

## Regardless

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/27216652) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/27216652>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">Graphic Depictions Of Violence</a>
Category:	<a href="#">F/M</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Fablehaven Series - Brandon Mull</a>
Relationships:	<a href="#">Warren Burgess/Vanessa Santoro</a> , <a href="#">Warren Burgess &amp; Vanessa Santoro</a> , <a href="#">Bracken/Kendra Sorenson</a> , <a href="#">Bracken &amp; Kendra Sorenson</a> , <a href="#">Kendra Sorenson &amp; Seth Sorenson</a> , <a href="#">Kendra Sorenson &amp; Vanessa Santoro</a>
Characters:	<a href="#">Warren Burgess</a> , <a href="#">Vanessa Santoro</a> , <a href="#">Kendra Sorenson</a> , <a href="#">Seth Sorenson</a> , <a href="#">Bracken (Fablehaven)</a> , <a href="#">Tanugatoa "Tanu" Dufu</a> , <a href="#">Ronodin (Fablehaven)</a> , <a href="#">Celebrant (Fablehaven)</a> , <a href="#">The Sphinx   The Ethiopian</a> , <a href="#">The Fairy Queen (Fablehaven)</a> , <a href="#">The Fairy King (Fablehaven)</a> , <a href="#">Mara Tabares</a> , <a href="#">Elise (Fablehaven)</a> , <a href="#">Trask (Fablehaven)</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence</a> , <a href="#">Angst and Hurt/Comfort</a> , <a href="#">Angst and Romance</a>
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2020-10-28 Updated: 2022-02-25 Words: 3,191 Chapters: 3/?

# Regardless

by [warrenessa](#)

## Summary

AU. MAJOR COTTG SPOILERS IN HERE YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED. Warren and Vanessa deal with the aftermath of what happened in the Dragon Temple.

## Notes

I needed more Warrenessa action after the team accomplished their mission in the dragon temple and since Warren and Vanessa are basically out for the rest of the book after that, I figured, why not I'm gonna write my own reaction fic. Originally intended to be a drabble, now I'm making it a full fic.

THERE ARE MAJOR SPOILERS FROM TITAN GAMES IN HERE. I ADVISE YOU STOP READING NOW IF YOU HAVE NOT READ THE BOOK.

Warning: language, violence

# Chapter 1

Part 1:

Once Raxtus had departed with Kendra, Seth and Merek, Warren turned his attention back to Vanessa, who had yet to move from the pile of treasure they'd found her sitting on earlier.

"Nessa?" He said softly, crouching down in front of her.

"You're okay," she whispered, her white eyes staring up at a spot just over his head. Of course Kendra had already confirmed that for her before taking off, but still Vanessa felt a rush of relief hearing his voice again.

"I am." Warren lifted his hand and gently caressed her cheek, using his thumb to brush away a tear that escaped one sightless eye. "It's going to be alright."

Vanessa exhaled and slowly lifted one trembling hand, and after a little fumbling, managed to cover his hand with hers.

She wished she could see his face. She would give anything to see his face...just one more time.

But now she never would. At least...not unless someone could either break Bracken free of the fallen Fairy Realm or some lucky person found the Sands of Sanctity and used them on her.

But that was like asking for a miracle and Vanessa wasn't holding her breath for one. She didn't want Warren to either.

"If you want to walk away, I understand." She said thickly.

Warren frowned.

"What makes you think I would?" He asked.

"I mean...I'm not...I'm a liability."

"To the mission? I told you, you did great."

"Warren." Vanessa sighed. "You know that's not what I mean..."

"You think I don't want you anymore?"

"..."

Warren sighed.

"Van, it doesn't matter to me. I love you regardless. I always will."

Vanessa let out a tiny sob as his hand left her face and he wrapped his arms around her.

"I love you too."

"We'll figure this out." He murmured as she buried her face in his shoulder. "I promise."

