

# Feral

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*Pretty much a story about how Shadow got her armour and met Spink and Virus. 8D  
I apologise for my inability to write longer chapters. o.O*

*I really should write a story that isn't in first person. XD*

*Everything (c) me (Amy)*

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<b>Chapter 1 - Hunted</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 2 - One of a Kind</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter 3 - Grand Tour</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Chapter 4 - Questions</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter 5 - Hearing Things</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 6 - Change of Scenery</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter 7 - Going Under</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Chapter 8 - Experimental</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Chapter 9 - New Enemies, New Allies</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Chapter 10 - Runaway</b>	<b>18</b>

## 1 - Hunted

A few more shots whipped past my head and the feathered darts buried themselves into the tree trunk I was leaning on. Break over. They were getting close. Very close. I had no choice but to take to my heels again and run like hell. This was the fifth time in two months that the humans had hunted me. And once again, I had no idea where I was running to, even though I knew this forest like the back of my hand. I was running out of energy and my muscles were protesting. I'd already tried changing, but my last shift was too recent.

I heard some growls and shouts come from the trees behind me. Then something hit me square in the back, winding me and knocking me to the floor. A set of jaws clamped firmly down on my shoulder as I tumbled across the damp forest floor trying to get the rottweiler off my back. I managed to throw it off me and scrambled to my feet, but I was knocked down by the dog again. The shouts of men grew louder. I couldn't hear what was being said, because I was too busy trying not to be torn apart by this sodding dog. It eventually gave up and I tried to run away again. I was on the brink of blind panic as I started to stumble away through the thinning bracken. I didn't manage to get very far as a strong net tangled around me, making me fall to the floor. I tried to find a way out of the net, but my squirming was only rewarded with a tranquilizer dart to my backside. I looked up and saw three faces staring down at me. I couldn't make out any details as my eyelids started to get heavier and my vision started to blurr and waver. But I knew there was one woman and two men looking down at me.

" 'bout bloody time we caught it.." Said one of the men, nudging me in the side with a foot.

"Hopefully this one'll get us that payrise we've been waiting for." Said the woman.

I didn't catch what the other man said. I'd already passed out.

When I came to, I was lay on a cold, hard metallic table with a needle buried in my arm. The room was brightly lit and I was forced to squint until my eyes adjusted to the bright artificial light. I had no idea where I was or what had happened. Then it came to me. I'd finally been caught after months of being hunted.

I pulled the needle out of my arm and rolled off the table, crouching down on the cold hard floor. My head spun and I grabbed the side of the table to steady myself. My hand touched a warm bag hanging off the side of the table, it's liquid contents were black and the bag was labelled. It was a bag of blood. My blood. No wonder I felt so light headed. How many more of these bags had the bastard's filled with my blood?

Someone entered the room and I grabbed the first sharp object that came to hand, which was a pair of nasty looking scissors.

The man who came into the room had a pair of blue jeans on, a dull white shirt and a knee length white coat on over the top. He was still flicking through the pages on his clipboard, but jumped and took a step back when he noticed that I was up and about and armed with a pair of painful looking scissors.

## 2 - One of a Kind

His bright blue eyes looked down to the scissors held firmly in my hand, my knuckles turning white as my grip tightened.

"You can put those down now. I'm not going to hurt you."

He sighed when I didn't reply.

"I'm just here to make sure that you're alright, so I would really appreciate it if you didn't gauge my eyes out." He said softly, daring to take a step toward me.

"Oh, and whilst you were unconscious, I brought you some new clothes so that you don't have to wear those dirty old rags anymore," He gestured at the baggy clothes I was wearing, a pair of dark blue, fraying jeans and a fading green tee that I'd thieved off of some campers awhile ago. "Or have to suffer wearing the standard itchy white overalls that my boss seems to like so much." He grinned and nodded towards the neatly folded pile of clothes that were sat on a side table at the otherside of the room.

"... Not much of a talker, eh? Hm... Well, there's a curtain over there with a sink behind it, so you can change and wash up. Don't worry. I won't let anyone peek."

I glanced suspiciously at the curtain in the corner, then at him again and let out a low growl.

"Promise." He smiled nervously. "This room's quite private, I assure you. There's only the one door and the one camera, which is, of course, for security reasons." He smiled again as I slowly sidled over to where the clothes were, not relinquishing the grip on my scissors or taking my eyes off him. He may seem polite, but that didn't mean that I had to trust him. Afterall, he was helping keep me prisoner.

I discarded my old clothes carefully, constantly looking about me to see if anyone was watching. Being butt - naked around other weredragons I could handle. But any other species - especially humans - I felt uneasy, like I was being silently examined. Though they probably did have a quick head to toe physical done on me when I was unconscious. That wasn't a thought I wanted in my head, really...

