



KyAnn
Waters

Mercy
of the
Dragon

Mercy Of The Dragon

by

KyAnn Waters

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PRAISE FOR AUTHOR

KyAnn Waters

AND HER BOOKS

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“This is a wonderful story full of love, passion, and a bit of bittersweet emotion that will keep you riveted to the pages.”

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EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

“Fiery, steamy, and oh so delicious, this book sizzles. Ms. Waters does a fabulous job of telling a fully-rounded story in just a few words.”

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TIE ME UP, TIE ME DOWN

“Each time I settle into my favorite chair to read a KyAnn Waters story, I know I’m going to get tons of heat, a lot of heart, and characters that will make me melt. In her latest, *TIE ME UP, TIE ME DOWN*, I got a little something extra – a craving for more.”

~Fern, *Whipped Cream Reviews*

Mercy Of The Dragon

Rocks bit into his calloused palms. The ground was cool yet his primed body heated. Adrenaline surged. His shallow breaths didn't make a whisper of sound. Blood rushed through his ears as his pulse raced. Tension coiled in his gut like a poisonous asp ready to strike. Every sense, every instinct he had as a hunter, tuned to his prey.

As his deadly prey stalked him.

Hidden in the scrub, he slithered on his belly toward the edge of the cliff, clawing at gritty dirt and rocks. Thorny vines whipped across his forehead, tearing his flesh. Protective cloth, stronger than armor but as light as cotton, molded to his legs and torso, yet left his arms bare. Spiders and other stinging and biting insects crawled over him.

Wind swooshed through the foliage above. Ja'darien froze, shifting his narrowed gaze to the canopy of green. Dense forest camouflaged his position but also impeded his attack. He'd never get a clean shot at the winged beast. Slaying Dracs—dragons—had refined his precision skills, honed his stealth attacks. Few slayers survived as long as he had. None were as driven. Perhaps the dark deviance of unholy lust for the beasts didn't infect their minds as it did his. Regardless, whether by lust or carnage, he was slowly sinking into madness.

Warmth radiated from his core. Blood and sweat trickled from his hairline. And his cock thickened. His body wanted, but his mind refused to relent. He was a man. A man with an embittered soul. Passion raged hot and his body ached with need—for the dominance of a Drac.

Ja'darien closed his eyes and inhaled through his nose. Sweet cinnamon assailed his senses. The poisonous breath of the Drac tempted him to breathe deeply of the toxic fragrance.

The air grew still once again, and Ja'darien inched closer to the edge of the steep ravine. Slowly, stealthily, until he was in range. Stretching out on the jagged outcropping, he positioned to see the exposed gully below. The sun was just beginning to peek over the distant mountainous horizon—the dragon's twilight.

Sliding his bow from the harness strapped to his thigh, he readied to take aim at the vastness beyond. From his vantage point, his aim would not fail and he would not falter. This day another Drac would fall, unable to tempt Ja'darien into abhorrent acts of seduction. The Dracs seeped into his psyche, making him desire them in unnatural ways. Man and beast could not commingle. Ja'darien would not live on his knees in submission to a Drac. Damn his soul, but he would not!

But by all that he was, he ached to serve, to open his mouth and more to the fierce beasts. Longings he couldn't control ruled his thoughts, but *he* ruled his actions. Once he'd destroyed every damned dragon that flew through the night skies, he would rest—in peace—without the gnawing hunger for their clawed touch and wicked tongue. His swelling erection was trapped against the rocky ground. The Drac, with his acute senses, would easily detect the scent of his arousal and discern his location.

Movement caught his eyes. Ja'darien flattened on the ground. He listened intently for the flutter of the Drac's silvery wings. Far below, off to the right, moonlight reflected off the thin membrane propelling the large magical beast on the night air. Sinew and grace. And sexual power perverting the

minds of men.

Ja'darien arched up enough to reach beneath his left arm and slowly pull an arrow from his long, narrow quiver. Setting the bow on the ground, he readied the arrow and waited for his mark.

