

Mates

Alpha Eric Connors was sitting with his all three of his brothers and their mates Jessica, Shana, and Molly. I watched the couples before me. I wanted the type of love they had. I was positive I could find it with the fairy princess for some reason. Duke had started to pace in my head. He was anxious about something. He'd been on edge this whole last year, but neither of us knew why. I was surprised when Caleb burst into the room. He quickly announced, "Eric, the fairy princess' found the princess!" I smiled then asked, "...And? What did she say about marrying me?" Caleb smiled, "They argued about it, but she's here."

My brothers and I all jumped up out of our seats. They brought her to me already? Shana, Molly, and Jessica's mouths dropped. I managed to speak, "I'm sorry. WHAT? What do you mean she's here? The princess is in the house?" Caleb smiled, enjoying my mild panic. It was rare for me to feel unnerved.

Eventually Caleb said, "The princess got in a fight with her brothers. First, she snuck up on them. She almost took them out from behind with a dagger before recognizing them. She figured out why her brothers had suddenly shown back up in her life and lost it. Rightfully so, in my humble opinion. They told her about the marriage agreement with you, Eric. She already knew who you were. She also knew about the war. She agreed to think about the proposal and asked for her time frame. She became enraged when she heard they already agreed without asking her. She screamed at them that she had no choice but to accept the marriage because if her brothers broke an agreement with you; the Fae would be killed off. She stormed off to her car. Our trackers followed her since we give no shits about where the fairy princess stay. The princess is currently sitting on the trunk of her car on the east side of the territory. She's just staring at the main house. Liam joined them. He said she seems at peace." Liam was our lead warrior.

I was surprised and that didn't happen often. Duke was still anxious. I asked him, "What's wrong with you?" Duke replied, "I don't know... let's go meet our princess. I must just be excited." I spoke out loud, "Well, brothers and your better halves, it's been an intriguing evening. I am going to meet my future wife. I'll see you all later. Caleb, tell Mrs. Blanch to prepare some food and a room. The princes were careless enough to let the princess out of their sight. I do not plan to be so careless." Everyone smiled. Caleb nodded, "Of course." Shana, Molly, and Jessica ran to the window to see if they could get a glimpse of my fairy princess.

I quickly left the room. I shifted once I made it outside. I quickly headed east towards where Caleb said the Princess was. I was barely headed in that direction when I smelled an enticing scent. It smelled strongly of honey and vanilla. I linked Caleb, "What else is out here?" Caleb linked, "Our warriors." I retorted, "No..."

I've never smelled this scent before." Caleb answered, "I'm sorry. WHAT?! How strong is the smell?" I answered, "Very strong. It's like the area was bathed in honey and vanilla." Caleb asked, "How's Duke acting?" I answered confused, "Weird. He's anxious." Caleb linked, "Son of a bitch." I didn't have time to ask what his deal was because I was getting close to the east border. The smell was getting stronger. It was taking over my senses. I needed to find the owner of that scent.

Then I saw a yellow Camaro with a stunning angel sitting on top of it. I felt like he was hit by lightning. Duke growled, "MATE!" Unbelievable. Haley Holloran was my mate. That's why everything about her intrigued me. She was mine. My wolf preened in delight that we'd finally found her. Duke linked me, "Mate is beautiful." He wasn't wrong. She was the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen.

At that moment, Haley turned and smiled at me. I was happy she wasn't scared of me. Duke was intimidating. I studied her. She was a bombshell beauty, and I had no intention of ever letting her go. Haley jumped off her car as if a magnetic force pulled her towards me. She reached out and touched my fur. Duke started to purr. I linked him, "Are you purring? I have never heard you purr. This is the moment you choose to purr?" Duke snarled at me, "Shut up. It feels nice." Ridiculous wolf. Haley laughed and her melodic voice filled my ears, "Hi there. I think I'll call you Thor." Duke immediately decided Haley's name was better than his own. He told me, "My name is now Thor. Don't call me Duke again." I linked, "You cannot be serious." Duke said, "Mate said my name is Thor. So now it is... make sure people know that." Oh, for the love of god. Duke growled at me, "I already told Caleb's wolf. They are sending a memo about it." Of course, he did.

