

The Three Stooges

Eric walked out of the castle and found Ubbe. He was about to open a portal to leave. I asked, "Where did they take Cason?" Ubbe's eyes were gold when he replied, "They have him in the torture building. It's the one about fifty yards from the barn." I nodded then asked, "Where are you going?" Ubbe angrily replied, "I have a mission. I can't delay it, unfortunately. Leave some of Cason for me, would you?" I snorted, "I have no intention of letting him die anytime soon. He touched what's mine; he was going to rape her." Ubbe froze asking, "What?" I explained, "She told me what he said to her. While looking like me, according to her, that she was going to sit still and take what he had to give her. She doesn't seem to realize what he meant, but I fucking do."

Ubbe turned on his heel and I followed him back into the torture building. There were rows of prisoners in the cells. I raised an eyebrow questioning, "Fairies? Why do you... Never mind." It had to do with Haley, that was the only explanation.

Ubbe laughed then asked me, "Did you not get a copy of the list of fairies, witches, and all sorts of degenerates on Haley's list?" I asked, "Her list?" Ubbe nodded and informed me, "Bjourn demanded a list of those involved with her torture as a child." I growled, "How many fucking people were on the list?" Ubbe snorted, "One hundred and forty-five." I growled in anger. Would the fairies ever stop surprising me with their depravity?

Ubbe led me to a room where Cason was chained on a table that had gears to move him up and down. Currently they had him where his feet were almost on the ground. He had been beaten, but it wasn't enough. Ubbe hissed, "He was going to rape her." Cason winced. All the Hackura's eyes blazed gold. I nodded to my brothers who nodded back. They were pissed.

Titus asked Cason, "Is that true? You were going to rape MY DAUGHTER in MY HOME?" I asked, "Why does my mate think you looked like me?" Cason looked to me, avoiding Titus' angry gaze. Cason snorted, "That's your question? Out of everything you could ask?" I nodded, "I already know you tried to rape her. She doesn't understand your words or their meaning, but I do." Marcus punched Cason. He yelled, "ANSWER your king and prince!"

Cason looked at Titus. He told him, "I wanted her, you know. I always have. I was going to approach you for her hand. I was waiting for the appropriate time. Then Bjourn came in after meeting the fucking wolf with his man crush."

Bjourn cut him off punching him. Bjourn spat out "I did not have a crush. I saw him fight and I spoke to him. He was a man of character. He had not met his mate, and our sister needed someone who was capable of protecting her. We no longer

trusted the fairy goddess to have the right mate for my little sister. Eric had never requested our help; he handled his issues on his own. We had been aware of the Connors for years. Mom thought Eric was perfect for Haley. When I met him, I just felt instinctively he was right for Haley. You were never worthy of her!” My mind flashed back to that moment when I’d first met Bjourn Cambridge.

Flashback 3 years prior

I was standing in a field ready for battle. I was in a meeting with several other Alpha’s trying to reach peace with Alpha Max. I knew this was pointless. Alpha Max was ruthless and had gone insane. He kept his own mate locked in a fucking dungeon. I didn’t understand the moon goddess at this point. I looked at Alpha Max disdainfully. This fucker had met his mate when he was twenty-two years old. They had a few good years together, then his parents passed away. Shortly after that, he began to mistreat his mate.

I would give my mate the world. I would never harm her physically as this sick fuck was doing to his. I was only trying to reach peace because his allies requested it out of respect for Alpha Max’s father. Goddess rest his soul; he would be devastated to see what had become of his son. Alpha Mason, Max’s father, was a good man. Unfortunately, Mason’s death turned his son into a sociopath. Alpha Max had locked his mate up and has been raping her for five years. When she got pregnant he’d take her children from her directly after birth. Even as an Alpha, if you just wanted your mate to act as your Luna and not a true mate; she deserves more respect than that.

As much as I wished we were here for his mate, I didn’t have the backing from her former Alpha to take her home. Stupid fucking rules. We were here because Alpha Max had taken two pups from Alpha Steven McDermont’s pack who had crossed the border. The rumors were that they were being tortured for being curious children. They’d simply crossed the border. Something my brothers and I had done many times as children and teenagers.

Alpha Max looked crazy. His eyes did not look how they once did. I rolled my eyes at my allies attempts to dissuade him from fighting. There would be no peace talks if Alpha Max had done this to pups in my pack. Alpha Max would already be dead, and the pups returned to their parents. Sadly, it wasn’t my call. This was Alpha McDermont’s decision to make, I was simply here to assist. We had heard a disturbing rumor that Alpha Max was working with rogues. I didn’t understand why he didn’t just bring the rogues into his pack if he wanted to work with them. Keeping them just outside the pack was cruel.

