



## Breaking the Shackles

*Mell Eight*

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Separated and abused by the magi, twins Laine and Baine each swore to do whatever it took to break free and save the other. But when Baine arrives at the werewolf village prepared to rescue Laine and return home triumphant, he soon learns that any plan involving a dragon and a werewolf is bound to go awry.

## Breaking the Shackles Details

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Author : Mell Eight

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## From Reader Review Breaking the Shackles for online ebook

### Elspeth says

This was my least favorite of the series so far, it wasn't bad it was just not as fun as the first and third.

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### Ami says

#### 2.5 stars

Hmmm, a couple of friends' reviews said that this was their least favorite story from The Dragon's Hoard series. I have to agree (based on comparison with book #1 of course, since I have yet read book #3).

I think the problem is the story features TWO couples within a novella length. Which is just not enough for me to create an attachment to either couple. Maybe if they have their own dedicated stories, in different sections of the story, I could appreciate it better.

But because it isn't, just when I start to care for Laine, I would be pulled out to read from Baine's perspective, and vice versa. It makes me a bit cranky, to be honest.

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### Kathleen says

#### 2.75 stars

Wow, that was....mediocre....in every way possible.

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### Tailtiu says

3,5\* and I'm looking forward to read Stealing the Dragon

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### Talya Andor says

Breaking the Shackles introduces an interesting magical concept, a pretty unique one I think, where there's essentially magic transmitters and magic amplifiers. Leaving that aside, the story focuses at first on Laine and Baine, and their recovery process. I enjoyed the fact that the story spends time on this, and shows the different ways that Laine and Baine have been affected by their divergent experiences.

The story moves at a fairly quick clip and relationships unfold for both twins in the first third of the story, but time is spent developing both of those. It's clear that neither Laine or Baine can jump right into love, though their love interests both seem meant to be. It's a shifter thing, though, so I can go with it. Maybe it's a little convenient, especially with Baine being paired off so that he doesn't drown in his jealousy over Laine having someone when they've just been reunited, but it works for the world that Mell has built.

From the beginnings of a fairly straightforward plot, we get some good twists and character growth, so there's a lot packed into a short space of time. It's a quick read, but it was satisfying to me because it covered a lot without feeling like it skimmed on any one storyline.

As with the previous story, *Breaking the Shackles* dangles a tantalizing tidbit for continuance, this one even more shiny (in my opinion) than the one before.

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### **Deeze says**

Another entertaining story in this series.

I did feel a little more chemistry in this tale, although the mystery story line takes centre stage over any romance. But the little bit of romance there was gave me my MM fix lol.

I love the dragons most and can't wait to dive into the third book. I hope there is more of Nyle and his Hatch Mother lol.

**ETE** Yep definitely better after reading book 3.

I really wish there were more books in this series.

**ETA** Still wish there were more books.

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### **Chris, the Dalek King says**

(If you haven't read *Finding the Wolf*, this may be a tad spoilerish. I tried to keep out a lot that might spoil book one, but I may mention a few things related to the plot of the book.)

The maji, born to be vessels of magic, have long been held as slaves to the other half of their community, the magi. But the tide has turned and the maji seek to break free of their chains. That freedom will come from different sources, though, for the twin maji, Baine and Laine. Separated by their masters for years, they must each find a way back to each other. Or, perhaps, find a new path to walk together.

Um, I guess I should point out that despite what my half-ass'd summary might hint at, this isn't acutely a twincest story. Sorry. Though I would have totally taken one of those as well. ;D

No, this is the story of two brothers who have to find a way to look past their captivity and find themselves the masters of their own fate.

Laine, who was featured in book one, has to break free of his chains (both metaphorical and physical) and see if he can have a place with Reese, the werewolf who has taken him in. Baine on the other hand has fought his way to freedom, only to find himself bound once again to an imposed duty by his family and his community. He feels bound to the duty almost as much as he feels drawn to Dean—a dragon who has every intention of gathering the young maji into his hoard.

I found I enjoyed this story a bit more than I did the first, probably just because I didn't know how it was

going to end. I liked how the author set up the magical world of the maji/magi. It was a lot more interesting than I thought it was going to be from what I read of the first book.