Haley continued talking "Maybe I'll be seeing you around here, Thor. Apparently, I am moving in soon." Thor purred in my mind, "Yes, yes, she is. Mate will never leave." Haley smiled at him. She admitted, "I've never met a Werewolf before. You're my first." She immediately blushed continuing, "WEREWOLF! You're the first Werewolf I've met. I've read about them though. I'm guessing you have to take me to your Alpha now. I didn't mean to trespass in your territory. I just went for a drive to clear my head. I ended up here without even realizing where I was going. I can't imagine he'll be upset that I'm here though. We are apparently fucking engaged. We should probably meet face to face."

Well, if my mate wanted to meet me, I'd have to shift. I ran behind a tree not wanted to startle her with being naked. My lead warrior, Liam, handed me shorts. He asked, "Did what I think happen actually just happen?" I smiled admitting, "Yes. Keep it to yourself for now. We can't have the pack link going crazy just yet. I want to see the look on my brother's faces. You should start spreading the word that Duke changed his name to Thor. He's not going to be accepting of anyone calling him by his old name." Liam busted up laughing. Then he said, "Sure thing,

Alpha. The Luna is beautiful." I smiled, "Yes, she is. You all feel free to get out of here. I've got her." Liam nodded and left.

When I stepped back out from behind the tree Haley's jaw dropped. She whispered, "You're actually my Thor. Holy shit." I had no idea what that meant. Then she whipped her head around furiously and asked, "Who said that?" If I hadn't had supernatural hearing; I wouldn't have heard her. I asked her, "Who said what, Angel?" Her eyes met mine. She whispered, "Damn... even his voice is sexy." I was trying not to laugh. She might have read about werewolves, but she didn't get to the part about how good our hearing was. That wasn't surprising. Fairies did not have enhanced hearing like other supernatural's. Haley spoke louder, "Someone said 'Mine' when you stepped out from behind the tree. I just don't see anyone else here."

I laughed, "Oh my Angel, that was your fairy side letting you know I'm your mate." Haley stepped forward and grabbed my arm and gasped. I felt like an electric current pulse between us. Her arousal filled the air. She eyed my six pack and tall frame. I couldn't stop my growl, which she misinterpreted. She jumped back and let go thinking my growl was directed at her. She stuttered, "I... I'm sorry. I don't know what came over me. I... just had to touch you. Which is fucking weird... I have a... that's not important... I'm Haley by the way. You said we are mates...are you sure? My fairy family told me I wouldn't have one. God, this just got so fucked up. I'm engaged to the Alpha here." I stepped closer to her until she was trapped between me and her car. Her breath caught as I placed my arms on both sides of her, onto the car.

I looked into her eyes and introduced myself, "I am sure you are my mate. Allow me to introduce myself, I'm Alpha Eric Connors, your fiancé, and I'm at your service my little mate." Her shock was palpable. She whispered, "WHAT?! No fucking way! You're who I'm engaged to?!" She touched me again. It was clear on her face she didn't understand why she felt sparks every time we touched. Did they not teach her about mates in Faerie? Why wouldn't they? Just because they told her she wouldn't have one they didn't teach her about them? What did they teach in school?

I was drawn out of my musings by her question, "Why do I feel safe here? Why do I feel like if I don't touch you, I'll die? Like if I leave, I'll be torn in two?" I quickly cupped her face with my hands. Thor was growling at the thought of her leaving. I couldn't let her leave. I whispered, "Oh my Angel, they taught you nothing in Faerie, did they? I recently heard you haven't been there for some time. You feel that way because I am your other half. You are safe with me. You won't die, but touching me is highly recommended, encouraged even. Leaving isn't an option, and I would never let you be torn in two. I am in fact the man you are engaged to."

Haley stuttered, "Wwwhat? I have to leave; I have classes tomorrow! It's finals week, and my dad..." I leaned in and touched my lips to hers. I'd meant it to be a soft kiss, however, I'd been waiting for her for so long. My undoing was when Haley moaned into my mouth. In a split second, I picked her up. Her legs naturally wrapped around my hips. I couldn't stop myself from gyrating into her against the car through our clothes. I was growling with need as she moaned.