He narrowed his eyes and scanned the horizon. Nocturnal, Dracs retreated deep into their lairs before daybreak. However, right now, during the transition from night to day, they were at their weakest and most vulnerable. The perfect time for a slayer to strike. Shadows shifted in the warming breeze. But the dragon was gone.

No, he had not missed his chance. He was there, somewhere. Ja'darien's body responded to the presence of the Drac. His cock lengthened with a slow stretch, pounding with surging blood. His balls grew warm and heavy with the need to come as the dragon neared. Ja'darien responded. He ached for the caress of the dragon's clawed fingers. He wanted the pain of being held down, bound by the power of the beast as the Drac's whip-like tail penetrated his ass. In a perfect mental image, the Drac fisted Ja'darien's cock as he curled his long, thick tongue around the corona.

A groan rolled from his chest. Fuck his twisted desires. He shook off the disturbing thoughts and searched in vain for the Drac. "No," he whispered. Pressure squeezed his chest. Cinnamon floated on the breeze. Ja'darien rose onto his knees, braced his bow and snapped the arrow into place.

Searching. Searching. *Show yourself*. He waited, a trembling finger poised on the trigger. He had to pierce the wing to ground the dragon. Only then could he cut out the heart and end his obsession. End the longings. Like a disease, his destructive desire for the dragons ate at his soul. His need to serve, to please, to submit to the violent passion, consumed him.

A dark shadow descended. The dragon loomed above him, imposing, hovering, ready to strike.

Fuck. He'd been so preoccupied with his thoughts, he'd lost focus. Ja'darien couldn't aim, couldn't shoot the bow. The frantic pounding of his heart roared through his head.

The dragon snarled, spittle mixing with the vaporous poison, the scent of cinnamon. At least in death his obsession would end. The cravings could not possibly follow him into the spiritual beyond. Raging amber eyes, lit with an inner fire, pierced his soul. The Drac's sweet, sweet breath washed over him. His tail whizzed through the air.

A shiver of need skittered over Ja'darien's flesh. The snapping sound of the tail heightened his sexual awareness of the power of the Drac.

Dizziness clouded his mind. The dragon's tail snapped again. Biting pain ripped through his arm. Ja'darien's bow dropped from his fingers. Warmth bloomed beneath his flesh. A feral cry rent the night air. His cry. He stood and staggered back a step, then another. Losing focus, his peripheral vision faded to black and he dropped back to his hands and knees. Would the dragon show him mercy and end his life quickly?

"Kill me now, Drac. For if I survive your cinnamon poison, you'll feel the edge of my blade as I carve out your heart."

The Drac charged and Ja'darien's world went black.

Impossible. Kerkira tamped down a wave of nausea. Fucking impossible! Yet, for the first time in his existence, Kerkira walked as a man. He'd transformed—shifted. The truth couldn't be denied. A slayer! A fucking *murderer* of Dracs was his mate—the man he would keep at his side, his partner and sexual submissive. Returning with the

slayer to his lair, he absorbed the impact.

Once Ja'darien had uttered the word cinnamon, Kerkira had known. Known that the vengeful man with the deadly bow was his partner, his mate. And the only one who could make Kerkira complete—both man and dragon. A dragon's venomous breath would only smell sweet to his mate.

He raked his claws over his skull. Impossible. This was not just any slayer. Ja'darien had a bounty on his head. He was ruthless in his killings, spilling the blood of Kerkira's brothers. Too many to count. Would the other Dracs understand? Because even though Kerkira would love to see the slayer destroyed, he couldn't. There was no tenderness in his feelings. But his fierce desire to seize the slayer, to take him hard and completely wouldn't be slaked. Kerkira would not resist claiming Ja'darien, but for his crimes against the Dracs, he'd make the man suffer—as he dominated him.

Kerkira approached the bedding. The slayer, naked and bound with cord to his pallet, continued to sleep. Kerkira swallowed hard. Ja'darien was beautiful in repose. His perfect form was seemingly at peace. His full lips softened to a half smile. High brows arched over expressive eyes.