Unfortunately there were a few editorial issues with this story. Most notably the fact that *Baine* becomes *Blaine* at several points in the book. I did have to take a few points off for that. I'm not one to usually moan about grammar/spelling things (since I am horrible at it myself), but I kinda like my main characters to have the same names all the way thru the story at the very least.

Dragons and werewolves and magic made this an entertaining read. It was less quick-paced than the first book, but made up for it with all the tension between the various MCs. I am really enjoying this series and look forward to whatever is next.

*This book was provided free in exchange for a fair and honest review for Love Bytes. Go there to check out other reviews, author interviews, and all those awesome giveaways. Click below.*

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## Ayanna says

\*pouts. I wanted more of Nyle+Leon...

I really want to know...

how does Dean magically know about sex? I mean, isn't it a "not-dragon" thing to do? Maybe they just skipped all of the extemporizing and such that Leon and Nyle had?

Still...it seemed like it was a foregone conclusion when it should have been more like, "You're part of my hoard now. That means you're my pretty and I'll take wonderful care of you because you're my pretty and o\_o WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?????"

Just a little hint of that would have been adorable since Dean was such a self-assured...(I'll be nice and won't say prick because \*shrugs)...yeah...anyways, just a little hint of that would have been cute. Cuz c'mon, authors. You need to earn your squees.

(I can see maybe why xe wouldn't; it'd be a bit too close to what happened with Nyle+Leon. I can also see why xe didn't go for the "We are going to do this sex thing" route because that's what Gail was all like. But still. \*Consistency is all I ask ~sob\*)

The ending was just awk for me. I mean, it wasn't even that funny. It really was head-desk-worthy. In fact,

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## Anna C says

The romance part was so-so and kinda off when Baine's magic suddenly "activated" in his vein and made him realized that he actually loved Dean from the start, and then I was like "WTH? O\_\_\_O" But I gathered maybe that's one of the Maji (Baine's race) way to find their mate.

However, aside from that, I liked the plot and the mystery part...and we got to see Nyle and Leon again. :) But the most hilarious scene was when the bewildered Gail finally got the result of her "experiment" with Toel. LMAO.

### **Teetee says**

This story encompasses two twins and we are introduced fairly quickly to their intended mates. I skimmed a few reviews before purchasing/starting this book so I was prepared for some disappointment, as many of the readers said this book was the least satisfying of the series. With lower standards in mind, I actually enjoyed this for what it was. Mostly a lot of world building and we do get some returning characters which was enjoyable. The focus was more on romance than sex which I heartily appreciated. Laine is sweet, his alpha mate is sweet and so their whole romance is slow and...yup, you guessed it-sweet. Baine was a little tougher. I am not a fan of bratty men who are loved just because of their attitude. Dean is enamored for no good reason to the mouthy Baine and suddenly and inexplicably (I think due to magic) about 2/3rds of the way through Baine begins to reciprocate Dean's feelings. Meh, whatever. I liked the story; I can forgive a bit of rockiness. Three stars is just right for this book.

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### **Galia says**

2.75 stars

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### **Bookwatcher says**

I loved the first book of this series (Finding the Wolf) but this one no. I liked it a lot, but in my modest opinion it's confusing!!! The plots excellent, like in book #1, but the constant change of point of views between all characters made me want to scream! There are 3 couples in this book, and ALLTHE time I was wishing it would stop, and talk about just ONE of those couples, not all. So that's my problem, the reason of 3 not 5 stars.

I would certainly recommend it, because the world is fantastic, with all that great creatures... The plot is again very original and interesting...

I will keep reading this series :)

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### **Mandy\*reads obsessively\* says**

Ok, Mell Eight is going on my auto-buy list, her stories are cute, sweet and have dragons. :)

Laine and Blaine ( as the mother of twins myself, that made me shudder) were held as slaves for years, drained of magic and shackled.

Blaine has been searching for his twin ever since he was freed, but when he finds him, he finds so much more.

Laine's has already been rescued by the wolves and dragon shifters and yep, added to the alpha wolf's hoard, lucky guy that he is. But Blaine isn't getting the short end of the stick, so to speak, he has a dragon wanting to add him to his bling.