I had a quick wash and hastily pulled on my new clothes. I hated them. They reeked of humans and were a pale blue and white combination. I reached for the scissors that I'd put on the side of the sink and found that they weren't there anymore. I heard someone walking away from the curtain, hard shoes clicking on the cold floor. I emerged carefully from behind the curtains, still feeling extremely uneasy about this new and unnatural environment I was in and saw that a short, slender dark haired woman had entered the room and was now stood next to the man. She halted her talking and looked coolly at me, dark eyes glittering with mischief, gently stroking the point of the scissors with the tip of her thumb.

"Haven't you got something important to be doing, instead of annoying me?" He grumbled sourly.

"Fine. You can have the feral teen. For now." She handed him the scissors and sauntered out of the room, the door closing gently behind her. I get the feeling that they don't exactly get along well.

He looked at me and smiled. "Ah! You look much better. Now, if you'll please come with me, I'll show you to where you'll be staying for a while, and then I'll need to ask you some questions once you get yourself settled in." He opened the door and ushered me out into the cold, white corridor where an armed guard dressed in black was stood. That was when I planted my feet firmly on the floor and refused to budge. He looked at me, his expression a mixture of confusion and worry. The guard merely grunted and looked sourly at me.

"I'm not going any further or answering any of your bloody questions until you tell me who the hell you are, where I am and why I'm here." I growled at him, refusing to move until I got some decent answers.

"Oh, forgive me for being so rude! I'm Rowan," He said smoothly "and we brought you here to the

Prytchard facility because you are one of a kind!" His eyes glittered with excitement.

"Oh...?"

"Mmm! We've come across several weredragons on our exploratory travels around this world and studied them. But none are as powerful as you. They're not as strong and their changes don't last as long as your's do."

Studying?! I thought in disgust, feeling more and more violated. The gurad grunted impatiently and Rowan looked at him, paling slightly.

"Um, well. Follow me." He hastily said and continued ushering me along the corridors with the guard following close behind.

"But why am I here?!" I protested angrily. Rowan flinched.

"Like I said. You're one of a kind, so we brought you here so we could ask you some questions and possibly learn more about your race. Because, pretty much all we know, is that your kind are few and far spread."

"Yeah, well. We blame you lot for that one. It's all that de-forestation and polluting your lot have been doing. It's killing us all off." I grumbled angrily.

### 3 - Grand Tour

Rowan took me on a tour of the facility before showing me to my 'room'. It went down three levels and the other three levels were above ground. The Prytchard facility was surrounded by a thick circle of tall trees in an isolated area of the country of Sutone. That's all he told me of the facility's location. I was at least thirty thousand miles away from my home country of Mu'tare, which made things worse because Sutone was extremely well developed compared to Mu'tare which was virtually untouched, with but a mere handful of villages and small towns scattered throughout the entire country.

Sutone was quickly becoming polluted and over populated, forcing the humans to encroach onto other people's lands across the borders, causing anything from harmless name calling to small, merciless wars all for the sake of a small piece of land.

"So this is where I'll be staying." I said blankly as the guard opened the door to my new 'home'. Assuming you could call a small, dingy room home...

"I'm afraid so, yes... I'm sorry to say that it hasn't been re-decorated in quite some time. But at least it's clean and has a working hot and cold water supply, which I hope, makes up for the size and the shameful view through the window." Rowan looked out of the small rectangular window that was showing the outside world at ground level and shook his head solemnly.

"As you can see, by the grass and the snail crawling up the glass, this floor is just below ground level." He turned and headed out of the reinforced steel door.

"You can't expect me to stay in here all the time! It's tiny!" I said, feeling slightly distressed.

"Try not to worry too much." He smiled. "you are allowed to wander around the facility as long as you have either me or a guard with you. And if you feel the need to change, let someone know and either Serjeant Brown here or myself will take you out into the enclosure so you can stretch your um.. Wings." He said awkwardly. "But for now, get some rest. You've had a long, hard day. I'll come and talk to you tomorrow morning and ask you some of those questions." He smiled again and vanished from sight.

"I will warn you now: There will be a guard at your door at all times. And you also have neighbours on either side, so behave yourself or you'll be answering to me." Brown grunted before heaving the door shut and locking it behind him.

They both failed to mention the camera above the door.

I walked over to the small chest of drawers and had a quick rifle through its contents. There several pairs of light coloured trousers, shirts and a couple of skirts and some underwear. Apparently, I was expected to stay here for quite some time, which I - personally - wasn't expecting to happen when I found out a weakness in this so - called 'high tech, secure facility'.

I looked around at my surroundings and saw that there was a curtain that could be pulled around the tiny bathing area for some privacy. How thoughtful. They study you for months without you knowing, hunt you mercilessly and once they've captured you and put you in a cell, they finally have the decency to allow you some privacy. Bastards.