On the ridge above the ravine, those emerald eyes had revealed more than fear and hatred. Passion and lust. Even if Kerkira hadn't scented the sweetness of his essence, he'd felt the heat radiating off Ja'darien. Ja'darien's engorged cock had pressed against his tunic. The arousing fluids dampened the protective cloth and sent shards of pleasure unfurling within Kerkira's dragon—awakening the man.

"How do I make you understand?" he whispered to the sleeping slayer. If only Ja'darien had realized he'd destroyed his destiny with his rage against dragons.

Kerkira had stripped him of clothes upon arriving at his lair. His mate was for his pleasure and the need to roam hand, mouth and cock over the muscular perfection was increasing with each passing moment. Instinct to mate, to claim him—to mark him—was overwhelming. But so was the need to discipline the slayer, to punish him with painful pleasure.

As he had tied the intricate knots in the rope, binding Ja'darien to the bed, Kerkira's clawed hands had trembled.

"You will never slaughter another Drac," Kerkira vowed. Ja'darien's destiny was to serve and Kerkira would see to his instruction. "For the pain and death you've rained upon my species, your submission to me will be total and complete." His eyes narrowed as he visualized a submissive Ja'darien accepting Kerkira's power and learning to take pleasure in punishment. Ja'darien had been fighting against his true nature. A dragon's mate was always submissive. "However, it may not always be pleasant."

As Kerkira reached toward the man, he paused, turning his dragon hand palm up then palm down. His fingers were long and thick like a man's but with the short talons of a Drac. He turned away from Ja'darien and crossed the vast expanse of his cave. Changes would have to be made now that he'd found his mate. From this day forward, Ja'darien would exist within the Drac's society. Because of his past deeds—murders—he'd never live free again. He belonged to Kerkira now.

Kerkira's rank within the Drac would offer a degree of protection to Ja'darien. But it would be Ja'darien who must ultimately prove his worth. Kerkira would curb his hatred, would show Ja'darien the beauty of submission and then the choice would be Ja'darien's. Accept the gift of mating

or die.

Kerkira stroked his cock, pricking the wet and slippery slit with the piercing tip of his claw. Emotions swarmed in his gut. How was he supposed to bond with and care for Ja'darien? Equal to his passion, hatred heated his blood. He wanted to fuck him and at the same time tear him apart.

Twisting his tail around his hips, he settled into the familiar comfort of his dragon. Even when standing as a man, he had his tail, both a weapon and a tool for pleasure. With perfect control, he traced the seam between his ass cheeks with the sensitive node on the end. Sliding the last six inches of his tail back and forth, he worked the tapered thickness into the tight trap of his ass and prodded at the entrance of his own hole. He groaned and gripped his cock harder. Talons grazed the taut flesh of his stalk as he imagined the man on his pallet was doing the stroking.

With his other hand, Kerkira reveled in the feel of his new flesh. His tough dragon hide had softened in the shift from dragon to man. Yet like a tattoo, his new supple and smooth body carried the markings of the Drac. Unique patterns covered every inch of his nude form. His mark. A pattern he'd imprint on the slayer when he claimed him through sex. Then all would know he served Kerkira.

A growl rolled from his chest and vaporous breath puffed from his mouth. The man on the pallet was his mate...and his enemy. And his body was unsure of how to respond.

The slayer groaned and attempted to break from his bonds.

"Fighting is futile," Kerkira said. "I won't release you."

Ja'darien's gaze snapped to the shadows. "Show yourself, Drac." The slayer's hands clenched into fists. He twisted beneath the ropes, looking for space

to move. Red welts burned into his bronzed muscular form. His nipples beaded in the cool cavernous air. Yet his cock was hard, hot and oozing thick, milky cream onto his muscle-grooved groin.

Kerkira stepped forward, drinking in the scent. His tongue lengthened and swelled, as did his cock. The node on the end of his tail vibrated. He slipped the tip out of his hole, then curled his tail between his legs and gently caressed his heated sac.