Alpha Max stood smiling. He said to me, “Alpha Eric Connors, I have heard about you. You are said to be quite cruel.” I stared at him as my brothers growled. He could not be serious. We’d met before, back when he was a sane Alpha. I

responded evenly, “So we meet again. You are one to talk about being cruel, Alpha Max. How’s your Luna? I would never treat my mate as you have.”

Alpha Max growled possessively, “You want my mate, don’t you? She is quite beautiful. Too many males looked at her, and she smiled at them. I had to teach her a lesson.” I rolled my eyes and scoffed, “I assure you; I don’t want your mate. If she had been from my pack, I’d have killed you long ago and taken her back so she could find her second chance mate. What you have done is despicable.”

Alpha Max growled, “She’s MINE!” I felt a presence approach the tree line. Whoever had just arrived radiated power. I kept an eye on the tree line as I traded barbs with Alpha Max “Yet you treat your mate like dirt. She was yours to protect and love. Even if you didn’t want her physically you could’ve let her live her life. Instead, you’ve locked her away and taken the children she’s borne for you after you raped her. You don’t deserve a mate, or anyone really. As for her being your mate, it wouldn’t have mattered to me had I been her former Alpha. I would never allow a pack member, former or current, to be treated that way by anyone; let alone their fucking mate.”

Alpha Max stood and taunted, “Spoken like the Alpha whose mate is probably dead since you haven’t met her yet.” I growled and stood as well. I told him, “Whether I meet my mate or take a bride; I will treat her with respect and honor. You disgrace the moon goddess with your treatment of your mate.” I was done. I turned to my allies and spoke, “Alpha McDermont, let me know what’s decided here. I cannot stand to be in this scum’s presence a moment longer.” I walked away.

My brothers followed me. Once we reached the tree line where our men were, I linked them all, “I’m going to see who that was that’s listening in.” Jackson nodded and replied, “I’ll come and hang back. Just in case you need me.”

Darrin added, “Harold and I will link you if a decision is made.” I nodded and shifted alongside Jackson. We made our way to the other side using the trees as cover. Once we were closer to the source of power, I shifted back. I grabbed shorts that our allies had stashed all around the field in case we did fight tomorrow. I got within ten yards when the man whirled and pulled a sword. So much for a friendly chat.

I growled and asked, “Who are you? And why are you here?” The man smiled and put the sword away. He said, “Hello Alpha Eric, that was quite a moving speech you gave for the mate Alpha Max is keeping locked away. I am curious, did you mean it?” I growled, “I don’t say things I don’t mean. Who the fuck are you?” He simply smiled and told me, “Who am I? Such a question. I suppose I’ll give you my real name, though I do not often do that. I am Prince Bjourn Cambridge.” I stiffened. That could be good or bad.

I linked Jackson, “We may have a fucking problem. A Hackura prince is here. If he means to fight against us... we are going to need more than you and me.” Jackson linked back, “FUCK! Which one is here?” I linked back, “The crown prince. It’s Bjourn.” Jackson replied, “SHIT! DOUBLE FUCK!” I snorted out loud.

Prince Bjourn raised an eyebrow. I asked, “Why are you here?” He smiled, “Hmm how to answer... Let’s go with to make sure justice is served.” I snorted and asked, “Whose version of justice would that be?” Prince Bjourn smiled, “Let’s just say that if a battle is fought, I will be on your side. Should you all agree to peace today then I will have to get the girl and her children another way.” My jaw dropped. I was stunned.

I shook myself and asked him, “Someone hired you? After all this time to finally bring his mate back home?” Prince Bjourn smiled, “We don’t talk about who hires us Alpha Eric. I am here and that’s what matters. The girl will soon be free along with her children.” I nodded. I told him, “Alpha Max is insane. There will be a battle. He will not give the pups back. That has been made abundantly clear since we are all here.” Bjourn smiled. “That would make it easier for me,” he acknowledged.

I walked towards him and extended my hand, “You are welcome in our camp, Prince Bjourn. I am sure you are used to getting your own supplies and what not. We have food and tents set up on the other side.” Prince Bjourn smiled, “I know you do. The food is delicious. I snagged myself some yesterday when I arrived. I let my power be felt by you and your allies to see who would come to me. After observing you all, I can’t say I’m surprised it was you. You do not disappoint.” I raised an eyebrow. What was he talking about?

