Chapter 5:

The next time Ryonir awoke he saw that it was still night outside, the sounds of crickets chirping filling the air as the only light came from the flickering of fire on the other side of his tent and the pale light of the moon above. When he attempted to sit up he found the pain in his chest almost completely gone, the elf letting out a small huh of surprise at how well Flynn’s concoctions worked. As he took a few breaths to steady himself while he sat there he heard the rustling of his tent and saw the silver dragon poke his head in.

“I thought I might have heard you wake up,” Zefrit said as he squeezed himself in as best he could without causing the tent to collapse. “Are you in pain? Should I get Flynn?”

“No, I’m fine,” Ryonir quickly said, stopping the dragon before he could go out and get the other elf. “Last thing I need right now is him doting on me again. Though I have to admit his poultice is rather effective, it’s like I wasn’t even bashed to the ground by an ogre hellbent on crushing my skull.”

“That is good to hear,” Zefrit replied with a smile on his face. “You know, if you’re not able to sleep you can always come over to where I’m sleeping and watch the stars with me, like we used to.”

“That’s a tempting offer,” Ryonir said. “But I think I’ll pass for tonight. Without the pain I’m pretty sure I can get back to sleep on my own.”

The dragon started to nod, then slowly began to crawl further in until he was practically on top of the elf. “Well one thing I know that doesn’t help with sleep is stress,” Zefrit stated, his grin becoming more playful with a hint of something else that he hadn’t seen on the dragon’s face before. “Since we’re both up I’d be more than happy to help with that. After all a dragon is supposed to help their dragon knight in any way that it can.”

Before Ryonir could ask what that meant he suddenly felt his entire body tremble as the tongue of the larger creature pushed out past his lips and licked him square in the middle of his bare chest. It was at this point the elf realized that he wasn’t wearing any clothes at all and as he felt the saliva of the other creature on his chest his already turgid member had started to swell with arousal. This… this wasn’t right, Ryonir thought to himself as Zefrit took his tongue and dragged it up until it practically wrapped around his neck and then started to go back down. Along the way it brushed over his nipples and the elf practically came right there as he felt the hot breath of the dragon start heading down towards his groin.

“Zefrit… I…” the elf tried to say, though his words were becoming hard to form amidst the haze of pleasure coming from every inch of his skin licked by the silver dragon. “I don’t think… we should be doing this… what about Flynn? Or the werewolf?”

“Well if those two want to join in then all they have to do is ask,” Zefrit replied lustfully, darting his tongue out and licking it around the fully erect member between the elf’s legs. “Unless you’re telling me to stop…”

Though Ryonir knew that he shouldn’t be doing this, not only indulging in pleasures of the flesh while on a mission but with a dragon he had sworn an oath with, but somehow his lips were unable to form the lips to do it. The silver dragon was more than happy to continue in his silence as the muzzle of the dragon continued to push forward, the elf’s legs trembling from the tongue still rubbing against them as the scaled snout bumped against his head. Suddenly the elf became concerned when he saw those teeth flesh for a brief second, but the lips of the creature kept him from getting close to them as the tongue swirled around the head of his member. At this point Ryonir wondered where the dragon had learned how to do this so skillfully as he felt his body arching back, allowing the head of the other male to bury itself into his groin.

“Oh gods…” Ryonir said breathily, his words hardly a whisper and hard to hear over the sound of the sucking noises coming from his crotch. “Zefrit… don’t… don’t stop…” The only thing the elf could focus on was the pleasure coming from between his legs, the rest of the world falling away as that surprisingly dexterous tongue curled and coiled around his member. Despite the potential risk Ryonir found himself bucking his hips up and putting his hands against the back of the dragon’s head, though the latter act required him to stretch forward and completely wrap his naked body around Zefrit.