I looked out of the tiny window and saw a large garden like area with a small fountain in the middle. There were people all in white coats or dressed head to toe in white and a few armoured guards milling about. All were chatting like it was the greatest day ever. I huffed out a puff of smoke and thumped down onto the bed under the window in the corner of the cramped room. I was mildly surprised to find that it was slightly more comfortable than a slab of concrete. I curled up with my back against the wall and

drifted off to sleep, hoping that when I woke, it'd all turn out to be some kind of demented nightmare.

## 4 - Questions

I woke up in the same position as I fell asleep in when the door was unlocked less than elegantly and Rowan scuttled in with his clipboard tucked away under his arm.

"Good morning!" He chirped, seeming insanely happy about something as he made himself comfortable on the other end of the bed.

"Ungh... There's never anythin' good 'bout th' mornin'..." I grumbled before trying to sit upright, but instead settling for groggily propping myself up with my elbows.

"Ah. Not a morning person either, eh? I know the feeling. I'd rather stay in bed too." He chuckled. Thing is, I'd rather be in my own bed or Zh'an's. But I'm not gonna go into that last part...

"Lemme guess. You're here to grill me, right?" I said, stifling a yawn.

"I'm afraid so," He didn't look too apologetic "but the sooner we get this done, the sooner you can eat breakfast and the sooner I can go and get my paperwork finished."

He took out a pen and started flicking through the pages on his clipboard before continueing.

"First of all, your name."

".... Shadow...." I replied cautiously.

"And last name?"

"Ironclaw..." I really should have lied, but it was too damn early for my brain to be functioning properly. He scribbled down my name and proceeded to ask me my age, birthdate and country of origin etc. If they'd been studying me, then they should know half of these things already.

"What about your parents? Got any siblings?"

I waited a moment before answering. "Both of my parents went missing a few years back. I dunno if they're still alive or not. And I have no siblings."

For the next half hour, he continued questioning me on my family, like where they came from, what their names were - I lied about their names and appearance incase they were still alive and the humans took an interest in them - and also how and where I was brought up. He was mildly surprised to learn that I'd been born in Klaneth and 'migrated', as he put it, to Mu'tare shortly after my mother went missing, where I was raised for the next 14 years of my life by my father, a Shadow dragon, in the vast forest that covered a good three quarters of Mu'tare.

I purposely didn't tell him about the hidden city that was carved into the peak of Mount Kras by our ancestors, otherwise the humans might - will - take it upon themselves to go exploring the Weredragon's only safe refuge away from the savagry of man kind.

Every Weredragon met in that glorious, ancient stone city each year to discuss what the humans were upto and to see how our friends were doing and if they needed any help with anything. But now, because of the humans, the creatures the Weredragons had sworn to protect where being wiped out by the human race because they were destroying the natural world and erecting a false, concrete one around themselves, polluting the world, and leaving some of the species either extinct or struggling to survive in a human environment like the Weredragons were. There were only a handful of us left. Seven turned up at last year's meeting, myself included.

"How many times a week do you usually change?" Pried Rowan.

"About once or twice." I was now sat cross legged on the bed staring past Rowan, and to the heavy, steel door.

He continued scribbling down notes on his clipboard when he was interrupted by serjeant Brown. "Doctor Allsopp, Professor Hill wants to see you immediately. And he says to scrub up too." Rowan turned and looked at me. "Oh, please excuse me Shadow. I have some urgent business to attend to." He stood up abruptly and hurried out of the room, with Brown following closely. A few minutes later, a tall woman wearing chef's clothing came in carrying a tray of food. She sat it down on the small table at the end of my bed and swiftly left the room, the door clanking shut behind her. The food didn't look too bad, but it didn't look too appetising either...



## 5 - Hearing Things

I ate the food that had been left by the woman and had a quick shower. Once I got dressed, I sat down on the bed, contemplating what was going to happen to me and how long I was going to be here for. I was pulled out of my thoughts by a tapping on the wall behind me. I leaned closer and heard the tapping again. I tapped on the wall and waited. Nothing. I decided to knock on the wall instead, and this time I got a reply.

So I did have a neighbour afterall. I was starting to think I was on my own and was beginning to hear things.

The knocking game continued for another twenty minutes or so, until I heard the door of that room creak open and bang shut. An hour passed and there was no sign of next door's inhabitant. I was getting restless, so I asked the guard at my door if I could go for a wander around. He agreed, so he opened the door and followed me for the next half hour. He was a nice man, alot more polite than that grumpy bastard, Sergeant Brown.

If I asked a question, he answered it honestly, but of course, there were certain questions he wasn't allowed to answer or just didn't know the answers to. And I knew he was being completely honest about not knowing what was going to happen to me.

