

# Challenge Accepted

Haley woke with a start. I'd be damned if I spent one more second in a hospital. I looked around, looking for a way out and was startled to realize I was in our bedroom. Eric had rolled away from my side of the bed in his sleep. The events from the day before came back to me. I cringed. I was really happy that Eric kept his promise to me. I didn't wake up in the hospital.

I got up and snapped on a pink bikini. I walked out onto the deck and got into the hot tub. My earth side loved being outside in nature. I just soaked in the calm earth, and I watched the sun rise. Eric's panicked voiced reached my ears, "HALEY?" I hollered back, "Out here Eric." He ran outside butt naked. I raised an eyebrow and smirked at him. I said, "Sleeping naked, are we?" He looked me over, seeming to reassure himself that I was all right.

After several moments he said, "I always sleep naked." I laughed, "And what a treat it is for me." Eric got in the hot tub and pulled me forward, so he was behind me. We sat together watching the morning come in, no words needing to be exchanged. He kissed my shoulder. I sucked in a deep breath and broke the silence, "I'm sorry about yesterday, Eric." He sighed, "You do not owe anyone an apology, Haley. Least of all me." I turned to face him, "Yes I do. I should've been able to handle it." Eric shook his head, "No. You are allowed to have whatever reaction you have. Your childhood was taken from you, and you were tortured by those who should've protected you. You should not have to be strong enough to ignore that trauma. You live with it, and you deal with it. That's all anyone can ask of you. You don't give up and you live to fight another day."

I considered his words. He seemed hopeful that I understood. I did understand, I just wanted to be strong. I admitted, "My brothers are all strong. They fear nothing. I hate that I disappointed Bjourn. He probably told our dad and brothers." Eric grabbed me by the shoulders. He said, "Your brothers didn't suffer any of the things you did as children. I'm sure they've had missions where they got hurt, but they have not gone through what you have. You cannot compare yourself to them, they didn't live your life. They were raised how you should've been raised. No one, I repeat no one, except you thinks that you aren't strong. I will tell you every day if you need me to, Haley. You are strong. Not because of your Hackura side. You are strong because of what you went through, and you survived. You didn't roll over and admit defeat, you saved yourself. You got out of Faerie on your own. Marcus took you home to heal, but you started the healing process by leaving. You are going to school to get a degree to help others who suffered like you. You, my fierce little mate, are a survivor."

I had tears streaming down my cheeks. He believed every word of what he was saying. I whispered, "Thank you, Eric. Speaking of school. I was going to tell you

the other day, but everything got crazy. I found an online program and applied to it." Eric lifted my chin up to meet his eyes, "You never have to thank me for telling the truth. I am a hard and harsh man. If I thought you were weak, I would tell you. Ask any member of my pack. I have told many men and women they are weak. You are not one of them, and Bjourn doesn't think you are weak. The weak are the fairies who picked on a Defenseless child and tried to mold a beautiful, powerful girl into their play toy. They are weak, those who pick on the innocent. You rose from your circumstances and became the vibrant, beautiful, fiery mate of mine. He kissed my temple then continued, "I appreciate you looking into an online program. I think it's important for you to get your degree. Security wise online makes me happy." I kissed him lightly on the mouth and popped us dry and into our bed. He snuggled my head into his chest. He held me close. I enjoyed the intimacy of the moment.

Eric told me, "I want to have your Luna Ceremony Friday." I looked up at him, surprised. I said, "That's in four days." Eric chuckled, "I know. My mother and the girls know what the ceremony is and what's expected. They can plan it and you can focus on the wedding." I nodded, "Ok then. I want to conjure a glass chapel for our wedding. Can I do that by the lake?" Eric gaped then asked, "You can do that?" I smiled, "Well, with Bex's help I can." Eric smiled, "I'll enjoy seeing what you two conjure. The lake near the base of the mountain is open to you." I smiled broadly; I loved mountains. I squealed, "There's a mountain? How the fuck have I missed that?" Eric laughed, "We are the Black Mountain pack, Angel. There has to be a mountain." I giggled, "Ohhh now the chapel is going to be so pretty, with a fabulous view! I'm so excited!"

Eric smiled and hugged me closer, "I love you, little mate." I looked up into his eyes, "I love you too, Eric." He sighed, "I'm going to go join my brothers for our run. You need to go see Ethan to make sure you are physically alright." I nodded, grimacing. I didn't want to see Ethan again. I still felt bad I'd attacked him. I kissed Eric, and he leapt off the bed to go meet his brothers.

I got up and grabbed purple yoga pants and my black top with a purple sports bra built in. I went back out onto the deck and did my PiYo workout. Afterwards, I went downstairs to the kitchen. Mrs. Blanch, Emily, Shana, Jessica, and Cassandra looked at me, worry coloring each of their faces. I wanted to cringe, but instead I smiled. I said, "Hi Guys! What's for breakfast?" Mrs. Blanch said, "We have waffles, strawberries and I made muffins for you. The ones you like." I smiled, "Sounds great! Thank you, Mrs. Blanch." Mrs. Blanch made me a plate, and I scarfed it down. I didn't want to see their pity for my outburst. I said, "I will be back later. I have to go see Ethan."