My phone rang, breaking our moment. I pulled away from Haley and growled into the phone, "WHAT?" My brother Darrin chuckled on the other end of the phone, "Hello to you too, big brother. Did the first meeting not go well? I was curious what my future sister-in-law is like. Aren't you back yet? I assumed you'd have her in the room Mrs. Blanch set up already." No, that wouldn't work. I needed her in my room. Thor wasn't going to let me sleep if she wasn't at least next to us. Thor growled, "Damn right. Having her close by but not with us would be torture. I'd growl all night." I growled out loud at my brother, "No, Darrin. I'm not back yet. You will meet your soon to be sister-in-law shortly. Be waiting in the main room." Darrin was in the middle of saying, "Dude, what?" when I hung up.

I studied my mate. She seemed confused and surprised by her own actions of what just transpired between us. She asked, "What... What just happened? I don't... I'm not... I don't do shit like this." I brushed her hair back from her face. I didn't like her being anxious. I eased her mind, "Little mate, it's perfectly normal. Please do not panic. Let's get back to the house, and you can meet everyone. Afterwards, I can answer any questions you have." Her face told me she was torn. She clearly didn't understand what was happening, but she absolutely didn't want to leave. That was good. I didn't want to scare her. Haley whispered, "I have finals in the morning..." I laughed, cutting her off, "Do not worry, Angel. I will have a pack member get you there. You must not live too far away. Are you going to the university around here?" Haley sighed, "Yes, I live about forty minutes away. I am a psychology major." No wonder Thor had been anxious this last year. It's because she was in the area. I smirked and leaned down to kiss her again.

I was addicted to how my body felt when we touched. Her lips on mine was an amazing feeling. My body felt like it was on fire. We lost ourselves in the kiss again. She was shattering my control. When she grabbed onto my hair and pulled me closer to her, a possessive growl ripped through me. I broke our kiss to declare, "MINE!"

Haley looked into my eyes. Thor had taken over and I had no doubt she saw the lust in them. She mused, "No one has ever looked at me the way you do." I growled, "And no one ever will if they want to live. You are mine. I will kill anyone who touches you." Haley looked at me sideways. When she realized I was serious she laughed, "Well, that's a bit extreme. Should you want to adopt that policy for any fairy you see; I could agree with that." I took back over from Thor. I

grabbed her keys out of her pocket. I teased her, "Let's get you back to the main house, my little mate."

Haley exclaimed, "Hey! You took my keys. I'm perfectly capable of driving my own damn car. I got here, didn't I?" I simply smirked and got in the car adjusting the drivers' seat. Haley stood outside her car for a few minutes before sighing and walking over the passenger side. She got in and the temperature in the car skyrocketed. I knew that being in an enclosed space with your mate was intense, but she didn't.

Haley sounded bewildered when she spoke "You smell like the ocean... I thought it was just the area... somehow. How is that possible?" I smiled and grabbed her hand. She gasped as sparks shot through both of us. I answered her "Mates smell strongly to one another. I smell like the ocean to everyone, but no one smells it as strongly as you do. It helps mates identify each other and feel safe together. Do you like the ocean?" Haley smiled, "I love the ocean. My dad took me there often after sending one of my brothers to find me when I first came to this realm. Sitting in the sand listening to the waves was one of the first times I ever felt safe."

Excuse me? How was she not safe until her father found her? I growled asking her, "Why did you not feel safe? Who is your father? Not even a whisper of who the man is has ever come out of Faerie." Haley struggled. She evasively answered, "I was never safe in Faerie, Alpha Eric. As for my dad, there wasn't a rumor because he wasn't a fairy. Which means no one cared enough to speculate. They just assumed he was a human and lied to my mother about being a supernatural being. Which is ridiculous. How the fuck would a human know about supernatural's?"

I frowned, noticing she didn't answer my question. She didn't appear to trust easily. I knew where to place the blame for that. Fairies. I asked, "What did they do to you, my Angel?" She sat silently and looked out the window. I sighed, "I am not used to waiting for answers, but in this case as you are my mate. You're young and this is all new to you. So, I will wait. You will answer my questions eventually though, little mate. Clearly, your fairy family did not explain how mates work. That's a lot to process. I will let this pass for tonight. I will not be put off for long though, Haley. Please don't call me Alpha... unless it's sexy in the bedroom. Call me Eric or Thor is acceptable." Haley muttered under breath, "Yeah well you do look like my God of Thunder so that fits." I was going to tell her how good my hearing was some day. Right now, it was entertaining to hear her musings.

