

## Negotiations

Six years Later

The fairies had been at war with the werewolves for two years. The fairies were losing decisively even though no battle had been fought. The royal family had never once fought the werewolves. Their numbers were decreasing at a drastic rate. Any fairy who set foot in the human realm died or was captured. Prince Aiden had nally had enough of his uncle and Mother avoiding the problem. That's what brought Prince Aiden and Prince Arion Holloran to the negotiation table on behalf of their mother, Queen Alania of Faerie.

Alpha Eric Conners watched on his surveillance feed as the fairy princes walked into his home. They were being led by my second in command. My Beta, Caleb. When Prince Aiden and Prince Arion entered the war room their eyes widened as they took in my family. I was proud of my brothers and the strong pack we had built. They rst looked at my brother Alpha Jackson, then Alpha Harold, nally my youngest brother Alpha Darrin. After getting a good look at them their eyes drifted to my allies. Alpha Steven McDermont, Alpha David Harold, Former Alpha Frank Daniels in place of his son, Alpha Chase Daniels, who was training in Europe, Alpha Nick Kyle, and Alpha Lucas Lyons.

I knew my reputation proceeded me with the fairy princes. Their eyes reected anger when they looked at me. I couldn't be bothered to care. At thirty-two years old, it was said that since I had not found my mate, I'd grown cold and hard. Maybe I had. I had goals for this meeting though, and that was to gain a wife. One that I had wanted for quite some time. I knew I was handsome. I was six foot ve inches tall with blonde hair and blue eyes. Many women threw themselves at me, even a few men. I blankly gestured to two empty chairs for the princes to sit in. They took their seats, and we sat in silence. I had thought they would start this conversation off. It appeared that was not the case.

Finally, I broke the silence, "You fairies requested this meeting. I suggest you start offering something. Or at minimum, tell us why you wanted to talk." Prince Aiden leaned forward. He spoke, "We want peace. This war has gone on long enough. The Fae desire to travel between Faerie and this realm without fear. We want our people to be free here." The arrogant bastard. I threw my head back and laughed. I pointed out, "You fairies picked this ght. What are you offering us to end it? In case you didn't notice, we are winning." Aiden and Arion looked at one another. Prince Aiden asked, "What would it take?" I looked at my brothers and allies. We had discussed this. Each one of them nodded. I answered, "A marriage alliance."

The princes were clearly stunned. Jackson used our mind link to speak to me. He said, "They didn't see that coming." I snorted, "We didn't think they would." Prince Aiden exclaimed, "What?! You want a fairy wife?! No! No fairy would agree to marry you. Our numbers are depleting. We need our females!" I had been prepared for his refusal. So, I was not deterred.

I smiled sinisterly "Ah, but I did not ask for a full-blooded fairy, did I? Do you not have a Princess who is not a partial fairy? The rumor is she is to be married off for the betterment of your people. I would say that puts my request in the lead. I need an heir, but I have not found my mate. I cannot take a werewolf bride; in case I do run across my fated mate. If you give your sister to me in marriage and she produces an heir that would satisfy our terms. We will have no quarrel with fairies any longer. It would allow the Fae to be free here, as you said. If you refuse, then you will have to lock yourselves away in your realm, because you would never be free here again."

The fairy princes looked at each other. It was clear on their faces they did not know how I knew about their sister. It was true that few rumors escaped Faerie about the young partial princess; however, I liked to know things. I couldn't deny I was intrigued by Princess Haley. Ever since her birth announcement went out. I intentionally sought out rumors about her, but they didn't need to know that.

Prince Arion nally asked, "Why do you think we would give our sister to you, Alpha Eric? You are the one who declared war. You have spilled the most blood of our people. You are ruthless, and our sister is timid." My brothers smirked proudly at me. I'd defended my pack and that was my job. The princes knew full well I had every right to declare war. I'd do it all over again if I had to.

My brother Darrin Conners spoke, " Everyone knows the Fae are elitist about their blood. Do you even like your sister? She's only a partial fairy which is lesser than you in your eyes and the eyes of your people. Here she would be respected. As the Luna and wife of my brother, she would be treated better than she probably is there among your people." When Arion and Aiden stiffened, I knew my brother had hit a sore spot. So, the young princess was mistreated. My wolf, Duke, growled murderously in my head. I found myself enraged that someone would mistreat my princess. Her beauty was rumored to be out of this world, even when she was a child. Despite my best efforts all whispers about her ceased six years ago.