I stopped outside a large viewing window on B3.

"Is there a probelm?" Asked the guard.

"What's this room for? I don't remember seeing it yesterday."

"Oh, this is the room that everyone calls the 'Tube Room'. It's a lame nick name, I know, but that's what you get for working in the same environment as a bunch of humourless scientists." He said, sarcasm slipping into his tone. "All of those large tubes are filled with a special liquid that helps stabalize and heal the body quicker if something severe happens. Basically, it's a hi-tech form of 'strict bed rest'." He smiled slightly.

"What do you mean 'If something severe happens'?"

"Well, this is a research facility that houses several labratories and a couple of operating theatres. And some of the chemicals used are very potent and potentially leathal. And accidents happen..." He looked grim.

"So I'm guessing, the reason why I'm here, is to be used as a labrat. Or more precisely, a labdragon." The guard grunted something and then he ushered me back to my room and told me I had two hours left before the last meal of the day would be served. I lay down on my bed and tried to think of something else, but those large tubes and what the guard had said about the labs, operating theatres, chemicals and accidents happening dominated my mind.

As I started to doze off, I could hear a distant voice.

It was vaguely familiar. It took me a few minutes to recognise the voice. It was Zh'an. He was calling to me and I wanted to call back to him, but something was holding back my mind speech.

\*Shadow! Please tell me you're alright! Your side of the forest has been destroyed! Where are you!?\* He sounded distressed.

I could feel his fear and it made me feel completely helpless and lost.

## 6 - Change of Scenery

I woke up abruptly, the light from the twin crescent moons shining through the small window. My body was aching and I knew I needed to change. I sat up and noticed a tray of stale food on the table. I guess they didn't want to wake me. How thoughtful...

But right now, I wasn't interested in food, I just needed to get out of this room.

I hauled myself to my feet and unsteadily made my way over to the door and hammered on it with my fist. The camera overhead whirred and I looked up at it to see that it'd repositioned itself to look down at me.

"What seems to be the problem, Ironclaw?" Came a gruff voice.

"I need to get out!" I gasped as my lungs started burning.

"It's two in the morning, can't it wait?"

"No it fracking can't!"

There was a mumble of voices from the otherside and the door opened revealing Brown stood next to the dark haired woman I saw the other day.

My vision suddenly blurred and then cleared, allowing me to see in greater detail. The woman had a clipboard tucked under her arm and she looked smug. She looked me up and down and her grin broadened.

"So soon?" She said, sarcasm seeping into her voice.

I just glared at her, trying to control myself.

"This way." She chirped and Brown ushered me out into the dimly lit corridor and through several armoured doors.

Once outside I ran for the furthest hiding spot I could find, leaving the woman and the guard standing at the door. I hid in a thick clump of bushes close to the outer perimeter trees, discarded my clothes and concentrated on changing.

I flexed my wings and had a stretch before peering carefully out of my hiding spot. I flicked my tongue out and tasted the air which was heavy with moisture and the scent of rotting vegetation. It was well into autumn now. The weather was getting colder and wetter everyday.

I looked up at the twin crescent moons, crouched down and beat my wings as hard as I could, sending myself into the air. The cold was slowly seeping through my scales and I could see my breath, but the weather didn't bother me. I was in the air, it was dark and I was willing to see if the human's security systems were as good as they made them out to be.

I wheeled around and headed for the thick trees. I tried to fly up and over them, but some kind of invisible barrier, almost knocking me out of the air. I roared in frustration, sending birds fleeing into the night. Was this part of the reason I couldn't make any contact with Zh'an?

I regained my balance in the air and looked over to where the sergeant and the female scientist was stood. Brown had an evil smile twisted across his lips and she was watching me with interest, scribbling things down on her clipboard.

The enclosure was smaller than it looked. I wasn't allowed to go too high or too far, because of the barriers that were in place. I wheeled about in the air, ignoring the humans below, searching for some prey down on the ground below. I was in the air for a few more hours and my stomach was protesting at the lack of food and the humans were looking more and more appetising. Then my attention was caught by a grey blur darted across my field of vision. The faint, musky smell of a panicked rabbit drifted up on

the cool breeze and my stomach groaned loudly. I folded my wings tightly and within a split second the rabbit was in my mouth, my teeth dug deep into the warm flesh. The humans had regained their interest in what was going on. The woman resumed scribbling down notes and Brown had his hand on his gun and was watching me carefully.

I made my way back to my hiding spot with the rabbit clamped firmly between my jaws, its warm blood dripping out of my mouth and onto the cold, damp leafy ground. When I'd stripped the rabbit of all its flesh, I peaked out of the bush to see the guard who'd escorted me the other day stood next to Rowan.