After a minute Haley told me, "The better question would be what didn't they do to me. My Uncle and cousins beat me. I can't hold my arms out straight; they have a curve to them. My Uncle... did... he..." Haley broke off and tears fell down her face. Her tears disturbed me greatly. I had never cared to see women crying, but this I couldn't stand.

I pulled into the main house and got out of the car. I yanked her out of the car and into my arms. I consoled her, "Little Angel, please do not cry. Your tears disturb me." She sobbed, "You won't want me anymore.... I don't... I can't... I... why do I feel like this? I don't know you... It shouldn't bother me. No one has ever wanted me. I feel like if you don't, I'll die. What the fuck is wrong with me?"

I pulled back so I could look into her eyes. I vowed, "I will destroy everyone who made you feel that way. Nothing you say to me will make me not want you. What did Fabian do to you?" I already knew he beat her. What could be worse? She was a princess. There were lines that could not be crossed. Besides, the man was her uncle. Did he use charms on her?

Tears streamed down her face. Haley tried to look away, but I grabbed her chin and brought her head up. I whispered, "Look at me, little mate." She looked back up into my eyes. I admitted, "I have been waiting for you for over a decade. Werewolves can find their mates when they turn eighteen. All my brothers found theirs within a year of reaching that milestone. Even my youngest brother. I have waited for you. I have longed for you. I watched them with their mates wanting that for myself. Eventually, I accepted that I would never find you. So, I sought out a marriage through a treaty for peace with the one woman who has intrigued me since her birth. I will NEVER let you go, little mate. Ever." Haley nodded and wiped her tears.

She looked to the side and whispered, "He sexually abused me for years. It started when I turned six years old. He continued until I finally left after the last time. I was thirteen years old at the time. I swore it wouldn't happen again. I... I had been working on my Fae powers in secret. I was trying to wait for my dad to come get me when I turned sixteen. I just couldn't after my brothers watched my cousins and Uncle beat me that badly again. I couldn't stay anymore. I screamed for Aiden and Arion to help me, but they just stood there. When my uncle told everyone to leave, they did. My brothers left me there with that fucking monster. He was brutal. He sodomized me, on top of the injuries I'd received from the beating I... I couldn't stay. I left through the portal and came to this realm."

Haley broke down again. I gently kissed her forehead absorbing her words. Thor was enraged. I knew why she was sodomized. Fairies wouldn't have wanted her to have a Fae child since she wasn't a full-blooded Fairy. I couldn't believe her own uncle did that. I couldn't believe it was allowed to happen to their own damn princess. I felt intense rage hearing my mates' story. I wanted to rip them all to pieces for hurting her and causing her pain. I also wanted to know how the fuck they had managed to keep it a secret. I would not have let that go. I would've fought for her; she was a Defenseless child. Other supernatural groups would've stood with us if we'd heard of her treatment.

I had to shove those thoughts aside. Hearing what she knew about her dad meant I had an idea what supernatural race her father was a part of. It was a bombshell. The only race I knew that would leave children until sixteen were the Hackura. They were the protectors of the realms. They were brutal and fierce fighters that were trained assassins. The fairies had no idea what they'd done by abusing Haley. The Hackura might not have retaliated on a large scale yet, but I could guarantee that some fairies had gone missing long before we declared war. You do not mess with the Hackura. Everyone knew that.

You could bring a Hackura here to this realm as a guard for a hefty sum of money. I'd lay odds the dad and brother she'd mentioned were Hackura. She likely had more than one sibling on her Hackura side. I had to laugh internally. I had inadvertently made a marriage contract with a girl with a very powerful lineage. Prior to even knowing she was my mate.

