

Of Demons and Pirates

A Series of Altador Cup Fics about Tandrak Shaye and Garven Hale.

Von Sean

Kapitel 3: The End

In that moment when the referee's shrill whistle had resounded over the field he hadn't even realized it. He had been breathing hard, his ears tingling from the bells on their opponents' tricots, fully caught up in the moment. He had passed that twisting mutant yooyu to Layton, he remembered that much, but had he scored it? Everyone was screaming, the summer air was hot around them, the sun burning down on their heads mercilessly, noise was everywhere. Where was that yooyu?

Then he saw it, gnawing on the clowns' net. Inside the goal. He blinked. It couldn't be true, could it? Then he was tackled by Tormo and hugged by Reshar - they all knew that neither their captain nor Kep were very affectionate - and then it dawned on him. They had won. Not just any game but the freaking Altador cup! Only then did he laugh with his team mates and hugged them back fiercely, screaming out his joy for everyone to hear. Cuddling or not, the four of them carried their captain to the award ceremony, accompanied by never ending applause and cheering. The air was buzzing with voices, most of them roaring out their names and that of their team.

Tandrak had no eyes or ears for anything else.

It took hours for the news of the second game to reach him, and he learned that the pirates had lost to Shenkuu after all. It angered him, knowing that Hale had been defeated, but his mood was simply too good for him to be dragged down by that information. Now was the time for their party, their victory, time for patting shoulders and congratulating them over and over again. They had damn well earned it, right?

It was only now, late at night, that he had calmed down enough to think everything through. Later during the festivities the Altador Cup Committee had announced their choices for what other awards there were to gain and he had cheered and laughed with all the others and Layton had been declared Most Valuable Player. It was an honor that made even the stoic Hissi blush a little beneath his dark scales. Tandrak was genuinely happy for his captain, he was the team's ace, he did most of the scoring, he deserved the award more than anyone. And of course he and Tormo were great choices for an All-Neopia team, there was no better defender in the league, no way around it.

So why was he staring at the wall across from him, forced to admit, if only to himself,

that he was just a tiny little bit envious, that he had not been chosen for any team, any award? The league had many good players, they could not all be chosen. And it was the team that counted, not just one single player, you couldn't win a match of Yooyuball with just one good player, Maraqua had proven that yet again.

He continued to stare holes into the wall, unhappy with his own treacherous thoughts, now sighing heavily. He thought of them winning the cup and smiled. Their ultimate victory *<i>never</i>* failed to have that effect on him, he always wanted to secretly squirm and wibble because he was suddenly so full of energy, or simply happiness.

All of a sudden there was a huff and a motion next to him and a muscled arm slid around his waist, turning him around to face the man lying next to him. "Ye're havin' tha' dump smile again, Shaye.", Hale grumbled sleepily, kissing his lover's cheek before sinking back into the cushions.

Tandrak hugged close to him, enjoying the feel of the other's arm and replied "I know. Can't help it.", before going back to sleep. Things would sort themselves out, he just knew it. It seemed worked for him that way these days.