

# Tasting Darkness By Jessicahall

## Chapter 69

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#### Darius POV

My mind was spinning as I held the hellhounds off. One stupid mistake nearly cost her life; I never should have taken her out of the castle grounds without the others. I was most shocked that she could have drained me of my power and portaled out and ran, leaving me, but she stayed to protect me. I knew something was off about her, but never in my wildest dreams did I think she was harmony Fae and elemental on top of that; not for one second did I ever entertain that idea, she shouldn't exist. Aleera would be a lethal weapon if appropriately trained.

Why would she keep it from us? We would have protected her. However, it made so much sense now why her parents tried to kill her.

"Aleera, stay with me, love," I called to her when my magic faltered when I was hit with a blast of air. My eyes scanned my surroundings as my flame wall suddenly encased us, and I barely covered her body with mine in time to stop the flames from burning her before reinforcing them stronger.

Come on Tobias, where are you? I thought just before I felt the shudder of him close; Lycus's presence also felt near as my mark stopped burning, Kalen not here, and I wondered what they did to subdue him to force him to remain home. I knew that man would walk through fire for her. We all would. Whimpers and shouting could be heard all around, yet the shudder against my shield as they bounced off it told me if I dropped it, they would get to her.

"Tobias behind you," Lycus called out before I heard him grunt. Panic made me drop the shield to find him fighting with the man from town, the same man that walked out in front of my car. The vicious snarl as the hellhound lunged at us, ripping me back to my surroundings and the fact I dropped the shield. My body covers Aleera's head to shield her, expecting its teeth claws any second before hearing the fierce sounds of flesh being ripped from bone and mighty furious roar.

Lycus' giant wolf gripped its neck in his powerful jaws, ripping the hellhound back at the last second and slamming it on the ground before he shook his head, ripping out the beast's throat and spraying himself and me in blood. Looking around, I noticed he and Tobias had taken out the others, and the only person left was the man Tobias was fighting. Fool to try to sneak up on him would have been smarter if he ran. Tobias plunged his hand in through the man's chest, his entire body became engulfed in flames. His screams drilled my ears.

"Idiot," I mutter, thinking his puny air magic was any match for a fire user. Tobias rips his hand out, leaving his burning corpse to fall at his feet. The hellhounds put up more of a fight.

Tobias runs over to us. Lycus' big black wolf comes over, sniffing and licking my face. I push his head away, lifting my body from Aleera's unconscious one. He sniffs her, licks her cheek, and nudges her before whimpering when she doesn't wake. Tobias comes over and runs his hand down Lycus's back.

"She will be okay. Let us get her home," Tobias tells him, and Lycus whines while I bundle her up in my arms. Blood trickled from her nose, ears, and eyes from using my magic. The amount she used told me she had never harnessed that much at once. Being an elemental, magic should come easy to her unless she hadn't used it. Tobias walks over to the car on its roof, and Lycus shifts back, going to give him a hand as he pushes it back on its wheels. The car banged and bounced as it was turned back upright.

"She has definitely seen better days," Tobias mutters at my ruined car before he pushes it off to the side of the road. Lycus retrieves the stuff from the boot and our belongings from the vehicle.

"Yep, need another one now," Lycus hums.

"The car is replaceable. Lives aren't," I tell them, and they nod before Lycus flicks his fingers a bit, setting it alight. Tobias opens a portal, and I groan as I stagger toward it with Aleera in my arms. Tobias comes to take her from me, but I pull away, not willing to let her go, and he looks at me questionably.

"She saved my life. She could have run, but she didn't,"

"Goes to show how wrong you were about our girl then," Tobias chuckles.

"We were all wrong; she is an elemental harmony fae," I tell him, and the shock on his face is apparent; Lycus chuckles. "Yeah, right, there is no harmony left, and what would be the chances of finding a harmony that was also an elemental, impossible?" I stare at him, and he looks between Tobias, who nods to him that I was telling the truth.

"What?" Lycus stutters.

"Aleera is an elemental harmony Fae. She took my magic and protected me while I was out. I woke up to her above me holding them off," I tell him.

"Fuck!" Lycus curses, and so does Tobias. This means the war we were fighting to protect had more meaning; now, the stakes were higher. Anyone finds out about her. She would have an entire world of Fae after her. It was bad enough that I was stuck for years going through tests to recreate the elemental status until I said no more. Not like they could force me when I could melt their insides with a click of my fingers. However, Aleera, no amount of fear for what she

could do would stop the council from coming for her.

Stepping through the portal, I find Kalen shackled by Lycus's magic. If looks could kill, we would all be dead for forcing him to remain behind. Tobias flicks his fingers in his direction as we step into our room, releasing him from the hold of his magic. The moment he is released, h

e stands up and punches Tobias.

"How fucking dare you," Kalen snarled at him while Tobias rubbed his jaw before grabbing his throat. Lycus flops on the bed, and I turn my attention back to Tobias, who presses his lips against Kalen's. "I will let that slide, but don't push me, Kalen; it's unsafe for you," Tobias growls at him before tugging him closer and embracing him. Kalen's eyes went to Aleera in my arms as he tried to escape Tobias, who sighed, releasing him so he could rush over to take her from my arms.

He hugs her close, burying his face in her neck and laying her beside Lycus. "You gave her magic?" he asks, and I knew he was assessing her aura when a thought occurred to me.

"You knew she was a harmony-Fae, didn't you?" Kalen growls but nods. "I noticed earlier when one of the phoenix's power shared to her," he says it so matter-of-factly like he hadn't kept it from us.

"You didn't think to say something?"