Prince Bjourn extended his hand to meet mine. He said, “Alright Alpha Eric, I will return with you to your camp, I would just have to steal your food later anyway. Did you know you’re the only Alpha who brought provisions? Very sloppy of the other wolves.” I frowned and said, “I didn’t know that. I’ll have to look at our rations and see if we can provide any for our allies.” Prince Bjourn laughed, “They should suffer their incompetence. How else would they learn?” I tilted my head. I didn’t disagree.

I told him, “They are still my allies. If we have enough to provide them food; I will offer the option to them.” He evaluated me for what felt like the tenth time. He announced “It seems you are the man I have heard you are. You are fair and you seem to respect women.” I smirked, “Oh, I respect the hell out of women.”

Prince Bjourn asked, “Have you ever hurt one?” I raised an eyebrow annoyed at the implication. I told him, “Only to protect my family and my pack. In general, no. I would never harm a woman. I’ve never hurt one that didn’t betray my pack with ample proof. I resent the question, Prince Bjourn. I have always been a fair

man. I pride myself on my reputation. I have never harmed a single person that didn't deserve it."

Prince Bjourn simply smiled "No offense was intended. I just needed to know." I was confused. I asked him, "Why?" Prince Bjourn smiled, "In a few years Alpha Eric, should circumstance not change, you will understand." That seemed to be all he was going to say on the matter.

My wolf was jumping around in my head excited about something, but he wasn't sharing whatever it was. The Hackura were protectors of the realms. I should be leery of a Hackura prince just appearing. He felt like he was trustworthy though. Honestly, he felt a like a brother. That was weird. I shook that thought.

I led Prince Bjourn back to Jackson, who inclined his head greeting, "Prince Bjourn." Prince Bjourn smiled responding, "Alpha Jackson. It is nice to meet you." Jackson asked, "You know me?" Prince Bjourn smiled, "I know who many people are. Including your brothers Alpha Darrin and Alpha Harold." Jackson and I stared at each other.

Eventually, I linked Jackson, "It makes sense he would know the players in this potential fight. He's here to free Max's mate." Jackson nodded his agreement with my thoughts. Together we led Prince Bjourn back to our camp. Harold and Darrin raised an eyebrow at us and our company.

I made introductions, "This is Prince Bjourn Cambridge." Both my brothers went rigid. Darrin announced, "Peace could not be reached. We will be fighting in the morning." I sighed, "Good. Then we can go home." Prince Bjourn smiled, "I must admit that makes me happy too. I look forward to going home as well." Jackson changed topics, "There are rumors that you have a little sister, Prince Bjourn." Prince Bjourn smiled, "I do. She joined us a few years ago." We all nodded.

My wolf was excited again, but I didn't know why. The darn wolf needed to calm down. I linked Jackson, "Why did you ask him that?" Jackson linked back, "It's been a rumor for a while now that Titus finally had a daughter. I was curious. We don't know much about them." I nodded. That was true, though it was definitely the way they wanted it. I showed Prince Bjourn to a tent then went to my own to get some sleep.

The next day, I woke before the sun and studied the area. I could sense wolves behind our camp. Prince Bjourn joined me. He asked, "What are you doing out here so early?" I answered, "I'm evaluating. We are being surrounded. Alpha Max is crazy, but he's not completely stupid. He's also not honorable. He's going to come from behind us all during an agreed to fight. I need to send a messenger to the other packs and split up my warriors." Bjourn smiled, "You are a smart wolf. That is good." I frowned at him not understanding what he meant by that.

I shrugged and went to give my orders to my lead warrior, Liam. When the battle came I gave Duke full control. I ripped through Alpha Max's pack that was here. There were even some rogues. Alpha Max's Beta didn't even join the fight. I was astonished while at the same time understanding. Not even his own people respected him anymore. I couldn't imagine fighting without Caleb. I spotted him not far away from me. The man always had my back.

I shifted back once the battle ended. I saw Prince Bjourn covered in blood. A deep inhale told me none of it was his. He was currently ripping a wolf's spine from its body. I shivered. That was brutal. Prince Bjourn spotted me and smiled. He strolled over to me.

