

Endless

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This is the final in the trilogy, finally finished!

1. Chapter 1

After a six month long break, the blade breakers and team darkness found that it was already time to leave their house and head over to Canada for the next tournament. As Kai packed up his things, he was already thinking about the tournament and whether or not they would be ready. They had done a lot of practice in the six months they had off, but hadn't faced any real opponents for ages.

Amy had joined team darkness and arrived the week after Emma and Dan had made their departure. Donna and Gilraen both liked her because she reminded them of Ashley, their old team mate, who had left them to join a team of old friends. Because the blade breakers had liked Ashley too, they, of course, also liked Amy and welcomed her into the house at once. She was also a good blader. Almost as good as Lauri had been. Kai still found himself thinking about Lauri at times, also he thought about Emma. He had realised, from an early point that getting over Emma for a second time was going to be a lot easier. After thinking he would never get over her departure, he found himself not even thinking about her the very next week!

Amy stuck her head round Kais door. "Kai, we're leaving in half an hour." And with that, she flashed her million-dollar smile and left. Unlike Lauri, Amy felt that she and Kai should just stay friends, even though she had once had feelings for this blue haired blader aswell. Amy liked to have things organised. That's why Donna and Gilraen appreciated her so much. Some would be fooled, but Donna and Gilraen were hopeless at getting things done. Once, Andrea had done all the organising, but they had been a little stuck with Emma and Lauri on the team, as they were almost as hopeless as Gilraen and Donna were. Now they had Amy and she was like a walking organiser! She did everything! The bladebreakers appreciated having her there aswell and she would always be first to the battling dish, ready for anything they had to throw at her. She wouldn't always win, but she always kept her spirits high and never let a defeat get her down. Kai felt that he could learn a lot from her. So could the rest of his team, especially Tyson. He was always getting angry and frustrated when he didn't win. And quite often, that caused him to lose even more, which got him more annoyed. It was a pattern, that Kai felt could be avoided if Tyson would take a leaf out of Amys' book.

Kai finished packing and raced downstairs, with his bag, passing Max, who called "Ill be back down in a minute, Tyson!"

When he reached the bottom of the stairs, he saw that nearly everyone else was already down there. Donna and Gilraen sat at the table, helping themselves to cereal, the last thing to be packed. Tyson was talking to Kenny about the tournament and what they would be doing and Rei was sitting by the TV. Kai walked over to Gilraen and Donna, helping himself to the cereal aswell. "Where's Amy?"

Gilraen, who had already finished her cereal, got up to put her bowl in the sink. "She's coming." After dropping the bowl in the sink, she turned to face Donna. "We should go over everything as soon as she comes down." Donna nodded and put her cereal in the sink as well.

At that moment, Max arrived downstairs, holding his blade. "I don't know what I would've done if I forgot this!" He walked over to Tyson and Kenny. Kenny shut his laptop. "I think maybe we should go over this together. This tournament will be tough..."

"You said it, chief!" Amy had arrived in the room. Smiling at all of them, she took in a long breath through her teeth. Finally exhaling, she said "This tournament will be tough, but fun! It will be interesting to see how far we have got with the team in six months." As Gilraen and Donna had not bothered to try and find another team member, they had decided to stick with three people in the team so that meant each person would have to work harder.

Rei stood up. "Yeah, I like this positive attitude! Good for you, Amy!" She grinned at him and strolled over to the window. It was obvious that Amy was a lot happier about this than anyone else was. But Kai liked this attitude towards the tournament. He felt that his team would blade a lot better if they felt like that. He got up and put his cereal bowl on top of Donna's in the sink. The doorbell then rang. It was time for them to leave.

2. Chapter 2

guess what...I'm back, and continuing this story, after like a year...

Upon arrival at the Canadian tournament, both Team Darkness and the Bladebreakers stopped off at the arena to sign up before heading off to their hotel. Amy was ecstatic with excitement and unbearable nerves. She had never been part of a huge tournament before; this was her first. This was the first time she would stand before the great dish which consisted of a different adventure every time, and claim victory or accept defeat in front of the great roaring crowd and feel that sudden adrenaline rush that Kai and his team had known and loved for so long. She was so new to the experience, and yet, nobody had a doubt in their mind, that she would perform remarkably.

'I'm so hungry, when do we eat?' Such simple words that came from Tyson's mouth, that had been heard far too many times since the Bladebreakers had formed, but it brought a comfort to them, as it showed that things hadn't changed much, or at least, not to the outside world, or to anybody except Kai and Gilraen, who raised their eyebrows at each other and sighed that familiar sigh that indicated that this was going to be a long and tough tournament, but although they were not on vacation, they knew they would have to get on with it, and they would try to enjoy every part of it as much as possible. It was a new beginning, and a long time since they had fought in a tournament. Kai thought longingly back to their last tournament, in Russia, when everything had been so normal. Gilraen and her team were nothing but competitors, they would be forgotten soon, along with all the others whom the Bladebreakers had defeated. But a remarkable chain of events that led to two beloved girls dying, and his own immortality, had turned his whole life around. Gilraen wasn't a competitor anymore. She was a true friend, probably the only one he had ever had. And he knew, and so did she, that they would stay as close friends forever. They had no choice but to.

Donna and Rei no longer saw each other as simply competitors either, far from it; they were lovers. In the last six months since they had got together properly, they had just seemed to become more and more attached, and Gilraen watched them now, completely at peace, with nothing to worry about except this tournament, but they didn't care, because they were together. And she watched them with a slight smile. Donna didn't have the problems which she did, she was not thinking about what would happen when she and Kai would be left in this world, old and alone. But she was so glad that Donna didn't have to face this, she would not wish it on her closest friend. And Donna and Rei were so happy, who would wish it on them?

After signing up, Tyson's complaining was starting to get a bit into all of their heads, so they decided to find a cafe near by before walking to their hotel, which was situated just a few blocks from the arena, just incase Tyson made them late as he normally did. Nothing would mess this tournament up for them, they were prepared.

But as they were approaching the large double glass doors to exit the arena building, they heard a sudden shriek. At this noise, Gilraen looked around casually. She had a new image of being casual and cool, but she had the feeling of familiarity when she heard the noise. Donna didn't notice, she was walking hand in hand with Rei and probably was thinking of nothing else but that.

As Gilraen turned her head, she was caught off-guard and spun around completely, almost

falling over in surprise at her sudden jolt. Running towards her was a tall and slightly older looking girl whom both Donna and Gilraen knew very well. Gilraen at once forgot all sense of calmness and pride and before she could stop herself, yelled out 'Ashley!'

Ashley ran into Gilraen's out-stretched arms. Gilraen was completely bemused by the sight of her old team-mate and close friend, that she could barely speak. She had not thought for a moment that she would be seeing someone who she knew as well as Ashley at this tournament. She found herself jumping up and down and giggling like a little girl at the reunion, and Ashley was doing the same. Gilraen had to catch a breath. 'You're taller!'

'I've got such high heels!' Ashley looked flushed and excited and Gilraen realised that she must look the same. 'Are you here with....?' she didn't finish her sentence, instead she went up on tip-toes and craned her neck to look over Gilraen's head. She caught sight of Donna, who also looked thrilled to see her, and rushed over, this time to Donna's out-stretched arms.

They decided to celebrate this reunion by all heading out to the cafe together. It was here where they met the rest of Ashley's team of old friends, The Samsonite-girls, and where Gilraen and Donna, and all the Bladebreakers who Ashley also knew well, caught her up on all that she had missed, they introduced her to Amy and told her about Lauri and Emma and what had previously happened with Adam's younger brother, Adrian, and how they had defeated him. They purposely left out those tiny details which had caused so much pain when the rest of the group had found them out, so much pain, that nobody wanted to think about it, and everyone had tried their hardest to forget about. They didn't mention Mariah, or what really happened to Andrea, and who had known about it all along and not told anyone. There was no point in making this happy reunion painful and depressing.

At lunch, they had spent hours discussing all that Ashley had needed catching up on, they had been introduced to who they didn't already know, and of course, the upcoming tournament. Ashley's team of girls were pumped and ready to fight it seemed. Gilraen, although happy to see them, was not sure that they were ready for such a tournament yet. Ashley was good, yes, but Gilraen had made a stereotypical decision that these girls weren't going to take this tournament seriously enough, and it would lead to their downfall.

After they had finished catching up, and nobody was hungry anymore, they decided to head to the hotel. All three teams found that they were in the same one, which would have been very exciting, had they not all been very tired. They'd had a long flight, and wanted to sleep now that they had put their names down. They needed rest for the tournament tomorrow.

Gilraen found that getting to sleep wasn't easy. She couldn't get the sinking feeling out of her mind that meeting up with Ashley wouldn't be as fun as she had thought originally. She would have to oppose her in battle at some point, she knew it. But she couldn't let her win, and she couldn't lose fairly. She had to win, but what if that didn't bode well with Ashley? She decided to stop thinking about it and to get some sleep. In the morning, it would look better. The tournament was starting the next day, she would have to rest and get ready, because tomorrow she was going to kick some @\$\$.

Smiling at this thought, she turned over and closed her eyes in sleep.

3. Chapter 3

Kai was awoken by the sudden buzzing of the alarm clock on the bedside table. On this day in particular, it was the last thing which he wanted to be woken from his slumber by. He rolled over and groaned. Today was the day, the first day of the tournament. So many other tournaments he had competed in, but not for such a long time; he didn't feel ready this time. He felt that, even with 6 months, not enough training had been done. Most of their time had been filled up training Team Darkness' new member, Amy. But at that thought, Kai relaxed a little; he can't be feeling as nervous as her. This was her first tournament. Ever. Kai rolled over one more time, sitting up and switching the alarm clock off. He looked over at the rest of his team, who were also rolling and groaning, no doubt thinking the same thing he was. Kenny was sitting in the arm chair, Dizzi on his lap. Kai had no idea what he could possibly be researching into, perhaps he was just worried too, and checking stats on Dizzi was his way of taking his mind off the tournament.

Tyson was first to the board. He had wolfed his breakfast down as fast as a speeding bullet and, taking some of it with him, raced from the hotel to the arena. He had dodged anyone who stepped in his way, rolled over car boots and pushed other young beyblading fans out of the way in order to make it to the front of the crowd. And he was there before anyone else. He was determined all right. The rest of the team waited for him to come back, Max still yawning and stretching. When Tyson had pushed his way back, he told them of the disappointing news.

'We aren't playing today.' he said in a huff. In a stop, he started to walk away from the crowd, stuffing the remainder of his breakfast into his mouth. Kenny ran to catch up with him, Rei close on his heels.

'Tyson! It doesn't matter! When are we playing?'

'Not today chief, I was so psyched aswell! We don't play until tomorrow.'

'Well don't worry about it, Tyson. I will check the Blades and improve them, and we can get some more training in before tomorrow.' said Kenny, with comfort.

'Donna!' No doubt, Rei had spotted Team Darkness, casually walking through the double doors came Gilraen. Donna looked forlorn as usual behind her, but cheered up as soon as she saw Rei, waving at him. Amy appeared after Donna. She looked excited, but more importantly, she looked ready. Sure, she looked a bit nervous, but that didn't look like it was going to stop her. Even Kai noticed how excited she looked.

'Oh hey you guys,' Tyson casually indicated towards the crowd forming around the large board which stated who was battling whom and when. 'You guys are first. Hope you're ready.'

'Don't worry about him,' Max quickly cut in 'he's a bit down because we're not playing until tomorrow.'

Gilraen took a deep breath and looked at Tyson. 'Well ok. We didn't expect to be so soon, but we shall to our best. Thanks, Tyson.' She looked round at her team. Donna nodded, but Amy didn't look so sure. That slight nervous look she had when she walked in had evolved into utter terror. She stood there, rooted to the spot, wide eyed with her mouth slightly open. All of a sudden, she didn't look so ready. Gilraen clapped her back in a friendly way. 'Hey, don't worry. We'll be great.'

'Hello everybody and welcome to the Canadian Tournament!' the roar of the crowd was

phenominal as the announcer stepped up, and the spot light turned towards him. The tournament had begun. As if now, everyone, every team was a competitor, to every other team. And it was, as if now, survival of the fittest. And Amy and her new team, we're first to face the beginning of the long test.

As their team was announced, Amy stood up suddenly, too suddenly, and began to feel woozy. At first, she didn't even recognise their team name, it had never really been referred to before. She began to follow Donna and Gilraen, her breathing was heavy and her heart was beating faster and faster as she was walking closer and closer to the light, and the sounds of the hysterical audience. At last, they were out.

They decided earlier that Donna would be first to battle, and Amy would step up second. Gilraen would be the last to beyblade, because if it was a tie, she didn't want the pressure to be on Amy. She just hoped that Donna would win the first match.

'And their contestants shall be...please welcome, audience, the Samsonite-girls!'

'What!' It was Gilraen that spoke. She knew she would have to face Ashelys team at some point, but why now? Why did it have to be the first match that they played. She looked over and saw Ashley and her team of about four girls run out of the darkness, waving and laughing. She glanced over at Ashley, who waved at her with a wide spread grin over her pretty face. Gilraen smiled back, but then frowned in concentration when Ashley had looked away. Now was the time to really try, more than ever, to win this game fairly. She suddenly had the over-whelming desire to prove to Ashley, that leaving their team was the biggest mistake she had ever made, and that equally, they could do fine without her.

Donna was first up against the tallest girl on their team. She was a giant, but gangly, she didn't look strong. Donna was a strong girl, even though she looked so young that, several times she had been asked if she was Rei's sister, or even daughter!

The match was over in about ten minutes, Donna's powerful bitbeast, Danta had crushed the opposing girl's bitbeast, but it hadn't been too easy. The girl herself may have looked weak, but her bitbeast was powerful. However, Donna proved that Danta was the more powerful of the two, and she walked back to the bench where Amy and Gilraen sat, smiling to the mass of applause from the ecstatic audience, and Rei, who was standing up cheering her on all the way. Gilraen smiled to herself 'Well done, Donna'.

Amy was next. Standing up, with a sudden burst of confidence, she strode towards the battling dish. However, her heart sank when she saw her opponent. Gilraen too looked rather surprised. Strolling up to the other side of the dish, was Ashley.

It was an intense battle right from the words 'let it rip'. Ashley called out her bitbeast immediately, and Gilraen saw that strong and familiar bitbeast, Dogtra rise from the beyblade. Gilraen remembered all the hours of training that the four of them, her, Donna, Ashley and Andrea had endured, in order to make their bitbeasts as powerful as they had been. Gilraen sighed, and dugged deep into her pocket. She pulled out from deep inside her jacket pocket, the deep red beyblade that she knew so well. She stared hard at the Dratzy bit-chip and sighed to herself. She missed Andrea. They had been friends since childhood, and nobody had understood Gilraen, or cared about her more. She glanced sideways at Donna, cheering Amy on. She knew Donna missed Andrea too, and she was so glad that Donna was still with her. They were closer now than they had ever been. Gilraen looked across at Ashley. A girl she had known so well, was now an opposition to her. One dead, one opposition, one still here with her to the end. How times had changed. She sighed again, and gently stuffed the old and un-used beyblade back into her jacket pocket, and focused on the match.

Amy was doing very well, and the match was taking a long time. All the bladebreakers were on their feet in the stands, and the rest of Ashley's teammates were also standing, cheering Ashley

on and waving excitedly to the crowd. Ashley didn't seem as confident as she had before, she wasn't smiling now. Her blade was slowing down and her bitbeast was getting weaker. Amy's quick speed and agility skills were starting to shine through. Gilraen snapped out of her daydream. 'Come on, Amy!'

'Come on, Darla!' Amy's bitbeast rose high and dove for Dogtra, her beyblade following closely. The bitbeast's hit wasn't very effective, but the beyblade was. It threw Ashley's blade right out of the dish and it crashed to the ground, and stood still.

For a second, everything was silent. For that short moment in time, nobody made a sound. Amy and Ashley stood there, dumbfounded. Neither of them could believe what had just happened. Gilraen launched herself from the bench and ran to Amy. 'You won! We won!' Amy spun around and Gilraen threw her arms around her in joy. Ashley had been defeated, and she hadn't had to do it. They had won their first battle, and no pressure was on her to score the winning match. It was such a great moment.

Gilraen turned to look over her shoulder. Ashley was backing away awkwardly, looking nothing short of humiliated and furious. She scooped up her beyblade and caught Gilraen's eye. Her face twisted into a smile, and Gilraen beamed back at her. Everything was going right.

Gilraen too won her battle against the last competitor from Ashley's team, and they had won all their battles. It was a tremendous victory. Gilraen, Donna and Amy all left the stadium, arms linked and laughing together. Each one of them had defeated their opponent and for that short time, the competition was over. They had time to celebrate. Amy had proved herself, and Gilraen had as well; she had proved that Ashley leaving their team had been a mistake, for her. But now was too late. If they were defeated again, they were out of the tournament.

They met the bladebreakers outside, near the hotel. Donna rushed into Rei's arms, shrieking 'We won it Rei, we won!'