## 7 - Going Under

Once back in my human form, I dressed slowly and walked up to Rowan groggily.

The sun had risen and I felt like shoot. I didn't get the exercise I wanted or needed, I was hungry, alone, trapped in some kind of government facility that was surrounded by an invisible cage and I was feeling more agitated than I felt before. Rowan didn't look so peachy either. He had a grim look about him and his pale face was topped by a scruff of dark brown hair that made him look as if he'd just woken up.

"Did you get enough exercise?" He said, forcing cheer into his voice.

"No." I growled.

"Oh." He said, his features dropping back into the recent mixture of sleeplessness and worry.

He led me back indoors and instead of taking me back to my room, he took me in a different direction and went down to B3 where the lamely named Tube Room was.

"Why are we down here...?" I asked nervously, remembering what the guard had told me about some of these rooms and their purposes.

"Professor Hill wants you." He said bleakly.

That doesn't sound good...

I looked about me at the brightly lit corridor. We'd stopped outside a white door and Rowan and the guard were stood on either side of me. Several men and women dressed in a similar fashion to Rowan bustled passed, taking brief glances at me as they went. There were only a couple of guards on duty and both were posted at either end on the corridor, guarding the doors. I shifted uneasily as the long minutes dragged by.

I didn't like this recent situation at all. Being captured and dragged to this place against my will and not knowing the reason why was bad enough, but being made to stand here and wait for something I didn't know about was somehow worse than being studied and called feral.

Half an hour later and a tall, grey haired man with glasses on beckoned us into the room. It was an operating theatre...

The sharp smell of disinfectant stung my nostrils. The room was full of weird instruments and high up on the far wall was a large pane of glass with a room behind it. Two men and one woman, all wearing military garb, were stood, eyeing me up, curiosity plastered on their faces.

"Shadow, this is Professor Hill. He'll be er... Working with you today..." Rowan said hesitantly.

Hill smiled pleasantly at me before turning to Rowan.

"Doctor Allsopp, would you kindly go see to our guests." He nodded slightly towards the three in the viewing room.

He nodded gently and solemnly made his way over to the door next to the window and vanished through it, reappearing in the small room and started talking to them.

The dark haired woman who was an almost constant annoyance to me swaggered in, dressed head to toe in white, like Hill was. I was flanked by two guards as Rowan came back into the room and was joined by the woman over near the sink. I started to edge back to the door, but the guards grabbed my arms in a firm grip. I tried to get loose, but their grip only tightened, sending bolts of pain down my arms.

"Stop wriggling about like that. You'll only do yourself damage." It was Brown's voice. He was stood behind and breathing down my neck.

He forced me down onto the cold metal table, the three guards still trying to restrain me.

"I think she's ready to be sedated, professor!" He grunted.

I could feel everyone watching me struggling to get free. I screamed at them to let me go, but Brown put his iron grip around my throat, making me choke on the curses I was spitting at them.

"Doctor Smith, the sedative, if you would." Hill said calmly.

I saw her out of the corner of my eye filling a syringe with a clear liquid. Rowan had his back towards me and I whimpered as Smith walked towards me and jabbed me in the arm, forcing the fluid into my body. I felt my ankles and wrists being clamped to the table as the guards bound me to the cold, hard metal, and my eye lids started getting heavy as the sedative started working.

"Is she going under?" Rowan's voice floated from the corner of the room.

## 8 - Experimental

The sun was warm on my back as I soared high above the rocky ground, searching for something. Or for someone. I recognised the barren landscape below me as Vu'tra, Zh'an's home country.

The rocky scenery below started to get greener as the shrubbery thickened out across the rocks. The forest took over and the familiar smell of my home took over. I was now flying over Mu'tare and it's forest. I felt like I was missing something important to me. I flew as close to the thick canopy as I dared and let the various scents fill my sense. I dipped the tip of my right wing down and banked off in a different direction, into the heart of the forest, sniffing and tasting the air as I went. The sun had just started setting when I picked up the scent I'd been unknowingly looking for. I folded my wings and dove through the trees, landing on all fours, wings flared, with a dull thud and cracking as the twigs beneath my claws snapped under my weight.

I followed the scent to a small clearing where two more filled my senses. Three humans and two canines.

Just beyond the clearing was devastation. The forest had been destroyed along with the trail I'd been following, making me feel extremely frustrated and alone. I looked down into a small puddle on the forest floor, but didn't see myself. Instead of seeing a dark blue and yellow dragon, a grey and black dragon was staring back at me, eyes full of pain and grief. It was Zh'an.

I kept my eyes closed as I came to. I could feel myself floating in some kind of thick liquid with a mask pulled over my muzzle, pumping oxygen into my lungs. Other things were attached to me too, buried deep in my skin all down my back, arms and legs.