Thor muttered, "She also mentioned she had Fae powers." He was right, that was surprising. Partial fairies didn't usually have any. My wolf growled at me for not speaking yet. Thor said, "She will think you don't want her! Comfort her. Say something!" I huffed at my wolf, "I am comforting her. I'm holding her. I've got a lot to process." Thor demanded "Say words... any words!"

Fine. I pulled back and lifted her chin so I could see her eyes. I told her to let my honesty come through my tone, "Haley, I do not blame you for any of that. It was not your fault. You were an innocent child. Even if you were older no one, male or female, should be held accountable if they were raped. Consent is important for me. I will always want you. I wish your sexual experience had been consensual prior to us meeting. Your Uncle is a pathetic piece of filth for what he did. If you have a taste for revenge, Hexxus is in our dungeons. Should you want to pay him a visit."

Haley wiped furiously at her tears. She told me, "I swear I'm stronger than this, Eric. I just haven't talked about it in a long time. I'm not that girl anymore. I'm a survivor. It was just the thought that you would turn me away because of what happened." I promised her, "Never, my little mate. You are a survivor. No one will ever harm you again. Should they even try they will meet my wrath. I am not a man people want to cross. As far as your strength, I think it takes strength to cry and let things out. You're now cowering on the floor. You had an emotional response to a tough subject. That doesn't say you're not strong."

Haley calmed down and smiled. I saw the mischievousness enter her eyes. She snapped her fingers. I stared astonished because her makeup was perfect again. I looked down and noted my chest no longer had black streaks on it from her mascara. Fairy powers indeed. I teased her, "Well little mate, it seems you do have some surprises. Most partial fairies cannot do magic. Then again, they live in the human realm. You're the only one that didn't that I know of." Haley was stunned. She asked, "What? There are other partial fairies?! But I thought I was the only

one!" I scoffed, "No, little angel. There are many of them running around this realm. Most don't know they have Fae blood. I believe it's the Earth fairies that take human lovers most often. Water fairies have a high number of partials as well. They have many children in this realm."

Haley seemed to be in shock. She asked "This whole time there were others like me? I... I have Earth Fae blood. My mother is both Sky and Earth fairy." I knew that. I started to guide her inside. I told her, "We can introduce you to some partials if you would like, Angel." Haley smiled, "I would really like that." I grabbed her hand. Sparks flew between us. I couldn't keep the smile off my face. I told her, "Let me introduce you to your new extended family, Haley." I opened the door a tad dramatically knowing my brothers were on the other side waiting. I was not disappointed when six faces stared at Haley with their jaws dropped.

Meeting the Conners

Eric wanted to laugh at his family's faces. Darrin, Harold, Jackson, Shana, Molly, and Jessica's mouths were practically on the floor. I saw where their gaze went. It was on Haley and my intertwined hands. They didn't expect to meet her tonight. Let alone find us holding hands. Not to mention she was stunningly beautiful. She definitely had the allure of a fairy. I was going to have to put many in line around my mate.

I made introductions in the order they were standing, "Haley these are my brothers Darrin, and his mate, Shana. That is Jackson and his mate, Molly. Last, we have Harold and his mate, Jessica." I turned to my family, "Brothers, sisters," I winked at the girls, and continued speaking, "this is my mate, Haley Holloran, the princess of the fairies." Darrin managed to speak first. He sputtered, "I'm sorry... Did you just say your mate? I think I hallucinated." Haley laughed and offered "It's nice to meet you all. " I put my arm around her waist. I proudly declared, "You heard correctly. No one is more surprised than I am that I've finally found my mate. She just so happens to also be my fiancé."

Darrin, Harold, and Jackson all looked at each other with dumbstruck looks on their faces. Shana, Molly, and Jessica squealed and surrounded Haley. They pulled her from my grasp. "OH!" Shana exclaimed, "Eric has been wanting to marry you for the last two years! I can't believe you're his mate! I'm so excited!!" Jessica joined in, "Don't scare her Shana! This is just the best! I can't believe how this all worked out." Molly laughed, "Yes Jessica, proceed to scare the poor girl after saying not to scare her. Welcome to the family, Princess Haley. We are so glad Eric finally found his mate. He is a good man who deserves happiness."