How had he gone so long without pleasure like this, Ryonir thought to himself as he felt his fingers pressing harder against the silver scales of the dragon, his entire body was positively thrumming with pure ecstasy with every suck. In fact it felt like his own cock was growing bigger, Zefrit somehow manipulating it so that his maw was pressing down on the sensitive flesh as his head began to bob up and down. After about a minute the silver dragon was pulling so far back that he caused the elf to fall backwards, and though it caught Ryonir by surprise all he could think about was thrusting his hips upwards to match the dragon sliding up and down… his… cock…

The member that Zefrit had stuffed into his maw was definitely not the elven dick that he remembered, though he had been big it was definitely not the foot-long member that Zefrit was engulfing entirely in his mouth. The shock of the sight burned away the haze of lust and he saw that his hands that had been holding the dragon’s head initially looked like they had been burned, Ryonir’s breath catching in his throat as he could feel claws pushing out of his fingers as he realized they were scales. As he tried to pull away from the amorous sucking of his dragon he gasped when he saw his toes stretching and curling, growing bigger as his panicked cry turned into a grow as jagged fangs began pushing out of his elongating maw…

Ryonir took such a sharp intake of air he thought he had broken his ribs again as he thrashed about in his bedroll before sitting up. Almost immediately he regretted his actions as he felt a dull throb in his chest, his hand going up to it as though to tell it to stop. When he saw his hand as he looked down he realized it, as well as the rest of his body, was still completely elven in nature. Even though he was pleased to find that it was just a dream he was still concerned not only of how vivid it was but the content that it contained.

The first thing was how much further he had gone with the dream Zefrit. This was much more than a simple naked kiss by the lakeside, this was a sexual act that he was clearly enjoying as he felt his cock throb underneath his blanket. If that wasn’t strange enough then there was him starting to turn into a dragon in the middle of it, something that he had no context nor heard any rumor of. Was this merely Xarlix messing with him, trying to get him to call off the hunt before he could come and complete his mission, or was there some sort of magic in play as well?

His thoughts drifted to the dragon tooth necklace he had on and took it off to examine it, weight the piece of jewelry in his palm. He had been wearing it this entire time, even having a dent in the middle of his chest where the ogre’s club and imprinted it into him. Though he didn’t detect any magic it didn’t mean it wasn’t there… though if this talisman really would transform him into a dragon, even if just in his dreams, it was certainly a rare charm to behold. At first he thought about putting it in his pocket, but after a second knew that was an easy way to lose something he put it back on instead and gently placed it against his still badly bruised chest before getting up and leaving the tent.

When he got out he found that it was already past noon and even with the campsite still in a destroyed state the bodies that had been scattered about were no longer lying there. In one corner was a burn pit where Flynn no doubt used more than a bit of his fire magic to make sure the goblins could do no more damage to the land while the werewolf bodies had vanished completely. When he started to walk forward he heard a small clattering noise and looked down to see a bowl of food waiting for him, and judging by its temperature it hadn’t been there long. He quickly scarfed it down before looking around for his companions, quickly noticing that the gurney they had brought the werewolf in was empty as well.

It took about an hour before the elf found the others, all of them standing on a hill where a number of fresh graves had been placed. In the middle of them was the werewolf that knelt down and had his hand placed against the biggest one in the center of it all. Though he couldn’t understand what the creature was saying it was most likely a prayer for their alpha, watching as the fur reverted from his body to reveal the human underneath it as he chanted. By the time he was finished and stood up the beast was gone, replaced with a tall human with long, dark blue hair that he pulled back into a ponytail.

As the group began to walk back they saw Ryonir standing there, all of them pausing from the sudden appearance of the dragon knight. “From what I’ve been told you were the one that saved my life,” the human said as he went to the elf and knelt down on one knee. “I am forever in your debt, had you not come when you did I would be joining the rest of my pack in the hunting grounds as we speak.”

“I just wish that we had gotten here sooner,” Ryonir lamented as he motioned for the man to get up. “What’s your name?”

“Samiel,” the human replied with a small smile. “Just Samiel.”