I was hurting all over and was struggling to control my breathing, not wanting to open my eyes, unwilling to see what had been done to me. All I wanted to do was stay with Zh'an, I didn't care if it was a dream or not that I'd just woke up from, I just didn't want to face the humans.

I heard muffled voices a few minutes later, one male and one female.

"So you think this recent experiment of yours will deterre our barbaric neighbours, Doctor Smith?"

"Absolutely." She chimed. "If you ever met her parents, then you'd agree with me completely."

"Oh?" He questioned.

"Mmmh. Her mother, Ivy, was a psychotic weredragon, willing to do anything to protect her kind, especially her daughter, and her father, Maxwell, wasn't even from around here. He was a powerful warrior from an ancient tribe of Shadow Dragons. According to Rowan, Maxwell's the one who raised her and taught her after her mother died an unexpected death..."

"I get the feeling, by the look on your face, that you're not quite done with talking yet." He said wryly.

"Well, she gets her strength and cunning from her mother and her speed and agility comes from her father's side, which is what we've been working on. The only problem is, when she comes to, will that side of her be at full strength and will she have inherited the Shadow Dragon's allergy to anything angelic?"

"Hmm. I read about that in your reports. Mental and physical pain? Sounds nasty."

"It is."

"Rather them than me." He said gruffly.

So. I'm just an experiment to them. I'd love nothing more than to crush Smith. Especially for what she said about my mother. It wasn't her fault. My dad said that the humans drove her over the edge in some

twisted bid to use her as a living weapon.

I slowly opened my eyes and carefully looked at my surroundings through the thick orange liquid. I tilted my head slowly to get a better look myself as my mind slowly recognised my location. I was in the Tube Room. Two more tanks were set diagonal from me on either side. In the one to my right was a dragon like creature, wings and striped tail warped around itself, hiding it's head, arms and legs as if to protect itself from something. But then I was in a similar position, with my wings and tail wrapped round myself. But there was something strange about the creature. The end of it's tail was flaming brightly, even though it was completely submerged.

In the tank to my left was an Iguana like creature with long twin horns similar to mine, but with a mop of hair inbetween. The creature looked male and had nasty looking spikes all the way down to the tip of his long tail, which was wrapped firmly around him. He looked malnourished and like myself and the other creature, had small, flexible tubes attached to him.

I closed my eyes, trying to ignore everything around me, but failed as the tanks started draining. I quickly opened my eyes, startling two scientists. The orange liquid drained away and the cylindrical glass tube was raised up and out of the way, leaving me sat on a cold metal grid, wings and tail still wrapped tightly around me. I blinked a few times to clear my fuzzy vision and Hill and Rowan came into focus.

Hill looked pleased with himself as he looked me up and down. Rowan merely looked sick as he removed the tubes from my body. I was too angry to be damned angry to move, so I settled for watching what was going on. Smith, Sergeant Brown and a tall, thin woman with ice blue eyes and hair set against pale skin walked up behind Hill and Rowan. The woman was wearing a long, flowing white dress with a light blue coat on.

"How're you feeling this morning, Shadow?"

"I'm going to tear your hearts out..." I growled. Well, I did say I wasn't a morning person.

The new comers continued to eye me up cautiously.

"Not much change in the personality. She's still a miserable dog, like Ivy." Smith grinned and something inside me snapped.

## 9 - New Enemies, New Allies

I lept at Smith, talons extended ready to tear the smug dog apart, when my vision blurred as something solid hit me in the side of the head. I heard a pained scream as I went down, solidly hitting the floor. When I regained focus, I saw Smith hunched over on the floor, bloodied hands to her face with Hill, Rowan and the pale woman kneeling around her.

Brown's boot landed firmly on my back, pinning me firmly to the cold floor as Smith struggled back to her feet. The pale woman had her hands over the scientist's face, murmuring something in a strange language. Smith wiped away the blood on her face with a trembling hand and glared evilly at me, the smugness replaced by rage.

A grin twisted onto my lips at the sight of the raw scars I'd left on her face. Though I now disliked the pale woman even more. Her pale skin, blue hair and healing abilities told me all I needed to know. She was an angel. And me being half Shadow Dragon, I knew that I could end up in serious pain or even be killed by one touch from this fragile looking woman.

Smith said something to the angel then nodded to Brown who promptly forced me to my feet. Everyone watched with intrigue as the angel slowly approached me. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the horned Iguana open his eyes. Nobody noticed though, because they were watching me and the angel.

"You really need to learn some manners, dragon." She said, her voice sounding like a quiet echo. She frowned and grabbed my arm, sending my nerves into overdrive. I roared in agony and collapsed to my knees. The pain was unbearable. It felt like I was on fire and slowly burning to death. I tried to break free of the angel's grip, but couldn't as the world around me spun and faded into darkness.