The slayers eyes widened and he gasped for breath. "What are you?"

The answer was simple. "I'm called Kerkira." He took a breath and exhaled slowly. "I am your mate."

Fear stabbed at Ja'darien with the sound of the dragon man's voice. Deep, rich and seductive. A sexual assault on his senses. Only Kerkira wasn't just a man. He was more. Something more dangerous dwelled within Kerkira. More alluring. More menacing to Ja'darien's psyche.

The dragon's eyes glared from the shadows. Lust simmered in the swirling amber depths. Lust Ja'darien reciprocated. Thick pearly cream leaked from Kerkira's thick and solid cock. And between his legs, his tail—yes, the tail of a dragon—rolled and teased his succulent sac. Skin, more like the flesh of a human but hairless, carried the markings of the Drac from the ridge. Not only had he lost the battle with the beast, he was now the Drac's captive—at his mercy.

"Release me." Either physically or by death, but he couldn't fight the images boiling in his mind. Visual fantasies of submitting to the dragon, of being a sexual servant and letting the beast ravage his body.

"Never." The Drac approached the pallet. "You can no longer deny our connection."

Ja'darien shook his head. Shivers broke over his

flesh. “No. We are *not* connected.”

“Do *not* deny what you are!” Kerkira’s gaze roamed over Ja’darien. Bound to the pallet he was defenseless. Yet the vulnerability heightened his awareness of the Drac’s sweet breath. The dragon man’s aroused body was carved of hard muscle and was the deep color of copper.

Lust robbed Ja’darien of breath, of thoughts other than of the Drac. He burned, ached for all he’d denied himself. He could no longer fight the forbidden. “Kill me, dragon.”

“I have no intention of killing you, Ja’darien, slayer of Dracs.” He dropped to the ground and sat on the edge of the pallet. His tail snaked around Ja’darien’s calf, the node inching higher up Ja’darien’s inner thigh, scoring a heated trail into his flesh. Ja’darien flinched with the touch, but his cock jumped and more cream trickled over the bulbous head. The binding kept Ja’darien’s legs spread. Kerkira slithered his tail, teasing as he ventured closer to Ja’darien’s center. Ja’darien would resist this torture. He was stronger than his desires. The tail curled around his shaft, squeezing with exquisite pressure. The node on the tip dipped into the slit of Ja’darien’s cock and gathered slippery cream.

“What do you want from me?”

“Today...your body. Tomorrow...your submission...and then eternity.”

“Why?” He arched as the tip of the dragon’s tail, slick with his pre-cum, pressed against his anus. His buttocks clenched, but the point pierced through the tightened opening. A fiery heat streaked from his hole and radiated out. Scorching hot but forbidden. “You should want to see me destroyed as I have destroyed your kind. If I had my bow, I’d clip your wings.”

Kerkira glowered. “You can see my wings have

become part of my tattoo.”

Ja’darien met his stare. “You’d still feel my blade as I cut out your heart.”

“My hatred runs deep—as deep as yours—but so does my passion.” The tail penetrated Ja’darien’s sphincter and continued to press forth. As the tail thickened in girth, Ja’darien’s hole was stretched.

Ja’darien groaned, thrashing beneath the rope bindings. The burn was punishing in intensity...but felt so fucking good.

“Someone has misguided you, slayer. You have been fighting what you are...what you were always meant to be.”

“No. To desire a beast is unnatural.” And once free, he’d thrust his blade deep and fast. Killing Dracs was all he knew. This pleasure was more dragon trickery.

Kerkira sawed his tail in and out of Ja’darien’s rectum, rubbing his prostrate with that wondrous node on the tip. Sweat beaded on Ja’darien’s upper lip.

“But as you can see, I’m also a man.” Kerkira bent over Ja’darien’s groin, wrapped his clawed fingers around Ja’darien’s cock and closed his mouth over the corona. Hot, wet suction encased the head. Heated breath scorched Ja’darien. The dragon’s teeth teased the taut flesh but didn’t bite. There was only exquisite pressure from his supple lips—lips of a man with the tongue of a dragon.

