of control. He couldn't understand the darkness that threatened not only him, but everyone around him.

The only one who could truly understand was Cree. Now, if they did not somehow convince Mel to give them a chance, they were destined to die either by their own hand before that darkness escaped or by the hand of their father. It was a promise their father had given them should they return without a mate.

"I understand what you are going through," Ha'ven said seriously. "If there is anything I can do to help you, ask. I will do whatever I can. I owe you that and more."

Calo looked into the dark violet eyes staring seriously back at him. He knew that Ha'ven was thinking of him and Cree's assistance when they rescued him from Hell. They asked nothing for rescuing the Curizan Prince. They did what was asked of them in a time of great deceit and turmoil. Still, there was something else in the glowing eyes that told him that perhaps the Curizan did understand what he was talking about.

“Cree and I will think of something,” Calo replied. “I do know that letting the youngling return to his world will not be an option.”

Ha’ven grinned. “If you need a warship, I’ll contact Bahadur to dispatch one,” he promised. “He loves to irritate Creon and his brothers every chance he gets. Last I heard, he was trying to sweet talk Mandra’s mate away from him.”

“Mandra will cut your Admiral into little pieces if you aren’t careful,” Calo chuckled. “Bahadur always did have a death wish. He was a hard bastard to out maneuver during the Great War.”

Ha’ven sobered as he thought of all the senseless lives that had been lost through the greed of a few. There were still those out there that needed to be brought to justice, including those that had kidnapped Vox and two of the Valdier Princes’ mates, Cara and Trisha.

“Has there been any word on the fate of Lady Cara and Lady Trisha?” Calo suddenly asked, as if he was reading Ha’ven’s mind.

“Trelon and Kelan are in pursuit. That is all we know at this time,” Ha’ven replied. “Raffvin and his followers have much to answer for.”

“If the Royal family needs my brother and my assistance, we will help,” Calo volunteered.

“Keeping Creon’s mate safe is more important. Raffvin or any of his followers would love to take him out. He made a lot of enemies when he saw through their plans and united the Valdier, Sarafin, and Curizan,” Ha’ven replied.

“My brother and I will protect Carmen with our lives,” Calo promised even as his dragon snarled at him in denial.

We pledged to protect and serve the Royal family, he reminded his dragon who hissed in anger.

Protect and serve mate, his dragon snapped back. I feel mate. Want... need mate.

That... may be a little difficult, Calo carefully pointed out. Our mate is not exactly what we were expecting.

Care not what expect, his dragon insisted. Want mate.

We have to be able to be in the same room first without being attacked before we can do anything else, Calo reminded his dragon.

Get in room, his dragon retorted. *Grab, hold. I do rest.*

Yeah, and have Lady Carmen kicking both of our asses and then some, Calo snorted, reaching up and touching the shorter strand of hair on the side of his head.

“Are you and your dragon having an argument?” Ha’veen asked with a knowing grin.

“Yes, I’m reminding him that pissing Lady Carmen off is not a good idea,” Calo said with a rueful smile.

Ha’veen reached up and touched his own shortened strand of hair. He shook his head as he laughed. He couldn’t argue with that.

“Good luck with your mate,” Ha’veen said. “It will be interesting to see how you and Cree win this battle.”

“We have to get close enough to have a battle first,” Calo laughed. “Getting a shovel full of Pactor dung slung at me is not exactly something I look forward to facing again.”

Ha’veen grimaced and looked at the door. “Better you than me,” he snorted as he slapped Calo on the

shoulder. "May the Goddess bless that you are swift on your feet."

Calo watched as Ha'ven turned and walked away. He turned back to the repair bay door and straightened his shoulders. He rolled his head from side to side to ease the tense feeling in his shoulders.

Okay, round two, he thought with determination. Let's see if we can get the old man to help us.

Just grab, his dragon snorted and rolled over. I bite, problem solved.

You were not the one almost wearing Factor dung, Calo reminded his dragon. Be careful or I'll let you deal with it.

Factor dung stinks, his dragon reluctantly agreed.