I groggily opened my eyes to see that I'd been confined to my room again. I was still hurting from whatever the humans had done to me and I had a dull headache from the confrontation with the angel.

"How're you feeling?" I looked to my side carefully, and saw Rowan sat on a chair beside me.

"Felt better." I grunted, ungrateful of the intrusion.

".... There's a few more people I want you to meet..." He said hesitantly.

"Oh joy. I can't wait. No. Really. I can't." I rolled back over onto my side and hid under my wings.

"I see your sarcasm's still intact." Grunted a gruff voice.

"Who the hell are you...?" I peeked over my wing at a well built, grey haired man in a military uniform that was adorned with ribbons. He was one of the observers in the operating room.

"General Har'mak of the Sutone army. And after witnessing your brief demonstration of your speed, that took even myself by surprise, I must say that I'm looking forward to seeing what else you're capable of doing and how well you use your new gift." He smiled tightly and headed towards the door, where he stopped and turned on his heel to face me. "Oh, and thankyou for wiping that smug look off of Doctor Smith's face." He proceeded through the door and left.

"What did he mean by 'New gift'...?" I saked suspiciously.

"Well, um.." Rowan hesitated again.

"What else did you do to me besides bugger about with my Shadow Dragon side?" I growled, forcing myself to sit as anger blotted out my headache.

Rowan paled and fidgeted before he answered.

"Well," He said nervously. "Professor Hill saw you as the perfect candidate for his new nano technology, because of the fact that you're a cross breed - a hybrid if you will - and a very powerful one at that."

"What did you do to me?" I growled.



"We implanted in you retractable armour. That's what the general was on about. You have a face mask, arm blades, armour plating on your breasts plates, spines and claws, just to name a few. It's still a young project, so the technology will develop with you as you grow older and stronger. And it's all light weight, it shouldn't affect your balance or speed or anything like that and it's all bullet proof and heat proof."

"And that last part's s'posed to make things better is it?!" I hissed. "And what's the deal with being stuck as a dragon?"

"We had a DNA sample from your father. We experimented with his and your DNA and your current form is the result." I just glared at him. "Well, I'll go send the other two in. Best to get it all over and done with. And I swear, if I'd have known what they were intent on doing, I'd have told you." He hurried to the door and vanished into the corridor.

A few minutes passed and the winged creature I saw curled up in the Tube Room walked in cautiously, antennae twitching slightly. She had a pale yellow oval marking on her chest, black stripes with large, red eyes set into an insect like head with two stubby horns either side of the antennae.

"You another one of their victims?" She said, eyeing me up.

"Yup." I sighed.

"I'm Spink, by the way. If you have any plans of escape, lemme know. I hate it in here. She saide cheerfully, showing her middle finger to the camera above the door.

I smirked and introduced myself. She sat down on the chair and told me why she was here. A few minutes later, the door creaked open and a tall, thin green and blue hroned Iguana with a mop of blue hair shuffled in, glancing from me to Spink and to me again.

"Uh, hi. I'm Virus." He gave a short wave and smiled sheepishly.

"I'm Shadow."

"And I'm Spink! Nice to meet you!" She grinned.

He sat down on the end of my bed carefully.

"Wait, so what you're saying is, you were just about to take your exams when Hill and his goons came to your school, lied to your teacher's about some non - existent family crisis and brought you here to experiment on you?!" Virus just looked at me and shrugged.

"That's sick..." Spink murmured in disgust.

"I know. It's kinda hard to believe that I was a teenage human two months or so ago with a whole social life."

"But why an Iguana's DNA?"

"And a Weredragon." He said, looking at me.

"I guess the horns should've given it away, eh?" I grinned.

"Well, yeah. And also when I sneezed the other day, I nearly fried Professor Hill. Unfortunately, He moved out of the way in time..." He said thoughtfully.

## 10 - Runaway

We sat talking for the next couple of hours, getting to know each other and taking the piss out of the scientists and guards. Professor Hill, Doctor Smith and Sergeant Brown were the prime targets, since they were the ones who annoyed us the most. I got ribbed for getting the 'Better deal with Rowan' a few times, whereas Spink had to put up with Professor Hill and Virus was stranded with Doctor Smith.

The twin moons were full and high in the sky when the heavy door swung open. Brown and two other guards came into the cramped room and he scowled at us. Apparently, he'd been listening in on us and didn't appreciate being compared to a balding, toothless, grumpy old bear.

He ushered Spink and Virus out of the room, and they left grudgingly, shouldering past Brown, who looked as if he might violently explode at any given minute. He glance at me one last time before slamming the door shut behind him and locking me in for the night. I lay on my bed, staring at the ceiling. After a few minutes, I closed my eyes and tried to get some sleep. I managed to doze off for about an hour, then woke up again to whisperings in my head. I thought I'd finally cracked and lost my marbles, until the voices registered...