Prince Arion evasively answered Jackson's question, "Our sister is a Princess, not some common fairy." Fairies couldn't lie, but they could evade. Prince Arion's answer was conrmation to us. My brother Jackson snorted, "But no full-blooded fairy wants her. Correct? The rumors have been rampant since she was born the only reason she was not killed as a child is because Queen Alaina loved her. The prevailing rumor is that people only cared about your sister because she held the title of princess. Which meant she could be married off to strengthen the position of Faerie. We are offering you a way to end a war and strengthen your kingdom with such a marriage."

Prince Aiden turned red with anger. He yelled, "NO ONE WOULD'VE KILLED MY SISTER!" Interesting. It seemed the princes did care for their sister in a way. Prince Arion grabbed his brother's hand. Prince Arion asked, "How long do we have to decide?" Prince Aiden turned to him stunned. I knew I had them. I spoke frankly, "We leave this table with a verbal agreement, or the bloodshed continues. I believe you two are acquainted with some prisoners in our dungeons. Hexxus is one of them. He shouts quite frequently that he is your cousin. Agree that your sister is to be my wife, or he will die next."

Everyone knew that Hexxus was Fabian Holloran's son. The princes couldn't allow him to die. Fabian was a prick, but the rumor was his nephews desperately wanted their uncle's approval. They both sighed in defeat. I linked Jackson, "It's sad how easy that was." Jackson snorted, "The war lasted longer than we thought. We were sure they would be at the table sooner." That was true. It was uncharacteristic of the peace, love, and harmony Queen, Alania, to allow her people to be slaughtered.

Prince Aiden stood and stretched out his hand to me. He agreed, "Alright, as Princes' of Faerie, Arion and I agree to your terms. Our sister, Princess Haley Holloran, will wed Alpha Eric Conners to end this war." I stood and shook Prince Aiden's hand. I decided to drop my next condition now that he had agreed. I said, "Fabulous. The wedding will take place in two weeks in my territory." Prince Arion squeaked his reply, "Two weeks?!" My face went to stone along with my tone, "Yes, two weeks. If you do not return by then with your sister, my agreed upon bride; then your cousin will be sent to you in pieces."

Prince Aiden hissed, "You'll have my sister as your bride. Just do not harm our cousin." They turned to leave. Prince Aiden turned back and said, "I want your word that you will not harm my sister." I growled, "My reputation may be that I am ruthless, but I have never harmed anyone innocent. I would not hurt my wife." Prince Aiden nodded. Prince Arion grabbed him and dragged him from the room before he could say anything else.

I told my brother, "Turn on the sound for our surveillance cameras." Jackson smiled. We watched the fairy brothers stare at each other in shock. I told my Beta, "Go observe them in case we miss something." Caleb said, "Of course." He left to follow them from the shadows. We had superior hearing to fairies. Caleb wouldn't have to get too close to them to hear, and they wouldn't know he was listening.

Prince Aiden spoke rst "We haven't found Haley in six years, Arion. To be fair, we didn't try that hard but still. The paper trail ended with some doctor. We have had no leads since then. How the hell are we going to nd her in two weeks?! And what do we even say? Hello little sister, it's been a while nice to see you. By the way, you must marry Alpha Eric Conners; or we all die." Prince Arion shrugged, "Hopefully she doesn't know who he is or about his reputation. He gave you his word that he won't harm her. She's quiet and un-fairy like. This life here might be better for her. We know Haley loves Mother. She loved taking care of the babies in Faerie; she wouldn't want them to die." Prince Aiden sighed, "She's not as quiet as you think, brother. She might hold out until Hexxus is killed. You know with everything he did to her; I wouldn't save him if I was her. Uncle Fabian is still alive as well, and she must hate him. We do not know who she has become in these six years away from Faerie and us."

We watched in shock. Prince Aiden exclaimed, "I loathe that those werewolves are right. Haley would be treated better here than in Faerie." Arion sighed, "It is odd how that stings. It's accurate though, she would be treated far better here. We can use that to our advantage when we nd her. Surely, she would much rather remain here with Alpha Eric than return with us. She ran away from Faerie for a reason. It's not like she wants to come home. You know we were going to have to use a charm to locate her. All our attempts to pop to her over the years failed. She's our blood, we can do it."

Prince Aiden admitted defeat, "We have no choice. We have to get her to agree for our people." Prince Arion looked down at his feet, "Maybe if we had defended her at least once we would have a better shot. Hopefully, she's still in this realm. We will have to delay going home until we nd her." Prince Aiden sighed, "We will stay. We will nd her, brother. The charm will work quickly. Convincing Haley to get married in two weeks to save Hexxus and our people will be the challenge." Prince Arion said, "Maybe we don't bring up saving Hexxus. Just our people... us and mother. She loves us." Prince Aiden sighed, "The fairy goddess, Azoney, only knows why, but you are right." They began to cast their charm to nd their sister. They showed no indication they knew Caleb stood in the shadows, listening to their entire conversation along with us.