I made a face when I said his name. He was getting me out of this awkward situation, but I hated doctors. Shana laughed asking, "Alpha's orders?" I frowned, "Yes, Eric said I had to go see Ethan. It didn't seem like I would win the argument

against going, even though I'm perfectly fine." Cassandra snorted, "No little girl, you wouldn't have won that argument. My son was very worried about you. He is... stubborn to put it lightly." I looked away, "I didn't mean to worry anyone." Mrs. Blanch smiled, "We are family now, Haley, we will always worry. It's what family does." I nodded and left the room. It certainly wasn't what my fairy family did. I walked outside in the direction of the pack hospital.

Once I arrived, I found Rose. She took me directly to Ethan. He didn't have any physical signs from our altercation yesterday. He smiled, "Good Morning, Luna." I nodded at him, "Good morning, Ethan. Eric said I had to come see you." Ethan nodded, "We need to check to make sure any damage was repaired. Hop up on the table." Ethan ran all his scans. After several moments he nodded, "It looks like everything is healed." He paused. He seemed to be trying to figure out how to word something. He continued, "I don't want you to take this the wrong way, however, I think you should speak to our pack psychologist."

Now I was surprised telling him, "I didn't know you had one." Ethan nodded, "We have two on staff. I think you would prefer to speak to Lindsey over Doug." I nodded, "I would prefer that. Sure, I'll meet with her." Ethan seemed stunned I agreed. He confirmed my suspicion when he said, "And here I thought I'd have to get Alpha Eric to talk to you about this." I shrugged, "I don't see why. I had a therapist in the Hackura realm." Ethan was visibly taken aback. He asked, "You did?" I nodded. He recovered, "Well, here's her card with her office line. I told her assistant to expect your call, she will get you an appointment." I said, "Thank you, Ethan. It's been a while since I talked with my therapist. This is a really good idea." I left both Rose and Ethan speechless.

I wondered where I could find Bjourn. I paused and laughed at myself. I knew exactly where I'd find my big brother. He would be in the gym. I walked inside and stopped in my tracks, taken aback by the facility. There was a track, weights, a fighting ring, mats, trampolines, and a swimming pool. They even had a rock-climbing wall. Damn. Eric was rich. I saw Bjourn and started towards him.

When I saw who he was talking to I broke out into a run and jumped on Marcus's back. I squealed, "Marcus! You're back! Marcus laughed, "Yes, you little spider monkey, I'm back." My brother Harper feigned hurt "Hey! What am I? Chopped liver?" I gasped and hugged him, "Harper, what are you doing here? Chopped liver? How could you be chopped liver? You're Harper." Harper laughed, "Of course. What was I thinking, brothers? I cannot be chopped liver. As for what I'm doing here, can't I come see my little sister?" He tapped me on the nose. I smiled, "Yes, of course you can come see me whenever you want. I missed you!"

The warriors and other wolves stopped to watch the entire exchange. When I looked around, people quickly turned away from us. Bjourn cleared his throat, "Sister, care for a fight in the ring?" I smiled, "What are the rules of the fight?"

Marcus laughed, "No fairy hijinks." I smacked his arm, "You love my fairy hijinks." Marcus nodded, "Yes, but I think you need to train with Bjourn without them. I want you to remember not to rely on your fairy powers. They can be taken from you, but your fighting skill cannot." I frowned. Why would I lose them? I wasn't planning on getting hit with iron any time soon. I said, "I train all the time without using my powers." Bjourn laughed, "Then it should not be a problem, right?" I smiled, "Nope! Bring it old man!"

I ran into the ring as wolves in the pack openly gaped at me. Bjourn chuckled "We will see who you are calling old, little sister." Marcus threw a bamboo stick at me. I caught it with ease. Harper threw one to Bjourn, who caught it just as easily as I had. It looked more like an extension of his arm. Like something that had previously been missing. I winked at him, and we tapped our sticks. I turned and went back to my corner, and Bjourn did the same.

Marcus bellowed, "FIGHT!" Every wolf stopped what they were doing. Some even twitched towards the ring as if they were ready to jump in if need be. Bjourn made the first move attacking me, but I easily batted his attack away. We started to dance around each other. We were both sweating profusely. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Eric, his parents, brothers, and their mates enter the gym.

Eric's face was grim, his arms crossed tight over his chest. He did not seem to like this at all. Darrin was a stark contrast to Eric, openly entertained, whereas Jackson was worriedly watching Eric. Did they think my brother would actually hurt me? I was perfectly safe. My gaze settled on Harold. His head was going back and forth between his brothers and the fight. Bjourn used my distraction of studying the Connors, getting in a headshot. I started bleeding and went down the mat.

Everyone tensed. Jeez, these guys needed to chill. Bjourn came over to me just like I knew he would. I swiped my feet towards his, knocking him down and giving myself time to move. I arched my back, jumping back onto my feet. I loved doing a kip ups. I could see all the wolves were surprised by my move. Bjourn did the same move I had, and the fight continued. I didn't lose my focus the rest of the time.

Eventually Marcus yelled, "Enough! Good fight. Both of you." I smiled and hit Bjourn's stick with my own. I turned and threw it to Marcus who caught it. He winked and threw me a Dr. pepper back. I smiled and turned to where Eric had been standing the last time I'd seen him. I smiled and ran over to him. He caught me easily and I gave him a kiss. I excitedly asked, "Did you watch?" Eric nodded and rubbed his thumb on my head where it had bled. He answered, "Yes, and I can say I did not care for it one bit. You were fabulous though." I smiled. I'd never wanted to jump him more. He needed to be naked.