\*Spink?\*

\*Hi Shadow! Sorry if we woke you, but we know you're as keen to get out of here as much as we are.\* She replied.

\*And we have a plan. Well, sort of.\* Virus put in.

\*A plan...?\*

\*Yup. When I was forced back into my room, I'm next door to you by the way - \*

\*We both are. You're inbetween us.\* Spink injected.

\*I noticed a power box opposite Spink's room, which, if taken out, should allow us a chance to get the hell out of here!\* He sounded excited. \*Sorry. Technology's one of my strong points.\*

\*And how're we gonna destroy this box?\*

\*That's where I come in.\* Spink said slyly. \* I can burn through this door in a matter of seconds and melt that box, shutting down all the main systems in this gods forsaken place.\*

\*Once we're out, I'll lead the way to the nearest emergency exit. But you'll have to help out if I get collard, I'm not much of a physical fighter...\* Said Virus, now sounding slightly nervous.

We continued to use our mind speech abilities for the next hour or so, Virus explaining the layout of the floor we were on, including where the guards were posted, when they change shifts, where the exits were - emergency exits included - and where they led to. We all agreed to make our escape attempt first thing, when the sun was rising.

I woke up again a few hours later to a dull knocking on the wall.

\*Ready to cause some trouble?\*

\*As long as that angel don't interfere, I'll be fine.\*

\*She should still be on the top floor, asleep. You two ready?\*

Virus said, his voice a mixture of fear and excitement. The smell of burning metal filled my room and a few seconds later, the power cut out, making the back up systems come on, illumintaing everything in a dull glow. The locks clicked on the door and Virus stuck his head in and signalled for me to leave the room. I came out into the dim corridor and saw Spink stood over the two twitching bodies of guards.

"Poisoned 'em." She said, wriggling her bloodied claws.

"Stop right there!" Roared a voice from behind.

We turned around and Virus slid behind me as Sergeant Brown and four armed guards edged towards us, guns raised.

"Get back into your cells, or we'll open fire." He growled, as his finger twitched slightly on the trigger.

I lunged at him, flicking a bloodied blade out of my lower arm, catching the surprised guard across the throat before he could start shooting at us. The four other guards watched in terror as Brown's head slid free from his body and rolled to the floor, his lifeless body, crumpled to the floor in a pool of blood at my feet. Before the other guards could react, me and Spink launched ourselves at them, tearing them apart like paper dolls.

"This way!" Called Virus.

We followed him around the corner where we came face to face with the three who'd brought us to the Prythard facility. Hill's face was twisted with fury. He was about to say something when Spink sank her poisonous talons into his gut, her eyes glittering with malice. His veins and eyes bulged as he gasped for air and he sank to the floor and ceased all movement. Smith screamed in outrage and lunged at Spink. She calmly side stepped out of her way and the scientist collided with Virus.

I knocked Rowan out and tied him to a pipe against the wall with a fire hose. I pulled myself up to full height again and saw Virus wrestling with Smith.

"Kamiri! He--" She gurgled as Virus reared up and plunged one of his large horns into her throat, spilling blood out onto his head, matting his hair as he pushed the lifeless body off himself.

"Oh shoot..." I groaned as the angel, Kamiri, appeared at the end of the corridor.

Virus pushed us through the emergency exit and through the small tunnel and eventually out onto a field outside of the facility grounds. We sat on the warm ground, catching our breath when the sound of running footsteps set us back on our feet again.

"Get on my back and hold on." I said to Virus, and he climbed onto my back and wrapped his arms around my lower neck.

The three of us had just gotten air borne when a load of guards spilled out into the field. They shot at us, but missed as we disappeared into the clouds. When we came out of the clouds, I looked back at the Prythard facility as it became a tiny dot in a sea of green before finally vanishing.

Relief flooded through me as the realisation of our successful escape, registered in my brain. Virus then suddenly burst into laughter.

"Oh gods! Thankyou so much for helping me escape!" He giggled, then I realise he wasn't the only one who was wearing a stupid grin.

"So where are we going now?" Spink queried.

"I was thinking about Mount. Kras. It's safe there, and it'll give us a chance to sort ourselves out.

"On a mountain?"

"There's an ancient city carved into the peak. It's an old Weredragon civilization. Though it's kinda barren nowadays, the elder who lives up there'll be willing to help us out.

Spink and Virus agreed to go with me and within a few months we were back to doing our own things.

Virus and Spink left the planet and I stayed for another year with Zh'an before leaving the planet myself.

We all kept in contact, Virus was a sky biker - don't ask.. - Spink found residency on an un-named moon of some strange void planet and I just hopped from planet to planet, looking for things to do.