“Oh, that means you were born with lycanthropy,” Flynn stated, Ryonir looking over at him. “Typically in most areas if two werewolves birth a child already afflicted they don’t give them a last name, saying that they are a child of the moon and the moon has no last name.”

“You know your lore,” Samiel stated. “That means you must be the one our Archivist was speaking to.”

“And that means you weren’t the one I was,” Flynn said dejectedly. “Sorry, it’s just I was really hoping to talk to them about the dread dragon that we’re supposed to be fighting. I don’t suppose he wrote down his findings in a book or anything like that?”

“Unfortunately no, unlike humans and elves we rely on oral tradition like the great dragons,” Samiel explained. “That being said I might be a bit helpful to your cause, if you’ll come back with me to the camp I can tell you a story that she told me that involved your dragon. While I didn’t memorize the entire thing like she had its still fresh in my memory so I can get you most of the details.”

The others nodded and went back down to the camp, Ryonir attempting to keep the group between him and Zefrit. Though he knew it wasn’t actually the silver dragon he still felt strange being around him after an intense dream such as that, and he also didn’t want to clue him in that there was something wrong. He was still uneasy that anything he says about his visions or dreams would cause them to be perturbed enough to try and convince him to pull back, and there was no way he was doing that now. Plus he reasoned it was likely just due to the stress of the mission they were on as they all took a position around the fire to listen to the story of the werewolf.

What the archivist had told Samiel, as well as the rest of the pack, was the tale of the last time the dread dragon known to them as the black death had come down from the mountains of the Frostward Vale. As usual it had been a time of untold destruction; first went the mining camps that dared to try and pull ore from the stone that it called its home, then it moved on to the farmlands where it scorched the earth to clay with its blue fire. Then it moved on to the towns, which the dragon had never done before as it blasted every structure it could find. Everyone in the kingdom feared this was it, this was when the black death would come and claim every last one of them for the arrogance of living within his radius of destruction.

And then… it stopped, just as suddenly as it started. There was no reason for it, no sign that it was coming, the dragon known as the black death had just disappeared from the middle of its reign of terror. Some say that the goddess who lived in the Frostward Vale had heard their prayers for salvation and kept the great evil at bay with powerful magic, others say that a great and noble warrior had gone up to the mountain where it had made its lair and slew the mighty beast. Some even claimed it was the work of another dragon, a metallic-scaled creature just as powerful as the black death that had finally brought it to heel for good.

When the werewolf finished his story he looked down at the fire that Flynn had got going once more. “I’m afraid that’s all I remember,” he said with a sigh as he leaned back. “It’s more of a legend at this point then a story, if you had come to my pack forty years ago when it first happened you probably could have heard the entire epic tale.”

“Forty years?” Zefrit said as his head perked up, looking over at Ryonir. “That was about when I caught you running naked down the mountain from all those kobolds, wasn’t it?”

“Wait, you told me you were in Gildeon for twenty years,” Flynn interjected.

“Well… it’s true that I was in Gildeon for twenty years,” Ryonir confessed. “But Zefrit and I spent a decade or two near the Frostward Vale trying to find some semblance of who I was or where I came from. When I didn’t find anything I went to Gildeon for help and ended up becoming part of the dragon knights.”

“Well if I remember correctly from the stories the dread dragon did enjoy his company of kobolds,” the werewolf stated. “So if you had done something to their monster like imprison him or kill him then it would make sense that they would chase you all the way down the mountain. Not sure why you would be naked though…”

“Ohhh, maybe you did something that resisted the blue fire!” Zefrit said as he patted his forelimbs up and down. “You could be the hero that they were talking about, or maybe the goddess!”

“Considering that Xarlix is alive I doubt I am either of those things,” Ryonir replied with a sigh. “Still… that talk of the gold dragon at the end there is intriguing, if it’s anything like my vision or memories or whatever it is then I think it’s the best lead we have to destroy the black death once and for all. That means that we need to get to that registry of dragons in the capital as soon as possible, is there any place you would like to drop you off Samiel? Maybe the border town?”