The romance is sweet and muted as in a lot of LT3s stories and there is tons of political goings on, plans being made, battles being fought. I read this series out of order, but that didn't deter my enjoyment at all.

## Sandra says

Good, but not as many feelz as the first. I'm not sure why this one didn't hit as hard as the others. Part of it was that I liked the addition of Baine, but felt he got shafted. Despite loving romances, I didn't appreciate that the 'mate'/lovers relationship took precedence over siblings and despite having been searching for years, Baine is simply supposed to get over it since they have mates now. I wish a better compromise could have been reached.

I wanted this to be a story about Lane and Baine, as much as it was about Lane/Reese and Baine/Don. I also didn't get a sense of their relationships progressing, the way I had in book 1 with Leon and Nyle. In all books of this series there is somewhat of an inst-love component since the dragon's *know* immediately if something(one) is in their hoard, and of course werewolves *know* their mates immediately. But in book 1 we saw some actual relationship development after the insta-love got it's hooks in. Here, Lane was resistant due to his shackles, then they came off and he was all about Reese. Baine was resistant to Don due to wanting to focus his attentions on his brother and reconnect with him, then the floodgates opened and he was fine with it. A little too much tell and not show with regards to their feelings.

Even though this book was not my favorite in the series (I have since gone on and loved book 3), it still works as an audio book. I like this narrator and think he does a good job with the characters in this world.

*Audiobook received from the publisher in exchange for an honest review, reviewed for Hearts On Fire*

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## Cole Riann says

Review posted at The Armchair Reader.

2.75 stars

This is definitely a light, comfort read, even more than the first book which introduced more of the world as the first book. Also, this short novella was split between two romantic couples as each pair of a twin falls in love with one of the shifters, wolf and dragon of the new alliance. So overall, I found the story rather superficial, without time to form any sort of plot or get into the characters, since the story relied heavily on the mating bond trope.

After the end of the first book the human castle is left in shambles from the fight with the Magi. When the last Magi was killed the dragons and wolves found a young human man whose scent immediately caught the attention of the Alpha wolf, Reese. *Breaking the Shackles* is his story, and his twin brother's, Baine. Born as Maji, not to be confused with Magi, the race of creatures that tried to subjugate the humans in the first book, the Maji are the receptacles of magic that shared a symbiotic relationship with the Magi. Once upon a time the Maji offered their magic to the Magi (who had no magic of their own) in order for their protection. In recent years, however, the Magi enslaved the race of the Maji to forcibly steal their magic.

Laine and Baine were taken from each other in their teen years. They've spent a few years apart, Laine waking up in a new type of slavery (or so he thinks) among the wolves, and Baine freed a couple years before and searching all this time for his brother. Their parents are waiting for him to return with his brother; now that the Magi have been killed, there is a vacuum of power where the Maji's society is, and their family

and others are clamoring to become the leaders of the people. When Baine finds his brother, he isn't too happy to see that Laine might be falling for the wolf who has claimed him, and equally upset by the green-haired dragon that keeps following around calling him pretty and shiny.

I laid out my main difficulties with this story above and for the most part they are the same ones I had with the first book, only compounded by the extra relationship and less time for the story. All the problems I had with it ultimately relate to that. The way that it manifested was mostly in two ways. First, there just wasn't time for the relationships to get off the ground. Basically, they meet, they bond, and the story is over. For Baine and Dean (the dragon) there is a little more between the steps, concerning Baine's jealousy of Laine's relationship with another man when he just got him back and his feelings of duty to return to his family. Mostly, however, what bothered me was there wasn't time to set up the proper background of Laine and Baine's family, which directly relates to the end of the story and the perceived threat the werewolves feel. The ending and the issues with their family seemed to come completely out of the blue. Previously in the story we only hear that they both feel some varying level of responsibility to return to their family, but very little about the family themselves, or even more than just a couple paragraphs about the structure of magical slavery the Maji were subjected to. It gave the ending very little impact.

If you're looking for a short and sweet dragon- and wolf-shifter series then this book and it's prequel will suffice, but it isn't the best. I was a little disappointed by this book even though I knew, roughly, what to expect, so I'm not entirely sure I'll read the next book and I probably wouldn't recommend them unless you want something cute and mindless.

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