'You did so well!' Rei took the small girl and kissed her forehead. 'Come on guys, let's get something to eat.'

'You said it, Rei, I'm starving!' Tyson laughed, as the team made their way to the nearest cafe, still revelling in the thrill of victory all the way.

'Hey, Kai! We won!' Kai turned to see Gilraen smiling up at him. He smiled back at her excitement.

'Yes you did. Well done, I'm proud of you guys.'

4. Chapter 4

'Hey, Donna'

Donna looked around at the calm voice addressing her. The girl approaching her sat herself down beside her and turned to the man playing the piano beside them. She flipped a coin at him 'Play something soulful for me, yeah?'

'Hey Ashley. How you doing?'

'I've been better Donna, to be honest. Well done in the match today. You really showed us.' She gulped out the last sentence as if it was almost too painful to say. Almost.

'Well, luck mainly. You guys did well, another move and...tall girl could have had me.'

'You're being nice Donna. Thanks.' Ashley took in a deep breath and looked her in the eye 'It means something to me.' She then paused 'I've missed you. And Gilraen. The whole team, i've missed it. I miss Andrea, and i miss what we used to get up to, the adventures we had, winning the Russian tournament. I miss the way we used to be.'

'Yeah. So do i. Those were the days, the four of us. You, me, Andrea and Gilraen. We were a team. But then Andrea-' Donna swallowed, and moved her hand slightly along the table to indicate what she couldn't bring herself to say out loud. She suddenly got the feeling that they were being watched, and they probably were. They were talking less discretely than was wise, and both of these girls were quite well-known around the other people in the hotel restaurant, as the winners of the last tournament. If people heard them talking, anything could get out. Things that Donna didn't want people to know. She nudged Ashley lightly and leaned towards her, talking through the side of her mouth 'Let's get out of here'

The two of them headed to the park at the end of the street. It was late in the evening, and freezing cold outside, but Ashley had agreed that they needed to get some air and get out of that stuffed and crowded hotel restaurant.

'What were you doing down there by yourself anyway?'

'I don't know, I wasn't tired. Gilraen told me to get to sleep early, but i said i wanted to get some air first. She and Amy went up to their room, i went to have a drink' then a thought struck her, 'what were you doing there?'

'Oh me? I came looking for you. Or Gilraen. Whoever i found first. I wanted to talk to one of you, one on one, without the rest of the teams or the bladebreakers. Just to catch up, see what was going on. I'm glad I found you.'

'Well, ok then. Let's see...'' Donna looked thoughtfully up at the sky, and then smiled 'Amy is our newest team member. Before her we had two others, Emma and Lauri. But Emma and Lauri didn't get along, and I got along with neither one of them, and they both ended up leaving for complicated reasons. Lauri and Amy were best friends, she recommended her.'

'Ah, yes I saw your new member.' Poor Ashie, Donna thought, she knew that Ashley didn't want to admit that she had not only seen Amy, but been in a ferocious battle against her, and lost. She must feel like a bit of a fool, but more importantly, she must be angry with herself, and with Amy, and with Gilraen. But mostly herself, though she would take it out on others, it was human nature.

Just then, Ashley voiced what Donna had been thinking. 'Hey Donna, do you think that Gilraen is trying to prove something?'

Donna started to say something in response, but Ashley cut across her 'I mean, I saw the way she challenged me before i stepped up to face...Amy' Ashley frowned at her name, as if it was

so insignificant, she had almost forgotten it. 'She challenged me with her eyes, i know Gilraen's challenging stare. And when Amy won the match, she just, she went mad. It was as if she was...' Ashley paused and looked quickly sideways at Donna, and then back again, as if not sure whether or not she was offending her. She decided to risk it 'as if she was rubbing it in.'

Donna took this observation into consideration. She was tired, and thinking slowly. She had gone downstairs in order to clear her head for a while. They had been training with the bladebreakers all afternoon, and she had been shattered by the time they had got back. She didn't expect to have to deal with this, nor did she really want to.

'Ashie, whatever you think Gilraen did, I'm sure she didn't mean to. I mean, she's always been competitive. And maybe, she was just really thrilled that Amy won her first match. It could have been against anyone...'

'Yes...but it was me...'

Donna didn't know what to say now. Ashley was playing games with her, but Donna didn't know how to play along. She had no idea what Ashley wanted her to say, and she couldn't be bothered to figure it out.

'Maybe we should get back to our hotels, and get some rest'

'I'm not tired. Let's stay a bit longer...'

Donna signed deeply and looked up into the sky. She waited for Ashley to speak again, she didn't want to figure out the riddles of what she was saying, nor why she was being so difficult. Luckily for her, Ashley did speak again.

'You know what Donna. I'm getting a bit annoyed with the way Gilraen looked at me during the match, the way she rubbed it in that I had lost, and looked more excited than i had ever seen her before, just because of that one match. I think that she is more interested in publicly humiliating me, than winning the tournament.'

'That's insane' said Donna, before she could stop herself.

'Well look Donna. Our team may not be as good as you, heaven knows we haven't had the practice! But I for one, am here to try my hardest to win this thing, whether or not we actually do win. I have no interest in proving myself better than my old team, and certainly no interest in petty competition with Gilraen. All I care about is beyblading. And that is what I will do.'

She'd had enough. She got up and, wrapping her arms around herself, started to walk away. She turned to say over her shoulder 'Goodnight Donna, good luck.'

Donna blinked and looked down at the ground while Ashley turned and walked away towards her hotel, where her team of giggly girls were probably waiting for her. Where, as soon as she joined them, she would turn giggly aswell, turn the way she used to be all the time.

'Thanks, Ashie' Donna said it so quietly, Ashley would never have heard her. Nobody could have except her, all alone in the middle of a public park at midnight.

Ashley had changed. A lot. This made Donna feel upset, and she didn't really know why. She couldn't feel so bad about an old friend changing could she? Ashley may be changed, but she was still here at least. Donna had been so happy to see her, and now she was wishing she had never seen her again. She didn't like the thought of the new Ashley. She was once a giggly girl like the rest of her team, the friendly one, the only one who the bladebreakers had really liked when they first met their team. Now she was a bitter girl, under a cool surface, who put on a happy face for the public, and felt that one of her old and closest friends was turning against her. She had changed alright. But that made Donna think, had she changed that much herself? She had definately started smiling more, and become more confident since she had started going out with Rei. Ah, Rei, the thought of him made Donna smile. He would be asleep by now, probably nervous about his battle tomorrow, but he was going to do great, she just knew it. And she would be there to support him, like he supported her today. She felt she must be the luckiest girl in the world to have him, especially at a time like this. The thought cheered her up

emmensely, as she raised up from the bench and, shivering, began to make her way back to her hotel, where Gilraen and Amy would probably also be sleeping, with no idea of where Donna had just been, who she had spoken to, and what that person had said to her.

5. Chapter 5

'Where were you last night?' Gilraen froze on the stairs in mid-step, frowning down at Donna with suspicion. The smaller girl turned around casually 'I went for a walk that's all. I was in the hotel but felt i needed some air.'

Gilraen didn't look like she totally believed her, and she gave Donna a look that made her shiver a little, raising her eyebrow, but then she nodded. There was no point in arguing with her, whether or not Gilraen really believed what she was saying.

When the two girls reached the bottom of the stairs, they went into the guests lounge to meet Amy. 'Took you guys long enough...' she smiled, standing up.

'I'm sorry, sorry,' Gilraen brushed the comment aside 'Come on, let's just go. I want to get good seats to watch the bladebreakers match.'

When they approached the stadium, both Gilraen and Donna looked around for the bladebreakers, hoping to see them before their match, to wish them luck and to talk to them. Donna wanted to tell Rei what had happened with Ashley, it seemed he was the obvious person to tell. She didn't want to tell Gilraen, and she knew Rei would keep her secret.

Unfortunately, the bladebreakers were nowhere to be seen and they figured that they must have arrived early to get ready, or even to get some last-minute training in. But none of the girls in Team Darkness doubted that they would really do well in this tournament. After all, they were the bladebreakers! They were famous! And more importantly, they were good. Gilraen smiled at the thought of them having to face the Bladebreakers again in battle, and she recalled the last time they had faced them, just over a year ago, when they had defeated them in all three rounds. But remembering that battle, she had to frown. Donna had been brainwashed for that battle. She had been just a tool in Adams plot to kill Kai. Gilraen shuddered at those awful memories of that tournament in Balcov Abbey in Russia. She was so grateful that she had escaped that alive, and the memories made her shiver, the memories of what good friends she and Adam, that tyrant, had been, when they were young.

She forced herself to snap out of her daydream when she realised that they were in the queue for places. She hurriedly fumbled in her pocket for the pass she had recieved when she signed up for the tournament, which guaranteed her seats in the VIP spot in the arena. Her hand brushed over Andreas beyblade, and an over-whelming sadness swept over her. It was only for a moment, but enough to last a life time.

She eventually found her pass, and when they had their tickets, they made their way over to their seats. Donna noticed that there was something wrong, 'Gilraen, are you ok?'

Gilraen shook her head and looked down at Donna 'Yeah, sure. I'm fine,' she then pointed over Donna's shoulder 'I think our seats are over there, let's go sit down.'

Donna knew that this conversation wasn't over, but for now, she would stop asking Gilraen what was wrong. After all, if she didn't have to tell Gilraen everything, Gilraen certainly didn't have to tell her. But she had a feeling that Gilraen had been thinking about Andrea, and she could relate to that. She had been thinking a lot about her aswell recently, but she wished that Gilraen and she could talk about this, she wished that Amy wasn't there, so that they could really have a proper conversation. She felt so much closer to Gilraen now than she used to. And she knew that Gilraen wouldn't want to replace Andrea, but Donna definately felt that she had found a new best friend, a true friend.

As if Amy had read her mind, she stood up and announced 'I'm going to the bathroom, be back

in a minute.' Donna and Gilraen nodded and she left them alone.

Donna might have started some sort of conversation, but she couldn't think of what to say, and even if she did know, she had no time. Suddenly, the light went out, the spot lights were on and the announcer was stepping out onto the platform, to masses of applause from the audience. The tournament was beginning.

Kai heard the sudden burst of enthusiasm from the audience, he saw the lights dimming at the end of the dark corridor, and he suddenly got a strange and familiar feeling about him. He knew that the tournament had started, and soon, his team would be out there, kicking the asses of the opposition, the way they always did. He smiled lightly. Any minute now. But he hated this anticipation of waiting for the announcer to shout their team name, where they would get to walk on to the masses of applause, and yet, he loved it all the same. He couldn't think of a single place he would rather be, than here in yet another tournament, another tournament that they would win, another title that would be theirs. He could not deny it, his team were the best he had ever seen, and he was proud of them. Max developed his skills and seemed to be improving every day, Rei still managed to keep his game up, even with a girlfriend. And Tyson, well there was no judging Tyson, he had always been the best on the team, and he still was, and even Kai knew that. He knew that he'd be a fool to admit it though.

At last the name was announced, and he followed the rest of his team, and Kenny, out into the light from the dark tunnel they had been standing in for the past twenty minutes, to be welcomed by the sudden mass of applause and screaming. He looked around and saw fans, real fans, people who loved them and their sport, and banners that people had made, cheering them on. And when he listened he could hear the audience, he could hear them cheering him on, cheering his team, even some shouting his name if he listened closely. Yeah, he smiled up at them all, he was home again. He caught sight of Donna and Gilraen in the audience. Donna nudged Gilraen and she looked over at him, and both girls waved. Kai lifted his hand at them in response and nodded his head. He then joined his teammates on the bench, sitting beside Kenny, while Max prepared to go first.

Their matches were all easier than expected. The bladebreakers already knew that they would be facing a team who had never been in a tournament before, but they didn't expect them to be as easy to defeat as they were. Each of them, Max, Rei and Tyson all won their battles, easily. But instead of being pleased with their victory, Tyson was annoyed. He complained that he hadn't been challenged enough, that the other team had been so easy to defeat it had not even been funny. But Kai felt that perhaps somebody was getting a little used to being a World champion. They were not the amateurs that they had once been, they had improved tremendously. Each of their beyblades was so powerful now that he felt there were very few people who could defeat them, and they weren't going to have a very big challenge until they got quite far into this tournament.

The bladebreakers left the arena after their battle, and Donna and Gilraen had decided to leave as well, and meet them outside to congratulate them. While they walked through the small crowd of people who were also leaving because they didn't want to see the rest of the matches, Donna sought a small opportunity.

'Hey Gilraen, have you been thinking about...old times recently?' she chose her words carefully, and she knew she had said the right thing. Without looking at her, Gilraen replied.

'Yeah you know what Donna, I have. I miss the old times. I miss Andrea, and Ashley.' she took in a breath 'Have you been thinking about it as well?'

'Yeah, quite a lot actually. I think we're all feeling it.'

Gilraen looked confused, and Donna could have kicked herself. Now Gilraen would know for sure that she had been talking to Ashley, she had given it away. Luckily for her, she sought a distraction to prevent Gilraen from questioning her.

'Rei!'

The long-haired blader spun around, 'Hey, Donna!' and approached him and wrapped her arms around him, feeling happy again, 'You did so well!'

'Thanks, it made me feel really good to know that you were up there, cheering us on.'

'Yeah, always! Like you did for us yesterday.' She smiled up at him and he smiled back. Then he looked around and said casually, 'Where's Amy?'

Such a simple thing to say, he was probably expecting them to say that Amy had quickly run off to the bathroom, that she would be back in a minute. But such a fuss it created instead. Gilraen looked at Donna, wide eyed and Donna returned the look.

'Was she with us when we came out?'

'Was she even with us when the match was on?'

'I didn't see her,' Kai had suddenly appeared behind them both 'When you waved from the audience, she wasn't there.'

Donna suddenly remembered 'She said she was going to the bathroom!'

'When?' Gilraen looked astonished at herself for not remembering, or even noticing that their teammate and friend was gone.

'Before the match started...'. Donna looked up at Gilraen with fear and suspicion in her eyes, and Gilraen mimiced this look at Kai. Kai took in a breath 'Okay, let's not exaggerate here. Perhaps she went back to the hotel, maybe she felt unwell...' but that sort of sixth sense that Kai got at times like these was telling him that he was lying, and he was quite sure that Amy would be anywhere but at the hotel. He really hoped that, just for once, his senses were wrong.

6. Chapter 6

When they reached the hotel however, Amy wasn't there. The two girls ran to their room, up two steps at a time, and burst through the doors, to find it deserted, and the way they had found it when they left it that morning. Without even stepping further into the room, the two girls slammed the door shut and ran for the stairs. Waiting for the elevator would take far too long, and they needed to tell the bladebreakers so that they could work on finding her as soon as possible. They were starting to get seriously worried.

They practically fell down the last 7 steps, and raced into the lounge, where none of the bladebreakers were actually doing anything relevantly like lounging, they were all stood up and staring at the doors when Donna and Gilraen burst in. Gilraen caught her breath and shrugged 'That's it. She's gone.'

Kai exhaled 'We have to find her...' he started towards the door, but Gilraen held her arm out. Then he heard Tyson speak 'Hang on, Kai, where are we supposed to go?'

Kai stopped and sighed. He really didn't know where he was going. He never did, but his instinct always led him the right way eventually. But this time, he had no idea where he was going, or how to find Amy.

'I'm going to report her missing...' Donna made for the phone.

'No, don't! We don't need help, we can do this ourselves.'

'Are you mad?' Donna looked as if she couldn't believe what she was hearing the blue-haired blader boy say, she brushed some of her hair from her face, put down the phone and gave him a challenging look, 'What are we going to do?'

Kai shifted his eyes around the room, then he looked down at Gilraen, 'Are you sure she wasn't in the room?'

'No, we stood in the doorway and shouted her name, we heard nothing.'

'What? But what if she went somewhere and left a note? What if-' he bit his bottom lip and took a deep breath, as though trying to decide whether or not to say what was on his mind, 'what if she's been killed? Or hurt? She wouldn't have called back to you then, would she?'

Gilraen looked ashamed 'You're right.. I should go and check..'

'No Gilraen, I'll go.' Donna had already started to walk towards the door at the end of Kai's speech. She was practically gone, there was no way Gilraen could change her mind.

'I should have gone...' Gilraen looked after her, as if contemplating whether or not to run after her. 'I'm used to seeing...' she looked around at the bladebreakers, who all knew what she was about to say, but she decided against it anyway, '..blood, and stuff. Donna may be scarred for life if she sees something horrible in our hotel room.'

'Gilraen, have faith in the girl...' Kai started, but Rei looked uneasy aswell.

'Perhaps i should go after her,' he nodded as if he had already made up his mind, and started to head towards the door. But as he reached the stairs, he saw Donna over his shoulder, running down a couple of flights above him. He waited for her.

'Donna. Are you okay?'

'Yeah yeah, don't worry. There was nothing there...'

They both headed down the stairs together, watching the small crowd of anxious and expectant faces awaiting them. Rei shook his head 'Nothing, guys.'