To their surprise the werewolf shook his head, once more getting on one knee and bowing to Ryonir. “I will be following you, protecting you just like you have protected me,” as Samiel looked up he couldn’t help but look around at the burned down tents around him. “Plus with my entire pack dead I… kind of don’t know what to do, in all honesty. I’m so used to following the command of my alpha that it’s a bit scary being alone without him, so at least until I can find another pack to go to I would like to stick with you and your noble quest.”

“I certainly don’t mind,” Ryonir stated. “There are worse traveling companions then a werewolf, long as you promise not to bite us or anything.” The werewolf gave him a small grin and promised even when the moon was full that he wouldn’t bite him. “Great… now I think we’re pretty much done here, if we can pack up we might be able to get back down to the border town by nightfall and only lose a day of our trip.”

As the dragon and two elves walked down towards the town once more they noticed their new companion did some peculiar things. Even when not in his beast form he sniffed the air and growled occasionally, or swiveled his head like dogs do at any noise. He also refused to wear shoes, saying that none of his pack did so they could feel the earth beneath their soles and remain connected to their primal nature. Still he proved more than useful as he used his superior strength to help carry whatever was still useful form the camp down to the town to sell in order to purchase additional supplies for him.

They reached the border town well after the sun had set; Ryonir and Flynn were almost not allowed entrance except Artemis had been there and recognized them from the day before. He vouched for them and even Samiel too as he brought them through the gates and to the barracks for the night, stating that dragon knights are just as welcome to share their food and beds as any other. The three of them were thankful for his hospitality and reported in on the goblin situation while they shared a late night meal together.

“An ogre you say?” Artemis said after they had told him everything. “I shot an ogre with a ballista once, made quite the mess, but I don’t think I would ever tangle with one in hand to hand combat. You were a very lucky soul that day… it’s a pity I can’t say the same for the rest of your pack.”

“They all fought and died valiantly,” Samiel said simply. “Did you know them Sir Artemis?”

“A little,” Artemis replied. “Whenever they would pass by I would hear rumor that the wolves were in town and knew it was your pack. But I also knew that your kind were invaluable of keeping the woods clear of bandits and other threats so you will be dearly missed. Damnable goblins…”

“Well right now we have bigger problems than goblins,” Ryonir said. “Since you have connections with the Arborrna military I was wondering if you could potentially find a way to expedite our travel to your capital? We need to get to the registry of dragons that you have of the Frostward Vale to follow up a potential lead but it’s going to take us almost a week on foot, which we don’t know if we have.”

The knight sat back and stroked his beard, thinking about it for a second before sitting back up. “Let me see who I can possibly get to maybe provide an escort,” he said. “At the very least we might be able to issue a statement to try and make sure that your dragon stays safe, last thing we need is the death of an innocent because they thought they were shooting down this dread dragon Kralix.”

“Karlix,” Ryonir corrected.

“Ah, sorry, must have misheard,” Artemis apologized. “Anyway you should all get some sleep, there isn’t going to be anything done tonight.”

The others agree and once more thanked the knight for his hospitality before heading towards the barracks. There were a few private rooms they usually left open in case there were injured that needed tending too that they were allowed to stay in, enough for all of them to each have their own. Before Flynn took his own bed though he wanted to check in on the other elf, checking on the bruise that was still extremely black in some areas while others had turned a sickly yellow. The archivist chuckled slightly and said that it was actually healing, which was a good thing as he took the poultice and once more rubbed it on his chest.

“Hey Flynn,” Ryonir said as the ointment was being applied. “If I told you something would you promise to keep it a secret between you and me? Especially keeping it from Zefrit.”

Flynn frowned slightly and capped the jar, then sat down on the bed next to Ryonir’s feet. “While I’m not sure it’s good to be keeping secrets from your dragon I certainly can,” he said. “What’s this all about, did you two have a fight or something?”