## Part 2

### Chapter Notes

Sorry for the lack of update, guys. I've been going through some stuff and haven't felt up to writing...but I'm getting back in the swing of things, and I've got ideas, so we'll see where this goes. Hope y'all like this update.

#### Part 2:

"So any bright ideas on how we're going to get out of here?" Vanessa asked. "With Bernosh gone, we're stranded."

Warren helped her to her feet. She swayed for a moment, disoriented and he took one of her arms, wrapping it around his neck, while wrapping his other arm around her waist.

Tanu pulled another bottle from his bag.

"Shrinking potion," he said. "You drink it, Warren can carry you down, then we can join Kendra and the others at Beacon Hill."

"Beacon Hill?" said Vanessa.

"Raxtus suggested it." Warren replied. "Merek seemed to think it was a good spot to observe things."

"And what use am I going to be in that department?" she asked. "Better yet, what use am I going to be *at all*?"

She hadn't meant to snap, but it was a valid question. There was little she could do now in the way of fighting or reconnaissance. And as there was no chance of her biting any dragons (not that she would have been able to, for one she'd never be able to get close enough to bite one and live to tell the tale, and two, her teeth would never have broken through the tough scales), her narcoblix abilities were void.

Vanessa had never felt so useless before in her life.

"Let's get out of here first," Tanu said after a few moments of uneasy silence. "Then we'll figure out our next move."

She felt him place the shrinking potion in her hand. Her hand trembled for a moment, she was afraid she might miss her mouth and spill it.

*You can do this. Focus. Take it slow.*

She took a deep breath and lifted the bottle slowly. When she was sure it was level with her mouth, she tilted it and drank the potion in one quick gulp.

Almost immediately after swallowing the potion, she had the distinct sensation that she was falling. When it passed, she stumbled, and felt a hand carefully wrapping itself around her.

"You're okay," Warren said. "I've got you."

"That was the weirdest thing I've ever experienced," Vanessa said. "and I've been on missions with you."

"How do missions with me qualify as weird?"

"Do you want the pamphlet version or the encyclopedia version?"

"You love my weirdness."

"On a good day."

"Hey! You two want to get a room or should we get moving?" Tanu interrupted.

"At this height, I'll take the second option," Vanessa said.

"Alright." Warren rolled his eyes and placed Vanessa in the front pocket of the flannel he was wearing. "Comfy?"

"I guess," she sighed. "Let's go."

—

Traveling by shirt pocket was by far the strangest thing Vanessa had ever experienced...and she'd experienced a lot of strange things in her life.

The trip back down the mountain was slow going even though the Perennial Storm had ended, and she found herself gripping handfuls of Warren's shirt to keep herself steady and prevent herself from tumbling out. After about ten or fifteen minutes they stopped.

"Warren?" Vanessa called, confused and concerned by the stall in their journey. She did not like not being able to see what was happening.

"I'm okay." He reassured. "So is Tanu. We just stopped to rest for a minute. Cliffs are wet from the rain and without climbing gear, it'd be a nasty fall down."

"And suddenly I miss our portable dungeon."

"I'm not that bad a transport, am I?" he pretended to be offended.

"Your shirt is more comfortable. It just lacks a safety belt." Vanessa sighed.

"I'm not going to let anything happen to you." he promised.

She smiled. "You're a lot better than the portable dungeon."

"Aw stop, you're gonna make me blush."

"I like making you blush." she teased.

Tanu groaned. "You two are disgusting."

"We're not that bad." Vanessa protested.

"You could be worse."

"May have been." Warren chuckled. Tanu frowned. "What? Ask Savani if we ever go back to Crescent Lagoon. I think she, Grady and Hako were conspiring at one point to kick us out of the Monkey Maze."

"Okay that's enough chatter about our love life." She said. "We should keep moving. Tanu how long will this potion last?"

"Long enough for us to reach the bottom of the mountain." he answered. "Let's go."