Without knowing what else to do, they had split up to search around the local area, with very little hope that they may actually find her, and when they all failed they met up again. They

figured that they might as well go back to the hotel for dinner, seeing as it was late, they were all hungry, and they could talk about Amy while they were there without getting strange stares from people on the street. Those guests in the hotel were quite used to seeing the bladebreakers and team darkness by now.

When they sat at the table and ordered their food, they started to get right on the case.

'When did you last see her?' asked Max.

Gilraen looked bemused 'I can't remember!' she frowned at her own incompetence, 'How can I not remember? Am I that ignorant?'

'She said that she was going to the bathroom...when was this?...a minute before the match started...or was it after it started?...no, no, before...just before...yeah..!' Donna seemed to be talking more to herself than the others, but they were all listening intently to her. She finally looked up and nodded.

'The bathroom...and then she just, never came back?' asked Tyson, incredulously, 'How is that possible?' He flipped his head up to look at Donna and Gilraen 'And neither of you noticed?!

'Tyson, please. I couldn't possibly feel any worse!' Gilraen frowned again, she really did look guilty. She couldn't believe her stupidity, and how un-observant she had been, at such a critical time. She desperately wished that she had gone to the bathroom with her, and Donna as well. She wished that they had been like normal girls and just all gone together.

After their meals were finished, they were still trying to get to the bottom of what had happened. Kai went up to pay the bill and Gilraen went to the bathroom. Donna offered to go with her, but Gilraen assured her that she would be fine. As soon as they were out of sight and ear-shot, Donna leaned in towards the remainder of the bladebreakers.

'Listen,' she started, fumbling in her pocket for something, 'I did find something in our hotel room when I went up there, I found this.' She retrieved from her pocket a small piece of paper and opened it out. She discreetly passed it to Tyson under the table and the other three boys leaned in closer to read what it said. Donna kept talking, 'I didn't want to show Kai and Gilraen because I have a feeling that she may want them too. I think we should go alone. Tomorrow.'

The boys finished reading and looked up at her. Rei started to speak 'Donna, do you think this is wise? What if we get killed?'

'No, you read the note, she doesn't want us dead. But I have a feeling that she will want Kai and Gilraen dead. She captured Amy to get to them, i just know it. And she thought it would be Gilraen who would find this, and keep it secret from us, not the other way around.'

Tyson looked pretty convinced, 'Alright then. Tomorrow we have no matches anyway. We'll go and check it out, alone.'

'Yes, but you can't tell Kai or Gilraen! Any of you!' She looked around at all of them. When they all nodded, she sat back and stuffed the paper back in her pocket. 'I'll send for you tomorrow. We'll have to keep Kai and Gilraen busy though.'

'You all know how much Kai likes to wander off. Tomorrow, when there are no matches, and a mystery to solve about a missing team member, would be the perfect time for him to wander off without telling us where he's going. He can take Gilraen with him.' As he finished this sentence, he looked up over Donna's head and Donna knew that one of them was coming back. She smiled and nodded slightly, and then Gilraen sat back down in the seat next to Donna's and the conversation was over.

That night, Gilraen and Donna tried to settle themselves down for sleep. While brushing through her hair, Gilraen sighed. 'I'll never get to sleep at a time like this.'

'Hey,' said Donna, trying to think of words of comfort, 'You've slept in worse situations.'

'Barely,' said Gilraen, putting the hair brush on the dressing table and climbing into her bed.

'Goodnight, Donna. Tomorrow we'll sort this out.'

'Yeah,' Donna sighed, fumbling with the piece of paper in her hand. 'Goodnight, Gilraen.'

Donna looked at herself hard in the mirror. She had been right, she looked straight into the eyes, of a changed girl. A few years ago, finding out something so crucial and not letting her best friend and team captain know what was going on would have been like asking her to jump off the roof of the bey-stadium. She had changed, her loyaltys had changed, but more importantly, her compassion had changed. She cared more about Gilraen's safety now more than she ever had. She cared about her enough to want to treck out, without her, for fear that she might be wanted by the person who kidnapped Amy. She had never done anything like this without Gilraen, and she was scared. But she was going to do it, with Rei, Tyson, Max and Kenny. They were in it together now.

She sighed and yawned. She had to admit that even in this situation, she was dead tired. She dropped the paper on her bedside table and fell into her own bed, switching the light off and starting to fall asleep. Beside her, the little note stood, written on behalf of Amy.

I know, why trust me right? You've never met me, you're just reading about me from a simple note i have left for you to find. But I have something you might want. Your teammate, Amy. She's with me, and she's safe. For now. Tell nobody about this, and come to meet me in the village tomorrow, 4th avenue off main street. I'll meet you there, be there at eleven in the morning.

You had better be there, and bring Kai with you. I would like to speak with him too.

Angela

7. Chapter 7

And of course, just as Tyson had expected, Kai had awoken early and attempted to sneak out by himself, either to attempt to find Amy, or perhaps just to get away and think, as he often did when in a situation like this one. So, at 6 in the morning, when he could be sure nobody else would yet be awake, he quietly slunk down the stairs and meandered around the corner into the deserted hotel lobby. He was trying to decide why Gilraen, the most observant and assertive person he knew, had let her friend and teammate run off and not even noticed when she didn't return. It certainly wasn't like her, and Kai was wondering what had got into Gilraen recently. He believed it had something to do with the arrival of Ashley, that blonde giggly girl whom Kai had never known well, he had met her very few times while they were in Russia, as he had been ever so busy avoiding death. Ironically, he had ended up avoiding death a whole lot more than he had originally planned. He had a feeling that Ashley showing up at the tournament was causing a lot of trouble between the girls, and the fact that their team had been defeated by Team Darkness made the situation even worse. Kai was frustrated with Ashley, he had never been very taken with her, and now she was doing nothing but ruining the tournament for them. Her team were not even a worthy challenge for either the Blade Breakers or Team Darkness. They were not fit to be at the tournament and they were making everything worse than it already was.

'Kai,' He couldn't tell where the voice had come from and, of course, suspecting danger, he stopped in his tracks and dug his hand in his pocket, letting his fingers curl around his beyblade. He then turned suddenly,

'Who's there?'

'It's me.' Gilraen stepped out from behind the door which blocked off the lobby from the stairs. 'Donna was snoring so I had to leave the room, i couldn't sleep any more. Where are you going?'

'Me?...I don't know. I needed some air and I needed to think, I guess.'

'Do you mind if i join you?' Gilraen turned her head towards the large glass double doors at the front of the hotel. The sun was starting to rise and she could see the thin yellow line forming over the mountains. 'I think I need some air too.'

Kai looked in the same direction as her, and pondered this for a few seconds. Gilraen was someone he could definately trust, so why shouldn't he let her join him? His thoughts were usually by himself, to give him time to think, but with Gilraen with him, he was sure there would be no distraction. Finally he nodded and walked a couple of paces, beckoning her to follow him out.

Snuggled up in her warm bed, upon hearing the slam of the door, the very much awake Donna smiled to herself. It had worked. She sat up in bed and read the note once more. Then she strolled over to the window. She could see that the sun was starting to rise, and she could make out a thin yellow line over the mountains, and everything was starting to look a little clearer. She lifted the glass pane and stuck half her body out, one hand holding up the pane and the other supporting herself on the ledge so she wouldn't fall out. She spotted them when she turned her head to the right, walking in the direction of the park which she and Ashley had that memorable conversation the night before last. She allowed her mind to wonder for a few minutes as she watched the two of them walk together, now barely visiable apart from under street lights. And she wondered, what secret had they shared which made them such friends? What experience

did they have to remember which had made them private soulmates? How did he get so deep into the closed book which was Gilraen? And more importantly, why had she, Donna, found it so difficult?

About two hours later, and Donna had finished collecting her thoughts, had dressed herself and read that note so many times that she could recite it backwards. She sighed quickly and suddenly realised that they might not have much time. They had been told to meet this mysterious 'Angela' at 11, and although it was now only 8.30, it would take a while to get there, main street was running through the centre of downtown and if they were to walk there it would take at least two more hours. Also, she had no idea how long Kai and Gilraen could take. Although together, their thoughts could take them for miles, for hours at a time.

On her way out, Donna picked up her room key and stuffed it in her jean pocket, along with the note Angela had left for Gilraen. Trying to be quiet, so as not to wake the other hotel guests, she snuck out of the door, and headed for the stairs, where Gilraen had made for a couple of hours ago, except Donna was going the other way. She headed up to the next floor, to the room of the Bladebreakers, whom she suspected would still be fast asleep.

They were not asleep. In fact, having been awake for almost an hour, the team were patiently waiting for Donna's arrival so that they could find out where they were to go. Rei was standing by the window, as Donna had been doing earlier. And he too had been trying to collect his thoughts until she arrived. Tyson and Max were sitting on the beds, and Kenny on the armchair, Dizzy on his lap as usual, as though they were simply nervous about the upcoming battles in the tournament, and not wondering about the loss of a teammate from their sister team. All these other teams in the tournament who were probably asleep right now had no idea what nerves really were. Donna knocked at the door.

'Donna, hey, where are we going?' It was Tyson who had eagerly answered the door after waiting, anticipated for her to finally knock on the door.'

'Oh, Tyson. I thought you would be asleep..' she looked around the room as she said this, scanning the environment of the room, and noting that everybody was in fact, ready to go.

Rei closed the window and started to walk towards her, saying 'So, where is this place we have to meet this person?' he gave her a light kiss on the mouth as a 'good morning', and looked over her shoulder at the piece of paper.

'It's an avenue off main street. It's downtown so if we walk there it will take a long time..'

Rei frowned a little as he read the note closely. Then he stood back a little. 'It says we need to meet at 11, we have time.'

'So shall we leave?' Tyson once again, was anxious to go. And who could blame him, they had been waiting for Donna to show up for at least half an hour.

Donna nodded and they were out.

So they headed down the stairs, as Kai and Gilraen had done hours before, and walked down the corridor to the lobby, nobody saying a word. Tyson was at the head of the line, followed by Kenny, then Max, Rei and Donna walking a few paces behind the rest. She was reading the note to herself again, probably with some absurd hope that it will tell her where Amy is, how to find her, that Gilraen would be in no more danger and they could all just live in peace.

'Where are you going?'

Donna nearly dropped the note. Hurdledly scrunching it in her hand, she looked to her right and saw, walking out of a door she was passing by, Ashley. Donna gave her a mysterious and cold look, which was instantly returned. 'This doesn't concern you.'

'Well sue me for being curious.' The blonde haired rival replied in a way as mysterious as her look. 'Where's Gilraen. I haven't seen her today. You aren't having..' she paused, and then spat out the last word in a daring way, '..troubles?'

Donna's look was purely cold now, 'That's not for you to know anymore.' The bladebreakers were far ahead of her now, almost at the lobby, and they were sure to realise that she was missing in a second. 'Good bye.' Donna marched away from her ex-teammate so as to avoid a sarcastic comeback. She caught up with the Bladebreakers quickly and left the blonde narcissist glaring after her, thinking the exact same thing Donna had been thinking about her after the evening talk at the park. Donna sure had changed.

8. Chapter 8

The 4 Bladebreakers and Donna were early. Their journey across town on foot had taken them less time than they expected it would. They used their time wisely and decided to stop for breakfast, seeing as they hadn't eaten anything since dinner the previous evening, where they had been too worried to eat anyway. Plus, this way they were able to discuss what their actual plan was.

'So, we've all been in the situation that might occur before,' Max tried to analyze the situation they might be about to face. Everyone considered it. Could it be similar to their encounter with the strange younger brother of Adam, who had kidnapped Gilraen and attempted to kill her and Kai? This Angela woman had wanted Kai and Gilraen, but she was not going to be happy when everybody else showed up but them. It suddenly occurred to the bladers that this might not be the best idea. Rei was the person who voiced this.

'Guys, what if this person has us killed for not bringing the two people she wanted?'

'She wouldn't' said Donna, almost immediately. She knew what Rei had been thinking because she had been pondering over the same thing. 'She wants Kai and Gilraen. We weren't supposed to even know about the note. It was a gamble she took given the fact that Gilraen doesn't have the room to herself. But if we don't get Kai and Gilraen for her then who will? She won't kill us. The worst she will do is send us away to bring them back for her.'

'I suppose you're right,' Rei turned to his girl 'But have we just been wasting our time then?'

Donna looked back at Rei thoughtfully. After a couple of seconds she said 'No, I don't think so. I think that we need to try, we might as well. Angela would be a fool to kill us, and whatever she wants with Amy, we will try to find out. Kai and Gilraen could be in serious danger.'

Donna sighed. She still felt guilty. She felt guilty that she and Gilraen had let Amy go to the bathroom in a busy stadium by herself, and not even noticed her not re-appear. She felt guilty that this mess could have been avoided. But thinking about it, had Angela not kidnapped Amy at the match, she would have kidnapped her somewhere else. And if not Amy, perhaps Gilraen or even her. But Donna could not stop thinking of poor Amy, she must be so scared. But surely she must know that her team are coming to rescue her, she must hold on and wait for them, because they would be there soon.

'I'm sure Amy's okay.' said Max, as though he had read her mind.

'I hope so,' murmured Tyson. He looked up past his team at the clock on the wall, 'maybe we should go, we have 15 minutes to get there.'

And off they went, searching through an unfamiliar town for a street to meet with the woman who could possibly want their friends dead. 1st avenue, 2nd avenue. They were approaching fast. Donna took another look at the slip of paper. This was it, they were there. 4th Avenue off Main street. The 5 of them stood at the curb for a few seconds.

'...should we go down there?' Kenny finally asked, timidly. Tyson and Donna looked at each other. Donna nodded.

'Yeah,' said Tyson with determination, 'Let's go'

'So this is what you do when you wonder off by yourself' Gilraen assessed. She was sitting beside Kai on a bench in a quiet street. She knew Kai had been thinking of what happened to Amy, and whether it had anything to do with what had previously happened to them in the last year or so. He had been sitting for ages with his eyes shut and though she had kept quiet beside him for hours, lost in her own thoughts, she felt the need to say something after a while,

in case he had fallen asleep.

But he opened his eyes and said simply 'I need space to think.'

Gilraen could understand that better than anybody. But she wasn't thinking about Amy. It was terrible, obviously, but she found there wasn't much to think about. She had no idea of anything yet. She didn't know a note had been left for her to find which gave away everything about her teammates kidnapping. She didn't know her dear friend had picked it up and taken the remainder of Kai's team to go and look for Amy. No, Gilraen was thinking of other things. Gilraen's mind was on her past. She, Andrea, Donna and Ashley. What a team they had made. They had been good, really good. But now everything had changed. But was it for the better? What if she had never met Kai and the bladebreakers? What if everything had gone on as normal? What if she and Adam had--but she shuddered at the thought. Adam. Her old friend. They had grown up together and now, he had completely destroyed all that was good about her life. Even the fact that at one point, it would end.

'Maybe we should go back?' They had been gone for hours. Everybody would have expected for Kai to have gone off, but her, she knew they would be worried. She should have left a note to say where she was going. What if Donna went out looking for her? What if she was taken too? 'Kai, I think we should go.'

Kai sighed. He could have stayed out for hours longer, but he knew what Gilraen was thinking, she was worried for her friend and for his friends. And even he knew that at a critical time like this, they shouldn't waste their time wondering off thinking. Especially as there was nothing to think about. For once Kai had found no solution. And there was nowhere to look because they didn't even know the town they were staying in. He let out another sigh and stood up. Everything was so much easier when they were only there to win a tournament. But it hadn't been just about beyblading for a long time now.

'I'm not sure about this you guys...!' Kenny was getting nervous as the group walked down the surprisingly deserted street. And he didn't know if it was his imagination, but the space between the buildings on either side of them seemed to be getting gradually narrower.

'Don't worry chief, nothing bad will happen' Max attempted to cheer him up but it didn't do much good.

'And how do you know that!'

'Shh! Both of you stop. I think we're getting nearer...' Tyson looked around. There didn't appear to be anybody there. Donna had a sudden thought. Surely this Angela didn't know this was going to happen? Surely she hadn't led them on a wild goose chase so that she could find Kai and Gilraen on their own? It sounded like a very risky concept, but looking around there was definitely nobody there. And they had the right place.

'Wait a minute,' Donna began to voice her thoughts. 'What if--'

But she was interrupted.

'And what might you be doing here?' a woman had stepped out of the shadows. She had a somewhat familiar face and was pale but wearing dark clothing, with a black ribbon tied around her short blonde hair. They assumed that this woman must be Angela.

Tyson bravely stepped towards her 'We've come to get Amy.'

Angela frowned. 'Oh i see. Well in that case,' she circled around them as she spoke, which made them all uncomfortable, 'I'm glad I didn't bring her here. I had a feeling you wouldn't be the people I wanted.'

'Tell us what you want with Kai and Gilraen' Rei demanded. Angela looked unphased.

'That piece of information is for me to know and you to find out.' She shot them a look and her voice went from smooth to sharp, 'Gilraen and Kai are the two people I want. You tell them to be in the village of Mount Sunaina tomorrow.' She began to walk back into her dark alley, but

turned her head to say over her shoulder 'The cab will know where it is.'
And she was gone.