Ryonir bit his lip and started to tell Flynn about the two dreams he had about Zefrit, starting with the first one at the pond in the woods and then the other with being in the tent and getting the blowjob. At first he was also going to tell him about starting to turn into a dragon himself while receiving it but after a second thought left it out, instead just leaving off the story with waking up in the middle of the sexual act. Though he saw the eyes of the other elf widen several times he didn’t appear to be disgusted or repulsed by the dreams, in fact he almost seemed sympathetic. By the time Ryonir was finished with his story the other elf just had a small smirk on his face and patted him on the shoulder.

“There’s nothing wrong with being a dragon lover,” Flynn said, Ryonir balking slightly as he chuckled. “Hey, I’m not the one having sex dreams about their dragon companion, I just wanted to say that sometimes when an elf loves a dragon very much they-“

“Oh shut it,” Ryonir sad as he tried to push Flynn off the bed, only to grunt and fall back when the pain from his injury flared up.

“Seriously though I’m glad you told me about this,” Flynn replied after he had finished with his laugh. “To be honest I’m actually relieved, when you started talking about dreams I was thinking that you were going to tell me you were having more visions of Xarlix, and that I would have to take more seriously. You fantasizing about your dragon companion is just you being attracted to someone, the fact that Zefrit is a dragon, and a male one at that, just means that you have certain preferences that he fulfills. I’ve known plenty of elves that have had dragon lovers, I think it’s the fact that we have similar lifespans… I can only imagine the heartbreak of falling for a human.”

“Right, I mean, that’s really great to hear, but…” Ryonir said, his words fumbling slightly as the began to feel the effects of the medicine kicking in. “Do I really bring this up with Zefrit? Especially if this is just some sort of manifestation of me being pent up, I don’t want to ruin our friendship because I got riled up.”

“I’m not one to really give advice on the subject but whether or not you have genuine feelings for Zefrit you’re probably going to have to talk to him about it before things get too awkward,” Flynn said as he stood up from the bed. “It’s probably better to rip off the bandage, plus then you know if he feels the same way or if your love will be… unrequited. That will probably put an end to those kinds of dreams, rejection has a funny way of killing the mood.”

“I suppose it does…” Ryonir said blearily, his eyes starting to close as he heard the footsteps of the elf heading towards the door. “Hey Flynn… you ever fall for a dragon?”

There was a long moment of pause, to the point Ryonir wondered if the other elf was even there. “I did… once…” Flynn finally responded. “As you can see by my current status it didn’t end well. Don’t let that stop you though, you deserve to find your own happiness.”

Ryonir wanted to ask more but the light had gone out of the room, Flynn likely having taken the candle so he could see his way to his own room. Tell Zefrit how he felt… the words of the other elf echoed in his mind as he was dragged down into the darkness of sleep. While it was true that telling the silver dragon would get it off his chest, what if he not only rejected the advance, but also his friendship. Or worse, what if he was also enamored with him but the dragon knight found out that he actually wasn’t and this was just lust?

When Ryonir opened his eyes again he found himself in the barracks in his own bed, his eyes slowly looking around for any possible discrepancies that this was a dream. He wasn’t in a cave and it didn’t appear like Zefrit was going to walk in anytime soon, though he continued to sit there and watch the door wearily. It appeared however that he was actually awake though and he got up and put his clothes on. When he inspected his armor he found the dent the ogre had caused in it was completely gone, the metal restored to its normal luster that made the dragon knight happy.

After donning his armor for the first time in a few days he left his room and looked in on Flynn, only to see the Archivist wasn’t there. The same was for the werewolf companion as well, and when he went into the mess hall he found it empty. Looking out the window he saw the glow of dawn and wondered if the two got an early start, hoping they were grabbing supplies so they could leave as soon as he got up. He decided to look for Artemis so he could thank him once again for letting them stay in the guard’s barracks as he crossed over into the armory.

