



A shadow with a womanly figure appeared before her, towering over Aliana. “We told you, you’re nothing but a failure.”

“You were never worthy of your friends, of the love both King Arthur and Sir Galahad professed.” Aliana looked up at the big, manly shadow that appeared on her other side. “And even those feelings were not real.”

“So true,” the woman’s voice drew Aliana’s tear-filled gaze, her next words like razors. “What they thought they felt was nothing but an illusion, fake feelings conjured by the power of the Fae Queen’s magic. Everything in your life is one manipulation after another.”

She tried to find the voice to deny the harsh accusations, but she couldn't. She gripped Dagg's still body closer to her aching one.

"The Fae Queen led you around like a pet on a leash, and you obeyed her every command. Free the sleeping king, find the knights, find Excalibur, fumble around Camelot, and guarantee the deaths of people that were truly loved. Find the Grail map and guarantee Titania gets one of the most powerful weapons ever created."

Aliana flinched back from the male's verbal assault.

"Look at you!" The female laughed again. "Cowering in a corner like the worthless abandoned child you are! Your parents are surely ashamed to have given birth to you. No wonder they so eagerly gave you away."

Her chest tightened as images of her real mother and father filled her mind's eye. She could see the disappointment that looked so foreign and out of place on their faces. Dagg let out a low, barely audible grumble.