

Princess Marigold Doylei of the Kingdom of Glimmerstone remembered a time when her kingdom was free. She remembers the last time she was able to play in the sun. She remembers the last time her mother braided flowers into her hair. She remembers the screams of her mother and father as the flames from the dragon's mouth burned them alive.

There once was a time when human warriors and dragons lived peacefully amongst one another. The humans would leave the dragons to their own devices, allowing them to practice their own cultures and beliefs in peace. The dragons gave the humans the same respect, that is until one fateful day 5 years ago. Dragons lived above the kingdoms of Glimmerstone and Frostspire, each being ruled by their respective families.

Marigold remembers when they first attacked. She was peacefully asleep in her room, her window open to allow the crisp autumn air to fill her senses. She was awoken by the sound of screaming and when she looked out her window she could see her home and people being burned. Not everyone survived that day, her parents among them. What did survive was her will to live.

When the dragons and their leader Nyx annexed her kingdom she was devastated by the laws that they put in

place. While most of the laws affected the rich men of her kingdom, it doesn't mean she was left to live her life in peace. She was banished to her family home, where she has spent her days wishing she could do more to save her kingdom.

Nyx's reign over her kingdom was like a disease. It affects different groups more harshly than others. Marigold can help but see the similarities between his reign and an ancient disease that affects humans during a time where it was thought that dragons didn't exist. The dragons corralled her kingdom's men into the cattle barns like animals. The dragons assigned all of them a number the larger the number the more worth they provided to the kingdom.

Ironically the poor men of the kingdom all were given a rating of eight or higher so they were left to live their lives without much change. It's how the dragons treat the rich men of her kingdom that causes her the most pain. The dragons believe that rich people are the poison of the world and therefore they should be treated as such.

Her people were thrown into what her parents named the canyon. Forced to perform heavy labour and then forcibly sterilized using a spell her mother created for women who didn't want or were done having children. This

was more a punishment for the women of her kingdom than the men. As they are now forced to have children with the dragons who now pollute her kingdom. She could see her mother rolling around in the mass grave she shares with the other victims. Her heart aches as she thinks of her fiancé Lord Viden Aldway of the Kingdom of Frostspire. When the dragons attacked he was called to fight them. She would have gone to fight them as well if her father hadn't insisted on her going to the dungeon in order to prevent her family or more accurately her family's monarchy from being wiped out.

Viden died that day along with the rest of her family. All she has left of him is his shield, sword and the imprint he left on her heart, she doesn't know how they ended up at the front of her family's castle but she's learned over the years not to ask questions. Her thoughts are broken when the strangled sounds of her kingdom screaming starts once more. Contrary to what Nyx believes Marigold is not some damsel in distress who will spend the rest of her days mourning her family while her kingdom is burned to the ground.

Her mother was a fighter before she married her father and became queen. She was the head of her kingdom's fighters. For as long as she could remember her mother taught Marigold everything she needed to know when it

came to fighting. Her father on the other hand was skilled in craftsmanship. In fact he was the one who made her wedding dress and her wedding band. He taught her how to make almost everything herself, including her own armour.

She's been waiting for this moment for years. Nyx made one mistake when banishing her in her family home. He gave her time, lots of time and most importantly he gave her lots of time alone. As she laces up her armour and braids her long blonde hair in the same style that her mother used to wear. She can't help but remember what she is doing this for. Yes, she could die today, does she want to die, no but is she okay with dying if it means her kingdom will be free, yes.

As she picks up her shield and sword, running her hand over the handle feeling the imprints of her husband's hand. She breathes deeply taking one last look at her family home and hoping that the next time she sees it, it would be a brighter world.

Marigold knew that her kingdom would look different from the last time she saw it. What she didn't account for was how different it would be. The dragons have destroyed everything good about her kingdom. What was once bright is now dull, what once was happy was now sad. As she

stands above where she knows Nyx hides within her kingdom, she breathes deeply, resisting the urge to cough due to the smoke in the air. She takes her sword and runs the blade across her hand. Dragons can smell blood and she knows for a fact that Nyx has trained himself to smell hers.

The ground shakes and everything around her goes still. She strengthens her gaze as Nyx's dark scaly form comes into view. His eyes bore into her as she pulls out her sword. While he might be at least three times her size he doesn't intimidate her. He speaks to her, threatens to kill her, but she just laughs knowing that he underestimated her.

What most people don't know about dragons is their hearts are the most accessible organ to humans. Luckily for Marigold she's the perfect height to access Nyx's heart. Marigold doesn't hesitate; she takes her sword and slices it through Nyx's heart, freeing not only herself but her kingdom from further heartache. As the dragon falls to the ground she feels a soft feeling against her hair. She smiles knowing the ones she loved were here the whole time.

THE END