I smiled at my sisters in law. Jackson linked, "This is insane. You just can't make this shit up." He wasn't wrong. I firmly grabbed Haley's waist and brought her back to my side. My brothers exchanged glances at my clear show of possessiveness. I didn't tend to be possessive with women. I'd only had one official girlfriend that was even serious, in my opinion. The girls all couldn't stop smiling at me. Molly turned to my brothers chiding, "You all best get your butts over here and welcome her right this instant." Darrin, Harold, and Jackson stepped forward. They simultaneously said, "Welcome Haley." Jackson added, "We are glad our brother has finally found his mate. We did not think he'd ever meet you."

Haley laughed then asked, "Did you all practice saying that together? This is all surreal, to be honest." Jackson cracked a smile, "I'll say. We just negotiated your marriage this afternoon. We most certainly didn't expect you to show up in our territory. Let alone be our brothers' mate. You are most welcome here Princess." Haley blushed, "I am sorry. I didn't mean to trespass on your land. I just fought with Aiden and Arion after seeing them after so long. I got so damn mad that I just

got in my car and started driving. Ironically, I ended up here. All of you can call me Haley by the way."

I smiled at her, "It's quite alright, Angel. I am glad you ended up here." Darrin linked me and our brothers, "Did he just call her Angel?" Jackson replied, "Oh he did." I rolled my eyes at them. Jessica linked me, "I know you guys need to talk. I'll handle this." Out loud she said, "Eric, why don't we show Haley around the main house? You guys need to talk about this new development. Us girls want to get to know our soon to be sister-in-law! Do you want her in the guest room or yours? I agreed, "That is fine. She will be in my room." Haley's mouth dropped, "Umm... I... I don't have any of my clothes, and I..." She trailed off. I told her, "Don't worry we will round up something for you to wear tonight. I'm sure the girls will help you pack up your things after your classes tomorrow. If they can't help, you will be escorted by members of my pack if I have a meeting and can't come myself." My tone left no room for negotiation.

Haley nodded, "Ok. That's fine." Under breath she said, "I could try to conjure my stuff... that would freak my brothers the fuck out and be fun." Everyone glanced sharply at me. I tapped her nose and said, "I'll do anything for you, my little mate, I will see you shortly."

The girls ushered her off immediately, giggling and talking all at once. I already missed her as soon as she was out of sight. Thor growled, "Go get her. I want her back." I ran a hand through my hair. I asked my brothers, "Do you miss them when they walk out of the room? I want to chase them down and bring her back." The brothers exchanged looks. Harold spoke first, "Yes, it will be stronger until you mate with her, but it's always there when they are gone. Marking her will help the most."

Thor purred at the thought of marking our mate. I sighed, "How the hell do you get anything done? I'm worried about her. I want her back here beside me, and I want to destroy everyone who has ever harmed her." Darrin interjected, "It will get better brother. Your mate is unharmed and safe with our mates. How bad was it for her Faerie?"

I growled menacingly. All the brothers shrank back at my intensity. I snarled, "We are going to visit Hexxus in the dungeons." Caleb came running into the room. He'd no doubt heard my growl. His tone was cautious, "Eric, what's wrong? Our scouts haven't reported the princess leaving. They said she was with you." I told him, "She is here. She is my mate, Caleb. Her mistreatment wasn't completely unexpected but hearing the truth of it pissed me the fuck off. They openly beat her which I wasn't expecting, given how much the Queen is rumored to love her daughter. Her Uncle Fabian sexually assaulted her, frequently, starting when she was just six years old."

Growls filled the room at my words. Jackson stepped forward asking, "At six?! That bastard did that to her at six! I will tear him to pieces!" I knew he was thinking of his own daughter, my niece Saied. Our other brothers nodded in agreement. Caleb cleared his throat, "As Haley is here, we cannot at this time tear him to pieces. His time will come though." I hated that he was right. The agreement had not been breached, and I was man of my word. I could not kill him, now. Later was a different story. I begrudgingly said, "True, but we never said Hexxus would return unharmed."

Everyone followed behind me as we made our way to the dungeons. Harold decided to speak, "What else did you learn about your mate, brother?" I turned and stopped walking right outside the heavy door that led down to the dungeons. I told them, "When she left Faerie, her brother on her father's side found her and brought her to their father. Unlike we suspected, her father is not human. Because she said her father would come for her when she was sixteen. She was trying to wait in Faerie until he came to take her away."