Just as he passed by one of the watch towers connected to the building he heard the loud clanging of metal against stone and found himself backing away as whatever it was came down the stairs at an increasing pace. Ryonir jumped back as one of the knight guards of the border town came crashing down, landing in a crumpled heap with his armor covered in blood. He didn’t have to examine the body to figure out he was dead, especially when he saw the head of the guard hanging completely lopsided. More screams and shouts suddenly came from the top of the tower and the elf jumped over the body and raced up to the top to see what was happening.

Midway there Ryonir stopped when he saw another knight slumped in the stairwell, the human gasping for breath as he turned towards him and revealed his partially bloodied face. “Sir Artemis!” the elf shouted and went up to him, trying to help him stand only to feel the heavy wait of his body slumping back down. “What happened, is it the goblins?”

“It’s… him…” Artemis wheezed, his eyes growing increasingly glassy as they appeared to have trouble focusing. “You were… too late. The dread dragon… rises…”

As Ryonir continued to hold him and tried to get him to say more all he heard was an exhale of breath as the knight’s head slowly drifted to the side along with his eyes. The elf tried shouting his name once more, then slowly put his limp body down and closed the warrior’s eyes with his fingers before standing up once more. Xarlix… just thinking of the name caused his blood to boil as he summoned his weapons and continued his way up the tower stairs. When he got to the top and ran out into the open air he was immediately blasted with a gust of scalding air that caused him to put his hand up to try and block it.

The smell of smoke and ash caused him to cough as he looked out over the town and found most of the buildings on fire, one of the larger houses exploding in blue fire as it was hit with a blast from above. Through the thick haze of the black smoke and dancing light of the fire Ryonir could see a giant shadow moving back and forth, swirling the darkness around him like a current. When it landed the elf could feel the ground shake under him and several of the buildings that were already on fire collapsed, sending up more ash and embers that swirled around the head of the dragon that poked through it all like a curtain.

“This is it!” Ryonir shouted at the creature. “I will end your reign of terror right here, right now!”

The dragon knight had to brace himself as the creature laughed, the booming noise causing the collapse of another building or two before it looked back at him with those gleaming blue eyes. “My terror hasn’t even truly started yet!” he bellowed. “Soon everything will be nothing more than ash and smoke, I will lay waste to this entire kingdom and cause the others to quake in fear at the mere mention of my name!”

“Why?!” Ryonir said, gesturing to the destruction around him. “Why do this at all when other dragons use their abilities for good? You could be one of the great dragons of legend!”

There was a moment of stillness, the only sound coming from the scorching wind blowing around the elf as the dragon’s head lowered through the smoke. “It’s in our nature, elf,” the dragon practically spat. “We are not creatures of creation like our precious metallic counterparts, we are here to provide balance to the world, the destructive force needed to sow chaos and disorder. Plus… it’s just all the more fun to watch an entire village burn at your hands.”

“But… but you stopped once! You could have destroyed more the last time you went on a rampage and you didn’t!”

“Yes, I suppose I could have continued on just like my brethren do,” the dread dragon replied. “But I found out a long time ago that if you do that, then they call someone like you to stop them, where if I stop myself then the ignorant humans forget… and then their greed takes over once more. Why just destroy someplace once when I can get the foolish creatures to continue to give me more entertainment time after time?”

Once more the dragon laughed, this time the noise almost deafening as Ryonir looked at the creature in disgust. “You… really are just a monster…” the elf said as he squeezed his palms, the glimmering blades of his gauntlets unsheathing themselves. “I hope you’ve had your fun, because I’m here to end it.”

“Oh, that is where you’re quite wrong…” The dragon’s lips curled up in a grin as he looked down at him, blowing hot breath out of his nostrils that nearly blew him backwards. “And mark my words that before I am done I will make sure that I take everyone and everything you care about, Ryonir…” hearing the dragon mention his name caused the blood in the elf’s veins to freeze despite the heat, his body frozen as it began to move even closer to him. “Ryonir… Ryonir…”