9. Chapter 9

'Where have you been!' Gilraen sprung herself up from the arm chair she had been sitting anxiously in. Tyson opened his mouth to give an explanation when Gilraen interrupted him. 'Do you know how worried we were! We had no idea where you were, why didn't you leave a message! We thought you had been taken as well!'

Kai, standing in the corner, cleared his throat. Gilraen waved this away impatiently. 'Well, I was worried at least!'

'Gilraen,' Donna panted, leaning her arm against the wall for support. The run back had seemed a lot longer than the march there. 'Gilraen, we need to tell you where we've been.' She caught her breath 'I think we should all sit down.'

They pulled over more chairs and everyone sat, except Kai who remained behind Gilraen. Donna was fumbling with something in her pocket.

'Listen,' she began, looking as though she had no idea how to word what she was about to say. 'Yesterday when I went back to the room to check that Amy was in fact not there, I did find something.' She paused. Gilraen looked anticipated, 'Yes?'

Donna pulled out what had been in her pocket. 'This note...was left by the person who took Amy. She's a woman and her name's Angela. She requested you and Kai go and meet her downtown at 11 this morning.' Donna bit her lip, 'But we went instead.'

Gilraen looked utterly perplexed, 'But why? Why would you not tell us? Do you realise how foolish it was for you to run off, possibly to your death, and not tell us?'

'We wanted to protect you,' Rei began, 'we came to the conclusion that they wouldn't kill us, and we might be able to find out what she wants with Amy.'

'Was Amy with her?' demanded Kai.

Rei looked up at him and shook his head 'No, she didn't bring her. She said she had a feeling it wouldn't be the two people she wanted.'

'You should have told us straight away. Your antics could have made the situation even worse.'

Kai glared at them. Tyson was the only one who dared challenge this familiar glare.

'But Kai!' he interjected, 'You should be grateful we tramped half way across town for you, not angry! Had you and Gilraen gone you wouldn't have come back alive!'

There was a pause, then Donna spoke to Gilraen 'We think you two are in real danger.'

Gilraen sat back and there was silence for a few seconds. No doubt Gilraen and Kai were still stunned at the idea of the rest of their teammates rushing off to protect them and solve the mystery themselves without either Kai or Gilraen knowing anything about it. Stunned that their teammates had lied to them about something so crucial. But none the less, impressed.

'What did she say?' asked Kai, so abruptly that Kenny jumped.

Tyson answered, 'She wouldn't give away where Amy was or what she wanted with her. She didn't tell us anything, but she wants to see the two of you.'

'Mount Sunaina,' remembered Max 'The village, and the cab will know where it is...' as if he had it memorized.

'When?'

'Tomorrow.'

Gilraen looked up at Kai. 'I've never heard of this place.'

'It doesn't matter, we need to get Amy back.' He turned to his teammates 'When's our next match?'

'It's scheduled for 2:30 tomorrow' said Kenny, a slight panick in his voice. Kai frowned.

'Then Gilraen and I shall go, and the rest of you stay, you can win the battles easily without me there.'

'Hang on,' Tyson raised an eyebrow 'If you think we're letting you go off on your own then you must be seriously lacking sleep.'

Kai was surprised. He had expected Tyson in particular to make a fuss about having to miss a match and maybe risk being disqualified for the whole tournament.

'But..the match--'

'Come on Kai, whats the use in winning a tournament without a captain?' Tyson gave a determined smile and Kai knew at that point, the bladebreakers were with them, no matter what it took.

Gilraen took a deep, thoughtful breath 'Tomorrow, then.'

Tyson nodded, 'Tomorrow.'

None of them slept well that night. Gilraen was still trying to get her head around the fact that Donna had actually found hand-written evidence that Amy was alive and who had her and where she was, and hadn't told Gilraen anything. She had pretended there was nothing there, made secret arrangements with the rest of Kai's team and they had wandered off into the centre of town, completely unprotected. To think of what could have happened.

Gilraen rolled over and looked to the other bed. Donna was, no doubt, awake too, but facing the other way. That girl lying across the room from her was one of her closest friends. That girl had always needed protection, that girl had always been so sad, so loyal, so scared. Now that girl had lied. That girl had marched into the face of danger. That girl had risked a lot of lives. And Gilraen found that she was now looking at the back of that girl, and smiling to herself. She was proud, so proud of that girl. She had grown up, she had learned from the people around her. She was so different to how she used to be. But what had made her like this, Gilraen wondered. Had the death of a good friend had such a remarkable effect on her? Or was it that dark-haired beyblader who was lying awake like them, in the room directly above? Or maybe it was everything, being thrown into the real world for once, a world outside the beyblading stadium they were used to. Gilraen concluded that this was a dangerous world indeed, but she didn't much mind it at all.

10. Chapter 10

Having slept very little, if at all, the 5 bladebreakers, Gilraen and Donna were all set to leave the hotel for Mount Sunaina. Before leaving the room, Gilraen had scrawled a message on a piece of paper explaining where they were going and requesting help be sent if they should not return in at least 3 days. After all, they had no idea where Mount Sunaina's village was, nor did they know how long they would be gone. Being two of the major teams in this tournament, she also felt the need to let somebody know what had happened to them, because people were bound to notice they were missing. There had been no time to inform anybody at the stadium itself because they were leaving so early.

It was still dark when they headed out the door. They waited patiently in the cold for a cab until one finally arrived that was big enough. During the cab ride barely anybody said a word; everybody was tired and cold and seriously wishing they hadn't got into this mess. Kai sat at the front next to the cab driver, ignoring all conversation the driver tried to make. Tyson, Rei, Donna and Gilraen were squashed together in the middle and in the back were Kenny and Max. Donna was asleep with her head on Rei's shoulder and Rei had his arm around her to keep her warm while he looked out of the window. It was an uncomfortable ride for Gilraen, squashed between Donna and Tyson and she was glad when, after what seemed like a life time, they finally arrived. 'This is it, this is the village.' They paid the cab driver and all stumbled out, as if they had forgotten how to use their legs. The drive up had taken at least 4 hours and it took a few minutes for everybody to get used to walking again. They looked around them at the small village.

It was a quiet place, but not deserted. Voices could be heard of the happy people who lived there and led quiet lives in perfect harmony. But where was the person they were looking for? They decided to take a look around

'We've been here before, we're walking in circles!'

'Well do you have a better suggestion chief!'

'Will you two stop it,' Rei frowned, 'We've been through the whole village and found nothing. I do hope we're in the right place.'

The group were starting to get very confused. They had been wandering for at least half an hour and hadn't got anywhere. They knew they had the right place, but where was Angela? Nobody they had asked seemed to know who she was.

On their wanderings they had managed to come across a bed and breakfast. Kai had gone in and booked them one large family room for the night, as that was all they could afford and weren't even sure that they would be using it.

'I'm..so..c-cold' even in Rei's arms, Donna was shivering violently.

Gilraen sighed with guilt 'We shouldn't have made you all come with us.'

'You didn't,' Tyson reminded her 'We insisted on coming.'

'But it's pointless. She's not here, nobody here knows her, we don't even know what we're looking for and we certainly haven't found it.'

At that moment, somebody appeared behind her. She was quick to grab her Driffen and spun round. She saw that Kai had done the same thing. But the man behind her was not armed.

'You looking for Angela?'

'What's it to you who we're looking for?' Kai snapped in response.

'If you're looking for Angela, you need to come with me.' He didn't seem to have heard what Kai

said, but he started to walk back in the other direction. The group looked at each other, and followed him.

It was a dangerous walk. Their destination was further up the mountain side and it was very fortunate they were in broad daylight by now. The paths were narrow and the cliff edges difficult to see with all the snow, even in daylight. It was a stressful and tiring hike they took, all the time following this strange man. Finally, they caught a glimpse of where they were heading. A bit further in the distance was a spectacular building, it looked like some sort of palace.

When they finally reached the front door, the man opened it with a key and left them in the hall. He told them to stay where they were and walked through a side door. They were left in this strange and beautiful building, which they suspected must be Angela's house.

None of them dared to speak but they looked at each other, and around them, with caution. After a few minutes they heard the faint clip-clop of high heels on hard marble floor. The noise got louder and then suddenly stopped. Gilraen poised, her hand clasped tightly around her beyblade, waiting for anything that might jump out at them.

'Well well, looks like you're finally here.'

Kai jumped and a cold shiver went down his back. He spun around to find himself face to face with the woman who had been searching for him. She smirked at him, but frowned when she saw who was behind him.

'You just can't seem to get it right, can you.' she put on a patronising voice and began to walk around, looking from Kai to Gilraen the whole time.

'We've brought you Kai and Gilraen.' Tyson spat at her, 'We did what you wanted, we've come to get Amy back.'

Angela shot him a look as if she had just realised he was in the room, and he should otherwise be ignored. She took a deep breath and gave her warmest smile. 'Welcome to my home. I'd like you all to follow me, please.'

She marched off through a large double door and down a corridor. Gilraen and Kai looked at each other and then followed, the rest of them close behind. They arrived into a very large room, where floor wall and ceiling were entirely white marble. There were large windows, doors and furniture to match the proportions of the room. Also each corner complete with its own guard. Angela indicated to a sofa. 'Please, take a seat.'

But as Kai and Gilraen made to sit down, she stuck her arm out and whispered 'not you.'

Once they had all taken seats, she looked around as if to make sure they were all there, her lips pursed in concentration. 'I'm going to borrow Kai and Gilraen for a few minutes.' She held out her hand to cease all reactions to this. 'Don't you worry about your friends, they won't be harmed.' She gave a smile that was far from warm, and left the room with Kai and Gilraen behind her. Neither looked back to see the terrified faces of their friends. They followed Angela without a word. For they were not scared and they knew one thing that Angela didn't, and she would soon find out if she didn't keep her promise not to harm them.

She led them into a small room which seemed completely distant from the rest of her large palace, it was not lit by any windows and the walls were constructed of grey stone instead of white marble. It was a small room which was probably never used, except there was something large stood up against one wall, with a blanket draped over it. If Angela had wanted to kill them, this would have been a good room to do it. Gilraen wondered if they were being led to where Amy was, but Angela turned and hissed at them.

'Why have you brought them with you? Did I not make it quite clear that it is you two I wanted to see?'

'We're here now,' stated Kai. 'Tell us what you want and tell us where Amy is.'

'Oh, it's not that simple.' she snapped back 'Your team can not be here, it is far too risky! I will not tell you anything of your friend Amy until I see the two of you alone.'

'Alright,' said Gilraen 'But first, we demand to know the reason for all this.'

The answer they had been expecting, and fearing, was spoken by Angela, who now had her back to them.

'Your doing's have now murdered two of my brothers. I swear, Amy can go home safely, but I can't let the two of you live. You can not get away with what you've done.'

Any other two would have flinched with fear, or even protested. But not Kai and Gilraen. They had been expecting this, they had seen it before. And they knew nothing could be done. Amy, a probably petrified girl, who could die easily, was in serious danger if they did not cooperate. There was nothing they could do. And besides, they didn't have lives to lose.

Angela whipped round 'Tomorrow.' she hissed sharply, 'And don't you dare tell your teammates what I told you. If you are back with them again I will have you all killed one by one. The two of you will be the last.' They glared hard at eachother. 'Do I make myself clear?'

'Crystal.' was Kai's usual smug reply in situations like this.

11. Chapter 11

'They've been in there for ages!' Tyson whispered to Rei. They felt the need to whisper so that the motionless guards in the corner didn't catch what they were saying.

'I knew we shouldn't have let them go in there alone!' Kenny was starting to panic again.

'No, she promised she wouldn't harm them.'

'Would you trust what she said, Max!'

Rei squashed the argument 'Well let's just leave it another 5 minutes, okay?'

'Go back to your friends in the atrium. They must be starting to worry about you.' She slowly started to walk towards the back of the room. 'I'll be there in a minute.'

Kai and Gilraen didn't need telling twice. They were quite happy to be out of that room and back into the well-lit white palace.

As they returned into the huge room, Tyson leapt up from the sofa. 'Ah Kai, we were getting worried. What does she want? Can we go? Did she tell you where Amy is?..Kai?'

But Kai had walked past Tyson and sat on the sofa. 'There's no use leaping up, Tyson. She's coming back.'

Gilraen sat down too and together they waited. It was a few minutes before the sound of high-heels could be heard again, and the tall elegant woman stepped back into the room. She smiled and spoke in a strangely calm way 'Oh good, you're all still here.'

She wafted over to the largest arm chair and sat down, looking at them all. The group looked back at her, wondering what was going on, and what she was going to do with them. Finally, she spoke, again in a strange sweet voice that none of them felt in the least comforted by.

'That Amy of yours is a very...' she chose her words carefully, '...loyal friend'

None of them dared to say anything, they just gaped at her. Tyson's eyes narrowed. 'What have you been doing to her?'

Angela looked down past her nose at Tyson. 'Nothing that would cause her any physical harm, I assure you.' She smiled up at Kai, who returned a death glare to her. Gilraen started to breathe heavily. She felt very uneasy and started to think something really bad was about to happen. They needed to find a reason to get out of there, quickly.

Angela sighed and stood up slowly 'Well look at the time. Looks like you should all be going...'

She drifted over to the window, and though they had as good as been dismissed, nobody moved. Angela now had her back to them, facing the giant windows. 'My, look at that storm. Nasty weather outside.' She turned her head to face them and gave that smile that was anything but comforting, 'You're welcome to stay here for the night.'

Kai got to his feet immediately. 'We'll go.'

Angela shrugged, 'If you say so, then of course.' She gestured towards one of her guards and told him to show them out.

Feeling very uneasy, the beybladers filed out the door quickly, following the guard to the front of the house. 'I hope you remember the way back,' Angela casually said after them 'My guard will not be escorting you down there, far too dangerous.'

Gilraen faltered for a moment and glanced back at her. Angela had been waiting for this type of reaction, and smiled back. Then she mouthed to Gilraen 'tomorrow'. Gilraen bit her lip and headed out the door, following the others. The guard led them to the door and waited for them to leave. And, holding their breath, they opened the large double doors, and headed out into the cold, dark, stormy night.

The hike up to the palace in broad daylight had been bad enough. The young group of beybladers now had to walk down, with barely any visibility. Due to the snow clouds, the darkness had come hours early, and there was currently a snow blizzard. But the team knew that they had to make it back to their little bed and breakfast in the village, they knew they had made the right decision by not staying in the house of Angela.

Tyson insisted on leading the group down, as he remembered the way clearly. They walked slowly against the wind and hail in single file. Kai stayed at the back to make sure that nobody fell behind. They couldn't speak for the cold, but it wouldn't have made much difference, there was no way they would hear each other trying to communicate. Gilraen, who was behind Tyson, still had this uneasy feeling and kept looking behind her to check everything was okay. She stopped for a little to let Kenny, Max and Donna pass her. She indicated for Rei to go too; she wanted to be able to see everybody in case something bad happened, but Rei silently insisted he stay behind her. The blinding sleet and dark clouds with no light to be seen for miles was scary. They could no longer tell where snow ended and sky began. They had no idea where the cliff edge was and all relied on Tyson's footprints to lead them to safety. They could no longer even see down far enough to know how high up they were.

Kai could see that Gilraen was not at all happy with the order. She would want to be in his position, she wanted to know what was going on behind her. And Kai could not blame her, she wanted to watch on the people who could die, as she herself couldn't, Kai understood that. But similarly, he and Rei wanted to keep an eye on her, as well as everybody else. Because although she couldn't die, it would be an awful thing to fall, and who knows how they would rescue her. He glanced up at Tyson, at the head of the pack. He sincerely hoped that Tyson didn't make a false move, because one wrong step could cause fatal disaster.

But as Kai was considering this, though Tyson was making strong and careful progress, Donna was becoming faint. The cold was seriously getting to her, and she was smaller and weaker than the rest of them. Her legs and feet were completely numb, her head was spinning and she could barely focus.

'Gilraen!' she tried to yell, but nobody could hear her.

Gilraen's heart skipped a beat as the young girl stumbled, only a couple of steps to the right. But such bad timing. Donna was swept clean over the side of the cliff, catching onto a rock ledge on a slightly lower level.

'DONNA!' Gilraen's heart jumped into her mouth. Without hesitation, she ran and she leapt, landing on the sloping ground and skidding down to where her friend was holding on. She could barely see Donna and had no idea how the ground she was skidding on was going to slope, and no time to even consider it. She jumped to grab Donna by the hand, Rei and Kai were close on her heels. As they landed the snow below their feet began to move. Gilraen screamed and made a jump for it, landing on another cliff edge she ran towards Donna as fast as she could. Falling was no longer an objective. Kai and Rei were safely behind her. She fell to her knees and reached a hand out, only seconds too late.