Ja’darien closed his eyes and reveled in the sensations firing through his system. Everything he’d imagined, every dark desire paled in comparison to Kerkira’s touch. “Release me,” he whispered.

Kerkira sucked hard, drawing out Ja’darien’s essence as he pulled his mouth off. “No.” He rolled onto Ja’darien, braced between his widespread thighs. His tail continued to penetrate, a slow thrust

and retreat.

Ja'darien refused to voice what his body commanded. He'd already lost...or maybe he'd won his battle with the Drac. The fight left him with each glide of the dragon's tail. He no longer had the will to resist. But giving in went against everything he believed. Submitting to the dragon made him weak...yet his soul strengthened as Kerkira reigned over him.

"Mine," the dragon said and hissed. His tail lodged deep in Ja'darien's ass and swiveled within. "Do not deny our connection." The Drac took Ja'darien's cock between his lips again. He sucked the head then drew his tongue along the length. "Admit this is what you've searched for."

"I won't." The pleasure too intense, he bucked against the ropes, the knots biting into his flesh and driving him closer to release. The rhythmic prodding of the dragon's tail was unlike any pleasure he'd known. Regardless, wasn't this unnatural?

The dragon's tail stiffened. "Your lips are a temptation, but they lie." The tail swelled and the tempo changed. No longer for pleasure but Ja'darien could only surmise the drilling was to prepare him, to open him enough to accept the Drac's heavy, aroused cock. The thought had his inner muscles locking onto the dragon's tail, attempting to hold him inside. A shudder rolled through Ja'darien. "I do this for you as much as for me," Kerkira said.

"I am bound. I have no choice."

"We have the choice to accept what is. We belong to each other." The dragon growled, his toned muscles quivering. "You will see. I am just as vulnerable to you."

"Then I suggest you never turn your back on me."

"Oh, I assure you, I will give you my back. But when I do, it will be for my pleasure...and yours."

The dragon purred the words.

Ja'darien's heart pounded and his flesh sizzled with need. He fought against the bonds. No longer to break free, but to grasp the man's tattooed head and thrust his shaft back into Kerkira's wicked mouth. Emotions churned in Ja'darien's gut. How could he fight this power? Kerkira sucked more of his length, curling his dragon tongue around the root and squeezing. Did Ja'darien truly want to?

Ja'darien moaned as the dragon twisted and pumped his tail. His own body betrayed him, unable to fight the immense pleasure. He rode the edge of release, fighting to come, yet the battle in his head continued to rage.

Kerkira lapped cream from the slit then crawled over Ja'darien's bound body. He leaned close. Chest to chest and cock rubbing against cock. Kerkira sniffed Ja'darien's neck and nuzzled into the crook of his shoulder. "Neither can I fight what is between us, slayer. However, fighting me does not alter either one of our futures." As he kissed Ja'darien's neck, trailing hot licks and light suction along his jaw, the dragon honed in on Ja'darien's prostrate with the tip of his tail.

The deep vibration pushed Ja'darien over the edge. Arching hard against Kerkira, Ja'darien cried out from the intensity. Heat streaked down his spine. Pressure built in his balls. Then like lightning, the pleasure raced along his shaft and hot pulses of cum jetted from his cock.

Kerkira roared and he slid down Ja'darien's body. He savagely licked, kissed and tasted the cream from Ja'darien's chest. Kissing lower, he gently nipped Ja'darien's quivering abdominals. Ja'darien flinched as the dragon gripped his hips, his talons curling into and piercing his flesh. Blood beaded at the wounds, but the pleasure of Kerkira's mouth and tongue on his groin soothed the sting.

Muscles bunched and Kerkira's skin seemed to heat as he consumed Ja'darien's cum. His tail thickened further, hardening like a steel sword as he continued to shaft into Ja'darien's ass. Convulsions jerked Ja'darien's body, aftershocks of a violent release.

