Once Artemis heard that the Elder had accepted their gift and they were going to receive his blessing, his heart felt like it was about to burst due to love. All the shijis behind them cheered, his tail flicked in annoyance as he just wished for them to go away. This wasn't some spectacle for everyone to witness except for them and the Elder that they were going to get blessings from. Khoi placed his hand on his shoulder while he pushed the black shiji closer towards him. He looked up at the chimera to see him looking down with his mismatched eyes which were full of love and understanding. Though, he could see that he kept his expression firm, not letting others ruin their special moment.

The crowd behind them died away. Qing, the elder had placed their token of love aside and looked around for a brief moment. Slowly, silence filled the area.

Qing scanned the crowd and then rested his eyes on the two lovers. He held his head high looking up at the clear blue skies.

"There's a clearing not too far away from here where I wish to give you your blessing from prying eyes. Follow me, both of you. For the rest of you, I'll return shortly and then we can celebrate the love these two have for each other until the sun rises once more if you wish." Qing didn't wait a second until he slowly started to fly through the street, slow enough for Artemis and Khoi to follow the Elder. The pace was set nicely, they could hear the crowd behind them cheer and howl wishing them good luck and congratulating them.

Khoi took hold of Artemis' hand and gripped it tightly, he glanced down at the shorter shiji and had a slight smile.

"Are you nervous?" He asked quietly as they got a few looks from other shijis. They probably were wondering what they were doing following an Elder but some might have known already.

Artemis' ears flicked. Nervous? Hah, he wasn't nervous. Or so he tried to tell himself, his heart was racing though he figured that was due to excitement but it could also be due to nervousness. Even if he would lie to Khoi, he was sure that he would see right through his words. He always seemed to have a good grasp of his emotions.

"I suppose a bit… but I'm also excited along with other emotions that are good." He finally spoke as they turned a corner. Artemis was going to say something else but then he got a good look at the nice park within the city which took his breath away. He had never been to this part of the city. There were few trees and then gardens and a small spot where it seemed that Qing enjoyed laying around. In the grass there was a spot where the grass blades were flattened. In front of it was a spring which he would have never imagined being there.

Without hesitating, Qing went over to the spot and sat down and calmly waited for the pair to make their way through. It seemed like they were in luck, there wasn't anyone in the area.

“Don’t be nervous, I got you, my sweet love.” Khoi spoke softly as the two walked towards the Elder slowly. “I’ll take care of you, for the rest of my life and in the next life.”

His words comforted Artemis, he held onto Khoi’s hand and briefly closed his eyes feeling the warmth of his mate next to him.

“I will also take care of you, my love.”

Khoi looked down at him, with a smile he said. “I know.”

Artemis and Khoi walked towards the spring, Artemis placed his bag on the ground next to it as he didn’t want it to become wet. The water was nice and warm, it wasn’t too hot though and it was relaxing. He figured that it would have been colder. He didn’t think this place got too much direct sunlight.

The two stopped in front of the Elder who looked at them both for a tiny bit of time until he cleared his throat. Artemis gripped onto Khoi’s hand a bit tighter which his mate returned in kind. There were a few dozen ideas running through Artemis’ head as they stood looking up at the Elder who had such calm aura surrounding him.

“Both of you have come to stand before me to be blessed. I shall grant you this and tie your souls together until one of you wishes to break it. This isn’t a small ceremony, this will also go into your next life. The two of you have had the feeling of your souls pulling towards one another. With time and patience, you found each other and have come here to complete each other.” Qing spoke softly, he leaned his head towards the two. “Now, both of you will exchange scales with the other. If you will.”

With a nod, Qing motioned the two to grab the scales that they had gotten from one another earlier before they had left. Khoi had known this was going to be part of the ceremony, both of them grabbed the scales that they were going to put on the other from their pockets.

Facing one another, Khoi took hold of Artemis’ left hand, and placed five of his violet scales around his wrist. One was bigger than the rest which was on top of his hand and curved around the wrist. When Khoi was done, he took Khoi’s right hand which was his darker half and placed his orange scales around his wrist in the same manner.

When Artemis had finished placing the scales around Khoi’s wrist. Qing took out his claws, both of them were palm to palm, Artemis admired the violet scales on his wrist which made him tear up, he looked up to see Khoi who seemed to have the same emotion as him.

Not speaking, Qing placed his claw onto Khoi’s wrist and then to Artemis. He felt something warm press against him where the scales were. When that was done, Qing stood

back. Artemis was very aware of the scales on his skin, it felt odd but in a good way. He felt like a new connection between him and Khoi had formed that hadn't been there before.

"Your souls will be bound now until the end of time." Qing spoke quietly. "Together, the two of you will take on hardships as one. As time passes by, your love will grow and blossom even more. Congratulations to both of you. We'll be waiting to celebrate this day with you."

Qing floated away and was out of sight within moments. Artemis thought, so he could go fast. As his thoughts were trailing, he felt himself lift from the spring and into the arms of his mate, now officially they were together.

Artemis had done a little squeak as Khoi held him up and he was above Khoi's head. Their noses touched lightly. Khoi laughed happily as he held onto Artemis. After the first initial surprise, Artemis relaxed and kissed Khoi warmly. He felt his tight grip around his body as Khoi supported him up in the air.

Neither one of them didn't know how much time went by. It felt like an eternity that they were locked in the kiss. Artemis leaned away, he held himself off against his chest with his hands above Khoi. Both of their eyes were filled with love.

"I love you, I can't wait to spend the rest of my life with you." Artemis grinned down at Khoi who nuzzled him with his nose.

"I love you as well, we have the rest of our lives to be with one another." Khoi whispered softly to him.

Artemis looked at his left wrist to see Khoi's scales be part of him now and forever. He had truly found his soulmate, he thought feeling so much love for his mate.