Gilraen's hand clasped at thin air and the snow beneath them all gave way. No longer able to hold herself, forced to let go, Donna's fingers had gone numb like her legs and given up strength. The last Gilraen saw was a sight she would try to be rid of forever, but it would never cease to haunt her. One last look at her terrified expression, and watch her friend sink quickly beneath the clouds. Pulled up to her safety by the other two bladers, but she could not be saved in time. One faint scream that would stay with Gilraen forever, and Donna was gone.

12. Chapter 12

There was nothing pleasant about that night, or the morning that followed it. In fact, it seemed as though nothing would be pleasant again. Having made it back to the bed and breakfast, everybody had gone straight to bed without a word. But Gilraen hadn't slept. Her mind refused to believe what had happened, and she could not bring herself to cry. It had been almost 8 months since she had felt this kind of sadness. She had hoped she would never have to feel it again.

But Donna's bed sat beside hers, untouched and empty. And on the bedside table sat her beyblade, with a Danta who's spirit had most likely died with it's master. There was nothing they could do to turn back the clock, and there was no way this could be denied. Donna was dead. Gilraen had lost another of her team mates, and her very best friends. She got out of bed, knowing that she wouldn't sleep, and sat on the window sill. She sat there all night. The tournament and her team seemed so far away now. The thought of winning, the long hours of training, the stress brought on by each match and all opponents they faced, none of it mattered anymore. Losing a tournament would never disappoint her again. What she had lost could never be won back.

Gilraen sat for hours and hours, watching the empty street, and looking at the bladebreakers sleeping in the room around her. Max and Tyson and Kenny slept soundly. She couldn't tell whether or not Kai was awake. But it made no difference to her, she didn't want to talk to Kai. She didn't want to talk to anybody, she didn't want to say a word. Because one word was all it could take for her to break down. At that moment she was stuck in her own mute and numb world, a world where everything was falling to pieces around her, a world where she was falling to pieces, but she couldn't feel a thing, for now. She couldn't even cry. One word spoken could break her free from this world, and ruin her. The last word out of her mouth had been her best friends name, and she wanted to keep it that way. She didn't know how she could face going back there the next morning. She couldn't walk down that path knowing what had happened there the night before. She knew she had to; Amy had to be rescued. But Gilraen didn't care, she'd give Amy a million times over to have Donna back. But Donna was gone, there was no bringing her back. And Amy could still be rescued, so it had to be done, she knew it.

Rei had locked himself in the bathroom all night. His bed also remained untouched. Now that the sobs had stopped Gilraen guessed that he too had managed to cry himself to sleep. She knew she wasn't the only one feeling the pain from Donna's death. At the moment though, as sorry as she felt for Rei, the only person she could really care about at that moment was herself.

Gilraen stayed seated in the same position as everybody else got up and began to move, getting themselves dressed, and saying few words amongst themselves. Gilraen remained with her back to them all, facing the window. She didn't want to even look at them anymore. She couldn't look, she could only see, and couldn't feel, and couldn't speak. For those few moments, she was an empty shell, and she could only listen.

'Is Rei still in the bathroom?'

'Yeah and it doesn't look like he'll be coming out any time soon.'

'Poor guy, we should leave him for as long as he needs.'

Gilraen didn't know whether she was glad or not that nobody had attempted to speak to

her, or seemed to even take notice of her. She assumed they had learned from Kai when a person needs to be left alone. But just as she was thinking this...

“Gilraen.”

She turned her head to find Tyson was standing behind her. Max, Kenny and Kai were all standing a little way behind him. She looked up at him but she still couldn't bring herself to speak.

Tyson looked down at her, unable to think of how he could possibly put this into words. “Gilraen...I--I'm just ..so sorry..” He trailed off. Gilraen nodded to show her appreciation but still didn't speak.

“Erm, Max and I thought we'd go to the store and get some food for us all, in case you want something to eat...” It was hopeless, he could get no response out of her. She didn't even nod this time, she didn't even look at him. She may as well have been in a coma. But Kai had seen his opportunity, and stepped forward.

“No, Tyson. I'll go. And Gilraen will come with me.”

“Wha--? Kai, Gilraen can't--”

But Gilraen had already stood up. She put a hand on Tyson's shoulder and nodded. Then she walked towards the door. Kai followed and turned back to his team before heading out “Stay here, we won't be long...and, check on Rei every once in a while.”

The long walk was as dangerous as it had been the first time, and it was quiet. Gilraen walked a couple of paces ahead of Kai the whole way up and they didn't say one word to each other. Kai knew that Gilraen must be thinking of Donna, however he couldn't help but wonder what they were about to come up against. Another relative of Adams, seeking revenge for his murder. And Kai wondered when this whole thing would end. How many other defeats would there have to be before they could just live in peace? But no matter what awful distractions had diverted Gilraen's attention, he knew that he was ready. He had his dranger sitting in his pocket as always, and that was preparation enough.

When they finally arrived one of the guards showed them into the familiar atrium they had been in only the day before. Angela was seated in her chair, and ordered them to sit down without looking at them.

“So here you are. And I trust you came alone this time, good.”

“Yeah, we're here.” said Kai, “And we're alone as promised.”

Angela nodded, and looked from Kai to Gilraen, and back again. “So, we have some unfinished business we need to take care of. This is why I called you up here. And I told you yesterday the little connection we have, I'm sure you don't need to be reminded of that story.” She smirked at Gilraen, who only looked at the floor in response.

“Oh, Gilraen. Why do you look so low?” she taunted. “Surely the memories of my dear, kind, intelligent brother, and how you brutally murdered him are not causing you any grief?”

“Your brother deserved everything he got!” As long as Gilraen didn't want to speak, Kai would defend her case willingly.

“My brother was a saint compared to what I can be!” Angela snapped. This was the first time she had showed them real anger. “You don't know what it's like to have your twin brother killed, you have no idea! Neither of you have lived in a family like mine, you don't know! And Adrian, my baby brother Adrian, you took him too!” she glared with fire in her eyes.

“Your brother was a wretch” Gilraen spat. The first words she had uttered since

the night before.

Angela stood up sharply, and Kai thought she was going to hit her. He poised, ready to leap up like a shot if Angela made any sudden movements. She didn't, but she remained standing.

'My brother was the World to me,' there was true passion in her voice and she was speaking a lot quieter now. 'When you have lived like me, you hold the blessing of a twin brother tightly in your hand. A family of 5 siblings we were. But my two eldest siblings gone forever, one dead, one thrown in jail. All I could ever look up to, intelligence and beauty, thrown aside for crime and drugs.' She shot them both a look 'Everything's been taken from me! I'm the only one left! It is up to me to avenge the death of not only one brother, but two. You took them both. You took the lives of two innocent young men.' 'Young men, maybe, but far from innocent. You don't know half of the story behind what happened with Adam.'

'Oh I know.' She glared at Gilraen as though she'd never seen anything so disgusting in all her life. 'Good friends you two were. And I never liked the sound of you, Gilraen Luinwe. Oh he would talk about you. This great friend he had, this amazing person he knew, this Gilraen. Well that Gilraen, that amazing person who I had never taken to, sure enough was the reason for his death.' She shook her head, 'My brother...' Gilraen was slightly taken aback on learning that Adam used to talk about her to his sister. She had never spoken a word of him to anybody, her friend's simply knew he existed. But this didn't phase her. 'He had it all coming.'

'And I suppose you think that anybody deserves to have their heart torn to pieces the way you tore his! The way you treated him, befriending this Kai boy and turning against him completely when all he ever did was help you!' She spat out Kai's name as though he was something not worth mentioning. Both Kai and Gilraen had had about enough of the stalling. They had come back for one reason, to retrieve Amy. Their attention could not be wavered.

'He tried to kill Kai, he had me murder an opponent, he used...people, against their will in order to achieve what he wanted!' She had come so close to mentioning Donna's name, but found that she still couldn't do it. Who knows when she would be able to speak that name again. Even thinking of her was painful, and she decided to quickly put out of her mind the time where Kai had come close to death in front of thousands of people, and the entire world, because of a completely Adam-controlled Donna.

'He would not act without reason! It is not in our nature. You led him to believe all sorts of things, and then decided he just wasn't good enough for you. You and that Kai ruined everything, it's no wonder he wanted the two of you dead!'

'Adam would never have killed me!' Gilraen had never sounded so sure of anything in her whole life. It seemed to her that no matter how much of a tyrant her old friend had become, she was still determined to believe he would have let her live. Miserably, perhaps, but he would never have brought himself to do anything to end her life.

13. Chapter 13

Angela raised her eyebrows at Gilraen "Oh, you don"t think so? Well, I guess we"ll never know will we..."

She began to walk over to the window, but Kai and Gilraen stayed where they were. They were worried she had something up her sleeve, something unexpected. But however bad, it could never be that terrible, because these two knew that they still had that one thing nobody else did. Something that could prevent them from being killed. Nothing she could throw at them would prevent them. Her younger brother had tried once, and failed.

"How terrible the news was," Angela began again, "when we heard of our loving brother"s death. He was so gifted, he could have done so much. And completely gone without a trace, well," she looked back at the two sitting on the crisp white couch, "tragic indeed. Oh, and what a fool young Adrian was. I told him to let me take care of it, I told him I knew best. But I couldn"t reassure him. He went away into a given death trap, not intelligent enough to know what he was getting himself into. And I could never have explained it to him. It was our secret." She swallowed. "He was not clever like the rest of us, he did not have the brains of my brothers, the beauty of my sister, he knew nothing of the dangers of the world. But all he wanted to do, was avenge his big brother"s murder."

She turned back to face Kai and Gilraen, but remained by the window. "And this secret, between me and Adam. This creation that nobody knew about, except us. This is what I could never tell Adrian, I could not convince him to stay put and wait for me to handle it. I had to watch him walk out to his death, able to say nothing. But, this is where you come into the story."

The two of them listened intently as Angela went on, but wished that she would get to the point. Timing was crucial at a time like this.

"Let me put it this way...for every poison that is brought to this world, there has to be an antidote. Without the antidote, and the poison need not exist, for fear it fall into the wrong hands."

She paused to look at them a second. Kai"s eyes had widened. Whatever he had expected, it wasn"t that. Angela knew. But Gilraen wasn"t following. She continued to listen though, and didn"t let the confusion show in her face.

"Yes, you probably didn"t believe it possible. But it is. And when the poison becomes extinct, who has use for the antidote? So rid of the antidote, they were. My clever brother had this flawless project, and he himself tested it. But machines of this sort always respond differently with those who created it. It was needed to be tested further. In later days it was tested on three different people, and proven to work. The first, naturally, his own beloved twin sister."

Kai definitely knew what she was getting at, but Gilraen was still having difficulty. She looked at Kai and saw an expression of fixed concentration on his face. He wasn"t taking his eyes off Angela, his hand in his pocket, no doubt clasped tightly around his beyblade. He clenched his teeth, he could not believe it possible.

"The poison, that incredible invention everybody had in their wildest dreams, destroyed. The antidote..." she looked behind them and to the left slightly, "lies in that room."

Gilraen spun her head around, looking at the door she had led her and Kai into the day before.

Kai still remained as he was before, still and tense.

“So I am willing to make the two of you a very fair deal...” she eyed them both for a few seconds before she continued. “Clearly what is needed here, is a fair fight. And you two, well,” she smiled, “you have the advantage. As do I.” Gilraen’s jaw dropped. She finally understood what Angela had been talking about this whole time. She knew they were immortal, she was immortal too! Gilraen’s heart sank as their only chance seemed to fly out of the window. But Angela was not done.

“So here’s my proposal. The antidote. You might have seen it yesterday, it lies within that small dark room. I kept it when they wanted to have it disguarded, because I knew this day would come. I propose we make this fair, and all step out of our comfort zones for a change.”

Kai looked as though he didn’t quite believe what she was saying. “You mean..?”

“I do indeed. Who’d have thought it would be so easy, to return to mortality, normality. And it lives right behind that door.”

Gilraen was frowning in concentration. Kai was reluctant. This proposition seemed almost too fair, what was Angela planning on doing to them having turned them mortal again? And how could they be sure she would keep her promise? He looked her straight in the eye. “How can we believe you?”

“Oh,” her lip twitched and she shrugged, carelessly. “you’ll just have to trust me.”

“Why would you want to put yourself at such a disadvantage? Surely, there’s a catch to this?” Gilraen was just as reluctant as Kai to fall into this trap.

“But think about it for a second. Without my promise, there is no way either of you would agree to bring your own guards down. And we could battle until the World ended, but nothing would ever get resolved. And I just...” she took a heavy breath and jerked her head away. “I just have to finish you. I can’t go the same way my brother’s did and though I could hurt you and torture you and keep you forever, and everything else that’s worse than death, until you are begging to die...I can’t leave this business unfinished. Adam needs to know he did not die in vain.”

But Kai and Gilraen still said nothing. Still trying to find some sort of catch in the proposition Angela was making, neither of them dared speak a word. Angela took this as doubt.

“No? Well,” her voice turned sour. “That’s okay. I have other ways to convince you to change your mind.”

As if on cue, the door at the other end of the large atrium swung open with a bang. Kai looked over his shoulder and to his astonishment, saw a surprisingly healthy looking Amy. On the contrary, she looked as though she’d been kept very well and even appeared to have new clothes and jewelry. The only thing about her appearance that didn’t suit the situation was that her hands were tied and she was being pushed in by a guard. Her face lightened when she saw who was sitting on the couch. She looked as though she couldn’t believe her eyes. But before she could speak a word, Angela put up a hand to stop her.

“Surely, you didn’t think I was lying. Amy has been kept very well here. She’s had new clothes, freedom of the whole house, and even her own suite.” She smiled with amusement at Kai and Gilraen’s expressions. “Well don’t look so surprised. I told you she would come to no harm. But for the moment I need her here, and she shall sit quietly.”

She gave Amy a stern look and the guard pushed her to the floor. He then tied a handkerchief around her mouth, much to her shock and discomfort. She squealed and struggled, looking up

at Gilraen helplessly. But Gilraen could do nothing. Angela jerked her head in Amy's general direction "Hush."

She smirked at Kai and Gilraen, and then started to walk behind them. "I assume we have a deal then? Follow me into the other room, we shall sort out this messy business and be done with it. But if you can't handle that, well" she dropped to a whisper behind them. "those of us who can die, shall suffer greatly indeed."

They looked over at Amy. Poor Amy, who didn't have a clue what was going on. She still had yet to learn the reason for her kidnapping, the whole reason. She might not even realise how much danger she could be in. She was still looking up at them over the handkerchief, a terrified expression still on her face. She was helpless at this time.

Angela was still waiting for an answer. "Yes?"

Kai stood up, Gilraen followed. They looked at each other and nodded. Kai turned to Angela "Yes".

14. Chapter 14

So back into the small dark room they went. And though there was not a single element of trust between Angela and the brave beybladers, they knew they would have to believe her this time. She had them stand back against the wall as she carefully took the blanket off the giant machine in the corner.

It was very complicated looking. And completely different from the machine that had previously put them in this state. Completely different from the machine the two of them had destroyed along with its creator. There was no vacuum with glowing bubbles in it this time. This was simply a machine.

“Close the door.” Angela was peering at the machine in deep concentration. Then finally she straightened up. She turned to them “Ready?”

“Let’s just do us all a favour and get this over with.” Kai replied with impatience. Angela raised her eyebrows again, and pulled on the lever.

For a few seconds, they didn’t feel any different. Gilraen was just about to say something, when it began. Shooting feelings went up and down her arms and legs, as though every nerve in her body was receiving a minor electric shock. Suddenly she found she couldn’t see, but she wasn’t sure if it was because she had been blinded or she had just shut her eyes in pain. She screamed out as ten thousand years worth of pain came at her in ten seconds. She had no sense of anything else, but there and then. And she felt a jolt, as though she had just landed after a very rough flight, opened her eyes, and it was done. She blinked furiously and felt very woozy. She looked over at Kai who was leaning against the wall, panting like he’d just run a hundred miles. Angela looked a little woozy as well, but she was handling herself a lot better than she or Kai were managing. Gilraen saw her pull out something, take in breath, and get ready. It was a beyblade. The battle was beginning. But Gilraen could barely move, let alone bring herself to reach for her beyblade. She suddenly felt so vulnerable, so weak.

It all came too soon “PRYTHANAE!” and out of the darkness rose Prythane, the room barely able to contain it. Kai and Gilraen found a giant white thestral bearing down on them. The thestral roared and dove straight for them. Gilraen had no time to react, but luckily Kai had recovered a lot quicker.

“Dranzer!” And as the giant red phoenix rose up with a deafening squawk, the room could no longer contain the powerful bitbeasts. The wall was completely blown apart and the legendary beasts soared out into the atrium. The blades shot out with them, followed by the bladers.

Amy screamed in fright but beneath the handkerchief and with all the commotion, nobody could hear her. She watched awestruck as the thestral and phoenix fought, both Kai and Angela demanding attacks at them. Windows were smashed and furniture was thrown.

“Flame saber!” Dranzer was fighting admirably with the amount of space in the massive room. But Prythanae seemed to just keep regaining power from somewhere, no matter what Dranzer did. All that seemed to happen was that Dranzer was getting a little worn out.