—

Upon reaching the foot of the mountain, Warren removed Vanessa from his shirt pocket and set her down on the ground as gently as he could. When the shrinking potion wore off, Vanessa experienced a sensation almost like rising up in an elevator, or an escalator, except at a much faster speed.

She felt Warren place his hand on the small of her back to steady her.

"Alright, so what's the plan?" she asked.

"Well I had a thought." Tanu said.

"And that is?"

"Ptolemy. The ettin." He replied. "You bit him, correct?"

"I did."

"Would you be able to see through him if we used him against the dragons?"

"Doubtful." Vanessa responded. "Three heads, three sets of eyes, three different minds. I'd have to pick a head to control."

"Kendra said the middle head seemed to control the other two," Warren said. "I observed as much from when I tricked him with the sheep we dosed with a sleeping potion."

"It was dosed enough to last for a couple of days." Tanu reminded them.

She was silent for a minute.

"No. It would leave me even more vulnerable than I am now." she said. "There would be no possible way for me to defend myself in the event of an attack. And chances are if I were to be ejected from the ettin by force, it would not bode well for my mental capabilities."

Warren ran a hand through his hair, not liking the despair in his girlfriend's expression. He wished there was something he could do...*anything* just to take her pain away.

"What'd I tell you before? It's going to be alright — we'll figure it out." He said, reaching for her hand and giving it a light squeeze. "We always do, right?"

A faint smile flickered across Vanessa's face. "We do." She sighed. "Let's move."

## Part 3

### Chapter Notes

having read return of the dragon slayers this fic will also now serve as a fix-it for the book in its entirety.

Buckle up, y'all.

#### Part 3:

Once they reached Beacon Hill, they found Kendra, Raxtus and Merek waiting for them on the ground. Warren didn't like the look on his little cousin's face. Nor did he miss how she couldn't seem to look in Vanessa's direction.

"Kens?" He said quietly. "what is it?"

"Nothing...it's nothing." She replied.

Warren gave her a skeptical look. "Nothing, hm?"

Kendra nodded absently, tugging at her fingers a bit and saying nothing. He decided not to push further.

"Where are your cousins and the satyrs?" Tanu asked.

"Last we heard, Terasios." Merek supplied. "The city was razed to the ground and Humburgh took a hard hit as well. We searched for Kendra's cousins high and low but found no trace."

"I'm sure they're alright, Kensie." Warren said quietly, placing a gentle hand on her shoulder.

"Sure..." she said faintly. "They're fine..."

Warren knew the halfhearted statement was meant for him, he could see she was worried but didn't want to say how she really felt about the situation and her missing family. Not only about the Larsen siblings and the satyrs, but —

"And Seth?" Vanessa said hesitantly.

"I found Humbuggle." Kendra replied, choosing to look at the ground instead of directly at the narcoblix. "He told me Seth won the game, regained his memories and destroyed the wizenstone." She swallowed the lump in her throat, trying not to cry. "And that Celebrant

captured him afterward. He didn't know where Seth was taken...or what happened to Knox, Tess, and the satyrs."

Vanessa looked uncertainly at Warren. Her boyfriend shrugged.

"Ken..."

"I've thought about it, and when Ronodin captured Bracken the first time he kept him at Soaring Cliffs." She said, "It only makes sense that Celebrant would take Seth there. So that's where I need to go next. Raxtus agreed to take me. And..."

"And...?" Warren said, eyes narrowed. He had an idea where this was headed and he didn't like it.

"There's a shrine there." She said simply. "To the fairy queen."

Vanessa sighed. "Yes. Of course."

"We don't have any other ammunition against the dragons. If I go to Soaring Cliffs I can free Seth and—"

"Kendra, there is no way for you to enter the fairy realm," Vanessa said.

"Right. Here, because the fairy king sealed it." Kendra replied. "The remaining shrines should still be open. If not, I'm sure Raxtus can get me in."