All three of my brothers and Caleb gasped. Jackson yelled, "No fucking way!" I smiled, "Yes, I think she's half Fae, half Hackura." The brothers stared at me. Darrin said, "So, to recap what's happening here so far. You are the most feared Alpha in the country. Our packs are nothing to turn your nose up at either. We've negotiated a contract for the fairy princess, who we now suspect is also Hackura. The deadliest assassins and protectors of all the realms; and she just so happens to be your mate." That did summarise quite a bit of the situation. I nodded.

Jackson joined in the conversation, "Why is it just a suspicion? Why didn't you ask her if she was Hackura?" I sighed, "When I asked who her father was, she avoided the question. I am giving her time to trust me. She's only nineteen years old. I didn't get the impression they taught her about mates. Tonight, she's learned she's getting married, moving, and that she's my mate. I already told her she will tell me eventually, but I think it's best to let her have some space to open up to me. After what she went through, she cannot trust easily. You saw how quickly she backed down earlier. She wanted to say something about not staying in my room. She accepted my decision without arguing. She will tell me soon about her background."

Harold laughed, "Oh big brother of mine, I have been waiting for the day you met your mate and it's even better than I imagined. You, who demands answers and refuses to back down until you get them, didn't get the answers to the questions you asked right away. It's just too good. You're not even mad!"

I shot him an annoyed look. I added, "She also has Fae powers. She snapped and fixed her makeup. She also cleaned off my chest since it was streaked with her mascara. You heard her mention conjuring her things. She was terrified I wouldn't

want her after telling me what happened to her in Faerie. She had no idea there were other partial fairies in our realm. She thought she was the only one."

Jackson sputtered, "She... she has powers?! No partial fairies have powers." I smiled, gloating "My mate does. Now, let's go visit Hexxus." We walked down to see Hexxus chained in iron to the wall. Hexxus sighed, "Oh, for god's sake. To what do I owe the honor?" Unable to control myself after hearing what was done to Haley, I grabbed Hexxus by the neck and squeezed. His eyes widened in panic.

I asked him, "Do you know what werewolves do to scum who prey upon children and beat them?" Hexxus started to turn purple. Harold laid a hand on my arm. I let him go only because I wanted Hexxus to suffer more. He did not deserve a quick death. Hexxus gasped, drawing air into his lungs. Once he was able to speak, he asked, "What... what are you talking about?" Jackson replied, "You're thirty-five years old, Hexxus. Princess Haley was six years old when you started beating her. That means you were twenty-two years old beating on a child. Did it make you feel like a man? To be able to best a child? If you aren't a coward, then fight me. Here and now." Hexxus laughed, "I told you she was an abomination. Those partial fairies should be eradicated. I'm not going to fight you, wolf."

I grabbed Hexxus' elbow and pulled until it snapped. Hexxus screamed in pain, "WHAT THE FUCK MAN?" I spoke in a bored tone, "You broke her elbow, so I broke yours." Hexxus' eyes clouded with pain. He was barely able to speak, "How... How do you know I broke her elbow?" I answered, "Because she is here, and she told me." I heard someone gasp. I turned and saw a female fairy with wide eyes. She whispered, "Haley is here?" I ignored her and turned back to my prey. Hexxus eyes snapped up. He triumphantly declared, "Then... then I am free! My cousins brought her to you."

Darrin laughed, "Oh no, Hexxus. They did not bring her. She came by herself, and my brother brought her here. Your family had no part in the Princess being here. The terms of peace have not yet been finalised. So, you are not free until after the wedding." Darrin leaned forward and punched Hexxus in the face. He hissed, "With such a sick and twisted father, did anyone not expect you to turn into the trash you are? I'm outraged on Haley's behalf. You are not a man. You're disgusting." Hexxus snapped, "So what if my father beat her? She's an abomination!"

Thor snarled. I wrapped my hands around Hexxus' neck again. Thor took over my body and thundered, "NEVER INSULT HER AGAIN! He didn't just beat her! He raped her starting when she turned six fucking years old!" Thor threw Hexxus into the wall. Hexxus gasped for several minutes trying to catch his breath.