“Dranzer hold it for a moment!” Kai growled in frustration. The thestral didn’t appear to be weakening at all. It suddenly reared and advanced straight towards the red phoenix. The energy and strength on the bitbeast was so great it appeared to be moving in slow motion. Dranzer gave another squawk on impact, and flew backwards along with the blade. But Dranzer is made of stronger stuff than that, and the beyblade lost no spin.

“Come on Dranzer!” Kai was trying with all his might but it just didn’t seem enough. But Gilraen had suddenly regained strength.

“Driffen!” and up the grey wolf leapt, straight to the phoenix’s defence. Driffen dove straight for the thestral and combined with Dranzer’s fire arrow attack, Prythanae appeared to have a slight disadvantage for a moment. But only a moment. They found it was regaining strength as fast as it had lost it, and Angela didn’t look nearly as tired as Kai and Gilraen felt. When either of their bitbeasts used up its energy, they could feel it too. But something was different with Angela and Prythanae. They didn’t seem to connect in any way. Angela demanded attacks and Prythanae obeyed. She smiled out the side of her mouth but that smile quickly vanished again. “Attack!”

The thestral headed straight towards them. Kai suddenly felt very afraid. His immortality was gone, it was as though he had put down a shield with an arrow seconds away from hitting him between the eyes. It suddenly felt like such a bad idea. And Prythanae was advancing on them.

“Dranzer!” Dranzer was there in a second, blocking Prythanae’s path towards him and Gilraen. Gilraen seized the opportunity. She too called upon her bitbeast, jumped over the white sofa, and ducked for cover. Both bit beasts were not strong enough, and the thestral broke through. Had Kai moved a split second later it could have been fatal. He dove to his left, his left arm caught in Prythanae’s attack. Kai yelled out in pain as he hit the floor, trying to control the blood. Gilraen jumped up from her position and made her attempt with Driffen. It didn’t do much good. Prythanae was throwing aside Driffen and still trying to get towards Gilraen.

Kai scrambled to his feet, “Dranzer now!” But as the phoenix made impact, the thestral didn’t even move. Suddenly there was a strange glow about it, brighter than the usual glow of a bitbeast. On impact, Dranzer gave a loud cry and had to retreat. Angela was smirking at this reaction. She had been waiting for this.

“Dranzer!” Kai tried again, but he wasn’t quick enough. With a new burst of power, the glowing beast raced with full force into the path of the unprotected Gilraen.

“GILRAEN MOVE!” but it was too late. Gilraen was blown clear off her feet and straight through the opaque glass door. Amy cried out and Kai was on his feet. He avoided the wings of the thestral and sprinted to where Gilraen was struggling to get to her feet. Blood and broken shards of glass now littered the hallway as well as the atrium. Gilraen had taken a nasty fall, and having recently gained her mortality back, she didn’t look so good at all. Her face was pale and her head was bleeding. But Kai helped her to her feet and they raced back to the atrium.

The thestral appeared to have disappeared. Breathing heavily, Kai looked around the room. Angela stood where she had been the whole time, rooted to that spot. Her beyblade spun in front of her. Kai and Gilraen’s blades were still spinning too. This match was far from over.

Kai was breathing hard through clenched teeth. Gilraen’s colour was coming back to her face, but there was still blood oozing from the back of her head.

“W-..what..is it?” Kai panted, “Why is it so powerful?”

Angela smirked again, “Oh Kai, foolish Kai. Foolish Kai and foolish Gilraen. You have wandered into a realm of suffering and death. Neither of you with any idea what you are dealing with. My Prythanae was a powerful enough bitbeast originally, but such advancements it has come across you would never understand.”

There was so much tension in the room it seemed for a minute as though the only people there were him and Angela. Staring straight at each other with pure loathing. It felt as though it was just the two of them in this black abyss, even though in reality they were standing in a pure white room, stained with crimson thick liquid.

‘Nobody can manage a bitbeast like I can, Kai. I am not the rightful owner of this bitbeast, but I tame it to be mine.’

Kai finally understood how no matter what happened to her bitbeast, Angela would never be affected by it. But taming a bitbeast that doesn’t belong to you is very difficult. Most people would never be able to manage it. Angela must be very skilled indeed, and Kai had that sinking feeling that he had underestimated her power.

Angela’s head was bowed and the giant white thestral was slowly rising up from behind her. Kai was poised and ready to give this another shot, Gilraen was also preparing herself beside him. They were going to take this, no matter what their weaknesses were, no matter how strong her bitbeast was.

Suddenly a guard shot into the room and ran towards Angela. Bitbeast still rising, she turned to the guard ‘What is it?’

‘There are people here. At the door, and they won’t leave. We won’t be able to hold them off much longer.’

Kai and Gilraen now could hear the commotion going on in the other room that they hadn’t heard before. People were shouting. Someone was trying to get in.

‘Can’t you force them off?’

‘There’s four of them and they’re not going anywhere.’

‘I don’t care, just keep them away!’

But before the guard even had a chance to get back to the door, there was a loud crash. One of the guards fell through the door next to the one Gilraen had hit. Kai’s jaw dropped. It couldn’t be.

There was huge commotion for a moment and several voices were heard. Then came a tremendous crashing sound and the colour drained from Angela’s face. A strange blue light was shining through the empty doorway and before the last deafening crash came an all-familiar voice.

‘DRAGOON!’

15. Chapter 15

Sure enough, it was so. The wall separating the giant hallway from the atrium was blown in by the force of Dragoon, and there stood Kai's team. Always there, just in time, always when he needed it most.

Dragoon crashed through the room, ready to take on its challenger. Tyson ran to Kai's side. Kai smirked sideways at him "What took ya so long?" But before Tyson had a chance to respond, Angela had released her deadly bitbeast once again and the battle was commencing.

"Draciel, go get 'em!"

"Go Drigger!"

Sure enough, they were all there, ready to help. They had known where Kai and Gilraen had run off to, they had figured it out. Kenny had rushed over to Amy and untied her. Nobody else seemed to have noticed she was in the room. Together, the 6 of them were a force to be reckoned with, even if Prythanae was an immensely powerful bitbeast, chemically enhanced with god knows what.

"Go Darla!" Amy joined in the battle, launching her own blade.

For a long time they battled. Nobody was timing it. But it was a long time. They weren't fighting just to win anymore. They were fighting for their lives now. Nobody but Kai and Gilraen could understand this, because nobody else knew. There was nobody to sympathise. But the two of them had to deal with it, because they hadn't been immortal for ever, not even for long, and everybody else was fighting as hard and as bravely, and they were all equal now.

"Prythanae, get the turtle out of the way!" Prythanae went for Draciel, whom Angela had picked to be the easiest target. Draciel did its best to defend and held it off for a while, but the glowing thestral was strong. Kenny was desperately trying to find some sort of data explaining the reason for its power, but Dizzi was receiving no information.

"Get him, Dragoon!"

"Hit him hard, Driffen!"

Angela was still looking as strong as she had done at the beginning of the match, while everybody else was practically hanging in rags. But these were the bladebreaker's, they didn't win world championships without being as strong as they were.

"Draciel, defend!"

"Get in there now, Drigger!"

It was chaos for a little while, as beyblades, shattered glass, bitbeasts and furniture soared around the room amidst a gust of wind and hail dragged in from outside.

Angela was still unphased "My bitbeast has never seen defeat! And it will stay that way as long as I live! Attack!!"

With a soaring swoop, Prythanae went straight for Darla. Not as strong-a beyblader as the rest of the people in the room, Amy could only watch, thunder-struck, as her Darla was thrown from the room, with such force that Amy could almost feel the same kind of impact. She fell to the floor, as though she had been knocked, her beyblade following suit. It crashed down before her eyes and shattered, only the bit chip remaining in one piece.

Drigger and Draciel went in next. But unfortunately neither of them could withstand the force of the thestral either. Prythanae was able to take on the two of them at the same time, and though both bitbeasts fought with all their might, it wasn't enough. Drigger, the mighty white tiger, went at the thestral with full throttle. The tiger ran and pounced, sinking its sharp claws

into the neck of Angela's bitbeast. Prythanae reached an ear-splitting note and after a couple of attempts, managed to throw Drigger off. It then charged straight at him. Drigger was weak from the crash that had resulted from his attack, and when Prythanae went for him, that was it. Drigger let out one last roar, and returned to Rei's beyblade, which slowly stopped spinning.

Draceil was even easier to defeat than that. Angela's beyblade went at Max's with all it had, and Draceil could not keep up with Prythanae's speed, or resist its strength. Rei and Max were increasingly frustrated with their defeats, and similarly with this bitbeast that it seemed could not be beaten.

Dranzer! Kai was making his way into the battle again. The phoenix recognised its target and went straight in for a head-on attack. Prythanae let out a deafening noise and reared itself up to twice its normal height, kicking out with its two front legs. The impact was incredible. It was as though a miniature atomic bomb had been set and had suddenly turned off all gravity. For a split second, it felt as though nothing touched the ground, it felt as though they were soaring through space. This impact had a bigger effect on Prythanae than anything else had so far in the battle. Sent flying backwards and tumbling over it midair, Angela ducked as her tremendous bitbeast flew through the window behind her, the last window out of all of them that had not yet been broken. The beyblade swerved and flew into one of the big pillars, knocking it flat. Max had been standing in the exact spot where the pillar landed, but had moved out of the way just in time. However, there had now been four defeats. Dranzer had completely vanished from the force of the impact, and Kai's beyblade lay somewhere on the other side of the room, completely still.

Only three beyblades remained spinning in the room. But though Gilraen and Tyson were still in, and still had the advantage as far as numbers go, they found themselves stumped. Angela's bitbeast was proving to be weakened by Dranzer's attack, but they still didn't see themselves winning this battle. Though for the moment, Angela didn't seem to care about how many beyblades were still spinning. Her attention was not on Tyson or Gilraen for the moment. Her Prythanae was being ordered to attack still, attack the people not the bitbeasts. After all, the pieces of metal spinning on the white marble floor, didn't determine anything in the real world. They were a game. But once you cross over the beyblading line, you realise that the metal things that spin can not determine everything, and not everyone will listen. This was not a game anymore, and nobody had to play it.

Kai was aching all over. His Dranzer was down, but he didn't even have a chance to contemplate over it. The bitbeast was after him, not Dranzer. And he needed backup because he as a person was not able to hold off a bitbeast, especially one as powerful as this.

Dragoon! Tyson had no time to think either. But he didn't believe he needed to. It was obvious what he had to do; his friends were in trouble, he needed to try whatever he could. Dragoon, give it all you've got!

And he did, Dragoon fought as bravely as he could, and similarly managed to weaken the thesral, which had seemed impossible at the beginning of the battle. Tyson was trying to stall as long as possible to give Kai a chance to regain some energy. This attempt was proving unsuccessful though, as Prythanae managed to slip through Dragoon's clutches, and lash out towards Driffen in the same second. Angela was getting tired of all the distractions.

There are too many people in here! Prythanae get them out of the way, and kill that Gilraen!

Max grabbed Amy by the arm and pulled her to the back of the room. They dived behind an over-turned sofa and ducked down as Prythanae swooped over them. Kenny was quick to follow, clutching his laptop still. Prythanae spun round in mid-air and dove down towards them, slamming the sofa so hard it flew back and crashed against the wall, the three bladers still

hiding behind it. There was a smash and a scream as the blader's in between the sofa and what was left of the hard marble wall, felt the impact.

Prythanae then went for Gilraen again. With nothing to hide behind, she cried out in desperation "DRIFFEN"

Driffen was there in an instant. Her cry had been followed by another "Dragoon!" and both bitbeasts had blocked Prythanae's path to her. Gilraen's grey wolf sunk its teeth into the thestral's neck, which caused a lot of pain to Prythanae, but that was about it. Angela's beyblade had not slowed down nearly as much as Gilraen's. Her beyblade would stop any minute. Sure enough, Prythanae lifted its front hooves and, performing its best attack, kicked out at Driffen with all its force. Driffen flew back and disintegrated in mid-air. Gilraen's beyblade flew back aswell, the sharp edges catching to the skin of her cheek on its way past. The deep cut stung, but this was nothing. She had felt pain worse than this. But Driffen was down for the count now, her beyblade was roughed up. Prythanae was still attempting to kill her, with or without the protection of her bitbeast. Gilraen retreated to hide behind a pillar. Prythanae was still trying to get to Kai, and Tyson's Dragoon was still doing it's best to protect him. It all looked bleak to Gilraen. The back of her eyes began to sting as the realisation came to her that they would not win this battle. How could they? There was no force strong enough to defeat this bitbeast. Angela was too much for them, and they were both going to die for it. Gilraen wondered if Angela would go easy on the rest of the bladebreakers, or have them all killed for causing so much trouble. If this is what it took to save Gilraen's life, then she wanted to live it. But at that moment, she was exhausted, cold, hurt and scared. This battle would not be won, and the idea of death was seeming more welcoming every minute. But no, she couldn't think this; Kai was still out there, he wasn't hiding. He knew what he had to do. Even Tyson, who didn't have a reason to die, was risking everything to protect the two of them. And here was Gilraen, hiding. Like a coward. Gilraen had known cowards, and she was so determined to believe that she wasn't one. But she couldn't bring herself to rejoin the battle. What was the point in walking out to die?

She then thought of something else. With such a fear of dying, this is what prevents a person from really living. She already knew two of her closest friends who had died, one of them had walked out with death probably the last thing on her mind. But she had died all the same, none the wiser.

Gilraen shot her head up, her eyes wide. It wasn't over.

"Argh, hang in there, Dragoon!" The blue dragon was still fighting as bravely as it could, but it could only hold off Prythanae for so long. It wasn't going to stop before it got to its target, and Angela's attack demands did not concern Dragoon at all. All she wanted defeated at that moment was Kai.

Gilraen was out from behind her post like a shot, standing with full confidence, the slit in her cheek gleaming with blood, with a beyblade that nobody recognised for a second.

"GO DRATZY!" Gilraen launched the beyblade and out rose the black wolf, more proud and powerful than it had ever looked before. It had been a while since it had been used, month after month sitting in Gilraen's pocket. And Dratzy was not difficult, it seemed to know in some strange way, exactly what had happened. It almost seemed to understand that it had a new master now, at least for this one battle, this important battle.

Everyone around gaped at the magnificent fierce black wolf, head to head with the glowing white thestral. Dragoon had fallen back and Kai and Tyson could only stare.

"I'm not alone!" Gilraen shouted, more to herself than anybody else, "Driffen may be out, I may be about to die, but I'm not alone! There's a

powerful force behind this bitbeast, Angela! It doesn't belong to me either!" Gilraen was breathing heavily through gritted teeth, and speaking out with passion like Angela had been when talking about Adam hours before.

And from out of nowhere, he was beside her. To everyone's surprise, he too retrieved a beyblade that at first seemed unrecognisable in his hands. But, with a determined look on his face, he launched the beyblade as Gilraen had just done.

"DANTA!"

And up rose, as big and proud looking as Dratzy had been, the large white wolf. Gilraen's eyes widened and she turned to her left, catching sight of the person who had released Donna's bitbeast.

"Rei!" It was the first time Gilraen had acknowledged him since they had entered. The two gave each other a side-ways glance that showed how grateful they were, how devastated, how relieved, and how sympathetic, because they knew they were in the same situation, but almost as though this was not the time, but they had to show it anyway. All in a split second. They knew that there was a battle to finish off.

"ATTACK!" came both of their voices at once. As the glowing thestral galloped towards the black and white wolves, who both launched themselves back at the thestral, everything seemed to suddenly go in slow motion. Gilraen could hear her own breathing, everything seemed to have gone silent. She watched in awe as the great beasts jumped up together, and her eyes watered at their beauty, at their strength. For the first time she believed they could take on the thestral. Everything around her either was no longer there, or no longer mattered.

She could even hear voices now. She didn't know where they were coming from. Maybe inside her own mind.

"Not alone."

It felt as though she was flying, she couldn't feel the ground anymore. She couldn't see anything except the cunning black and white wolves. Even Prythanae had vanished from her sight. It was like she was falling asleep.

Is this what it was like to die?

She couldn't be dead. She had people to help. She needed to stay alive otherwise everything she had been fighting for up until then was wasted.

"You were never alone."

They were talking to her. The wolves were talking. She could hear them, she wasn't imagining it. They continued to move slowly, in mid-pounce. But it was them.

She didn't know what she was saying or why she was saying it, but without even meaning to she managed to somehow form words. "But sometimes it just felt like...like I was left here with nobody...I thought everything was gone..."

Without thought, Gilraen let her feelings go. Everything she had wanted to tell them, she had her chance. The two wolves began to turn back the other way, towards her, tossing their heads back in slow motion to look into her eyes.

Gilraen blinked for a second too long. And when she opened her eyes, everything around her was black. And for a moment, they stood before her. And tears began to run down her cheeks, and stung on impact with the deep cut on her cheek, but she didn't care. They were standing in front of her. Two people she thought she would never see again. She had been given one more chance.