Molly interrupted my dirty thoughts. She said, "Haley, would you work with me? Training wise?" I smiled and nodded, "Sure! That would be fun." Shana and Jessica laughed. They simultaneously said, "Us too!" Darrin and Harold gaped at both of them. Darrin growled, "EXCUSE ME?!" Shana swatted Darrin and rolled her eyes. She said, "After the pups come, doofus."

A sultry voice came out of the crowd. "I'm not her impressed by her skills. Her brother obviously went easy on her. I challenge Princess Haley for the position of Luna." Eric growled and everyone went silent. I put my hand on Eric's chest to calm him down. I turned to face the woman who'd challenged me. I sighed when I saw her. She was... well gorgeous. Her blonde hair was sun kissed and she was tall, probably six feet. She had to have D sized breasts with a stick thin figure. I immediately hated her for no reason. Fuck that. I knew the reason. She and Eric would make a striking, tall, beautiful couple. Tall bitch.

Eric growled, "Vanessa, you cannot challenge her for the Luna position. The Luna position is for my mate alone." Vanessa smirked, "So, she's turning down the challenge?" Eric ground his teeth. Something told me I couldn't turn down the challenge, not that I'd planned to. I said, "No, I accept your challenge, Vanessa."

Bjourn, Marcus and Harper grinned at each other. Harper winked at me. I echoed my question to Bjourn and Marcus earlier. I asked, "What are the rules of this challenge?" Vanessa sneered, "No shifting, which you obviously cannot do, and no kill shots." I nodded. That allowed quite a bit. I asked, "That's it?" Vanessa nodded. I laughed. I could use my fairy powers on her, with lax rules like that. I said, "Alright then. Let's go."

Marcus rubbed my shoulders before I stepped in the ring. Marcus said, "Kick her wolf ass, little sister." Bjourn winked at me. Harper clapped his hands together. He cleared his throat and held his hand up as if it was a microphone. He said, "And in the right corner we have the dumb, wannabe man stealing she wolf. She's determined to show that blonde's really are that dumb. Meet the challenger, Vanessa... and in the left, we have Haley, the Princess of the Hackura, fresh off her fight with Prince Bjourn ready to kick the she wolf's ass." Marcus chuckled, "We don't need a commentary on the fight, brother." Harper sighed, "Come on man, I'm a BORN mc!" I laughed and stepped back down from the ring to pat him on the shoulder.

Vanessa laughed at me as I stepped back into the ring. She sneered, "You're so short and pathetic." I tilted my head. Vanessa was going to have to do better to intimidate me. I'd heard the 'you're short' shit my entire life, fairies aren't supposed to be short. I asked, "What's your fucking problem with short people?" Vanessa stopped laughing. She frowned, "I have no problem with short people. Just you." My eyebrows hit the ceiling. I don't think I'd ever seen this woman. I asked, "Why? I don't recall meeting you before right fucking now." Vanessa

smirked, "Alpha Eric is mine bitch." I laughed asking, "Are you serious?" Vanessa nodded.

I let my tone drop into a deadly register. "That's where your wrong, bitch. Eric is MINE." Gasps echoed throughout the gym. Vanessa dropped her fighting stance. I was tempted to make her pay for that by knocking her flat on her ass. What was everyone's deal? I didn't break a single fucking rule. Vanessa said, "You... you just called the Alpha by his first name." I stared at her, "So? His name is Eric..." I trailed off. Holy shit! Was she dumb enough to be fighting me over one of Eric's brothers? I asked, "Were you talking about one of the other Connors men because their mates are firmly established as Luna's of their packs." Vanessa just started at me not replying.

I turned to my brothers, "I'm thinking you may be onto something with the blonde comment, Harper. Why does her hair color matter?" Harper grinned. He opened his mouth when Vanessa growled. She hissed, "No one calls Alpha Eric by his first name alone. Show him some respect!" I sighed, "Watch it bitch. I respect Eric and he respects me. What is your major malfunction here?" Vanessa advanced towards me. Her eyes were like daggers. She said, "He doesn't let people call him by his first name." I stared at her. This bitch couldn't be serious. I said, "You do fucking realize Eric didn't growl, or do anything when I called him Eric right? In fact, Eric, Eric, Eric, Eric, Eric... well look at that no fucking growl or response of any kind. Lightening didn't strike me down dead... so Thor is fucking cool with it too." Vanessa paused again. She asked, "Who's Thor?" I smiled admitting, "I call his wolf Thor. Are you going to fight me? Or are you trying to talk me to fucking death?" Vanessa sneered, "His wolf's name is Duke." I was about to respond when Eric's growl then filled the room.

I smirked taunting, "OHHH Thor didn't like that. I think you'll find; his name is Thor." Vanessa stared and then quick as a flash she tried to punch me. I yawned and grabbed her fist. In one swift move I flipped her onto her back. I told her, "That wasn't a bad opening, but you telegraphed it the whole damn way. Don't look where you're going to hit your opponent, it's too obvious."

Darrin snorted, "Is she... Did she just give fighting advice? During a fight? GOD! Brother, I love your mate. Marry her already Eric so I can call her sister." I smiled at him. Jackson punched Darrin in the shoulder and Shana swatted him.

Vanessa got back up, sneering she tried to taunt me. She said, "I used to fuck Alpha Eric. I was on his roster." I laughed. I grew up where mates had sex with lovers in both Faerie and the Hackura realm. I knew Eric hadn't had sex with her since he met me. I taunted her back. "Aw how sad. I fuck him now, and so well he cleared the roster." Marcus, Harper, and Bjourn choked and turned to stare at Eric.