The dragon lifted his head. Amber eyes blazed with determination. "You're mine." He flicked his tongue over Ja'darien's nipples.

Ja'darien weakened. No longer able to fight the hunger, he released a shuddering exhale. He was at the mercy of the dragon. The power too raw to resist. Thoughts of dragons, of submitting to the passions dwelling within him, had nearly destroyed his mind. Those secret needs had driven him to kill. No more.

"I am at your mercy, Drac. Kill me or fuck me." For he could no longer live with the demons in his head. "If I am damned to serve you, so be it."

A low chuckle rolled from the dragon as he guided his tail from Ja'darien's well-stretched anus. "Now you're a martyr? No, slayer, you'll not hide from what you are." Kerkira released the bindings at his feet.

"Are you releasing me?" Panic flashed through Ja'darien. His mind fought his heart. His tumultuous thoughts twisted his guts. How could he want the dragon? Heat surged through his body. He squeezed his eyes shut, trying to vanquish the Drac's form. Man and dragon. When he opened his eyes again, the tattoo tracking over Kerkira's muscled body darkened to a deep coppery brown on his cock and sac. Long and engorged, the dragon's shaft bobbed. Glistening fluids seeped from the slit and dripped over the thick blunt head. Pulsing veins roped along the solid length and heavy balls hung beneath.

Talons grazed across Ja'darien's stomach and he shivered. "If I did release you, would you leave?"

Ja'darien couldn't answer. All his life he'd fought the Drac, now his thoughts betrayed him. Leave? No, he didn't want to end this torturous pleasure, but how could he stay? "Don't release me," he pleaded with a whisper. "Don't give me a choice."

Kerkira swallowed some of his hatred. Pain etched across his mate's face. Lips formed a hard line and a muscle ticked in his jaw. They had only glimpsed the passion simmering between them—a taste of what would be if the slayer could release his preconception of love and sexuality. No longer fighting his bindings, Ja'darien now fought himself.

"Once mated, you'll forever carry my mark. Dragons mate for life."

"After today, I have nothing. The life I've known is forever changed."

Kerkira pressed a kiss to Ja'darien's inner thigh as he bent the slayer's knee. "Yes, but in time you'll see it's been altered for the better." Grasping Ja'darien's left hand, Kerkira bound Ja'darien's wrist to his left ankle. Then he repeated the process to his right wrist and ankle.

"Dragon, you are my trial..." Positioned supine on the pallet, ropes crisscrossed Ja'darien's torso. Acceptance shimmered in Ja'darien's emerald eyes. His mouth softened and his breathing evened. Flexing his biceps, he pulled his thighs apart and rolled his hips, exposing his pink hole. "And my salvation."

Warmth bloomed within Kerkira, melting away more of the hate. Together they would traverse the pain of their past and forge a future together. "As you are mine."

Kerkira knelt between Ja'darien's thighs. Copious amounts of fluids oozed from the head of his cock, his natural lubricant. Touching the sensitive tip to Ja'darien's heated flesh, he smeared the

slippery cream over Ja'darien's hole.

Ja'darien tensed, bracing against the impending penetration. "Breathe me in," Kerkira softly demanded. His dragon's breath would elevate Ja'darien's arousal, taking him to greater pleasure...and giving him a defense against the pain of marking.

Ja'darien inhaled hard and deep, drawing in Kerkira's cinnamon-scented breath. With each exhale, Kerkira thrust more of his cock into Ja'darien's ass. Ja'darien's back arched off the pallet, straining his bindings. Kerkira grip tightened, driving his thighs further apart. He penetrated deeper, sliding the full length of his shaft into his mate.

"Kerkira, what have I done?" Tears streamed from Ja'darien's eyes. The full force of their profound connection overwhelmed him. Kerkira felt it, too. He plunged his cock deep, then slowly retreated.