"It shouldn't be a problem." Raxtus assured. "I'm positive Ronodin doesn't know about me."

"Even if you're able to get in, Ronodin could still refuse Kendra's admittance, possibly have safeguards to prevent herself from entering." Merek reasoned.

"And how would you know?" Kendra asked sharply before closing her eyes and sighing softly. "I'm sorry, Merek..."

"No need to apologize." He replied, understanding coloring his voice. "Care to enlighten me?"

"He...He knows how much the fairy queen's son, Bracken, means to me." She explained, not wanting to get into it. They didn't have time for long stories. "If I give myself up—"

"No!" Warren cried.

"Out of the question." Vanessa agreed.

"Not happening." Tanu added.

"If I'd known that was the plan I'd have said no to taking you." Raxtus said.

"Don't you understand?" Kendra said impatiently. "If I'm imprisoned there then I have a chance to get close to the queen and Bracken. Possibly free them. I've got to try...if I hadn't

caused such an upset, Ronodin would still be attempting to romance Queen Imani and he - *they* would be safe.”

“It wasn’t your fault, honey.” Tanu said.

“Just like me blinding Vanessa wasn’t my fault?”

Ah. There it was, the reason Kendra couldn’t look at her.

Vanessa sighed.

“That was an accident, *mija*.” She said patiently. “If there’s any blame to be had it will rest with me. I knew the risks, I knew the signal you told us to listen for, and I was too slow. You did not do this to me.”

“...”

“Kendra?”

She sighed.

“Fine...but regardless I’m going to Soaring Cliffs to help Seth and then I’m going to the shrine. I won’t change my mind.”

“And you want us to...what? Sit idly by while you throw yourself to the wolves?” said Warren.

Kendra shook her head.

“No,” She said. “I want you safe. All of you. I don’t want anyone else getting hurt. Go back to Crescent Lagoon. It’s the last stronghold, and if Ronodin hasn’t corrupted the shrine there, I’ll have a way back. And when you find them, take my cousins and the satyrs with you.”

“Kens —“

“No. I’ve made up my mind, I can handle it. I can...I can do it.” She said, expression nervous, but determined “I’m doing it.”

“Well not alone.” Warren replied. Kendra looked ready to argue but he kept talking. He wasn’t about to let his little cousin go off on a quest unprotected. And if it got him close to beings that could possibly help Vanessa, that was a bonus. “I’m coming too.”

“Warr —“

“I’m coming.” He said firmly. “I’m going to take inventory of my pack...let me know when you’re ready to go.”

He walked off.

—

Kendra stared at Warren as he sat on the ground, going through the gear he, Vanessa and Tanu had brought back from the mobile prison on their trek back from the dragon temple.

“Why are you coming with me?” she asked.

Warren gave her a pointed look. “You aren’t going alone.”

She sighed. “Obviously. Raxtus is going with me and now so are you. You didn’t answer my question.”

“Yes I did.” He said

Kendra rolled her eyes. “Really? You really think he’ll let you in with me? I need to go alone and you know it.”

“Whether he lets you in at all is the bigger question.” Her cousin countered.

“And if he lets you in?” Kendra shot back. “Just tell me alright? What reason could you possibly have for going back to the fairy realm, Warren?”

He didn’t answer, seemingly preoccupied with something inside his backpack. Kendra studied him for a moment and then her eyes widened in realization.

“*Vanessa?*” She said, “Seriously? Do you really think Ronodin cares about her? You think he will have some surefire way of curing her? That monster couldn’t care less about her.”

Warren rolled his eyes. “I know that.”

“Then why...” Kendra trailed off and then her eyes widened. “You want Bracken free. You want him to heal her.”

Warren was silent for a moment, fiddling with the zipper of his backpack.

“Unless Agad told you where he stashed the Sands of Sanctity before he died, Bracken or his mother are the only ones that can do it...” He said finally. “I’m not expecting either one of them to be able to, magic isn’t a cure-all...but...”