She made to step forward, but didn't appear to get any closer. Then she heard the familiar voice again, this time coming from Andrea instead of her bitbeast. "You were never alone."

Gilraen began to shake "You...you've been here the whole time. You've

been watching over me...I...I thought I would never see you again...’
‘We wouldn’t leave you, Gilraen.’ Donna shook her head.
This was too much for Gilraen. She couldn’t bear this over-whelming situation. She reached out her arm and tried to step forwards again but it did no good.
‘I’ve needed you.’
‘You need to save yourself, Gilraen. We’re going to help you.’
Gilraen shook her head, as more tears came. ‘I don’t want to be saved; I want to be with you.’
Andrea shook her head and said gently ‘We’ll always be by your side. But you need to stay where you are. They need you.’
‘Oh, please...’ Gilraen could no stand it anymore. But deep down, she knew that her old friend was right. She was needed on Earth, where she belonged, very much alive and not ready to die.
She took a deep breath and looked up one last time at her two best friends. She wiped the tears from her cheeks and bit her lip. This was the real goodbye this time. But they were going to be there, and Gilraen could live knowing that now. They were always there, not just in bitbeast form, but in spirit. Having wished for this moment to come, she found she didn’t quite know how to say goodbye. But Donna and Andrea were moving further away from her, and there was nothing Gilraen could do. Andrea put her hand on Donna’s shoulder and smiled back at her best friend. A smile from Andrea had always been a rare thing indeed.
As the two of them vanished into the blackness, Gilraen blinked again, but this time she didn’t open her eyes for a few moments. Knowing it wouldn’t do much good, Gilraen said to them ‘You won’t ever be forgotten.’
And though she could no longer see, she could still hear the voices. They were penetrating through her mind as though she was thinking them. But she knew it was them.
‘You are so strong...and never alone... as long as you live...we will use all our power to protect you...as you would have done for us.’
Slowly Gilraen could feel the room coming back, she started to get the sense that there were other people there. She kept her eyes firmly closed though, she would have liked to stay forever in that place, so far from reality.
‘Though justice could not save us...we will make sure it’s always brought to you.’

Gilraen felt a sudden thud and her eyes suddenly jolted open. With a loud howl, the two wolves launched themselves at the thestral, sending it with incredible force, flying through the wall. The sharp metal beyblade was off after it, cutting through the air faster than a speeding bullet. Angela only had time to give a look of utter shock, before the sharp spinning object sliced straight through her neck. She fell without a murmur, Prythanae gave one last shriek before it combusted, the beyblade smashed to smithereines and somewhere, a thousand miles away, a lonely girl cried out in her prison cell.

The battle was over. Standing in the centre of the room, Gilraen walked over to the small black metal object, still spinning but only just. She took it in her hand and looked at it. The black wolf bit-chip gleamed back at her and she managed a small smile.
Danta and Dragoon had also returned to their beyblades, and Kai and Tyson still stood, dumb-founded, wondering what had happened. Rei walked over to where Gilraen was, and picked up Donna’s blade. He looked at it for a few seconds, as Gilraen had with Andrea’s. He gripped the beyblade tightly in his hand and blinked furiously. Gilraen put a hand on his shoulder, ‘It’s alright, Rei. She saved us. Everything’s going to be

okay.’

Kai walked over to where Angela’s body lay and Tyson rushed over to the over-turned couch. Amy had been knocked unconscious from the crash against the wall. Max appeared to be really dazed, and the screen of Kenny’s laptop had smashed. Tyson pulled the couch back, ‘Are you guys okay?’

Max nodded, and then winced with the terrible headache that followed. Tyson helped them out and lay Amy on the ground. He then saw the state of the laptop.

‘Oh no, Dizzi!’

‘Dizzi’s okay, Tyson’ Kenny explained, taking his small and un-used beyblade out of his pocket. ‘She’s in here for now.’

The 5 bladebreakers and Gilraen stood in the once grand white marble atrium of Angela. This atrium was now missing all its windows, all its doors, and three of its walls. Blood stained the white marble and the owner of the grand palace now lay by the back window, a still-bleeding hole in the middle of her neck.

The battle that had seemed impossible to win, had been won. They could all go back to the tournament, or even just go back home. They need not be bothered by any psychotic relative of Adam’s anymore.

16. Chapter 16

Several hours after the battle had been won, the bladebreakers and half of team darkness sat in the back of the cab, making the long journey back from the small village on Mount Sunaina. Kenny sat up front next to the driver this time. Amy, who had regained consciousness, sat in the back next to Max and Rei. Rei didn't say much the whole ride back. Gilraen didn't feel like talking much either, and sat in between Kai and Tyson in the middle row. High above them a rescue helicopter followed the cab drivers lead, having retrieved Donna's body from the bottom of the cliff. They had not waited to see the rescue team bringing her back up; nobody had wanted to see the small, pale and cold young girl being retrieved from her falling place.

'Hey Kai,'

'Yeah, Tyson?'

'To answer your question, it took us about 5 minutes to figure out where you had gone. What took so long was getting Rei to come out of the bathroom.'

Kai nodded, 'Good to know you figured it out.'

'We know you, Kai.'

Kai gave a small smile and continued to gaze out of the window. What a day they had just had. It didn't feel as though it was that morning he and Gilraen had set out, expecting this battle to be somewhat of a piece of cake. Now it was getting dark again and they were all heading back, with Amy, without Donna. Having all fought admirably, all suffering minor injuries, having won the battle and beaten all the odds. But Kai couldn't get his head around the fact that he and Gilraen were now mortal again. There had not been much time to properly think about it before. He really had thought there was no way back. He had wished for the day it could all be turned around. And though it seemed like a disadvantage at times, he took great comfort in knowing he didn't have to live forever. But he wanted to talk to Gilraen. He wanted to know how she felt about it, whether she could even believe it either.

He glanced to his left. Gilraen had her head leaning to one side and her eyes were unfocused. Kai could tell she was deep in thought. He would need to speak to her, but not here, not with everybody there with them. Nobody else had even known about it, and nobody knew about it now. Kai sighed, thoughtfully. Maybe one day he and Gilraen would tell them.

Stepping out of the cab on to stone pavement, looking up at the giant beyblade stadium, was such a strange sensation. They had left only the day before, and yet it seemed as though they had been gone for ever. Now they returned, completely different, and missing another member of Team Darkness. Now they would have to walk in to find out whether or not they were even considered to still be in the tournament.

'It's so strange,' said Max thoughtfully, 'Everything's the same, but everything's so different.'

'I know just what you mean, Max,' Gilraen nodded. 'I know just what you mean...'

The bladers got several looks walking through the parking lot, and by the time they were inside the stadium building, people were stopping to watch them walk by, wondering where they had been the last couple of days.

Kenny took charge 'Tyson and I will go find out what's happening with us. Nobody else needs to come, so I guess we'll meet you back here.'

“Okay chief, we’ll sit over there I guess.” Max indicated to the benches lined up along the walls. Kenny and Tyson left them and the rest of them went to sit down, still saying as little as possible.

Gilraen looked around. The last time she had been in this building, they had been watching the bladebreakers, cheering them on, she and Donna. It seemed so far behind them now. She looked around at the looks people were giving them, the young children who were so excited, people whispering at the sight of them, wondering where they had been, people who would never know, could never understand. And Gilraen realised that the whole place made her sick. Tournaments once had her hyped up, even if she never showed it, they filled her with a strange excitement and she knew everybody was enjoying themselves. But she looked around, and nobody looked as though they were having fun anymore. The three boys looked exhausted and thoughtful, like she did. None of them wanted to be there, not at that moment. For something to do, Gilraen stood up and muttered that she was going to the bathroom. Amy nodded, but nobody else seemed to hear her at all, too busy lost in their own thoughts.

Gilraen walked slowly; she was in no rush. Everybody else was excited to watch the next match, whoever it was facing off against each other, Gilraen didn’t care. She had no patience for this anymore. There were more important things to concern herself with.

But as she rounded the corner, she felt something take hold of her wrist.
“Gilraen...”

Slightly puzzled for a second, Gilraen turned around to see who had come after her. But to her slight surprise, she found herself looking straight into the eyes of her ex-teammate. But she didn’t look like she had when Gilraen last saw her. The heels, the makeup, the hair extensions, it had vanished. For a moment, it seemed as though Ashley had gone back to normal. But she wasn’t angry this time, and she wasn’t smiling like the Ashley Gilraen knew either, this time she just looked concerned.

“Gilraen, there’s a rumour going around...is-is it true? Is Donna...?”

She couldn’t bring herself to say the last word, and she didn’t have to. Gilraen took a deep breath in, and nodded. “Yeah...it is.” She wasn’t prepared to hide anything from Ashley, she was a former best friend of Donna’s as well, and deserved to know exactly what went on.

Gilraen took a few minutes to briefly explain to Ashley where they had been. She had to be extremely brief when talking about Donna, because she still couldn’t bear to say it. She still didn’t know if she would be able to even say her name. But by the end of her story, she’d brought Ashley to tears. Wiping her tears on her sleeve, she turned away to avoid looking at Gilraen. “Oh, Donna...not our Donna...”

Gilraen swallowed and nodded. But she found she was still not crying. She didn’t tell Ashley exactly what had happened at Angela’s palace, she didn’t even tell Ashley who Angela was. Ashley had known Adam as well as the rest of them, but she had no knowledge of his twin sister, that they had been trying to have her and Kai killed, or that he was the one who had murdered Andrea. She knew none of this, and now was certainly not the time to tell her.

“Oh Gilraen, how terrible, and I have missed it all, I feel so awful, what sort of a friend am I? Oh Gilraen,”

She reached over and took Gilraen’s hand again. “Oh tell me what I can do. I have been awful, I should never have left you. I’ll leave the Samsonite Girls, I’ll leave everything behind, I’ll return to Team Darkness, it’s where I belonged anyway. I won’t ever leave you Gilraen, we can be a team again.”

A few days ago, Gilraen would have glowed with pride over this defeat. But this was no longer about competition between her and Ashley, and now she frowned slightly. “Ashley, I

begged you to stay...’
‘Gilraen, I’m so sorry.’
But Gilraen shook her head. She had made up her mind once and for all. ‘Ashley, thankyou.’ Gilraen smiled and held Ashley’s hand in return. ‘I do appreciate your offer. But I don’t need it. You stay on your team, and we’ll stay friends, I promise. But I have a lot of thinking to do.’
Ashley appeared to have understood. She nodded, ‘I will leave you to it then. I’m, so sorry.’
‘I’m sorry too.’ Gilraen did not quite know why she was apologising. Ashley had not even been there at the time, she had no idea of the pain. But she knew, Ashley was Donna’s friend too, and she mustn’t be selfish. ‘I’ll see you around, Ashley.’
‘I hope so, Gilraen.’ She squeezed Gilraen’s hand one more time, before letting go and turning to walk away. And despite everything that had happened, Gilraen did feel a bit lighter after that. It was nice to finally have something sorted, something that had been lurking at the back of her mind for the last few days or so.

She continued to make her way towards the bathroom, but was stopped short again by another voice. ‘Gilraen.’
This time Gilraen knew the voice, and she turned to see her dear blue-haired friend striding towards her. She gave him a small smile as he reached her.
‘Are you alright?’
She nodded ‘I’m okay.’ And she was telling the truth.
Kai went straight into it, ‘Gilraen, are you...glad that we’re, you know, mortal again?’
Gilraen didn’t have to even think about it. She nodded, ‘Yes, I am. It made everything worth while. I am glad about it, I’m glad that there’s something to be glad about.’ She kept going. She had been wanting to talk to Kai about what had happened. ‘I’m glad we can now go on with our normal lives, I’m glad that we’ll no longer have people trying to kill us. I’m so glad that we stuck together, Kai. We didn’t go our separate ways after the Russian Tournament, and if we had we would have made no progress. And even given every bad thing, every tragedy that has occurred, I’m glad to know that something good came out of it.’ She took out Andrea’s beyblade from her pocket, ‘I’m glad to know that one day I’ll be with them.’
Kai listened closely to Gilraen’s words. He found that with her he had all the patience in the world. He nodded when she had finished ‘I’m glad too.’ His eyes shifted downwards to his right, and he looked back at her again, changing the subject. ‘I’m worried about Rei. He’s not as strong as you are, I don’t know if he can cope.’
Gilraen raised her eyebrows slightly at Kai’s assumption concerning her strength. She guessed it was because she hadn’t managed to cry, at least not in front of him. He had no idea how weak she really was. But since Donna’s death, something had made Gilraen feel so much stronger. ‘Rei will be okay.’ She was able to say with confidence. She might have told Kai about what happened during the battle that made her suddenly feel so assured, but she could see the rest of their teams approaching, and they did not look pleased.
‘We’ve been disqualified.’ Tyson said plainly, as they approached.
‘Some other team will have to win this one.’

But looking around, it didn't look as though anybody really minded. It had been an exhausting few days, and it seemed everybody was just ready to go home.

17. Chapter 17

Here lies Donna Batani

1989-2005

May she forever rest in peace

Staring down into the deep pit dug out in the grass, watching the long wooden box lowered gently down into it, knowing that Donna was lying inside that box, still didn't seem right at all. Her sad eyes gazed upon the burial of her close friend, and the rain beat like a thousand stones against her black umbrella.

It was a beautiful service, small and intimate. Gilraen, Amy, the bladebreakers and Ashley were the only ones who attended. They were the only ones invited. Donna had no other close friends that could be reached so easily, and her parents were long since gone. Some thought had gone into whether or not to invite Emma, but both Kai and Gilraen had decided it would be better not to. Plus, they had no idea where she was.

When the service had been in progress, they had been invited to step up to say their last goodbyes. Slowly, the young beybladers rose out of their pews, and stepped towards the large wooden box in which Donna lay. A sniffing Max had been the first to step up, and say a few short words to Donna. It seemed that nobody knew quite what to say. Kenny was the second to go up, clearing his throat and rubbing his eyes. After him was Tyson, and then Kai. Tyson's voice could be heard quaking, but Kai remained strong during his goodbye. Amy, who had not known Donna nearly as long as the rest of them, still managed to cry, and Ashley had been in tears from the moment she had arrived. Rei froze for a few seconds, and suddenly reached for Gilraen's hand.

"I can't do it," he whimpered "I can't bear to see her like this, I can't say goodbye to her, I just can't."

Gilraen squeezed his hand in comfort and put her other arm around him. Then she looked up at him encouragingly "I'll come with you."

He looked hesitant, but eventually he nodded, and the two of them made their way up. Everyone else had taken their seats again, and were looking at their feet. Gilraen and Rei slowly stepped up to the side of the coffin.

For a moment, everything was silent, even the sound of the beating rain on the roof appeared to cease. For the first time since her fall, Gilraen was looking at the face of her Donna, her real face. It made a change from the petrified expression, the last thing Gilraen saw of her when she was alive. She was now completely at peace.

Neither of them said anything for a few moments. Gilraen was busy trying to take everything in, she couldn't possibly put into words what she wanted to say. Rei was gripping on to the coffin's edge, clearly lost for words as well. She couldn't find a way to begin, she needed to say something, there were so many things she wanted to say. But after the first word, she was less controlled than she would have liked.

"Donna..."

Her name. Gilraen felt as though she was letting go of everything. Everything she was trying to hold back suddenly came loose. She closed her eyes tight and silent tears poured down her cheeks. She tried not to make a noise, she tried not to let anybody see her let her guard down. But she had set Rei off too, and the two of them just stood there, unable to speak, crying their hearts out.

But now they stood outside in the pouring rain, the coffin being lowered so deep in the ground, they would never see it again. Donna didn't belong in the ground, she shouldn't have to stay down there, she should be living. This was a mistake, Gilraen was determined to believe that none of this was meant to happen. But knowing that would not bring her back. She looked around to find them all looking very much the same as her. All their heads bowed. Some discreetly wiping their eyes, a couple of them weeping on other people's shoulders. She did neither. Numb from all the crying before, her face was still wet, though it might have been rain. She simply stood there, saying all the words she wanted her to hear, saying them in her mind, knowing that Donna would be able to hear them. Because Donna would be there; she had promised. She was probably there right now. Gilraen glanced around. No, she couldn't see her, but she was there. Either watching from a distance the friends who would miss her greatly, standing with her arms around Rei, or even standing right beside Gilraen, as she always had been.

