LEGENDARY

With both hands, she grabbed the sword and whirled around to face the amber. The magic fire fizzled and popped against her skin, sending waves of prickles surging up her arms, but she ignored it. Closing her eyes, she drew in her breath as she raised the blade high over her head. With all her strength, she brought the sword down, cutting into the rock.

The opposing magic's collided, and the shock from the blow left her arms shaking, her hands unable to keep their grip. Opening her eyes, she saw that the sword had cut into the edge of the block, but other than that, the amber seemed unaffected. Furious with herself for failing, she tried to pull the sword free for another try, but the flames melted into the stone, disappearing completely.

 "What did I do wrong?" She let go, stumbling back a step. Before she could ask Daggerhorne to burnish the sword again, a crack echoed around the room. Small cracks in the amber formed around the sword, spreading like a spider's web further and further into the stone. Chunks started to fall, disintegrating, leaving no evidence of its existence.

Aliana was shocked when she got her first good look at Galahad. He was breathtakingly handsome. His features were Roman in shape, and his wavy hair was light brown, but the paleness of his skin spoke of his northern heritage. His jaw was strong and clean-shaven; his mouth was set into a firm line, his eyes closed.

The last of the amber fell away, revealing a powerful body, honed by years of fighting and training. Over his hand and wrist was a thick cuff of silver decorated with a Dragon taking flight—the Pendragon seal. Here before her was a Knight of the Round Table, Camelot's protector and loyal servant to King Arthur.

Dazed, her body moved closer to his, as if of its own accord, and her hand stretched out to brush against the cold silver of the glove, tracing over the back of his strangely warm hand. The moment her skin touched his, a spark shot from her heart down her arm and to their connected hands. His eyes snapped open, finding hers immediately. Aliana's world tilted. His eyes were

such a shockingly clear shade of blue, and they were focused on her! She could feel herself being drawn into his captivating gaze, a band snapping into place around her heart.

Barely able to breathe, she was drawn even closer to him, her hand reaching up to rest lightly against his chest. His muscles tightened and shifted under her touch. Before she realized it, his hands shot up, capturing her hands and pinning them behind her back, holding her prisoner in his iron grip, though his breathing was shallow and rapid.

Her legs gave out and she sank to her knees. Galahad followed her down, preventing any chance of escape. "Who are you?" His demanding voice was cracked and dry from disuse.

Aliana tried to answer but she couldn't form any words.

"Who *are* you?" His voice was deeper and stronger now. "What are you doing here?" His face was inches from hers, and his eyes were a mix of confusion and cold anger as they searched hers.

Forcing words past her terrified lips, she answered, "I…I'm Aliana Fagan."

Galahad's grip tightened, and pain shot through her arm, the gash on her arm throbbing. "Please let me go," she whispered. Terrified by his wildness, she tried to twist her arm free, but he was too strong. "I mean you no harm, I—I just want to help."

"You forget yourself, Knight of Pendragon!" Galahad's eyes turned to meet Daggerhorne's. "You serve Arthur Pendragon's code of honor, yet you would attack the woman brave enough to free you from your imprisonment and restore the king to this world?"

Galahad's eyes closed. Finally, he was able to take a deep breath. His eyes returned to Aliana's, the cold anger burning away. Taking another breath with his eyes never leaving hers, he pulled her up to her feet as he stood, holding her ever so gently until she had her balance back.

The knight towered over her; she just barely reached his broad shoulders. Backing away, she studied him, rubbing her sore arms and checking to see if she was bleeding through her scarf bandage. Galahad seemed to take up all the available space in the small room. When she had touched him, he had been solid muscle. A dangerous kind of strength rolled off of him, scaring and comforting her at the same time.

Galahad turned to Daggerhorne, looking away from Aliana. His face contorted, like he was confused. Though she was still upset by his actions,

she couldn't help but feel bad for him.

"Lord Daggerhorne, what are you doing here?" There was a strange cadence to Galahad's deep, soft voice with a long drawl on 'a's and 'e's.

 "*We* are here to free you from the Sidhe and get to Arthur's hollow, so that we may awaken him. But I find myself worried that you will be unable to lead us there. You have clearly forgotten everything you stand for if you would take such action against a woman." Daggerhorne's power clotted the air as he narrowed his eyes on Galahad.

Taken aback by the Dragon's harshness, Aliana glanced away from Galahad and glared at Dagg. "Stop! He's been trapped for centuries, and he doesn't know me from a Sidhe."

"Lord Daggerhorne is right, my lady." Galahad said, facing her again, surprise in his expression. "There was no excuse for me to hurt you the way I did, no matter the situation. I beg your forgiveness for my actions."

His Carolina blue eyes were clear and focused, the confusion from moments ago banished and replaced with a calm confidence.

 "Apology accepted." She smiled softly, holding out her hand. "It's nice to meet you."

Galahad smiled back, looking way hotter than should be allowed for a guy who'd been frozen in amber for centuries. His hand closed around hers, strong and sure. He gave her a small bow, bringing her hand to his lips and brushing a gentle kiss. The newly formed band around her heart tightened, her stomach filling with dozens of popping bubbles.

 "It is an honor to meet you, Lady Aliana. I am Sir Galahad, first knight of Camelot and loyal servant to Arthur Pendragon."