Kendra folded her arms over her chest. “And what does she think?”

“Think about what?”

“Well she’s not exactly happy about it.” Both turned to see Vanessa approaching. “But I’m not going to tell him not to go with you. You need someone backing you up. Especially in the fairy realm.” She sighed. “Honestly? I think he’s holding out for a miracle that won’t happen.”

“Which I’m not.” Warren spoke up. He reached over and took both her hands in his. “Like I said, I know magic isn’t a cure-all. I love you, Nessa, there’s nothing I wouldn’t do for you.”

Vanessa sighed. “And if he or the queen can’t heal me?”

“Then no harm done.” He replied easily. “It doesn’t change anything.” He kissed her softly.

Vanessa smiled as he pulled back, giving his hands a light squeeze.

Kendra cleared her throat. “You two need me to come back later? Maybe find you a room somewhere?”

Vanessa chuckled and Warren rolled his eyes before returning his attention to Kendra.

“Like she said, you need someone backing you up,” he said. “I mean, did you really think you were going anywhere without your ‘gallant protector’?”

“I don’t—”

“Like it or not, you’re stuck with me, kiddo.” He said, tone leaving no room for argument. “We can rendezvous with the others later.”

Kendra glanced at Vanessa.

“Where will you go?” She asked.

“Tanu and I will find your cousins and the satyrs,” she answered. “And then we’ll regroup when you get back.”

“Where?”

“I would suggest my father’s kingdom,” Merek said. “I propose we meet in Selona, at Fairview Castle.”

“Konrad’s realm?” Kendra said with surprise. “Where is it?”

“Concealed in Europe,” He replied. “Well fortified, protected by a powerful distractor spell.”

“An entire country?” Warren asked with wide eyes. “How is that possible?”

Merek shrugged. “My father’s work. My siblings and I helped over the years to strengthen it but none of us are as well versed in magic as he is.”

She glanced uncertainly at Tanu, Warren and Vanessa. “It’s up to you wherever you go, just protect my cousins...and the satyrs for Seth’s sake. Please.”

“Speaking of Seth,” Warren said, “If he isn’t at Soaring Cliffs then what do you propose to do?”

She opened her mouth to respond, but then closed it. All she had thought of up to that point was saving both Seth and Bracken. Not what to do if she came to an obstacle that prevented her from doing so.

“Well...” she tugged at her fingers, trying to not let her anxiety show. “I...”

“Find my siblings,” Merek suggested. “And any allies you can, we’ll need them in the inevitable battle we face.”

“Your siblings...” Kendra wracked her brain trying to recall if the book Andromadus had given her had named them. She kept coming up empty, all the book had mentioned was that Merek had two sisters and a brother. “I don’t know their names, much less how to find them.”

Merek nodded in understanding. “I can give you their names. My brother’s name is Gerwin, my sisters are Nadia and Magdalena. As for how to find them, I’m less certain.”

“They’re not in Selona?”

“Correct.” Merek replied. “We were widely dispersed after the last dragon war, and though I recovered my identity and memories, I don’t recall where any of them were last.”

Kendra sighed. “I’m sure there’s a way...there has to be. We can figure it out once I deal with Seth and Bracken.” She glanced at Warren. “Well...let’s go.”

Tanu and Vanessa hugged both of them.

“Be careful,” Tanu handed Kendra a few bottles from his potions bag. “Speed, Energy, and a couple gummy potions. Just in case.”

“Thanks, Tanu,” she handed them to Warren, who tucked them into his pack.

Vanessa gave Warren another hug. “Be careful.” She whispered.

Warren smiled. “Always am.” He kissed her deeply. “It’ll be alright. You can do this.”

She nodded, trying to hang on to what she had left: his scent, the sound of his voice, the feel of being wrapped up in his arms and his lips on hers.

God if she could just see his face one more time....

She tried to focus. Warren was right, she could do this.

She could do this.

....right?

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