When the service was over, there was little to be said. Ashley was the first to take off, saying goodbye to everybody, and telling Gilraen her offer would always stand, should she need it. Straight away, Gilraen made her way towards Tyson "Can I talk to you?" "Oh...of course" the two of them headed back to the shelter of the porch, leaving the rest of them to lay down their flowers. "What's up?" "Tyson," she began, "Have you ever, er...what I mean is..." She wasn't sure how to ask this absurd question, but something told her that Tyson would have the answer she was looking for. "Did your Dragoon ever...speak to you?" Tyson's jaw dropped slightly. "Y-yeah, yeah it has. At the first Russian tournament, when I faced off against Tala. Did Driffen speak to you?" Gilraen shook her head "Not Driffen. It was Dratzy, and Danta too. But, it wasn't the bitbeasts that were talking, I don't think." "Who was it?" "It...it was them." "You mean Donna and Andrea? They were speaking in form of their bitbeasts?" Tyson looked astonished. "Yeah, and then for a moment...I could see them. And they were talking to me...They saved us." She looked sideways at him. He no longer looked astonished. In fact he was smiling slightly. "Wow..." She nodded. "They're watching over us." "They're watching over you." Tyson corrected her. She looked at him and nodded. He then spoke again. "Did they speak to...anybody else?" Gilraen knew what he was getting at, he didn't have to say it. She looked over at Rei, straightening himself up again, the tears still probably falling from his eyes. Truth be told, she had no idea if he had seen Donna too. She didn't think he would be too willing to tell, but if he ever did tell, he would tell her. And she would wait for him to be ready, she was not about to ask. She shrugged "I don't know." Tyson nodded and made a "hmm" sound. The rain had stopped and the evening sun was starting to come out. It glowed a strong orange light that seemed to shine on everything, and everything started to look a little bit better. Before her conversation with Tyson came to an end, Gilraen made a snap decision she had been pondering over for a while. "Tyson," she began "I'm going to quit beyblading." "You what?!" the reaction had been exactly what she was expecting. Tyson gaped at her, eyes wide and mouth open. "I can't continue with this, Tyson. I swear I'm not running away. I

don't even care if I am. I can't take it anymore, I can't live this life. Tyson looked dumb-struck. For someone like him, quitting something as important as beyblading would be impossible; it was basically his whole life.

'Bu-but how? I don't understand how a person can want to just quit beyblading.

Gilraen looked him right in the eyes 'I'm glad that you don't understand it, Tyson.

Biting her lip, Gilraen decided to get it over with quickly. Though her mind was made up, parting with it would be painful indeed. She dug into her pocket, and brought out her beyblade. She took Tyson's hand and placed the beyblade in its palm. 'It's yours.

'Wha-?' Tyson gaped down at the beyblade, still scratched up from their battle, the bit-chip of her beloved Driffen, gleaming up at its new master. Tyson shook his head furiously, 'No, I can't take this, this is your beyblade.

'Not anymore, I'm giving it to you. I can't keep it, Tyson. I have to erase this sport from my life. Completely.

'B-but why me? Why not-?'

'Because Tyson, you are the World Champion. You are the best beyblader I know, and I am certain that nobody else would take better care of my Driffen than you. You will know what to do with it, and whatever that is, I have faith in your decisions.' While he was lost for words, she dug back into her pocket, and held out Andrea's beyblade. 'Take this one aswell.

'That's Andrea's. No, I can't take hers aswell. What if, he looked around cautiously, 'What if she wants you to have it?'

Gilraen shook her head 'Andrea will understand. I cannot her beyblade, my beyblade or any beyblade. She will still stay with me, and her beyblade will go to a World Champion. I would be proud to know it was mine.

She gave Tyson a small smile and put her hand on his shoulder. Before he could say anything else, she stood up and began to walk back over to the others, leaving Tyson completely lost for words, with two new beyblades.

Rei was the first person she met. The pain in his face told her that there was something he couldn't get rid of. She gave him a comforting smile 'How are you feeling?' 'I...it's...there's just so much I could have done...I-I could have saved her.

She put her hand on his arm. 'Rei, please, we can't go on thinking about what we could have done. We'll exhaust ourselves. What mattered is how you saved her when she was still alive.

'But, what if she didn't know? What if she didn't know how much I wanted to save her?'

'She knew, Rei.' Gilraen was able to say with full confidence. She looked up at him. 'She loved you.'

'I...I hope so.'

'She did love you, and I swear she still does.' And Gilraen knew that Donna was probably standing right beside them now, grateful to her for telling him what she didn't have the chance to.

Rei looked slightly comforted by Gilraen's words. 'Thankyou.' He reached down to hug her, grateful to have somebody to share his pain with, somebody who had loved Donna as much as he had, if not more. When they separated, he dug into his pocket, and pulled something out. It was her beyblade, not a scratch on it from the battle. 'Here, I

suppose I should give this to you.”

Gilraen shook her head firmly, putting her hand over Rei’s and enclosing the beyblade in his hand. “I won’t take it from you. I am done with beyblading for good. You keep Donna’s beyblade, or if you really can’t handle keeping it, give it to Tyson. He owns Dratzy and Driffen now.”

Rei looked slightly shocked at Gilraen’s readiness to give up beyblading for good, but it didn’t hold for long. He could understand her reasons, he wouldn’t ask her to explain. He looked down at Danta. “I’ll keep it with me for ever.”

Gilraen didn’t know how long she stayed there for. Sitting on the hill side, looking at the view, flowers still in her hand but on the ground, under which her best friend lay. No more, she thought. She’d had enough. Everything she told Tyson was true, and he had her Driffen, her beloved Driffen. And Dratzy aswell. She knew she had made the right decision. She had lost everything to this sport. No longer was it going to rule her life, and ruin it even more. Amy could join Ashley’s team if she wanted, she could do anything for all Gilraen cared. She was done with it.

But even at this time she knew she was not alone. She looked over her shoulder to see him standing, quite a way behind her. But that was a look of concern on his face, no doubt about it. While everyone else had gone long before, he had waited and he cared. She knelt in front of Donna’s grave, and lay down the flowers. One last tear, and she stood up and walked over to him without looking back. And for the first time, she showed him a sign of weakness. She fell into him and he held her tight, with no thought to his own image. He could only imagine how she must feel. To want to quit something like beyblading, Kai didn’t think he would ever be able to do it. Yet she had given up her blade, her bitbeast. Without his Dranzer, Kai knew he wouldn’t be complete, and he knew it would take a while for Gilraen to be complete again. But he would help her. Whatever it took, he would be there. The two of them weren’t just competitors, they weren’t simply friends. They would have gone through forever together, and it was strange to think that they would no longer have to. One day they would die like everybody else.

But Kai knew, as Gilraen knew, that they had long lives ahead of them. And though they would no longer live for eternity, it was only when the sun stopped rising, the blades stopped spinning, the world as they knew it would be sucked into oblivion, that they would forget.

18. Epilogue

From then, the young bladers continued with their lives with no more disturbance, or danger. One day they would tell tales of their adventures to eager ears. The Bladebreakers remained successful world champions for years to come, but everything comes to an end, and after they finished they went on with normal lives. Though they never cut beyblading out of their lives completely. Kenny and Max opened up a private beyblading school in the heart of New York City, which was widely known to be the best around. Rei ended up back where he had originated, a small town in the depths of China. It took him a long time to get over the loss of Donna, but sure enough he found love again. He married and had lots of children, and made sure they all possessed the skills needed to be world champions as he had been. Tyson could never completely get out of the spot light. He was the only team member that continued with tournaments and joining famous world champion teams, though he never found a team more incredible than his first; the Bladebreakers. And Kai, well he moved around, place to place, living off his long-dead grandfather's fortune. Even he didn't really know where he would end up, but he was happy to have time to think.

Gilraen did quit blading when she told Tyson she would. She began to lead a normal life, completely distant from the ever-popular sport. The only time beyblading ever came of any use to her after the day of Donna's funeral was her scholarship to a university. She eventually settled back in Russia, where she belonged. And when Kai was in the neighbourhood he always paid her a visit. After all, how could these two not stay friends? And with Kai owning his grandfather's old abbey, he was there often.

Unfortunately the bladers did not keep in touch often at all. But Tyson would be seen world-wide on television for as long as he lived, and when they were to meet up at the age of thirty five, it was almost as though nothing had changed. Even though they knew that everything had changed really. It was nice to be able to lead lives without fear of death, but they missed the trouble they used to get into, back when they were young and famous and in constant danger. And Kai and Gilraen would sigh with relief, that they had many years to come, and that was all. Immortality would have changed it all. But the bond between them could not be broken, and they would never forget how close they came to living for eternity.

~~~~~  
So that concludes the trilogy! Oh wow, I finally got it all finished!  
Began in 2004 and ended 2008, took me a while I must say  
So glad it's all done.

~~~~~

CHARACTERS

Yes, my characters to these stories are well-thought out and complex.

I put this at the end of the trilogy because it gives away a lot...and I thought of it about 5 minutes ago =P

Bladebreakers:

(disclaimer: I do not own these characters)

Tyson

Bitbeast: Dragoon (blue dragon)

Kai

Bitbeast: Dranzer (red phoenix)

Max

Bitbeast: Draceil (purple turtle)

Rei

Bitbeast: Drigger (white tiger)

Kenny

Bitbeast: Dizzy (god knows, it's in a laptop)

White Tigers:

Mariah

Bitbeast: Galux (pink... cat?)

Mariah is killed in Eternal by Gilraen. Gilraen was ordered to murder Mariah by Adam so he could get his revenge after finding her with Rei.

If you don't know these people I can't help you really. I assume everyone who reads this knows Beyblade and therefore knows these characters.

Team Darkness (original):

(claimer: I do own these characters =P they're my oc's)

Gilraen

Bitbeast: Driffen (grey wolf)

Gilraen is the team captain of Team Darkness. She was originally brought up by a religious family, though that's not in the story at all, I felt the need to mention it. Throughout the stories she goes through a complete character change, eventually deciding to quit beyblading, after losing almost everything from it. She is the balanced character who gets too involved when she cares deeply about something. She is one of the main focuses in the trilogy.

Donna

Bitbeast: Danta (white wolf)

Donna is a very small and quiet girl who appears to be too young for the team and is constantly looking depressed. We learn more about her character in the second story when she plays a more active role. One of the most epic moments in the trilogy is her tragic death in the third story. She is the second of the original Team Darkness to die.

Andrea

Bitbeast: Dratzy (black wolf)

Andrea is an extremely preserved character who expresses similar traits to Kai, no social aspects to her personality at all, but remains loyal to who she cares about. She was Gilraen's true friend and this led to her murder in Eternal.

Ashley

Bitbeast: Dogtra (brown wolf)

In Eternal Ashley was the only friendly member of Team Darkness. She had little to do with the story, and left the team after the death of Andrea. In Endless she re-appears a changed girl with a new team. Things turn icy between her, Gilraen and Donna, but she and Gilraen manage to remain friends in the end.

Family of A's:

A dysfunctional family with no last name to record, so they're simply the family of a's. The family consists of 5 siblings, three of which are actively involved in the trilogy, the other two are merely mentioned.

In order of age-

Alistair

No active role in trilogy

Alistair was a smart young man until he became involved in gangs and started taking heavy drugs to help him get over the stress of his work. He dreamed of becoming a surgeon, but ended up losing his life due to an over-dose of sleeping pills. This had a terrible effect on the family for ever.

Amber

No active role in trilogy

After the death of her brother, Amber also turned to drugs and joined an underground beyblading gang. Nobody knows what they used there but it made their blades supposedly undefeatable. She had once been beautiful and well-behaved. She was jailed for life, though the reasons are left to the imagination of the reader. The only one of the family of a's to survive. No idea of what happened to her younger siblings, she gave Angela her powerful beyblade and believes they are still alive and waiting for her.

Adam and Angela (twins)

Adam's Bitbeast: not known

Angela's Bitbeast: Prythanae (white thestral- legend of a skeleton horse)

Adam plays an active role in Eternal, and Angela in Endless. Adam's death is the reason for the involvement of Angela in the story. The two of them, being twins, had a very close relationship and Angela was immortal like Adam. Adam was the creator of the immortality machine, and so when it was destroyed, so was he, whereas Gilraen and Kai remained immortal. Both twins were attractive like Amber and intelligent like Alistair.

Adrian

Bitbeast: Pythagonite (turquoise giant snake)

Always admired his older brother Adam and so was vengeful when he heard of his death. Adrian has a strange dark aura about him, whereas both his older brothers appeared very normal, perhaps due to trauma he suffered in his short life. His revenge for his brothers death

backfires and he ends up dead too from building collapse in Ever-lasting.

Others:

Those who play active rolls or are simply mentioned in the stories.

Emma

Bitbeast: Drafitte (gold lion)

Emma is a kind and slightly selfish girl who is a good blader and instantly liked by Gilraen. When it comes to relationships she tends to put herself before others, but proves herself to be a better person when she saves Donna's life in Ever-lasting. After leaving I don't believe Emma continued to beyblade, I think she figured that for her, love was more important.

Lauri

Bitbeast: Deana (maroon fox)

Lauri came into the story making a bad impression, and instantly letting the reader know her intentions; to be with Kai and get rid of Emma. She is not liked by most of the bladers and when she loses Kai, the one thing she had, she leaves the team without saying a word, only leaving a note. Though she realises her downfall by the end of Ever-lasting and recommends Amy, a 'much nicer person'.

Amy

Bitbeast: Darla

Amy was Lauri's best friend, though after Lauri disappears nothing is said of them being friends again. Amy is determined to prove herself worthy of being on such a great team and has an enthusiastic personality like Tyson. She knows she needs to improve and sets herself out to do it, aswell as organise everything.

Dan

Bitbeast: Unknown

Dan rarely appears in the trilogy, only in Ever-lasting a couple of times. He is instantly introduced as a typical good guy, attractive, nice, and a good beyblader. Despite his beyblading potential, he is not quite motivated enough to become a champion beyblader and is distracted easily in battle.

CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS

Kai and Gilraen-

The most powerful friendship bond in the story, these two characters brought together by the experiences they shared and the temporary immortality. These two were unexplainably drawn to each other and risked everything to protect each other several times.

Kai and Emma-

Emma let's the reader see a little into Kai's past, before the Bladebreakers. Kai and Emma were once a couple, though an odd one as their personalities seem to clash. They never really seemed to get over each other until they had an understanding and Emma left with somebody else. But who knows if they ever truly will; first love's are hard to forget. Emma helped Kai learn an important lesson; running away is a coward's thing to do,

something Kai had never grasped the concept of before.

Tyson and Gilraen-

Though not together very often, an uncanny friendship developed between these two. Mainly evident at the end of Endless, but Tyson does approach her in Eternal as well. At Donna's funeral, Tyson is the first person she tells that she's going to quit blading for good. She hands Tyson 2 beyblades, Andrea's and her own, because she knows he will do the best job with them. They also share the same experience of talking bitbeasts, which nobody else can claim.

Gilraen and Andrea-

These two truly understood each other. Andrea having such a reserved personality, Gilraen was the only person she could really talk to. In return, nobody cared for Gilraen the way Andrea did before her death. And the reason for her death was her close friendship with Gilraen.

Gilraen and Donna-

Donna stuck by Gilraen through the death of her best friend, and never left her side while the two of them watched 3 later members leave. Donna became a true friend because of everything the two of them went through, she would have stayed forever if she had not fallen to her death. Gilraen never truly valued her until she was gone.

Rei and Donna-

Rei and Donna are the lovely couple in the story, though not until Ever-lasting do they get together. The relationship does not last too long, but they fall hard for each other and when Donna dies, Rei is in complete despair. He keeps Donna's beyblade for ever just to have a part of her with him always. Gilraen noted he was one of the few people who could make Donna smile.

Emma, Lauri and Donna-

The new Team Darkness, with Gilraen. This proves unsuccessful and both Lauri and Emma leave the team before they even get a taste of beyblading life. Lauri and Emma despise each other. Donna also does not get along with either of them and feels outcasted in the new team Gilraen has selected without much of her approval. However the relationship between Emma and Donna gets better when Emma saves Donna's life in the path of Adrian's bit beast. Emma also tells Donna first that she is leaving the team.

Kai and Lauri-

Lauri is a lucky fan girl of Kai's who manages to become his girlfriend for a while in Ever-lasting. However even she knows that this relationship is due to Kai's jealousy of Emma and Dan, but she doesn't care. She will soak it up. A loner and a drama queen, this pair would never have worked out.

Emma and Dan-

A minor happy couple that ends happily. We don't hear of Emma and Dan after Ever-lasting but we assume they had happy lives, together or not. These two are instantly taken with each other at the tryouts for Team Darkness and end up leaving the country together. Emma turned her back on another chance with Kai to leave with Dan, truly believing she had finally found a love she was looking for.

Gilraen and Adam-

The history between Gilraen and Adam is mentioned frequently in the stories. The two of them had been life-long friends for reasons unknown. Eternal begins with Adam trying to take their relationship to the next step, and a feisty Gilraen violently responding, hurting him in more ways than one. Their relationship is what began the whole mess between the two teams and Adam's family.

Adam and Mariah-

After being rejected by Gilraen, Adam hooks up with Mariah. This is partly to get over Gilraen and partly to make Gilraen jealous, an attempt which is unsuccessful. Adam ends up ordering Gilraen to murder her after finding her with Rei. This is due to his humiliation at being rejected a second time.

Rei and Mariah-

Until Rei realised how much Donna meant to him, he was deeply depressed at Mariah's death. As most of you know, Rei and Mariah had been friends since they were young and there had always been something there. He finally realised this a little too late. He probably had loved her, but this love is not as deep as his love for Donna.