Darrin amusedly howled, "OH MY GOD! I LOVE HER!" Molly snickered, "Me too." Vanessa was undeterred. She glared at me and said, "Alpha Eric and I would have a passionate encounter. After we fucked for one round I could barely walk. I thought about it for days after." I laughed. Which clearly confused and distracted Vanessa. I used that and roundhouse kicked her in the face.

I asked, "Once?! You only did it one fucking time?" Vanessa jumped up and snapped back, "That night! We would have sex other nights!" I punched her in the face following up with a shot to the stomach. I rolled my eyes, "I was asking about that night you dumb bitch. I can't recall a single night we fucked just once. Even in the morning, or the afternoon; we fuck at least three times before we find the strength to attempt to be social... It sucks that you were clearly stress relief for my mate. Sorry about that, it must sting. Don't worry you'll find your man." Vanessa roared, "I already found him! You... you... man stealing bitch!"

She tried to attack me and countered with a kick, but I saw it coming a mile away again. This woman was no skilled fighter. I grabbed her leg and lifted her up in the air, then slammed her down and she hit the mat with her back. I let my eyes blaze gold. This bitch needed to stop saying Eric was hers. I hissed, "My mate is not your fucking man. The mark on my neck AND HIS tell you he's fucking MINE." Vanessa growled back at me, and she began to shift. I let her go and backed up.

Vanessa fully shifted into her wolf and snapped her jaws at me. I yawned and looked around. "I'm sorry. I'm not clear on the damn protocols here, but don't I win by like default? Even though I was kicking her ass. She literally broke like one of the only two rules." Vanessa's wolf growled, baring her teeth, and jumped at me aiming for my throat. I sighed. "Ok now you're breaking rules one AND two. You're just breaking all the fucking rules."

I dodged her attack and wrapped my arms around the wolf's neck. She tried to get away, but I held her until she gave up with a whine. Eric's voice boomed throughout the gym. "Shift Vanessa." I looked back to see him entering the ring. Vanessa whimpered and shifted back. I snapped her some clothes, so she didn't have to get dressed down naked. Vanessa looked at me in surprise. I shrugged. I was still going to be the Luna of the pack, and that included her. She was one of my stupid fucking people to watch out for. Eric walked over and possessively grabbed me. He studied me looking deeply into my eyes before turning to Vanessa.

Eric declared, "For breaking the rules of the fight, rules I set in place, you are banished from our pack." Vanessa flinched. Everyone else nodded in agreement. I didn't understand. I frowned and looked down. I wouldn't challenge him; I didn't understand their ways here yet.

When I looked up Vanessa was looking directly at me. She beseeched me, "Please... Luna, speak to him." Eric growled at her. I was stunned. I'd give

Vanessa this, she had brass ones. I said, "Vanessa, I am his mate. I trust his judgement, and I do not question him." I mind linked Eric, "Publicly anyway. Do you need to banish her? I won. Not to brag, but I won pretty damn easily." Eric mind linked back, "You did win. Had Vanessa not broken the rules, she would have to live with that; however, she broke the rules. She knew the consequence of doing so." I sighed, "Alright." Vanessa cried. She jumped out of the ring and ran from the gym.

Eric looked around. He found who he was looking for and spoke to him, "Liam, make sure she packs up. I want her outside our border in an hour. Tell her I won't stop her from seeking out another pack. I will tell our allies what occurred and her infraction. I'll let them know we will not be upset with them if she is accepted elsewhere." Liam nodded and left quickly.

Eric grabbed my hand and led me to what must be his private office in the gym. I asked him, "Do you have offices everywhere?" Eric pushed me against the wall and covered my mouth with his. He linked me, "Snap our clothes off. NOW." I snapped off our clothes in the next second. It was so hot when he got all dominant like this. Eric entered me the second we were naked. I whimpered, "Eric..." He growled, "If you're going to talk about my sexual prowess you can expect to get pounded afterwards." I gasped when he took my nipple into his mouth. I managed to choke out, "She started it!" Eric smirked and kissed my lips. He linked me again, "I'm ending it." I muttered, "I mean technically speaking I fucking ended it." Eric slammed into me. My ability to form coherent words left me.

I came violently and Eric followed. He carried me over to the desk, clearing the contents on it with the sweep of his hand. He laid me down on it. He fucked me on the desk, the chair, the couch, the floor, against the wall before his wolf calmed down. He pulled out of me and laid beside me panting. I smirked at him. Now that he seemed less manic to claim me, I straddled him. I leaned down and bit his earlobe. I said, "My turn." Eric smiled at me, "Go for it, Angel." I popped us over to the couch. Once I had Eric in a seated position, I turned around in the reverse cowgirl position Miley had told me about once. I rode him like a prize winner. He came again screaming my name, "GOD! HALEY YES!" I turned around and kissed him deeply and possessively. I said, "hmm I wonder what would happen if I..."

I trailed off, leaned down to his mark and bit it lightly, Eric lost it again. He picked me up and bent me over the couch, slamming into me from behind. I gripped the cushions and lifted my ass up towards him. He growled in response. He flipped me over the couch and pounced on me, lifting one of my legs over his shoulder. He put his index finger on my clit and pushed down. I screamed and shuddered, "ERIC! Oh god! Please!" Eric asked, "Who do you belong to Haley?" I shuddered. Eric grinned devilishly at me, leaned down and lightly bit my mark. I convulsed against him; pleasure coursed through my veins. He asked harshly, "WHO Haley?" I



screamed, YOU! GOD! YOU! PLEASE ERIC! MOVE!" He smirked and slammed into me. I fell apart screaming his name after only a few thrusts. Both of us were out of breath.