"Not my place to say; I figured she would tell you when she trusted you," Kalen said, leaning down and kissing her before adjusting her on the bed, so her head was resting on Lycus's shoulder

"She needs magic, Darius. She won't run," Kalen says, looking over at me.

"I know, she could have, but she didn't," I tell him, lifting my shirt to find a piece of the door trim stabbed into my side. Tobias hisses as I groan, ripping the piece of metal out before his hand was covering it as he tried to heal me.

"Save it, I will heal on my own, save it for Aleera," I groaned, sitting down holding my hand to the side to stem the bleeding as I waited for it to heal. We all kind of sat around in silence, everyone shocked at what we learned when Ryze flew in the window and shrieked as he landed on the windowsill.

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## Chapter 70

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"Bloody bird, she is fine," I tell him, and he flies over to perch on the bed head. He leans down, looking at her and licking her cheek, caressing it with his beak

while Lycus remains frozen, only for Ryze to lick his temple. I snicker when he pales.

“Having a taste test for when he plucks those eyes of yours out,” Tobias chuckles before whistling to Ryze, who flies over but instead of going to Tobias, he perched on the arm of my chair, looking down at my bleeding wound before looking at Aleera and back at me.

“She is fine; you bite me, I will smack your damn ass,” I tell him while he eyes me with his creepy beady eyes. He then took off out the window. And we all relaxed; that was only momentarily when he came back but with the big fucker that we thought would kill Aleera. My fingertips fizzled as it squeezed through the window and everyone froze to see what it would do

It hopped down on the ledge walking across the carpet like an oversized fucking chicken, its long tail still outside the window when it stopped beside me. Its eyes roamed over me, and Ryze cawed at it, nudging the other Phoenix, who tilted its head to the side. Such intelligent birds, but they scared the crap out of me.

Its beak opened, its long tongue slivered out split at the end. Going in two different directions. I leaned back, wondering what it wanted, and my eyes darted to Tobias. When its tongue suddenly zapped my hand, the buzz of its magic shot up my arm, making me jump. When it spoke. “Welcome,” it said, and I gasped before my side heated. The Phoenix then turned and jumped back out the window, and Ryze jumped up to perch on the armchair. Nudging my side with his beak. Looking down, I find my wound closed, and my mouth falls open.

“Lira,” Ryze tried to speak before sneezing, he was still too immature to pronounce words. I knew they could talk but had never actually witnessed one speak. Then again, I tried to avoid the bloody things too.

“That big bastard spoke right, and?” Lycus pointed to Ryze, and I nodded.

“Now we know why we suddenly have an infestation of Phoenix’s they sense White Fae, they sense their own magic,” I tell him, looking at Aleera passed out still.

Ryze flies over to her, sitting beside her and resting his head and neck on her hip like he was some kind of lap cat wanting cuddles from its mother. “I need to shower,” I groan, getting up and walking to the bathroom. I showered quickly when the sounds of arguing reached my ears.

“Of all the days they want to argue, it has to be now,” I mutter, wrapping a towel around my waist and shoving the door open.

“No, you’re doing it wrong; it has to go the other way,” Lycus says and I noticed Ryze was gone and they were huddled together arguing over something.

"How does it stick, though? It says it will stick, and where are these wing things,' Tobias says, showing Lycus something on his phone, while Kalen held a pair of Aleera's panties and Lycus was holding up some of the pads.

"What the fuck are you doing?" I ask, walking over to them.

"She was bleeding through her pants, we tried to wake her," Kalen said, and I glanced at her. Fuck, probably from using so much of my magic before she shredded. I peer at what they are watching on the phone, some youtube tutorials. "Ah, we have to peel the back thing off,' Lycus says, turning the pad between his fingers.

"Now what?" he says, and Kalen leans over to peer at the screen. I shake my head, snatching her panties and the pad from Lycus's hand. "Bloody morons," I growled before laying it in the underwear and folding the wing things over the sides.

"Ah, you used them before?" Kalen asks, and I raise an eyebrow at him.

"Common sense, fool," I growl at him.

"Now, how do we put it on her while she is passed out?"

"We could always lay a tarp under her," Lycus says, and Tobias snickers.

"What, we could then we don't have to worry about her freaking out if she wakes up while undressing her," I shake my head before walking over to her removing her jeans. "Get me a cloth," I tell them, quickly cleaning her and placing panties on her. I tucked the blanket around her, and Tobias climbed under the blanket with her tucking her close. Standing up, Kalen and Lycus were staring at me. "What?" Tobias rolls his eyes.

"Darius cared for his mother for years, stopping staring at him like that," Tobias snapped at them.

"Granted, my mother wasn't a keeper, so I never had to deal with her shredding, but the same thing, stop staring at me," I growled. Kalen shakes his head before climbing in bed beside Tobias. 1

"We know that, it's just odd seeing you be caring toward her like you had a brain transplant," Lycus snickers.

"Shut up," I tell him, going to get changed.

"You think it was the council that time," Tobias calls out.

"Who else would it be?" I tell him.

"Her parents," he says.

"We masked her," I retorted.

"Yes, until she used Lycus's magic earlier, it would have been like a beacon for some with those particular gifts," I think over his words. We had been hunting her parents since they tried to kill her; now we knew why they did. Walking out, I stop at the end of the bed.

"We have an entire army; I won't let them touch her," I tell him.

"But if she knows they're alive, what if she goes looking for them?" Tobias says, brushing his hand down her cheek.

"She won't. We are her mates," Kalen whispers.

"But after everything?" Lycus murmurs worriedly. I bite the inside of my lip.

"She wasn't the only one that lost everything, Lycus," I told him. Although, I now feel even worse after she saved me. She saved me despite everything I had forced her to endure.