"You have realized your destiny...and mine." Kerkira twined his tail between his legs and prodded against his own hole. He plunged his cock into Ja'darien. Rearing back, he slid his tail past the tight ring of muscle in his own ass, ignored the burn, and glided in. The vibrating node on the tip honed in on the endocrine gland, released paracrine specific for mating, and triggered a primal smoldering reaction.

The heat surged into Ja'darien. He cried out and his body contorted against the bonding. "Kerkira!" Fear laced his voice.

Kerkira drilled harder, deeper. "You're mine," he said and snarled.

Ja'darien's eyes snapped to his. "Yes!" He gnashed his teeth, hissing breath. Knots in the cord abraded his flesh as he struggled against the bindings. In pain...in pleasure.

Kerkira's flesh sizzled as he continued to spear

his cock in and out of Ja'darien's hole. His tattoo heated, scoring his mark into Ja'darien. Unable to control his raging passion, he pounded into Ja'darien. Blazing heat ripped along his shaft, and he erupted, spewing his hot seed deep into Ja'darien's rectum. His balls contracted and every muscle tensed.

As Kerkira's fluids filled Ja'darien, Ja'darien moaned. Ribbons of cum spurted from Ja'darien's shaft, shooting onto his chest. Kerkira hungered for more. He ripped his shaft from Ja'darien, bent forward and greedily lapped at the salty-sweet essence. With the first taste, euphoria clouded his thoughts. His only focus was the man beneath him. His mate.

In the waning passion, Ja'darien's breathing mellowed and his skin cooled. Sweat trickled along his sternum. Kerkira licked the salty drops. He wanted to thank the slayer because their bonding completed him. He would now live as man and dragon and share that life with Ja'darien—as his master.

But like Kerkira, Ja'darien had been filled with hate. Was he still?

Kerkira sat back on his haunches and released Ja'darien's bindings.

"One fucking and you're sure I won't attempt to flee?" The ropes fell away. Ja'darien lowered his legs and rubbed circulation back into his wrists. "I'm a slayer. Perhaps I'll cut out your heart as you sleep."

Kerkira sighed and shifted on the pallet next to Ja'darien. "Don't you understand?" He wrapped his arm around the strong man. Emotions welled in his throat. He curled his tail around Ja'darien's back and traced the pattern of his tattoo now covering Ja'darien's groin and abdomen. The pattern would burn over most of Ja'darien's torso. During sex, Kerkira had branded Ja'darien, marking him

wherever their bodies touched.

“My heart is yours to cut out.” He hadn’t wanted to care. He’d wanted to punish Ja’darien for his murderous acts against the Drac. Now that they had mated, Kerkira couldn’t live without him. “My life is yours. Do you still want to take it?”

The slayer stared. Silence hung heavy between them. Kerkira couldn’t breathe. His heart pounded and his gut clenched. The choice had not been his. The past wouldn’t matter to their future...if Ja’darien could accept him.

“Having me for a mate will come with complications,” Ja’darien said.

“I’ll worry about the Dracs.” He combed his fingers through Ja’darien’s golden locks. “As long as you’re retiring your bow.”

Ja’darien lowered his gaze and shook his head. “I can’t amend my past.”

“No. And you will have to live with the memories of those choices.” Kerkira kissed Ja’darien’s forehead. “But I’ll be here, with you, to make new memories. As my mate, I swear to provide for you and to protect you.” Were any other his mate, he would vow to love, but their dark history kept Kerkira from voicing the words in his heart. “I will *care* for you.”

Ja’darien leaned forward and hesitantly nuzzled his nose against Kerkira’s chest. “Cinnamon.” He gently placed his lips against Kerkira’s tattoo. “You’ve claimed me, marked me and now I belong to you.” He lifted his eyes. “By serving you, I’ll honor the Drac lives I’ve taken. I’m at the mercy of my dragon.”

About the Author

KyAnn Waters lives in Utah with her husband, two children, and two dogs. She spends her days writing and her evenings with her family. She enjoys sporting events on the television, thrillers on the big screen, and hot scenes between the pages of her books.

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