Eric smiled and lightly kissed me. He said, "That was definitely more than three times." I laughed, "It wasn't like I issued you a challenge out there you big bad Alpha." Eric wiggled his eyebrows, "Oh, but I had to back up your words to our pack." I turned red, "Did... can they hear us?" Eric laughed, "Werewolves have very good hearing. I would imagine Jackson cleared out the gym the second I started leading you back here." I smacked him on the chest.

I snapped our clothes back on. Eric grabbed me and pulled me down onto his chest. He said, "Somehow you look ridiculously sexy in every workout outfit you own. Even with a shirt on. I had no choice but to prove to everyone that you're mine. You and your fairy allure." I snorted, "Hey! I just fought a girl on your and I quote 'roster'. I don't have a damn roster, or a number other than you... well I guess if you count r..." Eric growled interrupting me, "They don't count." I nodded hiding my relief. I said, "Alright then. My number is a whole whopping one. You. Chill buddy." Eric growled, "You did not just tell me to chill." I laughed, "I did. What are you going to do about it, Alpha?" Eric rolled on top of me and ground into me.

He looked confused as he asked, "How do you do this to me? I already want you again." I shrugged, "I don't know. I'm not your fucking stress relief or a roster name? You love me or some shit." I winked at him. Eric growled and nipped my ear with his teeth. A knock interrupted what was likely to start off another round of sex. Eric sighed, "Come in."

Jackson walked in slowly, looking around cautiously then said, "Thank God. You both have clothes on. Mrs. Blanch is on a warpath about Haley eating lunch. The Cambridge boys are obsessed with her and want to take her home. She hit them all with her roller pin because she has a grandpup on the way; however, that just made them like her more." I giggled.

Eric sighed, "Do something about your brothers will you Angel? They can't take her away from us." I laughed and said, "They won't take her, but they are all flirts. What's for lunch Jackson?" Jackson smiled, "Pulled pork, baked beans, cheesy bake potatoes, Brussel sprouts and I heard a rumor about brownies for dessert." I squealed, "Come on Eric! Brownies!" Eric laughed, "She won't give you one until you eat all your food." I said, "So? I can eat really fucking fast." Eric laughed, "Alright, let's go." The three of us headed off through a now very empty gym. Eric and I sure knew how to clear a crowded room.

# Don't Upset Mrs. Blanch

Eric ran to join his brothers for their run. All of us shifted and took off. Jackson linked me asking, "How's Haley?" I sighed, "She thinks she's weak. She apologized to me. That's why I was so upset yesterday. It was because she said I deserved a better mate and Luna. I don't know how to make her understand that she's far more than I deserve. I don't deserve her. I'm a cold bastard and she's the damn sun. Physically, she's fine though. Apparently, she wants to conjure a glass chapel with Bexley for our wedding. She asked if we had a lake." Darrin sighed, "Poor thing, she's not weak. After seeing her scans, I'm with Ethan, Haley's stronger than all of us combined man. She can conjure a whole chapel? How strong is your mate? And how on god's green earth did the fairies not notice this?" I nodded, "She says she can. They are morons, that we've established. They also ignored her if they weren't abusing her."

Jackson responded, "You can't blame her for not knowing her true worth, Eric. Every fairy we've encountered, even Aiden who truly seems to care about her, constantly says she's 'just' a partial fairy." I sighed. I wanted her to know her worth. She was everything to me.

Our run ended and we shifted back, grabbing the clothes that we'd left out. I admitted, "I don't blame her. I just wish she could see what we all see. She's healed members of our pack from bullet wounds, and reproductive issues. She protected Shana and brought her back to us. Which we would've done once we'd reached her and dealt with it, however, they could've hurt Shana before we were able to get there." Darrin growled at the reminder but nodded his head in agreement.

We walked inside and got to work. We had a lot of paperwork to catch up on. There was a surprising amount of paperwork to do as an Alpha. After I'd signed few papers in front of me, I decided I'd put off my next task long enough. I resigned myself to calling the prince of the fairies. The less obnoxious one. The phone rang a few times before Aiden himself picked up, sounding amused as he answered, "If it isn't my sister's wolf, this is a surprise. Be honest, I didn't pop to see you yet today and you miss me."

The fact that his voice was full of amusement annoyed me. I growled, "No, I long to not have to speak to or see you for a few days. I'm calling to tell you that fifty-five fairies showed up yesterday on Fabian's orders to take Haley from me. Two were taken as prisoners. Fifteen of them cut and ran when Bjourn drew his sword. You should be quite proud of your army. Drexsi will not be returning to you. Ever. The Hackura have claimed him as their prisoner. The other fairy we haven't questioned yet, but that seems redundant. Especially when you consider the fact that Fabian called me himself to tell me that he was going to take her. Oh, and apparently, he plans to take her and give her to the vampire king of Tennessee. He

sees nothing wrong with this so long as it's after she gives me a pup. Apparently, unbeknownst to you or your brother, he promised your baby sister as a fairy snack to King Damon when she turned sixteen. I'd said it's surprising you didn't know but given how much you don't know about your little sister... I am not shocked.

Aiden shrieked, "HE WHAT?! NO... Eric, I swear I didn't condone taking her from you. That was not our army... the army cannot leave without my say so. I came to see her yesterday. Is that why she was so upset? I couldn't hear what you discussed... Did you say Bjourn?! As in Prince Bjourn Cambridge? Why is he there? I thought Prince Marcus was guarding my little sister." I barely held in my chuckle.