He finally managed to say "My... my father...he's... different... He's a visionary! You just don't understand him." Jackson scoffed, interrupting Hexxus "You fairies

seem to forget everyone knows you can evade like a mother fucker, but you cannot lie. She cannot lie, and you know it." Hexxus paled, "He... She... she doesn't know the Fae cannot lie." Darrin scoffed, "Oh Hexxus, I think you would be surprised at what she knows. Besides, it doesn't matter if she knows she couldn't lie. She still can't lie. I bet you don't know she has fairy powers."

Hexxus coughed, "No... No, that's not possible." I took back over from my wolf and backhanded Hexxus. I hissed at him, "And yet Hexxus, I saw her use her powers tonight. You will never harm her again. Your father, should he ever set foot in this realm, will be brought to me to be executed on sight. I do not have a forgiving heart like your Queen." Hexxus paled, "If we have a treaty, you cannot kill my father. The war would begin again."

I gave Hexxus a look that had him cowering. I informed him, "I will include it in the treaty. Even if I didn't include it; in case you didn't notice we are beating the fairies in this war. I would drive you into extinction if that's what the Princess wanted. No one who harmed her will ever come into my territory and be safe." I knew Hexxus believed me. He could see it in his eyes.

Hexxus asked, "She... she came here to save me?" Hexxus was absolutely stunned. I scoffed "According to my trackers, she didn't care much when her brothers informed her your life was on the line. She was terrified they already gave me their word. She knew they couldn't back out and live. She came for Aiden and Arion's lives, not yours." I decided to let him think about that, and left Hexxus in the dungeons. Hexxus called to us as they got to the top of the stairs, "I... can I see her? I want to see my cousin... NOW!" I saw red and turned. I roared, "YOU DO NOT MAKE DEMANDS OF ME! I AM ALPHA ERIC CONNERS. If you see her, it will be her wish. Someone remind our prisoner, he's a goddamn prisoner not a guest." A warrior appeared beside me. I told him, "Give him no food for three days. If he slips and injures himself... he has harmed your future Luna. Accidents happen."

With that I walked through the dungeon door and slammed it shut. We walked back to the war room. Jackson asked, "Brother, are you alright?" I threw a chair into the wall, breaking it into multiple pieces. I took several deep breaths, admitting, "No, I want to tear him limb from limb. Then I want to go to Faerie to rip Fabian apart one piece at a time." Darrin grabbed my arm, "Go to her brother. Hold her. It will settle you."

I left before Darrin could finish his sentence, seeking out my mate. I could still hear my brothers talking. Harold spoke, "I never thought I'd see the day our older brother was so into a woman." Jackson laughed, "It's his mate, Harold. You were much worse. You growled at anyone who looked at Jessica for three weeks after you found her. You never even let her out of your sight for two months." Darrin laughed, "Oh you're one to talk, Jackson. You still growl when anyone looks at

Molly. I am so excited Eric finally found her. To think he had been making moves to marry her since the Fairy War started." Harold scoffed, "To think she is probably half Hackura and the Princess of the Fae. That should more than make up for how long he's waited for her. The Moon Goddess has rewarded him, and our packs, greatly. No one will dare come against us now."

Jackson sighed, "People will always dare, brother. Many may try to take her from him once they find out her background. It would be enough that he finally has a mate, there are those who would love nothing more than to see our brother in pain." Darrin turned to them, "Heaven help anyone who tries to take her from him. You saw him when the girls took her out of his grasp. He allowed it for less than twenty seconds before he took her back. He wouldn't have left her side if the girls hadn't pointed out we needed to talk. I don't know about you guys, but for the happiness I've seen in our brother in those few moments we saw them together, I will fight to keep her here with my life to see him that happy." Harold and Jackson agreed with him.

They weren't wrong. No one wanted to see me without her now that I had her. I pushed all those thoughts aside and followed Haley's scent. She was in my room. I couldn't stop my smile. It was our room now. My mate was in our room waiting for me. I needed to hold her to feel settled. Then I would make everyone who hurt her pay dearly for what they'd done. They didn't know it yet, but I was coming for them.