Jackson linked me, "You're about to drop the Hackura bomb, aren't you?" I smirked, "You bet your ass, brother." Out loud I said, "I don't tell her brothers when they can visit their sister. I do not have a desire to have any Hackura upset with me, let alone the royal family. I know you didn't condone their actions Aiden, that's why some of the fairies left my territory. Haley pointed out they were breaking your laws by not having your blessing. This is simply a courtesy call to let you know your Kingdom is out of fucking line. Get it back in line or the treaty is off, and I'll fight you with your sister at my side along with the Hackura."

Aiden dropped the phone. It was amusing listening to both of Haley's fairy brothers side conversation. Aiden hissed at Arion. "Did you know of this Arion?! I SWEAR to the Goddess if you knew and didn't tell me I'll..." Arion interrupted him asking. "Know of what, brother?" Aiden cursed, "Our uncle sold Haley to the vampire king of Tennessee. In case that wasn't bad enough he also sent people, MY PEOPLE, to take her from her wolf. This visit happened to coincide with Bjourn Cambridge showing up to see his sister and... HOLY FUCKING SHIT!" I linked Jackson, "It took him long enough to pick that up." Jackson replied sarcastically, "Shocking."

Aiden picked the phone back up, "You don't mean Haley, right? You can't mean Prince Bjourn came to see Haley... that would mean..." Arion scornfully replied, "No way they are related. We would've known." I growled, "Yes way you fairy prince prick bastard. Bjourn's sister and yours just so happen to be one and the same. Your uncle was beside himself when he heard the news." Both brothers gasped. Aiden spoke first, "She's... she half Hackura?! Our little sister? Who NEVER fought back if anyone raised a hand to her, that's what you're saying? My sweet innocent little sister... is half Hackura?" Arion cursed, "Oh fucking shit fuck balls. That's just great." Aiden sighed, "Well put brother." I said, "That's what I'm telling you."

Aiden was silent for several moments. Finally, he said, "Alpha I appreciate the courtesy call. I am making moves to take Haley's advice." I nodded, then realized he couldn't see me. I said, "That will make her happy. That might quite possibly,

make everyone in the supernatural community happy. Well, except the vampire king of Tennessee." Aiden snorted, "It will not make my uncle happy either. I can't believe he would give her to the vampires. That's just low, and uncalled for. It's actually barbaric. You can't let King Damon have her. Fairy blood is addictive to vampires. It's why they hunt us down, and why most of us would not call them friends. There are exceptions of course, but King Damon is not one of them. He has sucked several fairies dry for their blood, and their blood is not HALF the strength Haley's is. If he gets her and doesn't drain her, you'd have to kill him to keep him away from her." I growled, "If he ever got her, he would be killed as soon as I caught up to him." Aiden gulped, "Right, well I have plans to enact. I cannot be part of conversation about killing other monarchs until I am one myself."

I hung up. Liam mind linked me, "Alpha, your mate, is sparring with her brother. You have to see this. I am impressed, and I do not often find myself impressed. She is a worthy Luna... no one will doubt that after seeing this." I jumped up out of my chair. Every fibre of my being disliked that Haley was fighting. Everyone looked up at me as I started to leave the room. I said, "Haley is sparring with one of her brothers. Our warriors, specifically Liam, are impressed."

Darrin grinned widely, "Damn! He's never impressed. I've never seen Hackura fight each other. Which brother? What am I saying? LET'S GO!" He ran out after me. Our other brothers caught up to me, Harold yelled, "Wait for all of us, Darrin." I linked Liam, "Which brother?" Liam replied, "Prince Bjourn." Out loud I yelled, "FUCK!" Jackson said, "Eric?" I said, "She's fighting Bjourn." My dad's eyes went wide.

My mom came around the corner just as we were about to hit the front door. She put her hands on her hips, "Just where do you all think you're going?" Molly, Jessica, and Shana giggled, standing right behind her. Darrin was far too amused for my liking and spoke up quickly, "Haley and her brother are in the ring. Come on Mom! You're making us miss seeing the Hackura fight each other!"

Everyone was silent on the way to gym after Shana swatted Darrin. Once we stepped inside the door of the gym, my arms instantly crossed. Haley was gorgeous. My eyes were instantly drawn to her ass. I was going to have to buy her bulky, ugly workout clothes. I got hard watching her ass move around in her yoga pants as she fought. Our entrance distracted her enough that Bjourn took a shot to her head that landed. I tensed and Jackson grabbed my arm. She was bleeding. I couldn't stop my growl. Haley got back up and they continued fight. Thor was restless, impressed but not liking any of this. I looked around my pack and saw many impressed, though weary. It was almost as if they were ready to jump in and defend their Luna at any moment. Pride filled me for my pack and mate.

Finally, Marcus called the fight. It went on far too long. Haley came running over to me, launching herself into my arms. From nowhere, Vanessa challenged her for

the position of my Luna. Was she serious? We fucked a few times; she was never going to be my Luna. Thor was enraged and I was right there with him. Vanessa and I didn't even talk. She was technically part of Harold's pack. I was the head of them all but still. For god's sake, I didn't even talk to her when I wanted to fuck her! I texted her. That was the extent of our relationship. Why the hell did she think I would want her even if she beat Haley? I knew that wouldn't happen, but I didn't want Haley fighting fresh off her fight with the future King of the fucking Hackura.

Haley accepted Vanessa's challenge. I winced. She truly had to accept, or I wouldn't allow this. If she hadn't accepted, or I'd interfered, the pack would view Haley as weak. Unlikely, since they just saw her fight; however, some would doubt her as their Luna. I didn't want that for her. Additionally, Vanessa could've taken it to our council. That would've been a shit show.

Thor and I were both anxious watching Haley in the ring again. I was trying to calm him down, but I was furious too. It wasn't a good combination. Jackson linked me, "I don't recall you ever having a conversation with Vanessa." I sighed, "I haven't. We fucked." Darrin's grin couldn't get any broader. I wanted to punch him. When Vanessa called my wolf Duke, Thor growled as if it was Vanessa's fault he decided to change his name. He purred in my mind when Haley said Thor didn't like that. Ridiculous wolf.

Jackson linked me, "Oh Shit." I linked, "Seriously? Did Vanessa have to tell her we fucked? I could've told her afterwards." Haley's brothers turned and smirked at me. I frowned. It is one thing to know I slept around, but it was entirely another to be challenged for her rightful position by someone I fucked.

I stood a little bit taller, preening at her response about our sex life. Haley's brothers turned and openly gaped at me; they were beyond stunned. I was fucking Haley so hard after this fight in my office in the gym. We were going multiple times to show my pack she wasn't wrong. Not that they thought she was. She's a fairy, they can't lie. It was over the second I saw Vanessa start to shift. Bjourn, Marcus, and her other brother I haven't met yet had to hold a few warriors back.

I linked them, "I appreciate your willingness to step in and protect your Luna. I'll be ending the fight as the rules were broken." Liam linked me back, "The Luna won before that anyway." I smiled and I started moving towards the ring. When Vanessa went for the kill, I saw red, moving quickly to the edge of the ring. Thankfully, Haley had it handled.

I turned to see all three of Haley's brothers had weapons out. Bjourn had a dagger ready to throw, and Marcus and the other one both had guns out pointed at Vanessa. I took care of business then dragged Haley to my office and fucked her on every surface I could. We calmly discussed what happened. I was expecting her

to blow up and be upset, but she genuinely didn't care. Jackson came in and we all went up to the house for lunch.

We entered the kitchen to find Mrs. Blanch had a steely look in her eyes. She pointed at Haley, "Here's your plate, and you little miss will eat it all. Honestly, taking on challenges after sparring with your brother, the insanity." Haley's eyes widened and she sat and ate quietly.

I smirked until Mrs. Blanch turned to me, "And YOU! Just what were all of you thinking?!" she demanded, pointing at my entire family. Mrs. Blanch met each of our eyes as she continued, "She's been injured enough since she's been here. One of your...." She trailed off and looked to Nick. She asked him, "You call them fuck buddies right, Nick? Is that what the kids say?" Nick choked on his food, while all the women snickered quietly. Every male looked away, wanting the awkwardness to end. Eventually, Nick nodded. Mrs. Blanch nodded then continued her speech. She rounded on me, "One of your fuck buddies challenges her, and you don't even think to put her in her place. Or put off the challenge until Haley's had a longer recovery time?! I ought to take you over my knee!" I paled. I knew that was not a joke.

Darrin laughed out loud. It was a mistake, and we all knew it. Mrs. Blanch rounded on him. I raised an eyebrow and linked him, "You've fucked up now." Darrin linked back, "Shut up. I know." Mrs. Blanch yelled, "YOU! I hear you were laughing and entertained by the whole thing." She pointed at our mother and said, "We raised you better than that, young man! Your brother's mate, and your future sister-in-law was in danger, and you LAUGHED! No brownies for you! No brownies for any of you!" All of us frowned. She made the best brownies; they were a pack favorite.

Jackson muttered, "I didn't laugh, can I get a brownie?" Mrs. Blanch huffed, "NO! You just let it happen too! All of you just no... I'm so disappointed in you all." She threw her hands in the air, "You can get your own plates and go eat somewhere else!"

The Cambridge boys were in a snit laughing over the entire thing. Marcus said, "We get brownies right, my jewel?" Mrs. Blanch smiled and pinched his cheek, "Of course you do." Darrin frowned, "That's not fair they let the fight happen too!" Mrs. Blanch turned and slapped him on the arm, "They aren't from this pack! They are not Alpha's behaving like foolish children! They fight. It's what they do! You, get OUT! You all get out of my kitchen." She reached for her roller pin, and we all took off. Getting hit with that thing hurt like no one's business.

I linked Haley, "Will you snag me a brownie?" She laughed, "Fuck no! I want to stay on her good side, she loves me." I sighed and we all went back to my office. Looks like I wouldn't get a brownie today. I had to smile. Only Mrs. Blanch could

get away with this. I normally just took what I wanted. It's why I was feared. The most feared Alpha, brought to his knees by a cook and my tiny little mate. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Once we entered my office, I saw a messenger had stopped by. Caleb looked grim, "Eric, this is a messenger from the vampire king." I rolled my eyes, "What do you want?" The messenger looked terrified. He stammered, "The King sent me with an official request." My eyes narrowed, "Obviously it's official. He sent you. What's his official request? Bear in mind... I don't much care for the saying about not shooting the messenger. I personally think it sends a message itself." The messenger shuffled from foot to foot, looking at the ground. He whispered, "King Damon would like to begin negotiations to take over your contract with the Hackura... in exchange for the Fairy Princess." I growled and grabbed the messenger. I held him up by his throat with one hand.

Jackson and Caleb were trying to get me to release said messenger. Caleb said, "Eric... he's just doing his job." I growled, "I should send you back to King Damon with your head on a spike!" The messenger sputtered and started to turn purple. My dad came in the room like a shot. He said, "Son... release him." I looked over, "He's in my territory. I'm the Alpha and he wants to take my mate from me." Jackson said, "He wants nothing of the sort. Haley's not leaving Eric. he's just a messenger." I made sure he would have bruises when he returned to King Damon before I dropped him.

I bent down and looked the messenger in the eyes. I said, "I am not open to negotiations for the contract with the Hackura. I will never be in negotiations for MY MATE! She's MINE! She will NEVER be some fucking fanger king's snack. I'll stake him if he EVER so much as sinks a fang into her. Are we clear?" The messenger gasped for air but nodded. He got to his feet and ran from the room like it was on fire. Caleb glanced at me, "I told him we weren't interested. He had instructions to ask you himself." I growled and hit the table so hard it broke.

Caleb winced, "In other news. When the messenger wouldn't leave, I said to myself something will get broken. I have an order in for a new table already." Jackson clapped his hand on my back, "You knew he wouldn't give up so easily, brother." I nodded, "Yes, I did know that. I didn't know how pissed off it would make me. He's trying to take my everything from me. I also don't think he's going to be above board with all his attempts. We need to talk to Haley's Hackura brothers. I don't want Haley to be worried about anything while she plans the wedding. I want her Luna ceremony to happen on Friday, so tell your mates and mom to plan accordingly. Haley is fine with them planning since they know what it entails. She's going to focus on the wedding,"

Jackson was surprised and he didn't hide it. He asked, "You don't want to do the wedding and the ceremony at the same time?" I shook my head, "No I want our

pack to know who their Luna is. If the vampires make a move prior to the wedding, I want them to be seen as the aggressors against our Luna. Our allies would be in no position to refuse to help us if she's the pack Luna as opposed to just my mate."

My dad was stunned. He said, "You think they would refuse to help you if Haley was taken?" I shook my head, "No, I think they would come to our aide. However, I didn't think anyone would take my brothers mate or dare to have plans to kidnap the others. I became relaxed and overconfident in our position, and I won't take that chance with my mate." I looked each of my brothers in the eye and added, "Or yours. Ever again." Everyone nodded and got to work again.

I looked up when my mom stormed in, "Eric, your father said you want us to plan Haley's Luna Ceremony for Friday." I nodded. She sighed, "This Friday, Eric? Tell me your father misunderstood." I shook my head, "Dad didn't misunderstand. It's this Friday." My mom sighed again. She said, "You are lucky I love you. You do realize that's in three days, and we have the wedding planning session with Haley and her family tomorrow." I nodded, "I do realize that, yes." My mom huffed at me and left the room.

My dad groaned, "I am going to pay for that." I shrugged, "Sorry dad." He glared at me, "Didn't I teach you not to say things you don't mean?" Jackson, Darrin, Harold, and I all broke out laughing. I said, "That you did, dad." We worked with our heads down until Caleb cleared his throat. He pointed at the clock, "It's dinner time." Jackson groaned. He mind linked me, Darrin, and Harold, asking, "Do you think we are allowed in the kitchen yet?" Caleb had raised his eyebrows at Jackson's groan. Darrin chuckled and said out loud, "Be a good man Caleb, and go see if Mrs. Blanch will allow us back into the kitchen?"

Caleb shrugged, "Normally, I would ask for an explanation about why you were banned, but I'm too damn hungry. Plus, none of you appear to be offering the information. He left and returned moments later with a red pin roller mark on his cheek. He glared at Darrin, "That would be a negative and fuck you guys for not giving me a heads up. That pin roller hurts, Nick is bringing our food in here." We all laughed and took a break for dinner.

There was a knock on the door. I simply told the person to enter thinking it was Nick with our food. I was surprised to see one of my warriors Karl standing there awkwardly. I frowned asking, "Karl? What's going on? Karl told me, "I'm just here to report on Vanessa leaving the territory. She cried a lot. She seemed a little off, but she left without too much protest. I uhh actually also came to see you because I have a request to ask of you, Alpha Eric." I was surprised but nodded, "What is your request?" Karl shuffled his feet and stayed quiet. Eventually he replied nervously, "Well, you all remember my accident as a pup."



Caleb grimaced along with the rest of us. Karl had lost his testicles in a rouge attacked protecting Jim when he was a pup. Jim had been standing at the border, and his back was to the rouge. Jim never even sensed him. Karl had been running the patrol at that moment and made it just in time. I nodded and made a continue motion with my finger. Karl stammered, "Well... you know my mate, Macy. She loves me despite that. I told her to reject me when I found her, but she says it doesn't matter to her. It kills me every time she sees someone her age with a pup. It hurts her, I know it does. It kills me to disappoint her. I just thought... well you said your mate healed your brothers Luna's. Nick said Emily was healed as well... I... just... wondered if the Luna could heal me too." I nodded, "We can ask her Karl. Your Luna has a kind heart. If she capable of healing you; I'm sure she will." Caleb looked visibly relieved at the possibility.

Nick came in with food and Haley behind him. She smiled when she met my eyes. Darrin said, "Well speak of the fairy, and she shall appear." I smiled, "Angel, Karl has a request. She smiled and turned to face him. She was a wonder.