He put his hand out for me to shake. I took his hand and he said, "You are an excellent fighter Alpha Eric. I wasn't sure if you would be, but you are somehow exactly who I did not know I was looking for." I frowned, "How could I be who you were looking for? I thought you were here for Max's Luna and her children." Prince Bjourn smiled, "I am. I just stumbled upon something else in the process. See you soon, Alpha Eric." With that the Prince of the Hackura headed towards Former Alpha Max's pack house.

*** Flashback ends***

The memory cleared from my mind. I stared at Bjourn. I snorted, "HOLY SHIT! That's what all your cryptic comments meant? You wanted me to marry Haley the first time we met?" Bjourn nodded. Cason was disgusted. He hissed, "Why? Because he can kill like you can." Bjourn hit him again. He answered, "No. Because he was honorable. He spoke up for the mate of another Alpha who was being abused. Because he does not harm those he has no reason to, and because he is a fierce fighter who shows no mercy. My sister needs someone who's a fighter. Someone who will fight for her, by her side, and against the fucking fairies she needs protecting from." Cason scoffed, "She can take care of herself."

I interjected, "Of course she can. She's extremely capable, but I will always have her back." Cason scoffed, "Unless that Claudia bitch tells you not to." I stiffened. I linked Jackson, "How the FUCK does he know about Claudia?" I looked at Haley's brothers and her dad. All looked surprised.

Jackson asked out loud, "How could you know anything about Claudia? You seem to imply you know there were problems when no one else outside a close circle would say that." Cason stiffened muttering, "People talk."

Marcus growled, "We do NOT talk about Haley's life outside our family." I grabbed Cason by the neck. I told him, "I'm going to get the answers I want. First, I want to know why my mate thought you looked like me. I want to hear the sequence of events out of your mouth. Full disclosure, you should know I've heard

hers.” Cason laughed and asked me, “You think the princess told you the whole story? No, I’ve seen how she looks at you. She is a fairy after all. I bet she evaded most of the details. She wouldn’t want to hurt you.” I squeezed his neck. I hissed, “Tell me.”

Cason was turning purple, but still he smiled at me. I eased back on my grip so he could talk. Cason coughed then said, “I’ll tell you all about it. It was amazing. For the first time since I met her, I got to touch her. Her skin is as soft as I’d always imagined it would be.” I punched him in the face and he spat out the blood in his mouth. He smirked, “Worth it. Anyway, I was standing in the shadows waiting for her to be alone. When she noticed me, I was surprised because she never does.” I interrupted him, “Yes, WHY did she THINK you were ME?” He smiled and taunted, “A fairy enchantment meant specifically to trick her.”

FUCK ME! I asked, “You were working with fairies? Were you their backup plan to take her from me?” Cason shrugged, “So they thought. I would never give her to them. They made me look like you though. The way she looked at me when she saw me was everything I’d ever wanted. She was relieved, excited, and my favorite emotion her eyes held was lust. Then I might have gotten angry because it wasn’t for me. It was for you, a disgusting wolf who doesn’t deserve her.”

I grabbed a set of pliers on the table shoved them into his mouth, forcing it to stay open. I maneuvered them to the back of Cason’s mouth and ripped out one of his molars. He screamed. I told him, “I’m aware I don’t deserve her. She’s incredible; beautiful, generous, and kind and I will spend my life wondering how the moon goddess gave her to me. But she IS fucking mine, and I will NEVER give her up.”

Cason hissed at Bjourn, “This is the kind of man you wanted for her, Bjourn? Someone who knows he’s not good enough but won’t give her up anyway.” Bjourn rammed his fist into Cason stomach’s. He grabbed his face and said, “It’s Prince Bjourn to you, Cason. As for your question, yes. Eric is exactly who Haley needs. I knew that even before I knew they were mates.”

Cason snorted then continued the story, “I asked why the princess could never see me, and how come she could never let me in.” Jackson linked me, “Fuck us all. This asshole probably set her mind back to real or not real, since he was looking like you saying that shit.” Anger consumed me because I realized Jackson was right. That’s why Haley flinched when I went to touch her.

Cason continued, “She was confused. I just got so mad when she talked about how she let you into her heart, and how you know every part of her. She should’ve wanted me! I pushed her... not hard, I just didn’t realize how close she was to the step. She has such good balance; she was probably just surprised you pushed her.” I growled and yelled, “I DIDN’T fucking push her! YOU DID! I would never physically hurt her. I’d walk across hot coals before harming her. I have never

intentionally harmed her in any way.” Cason laughed, “But you have hurt her haven’t you, wolf?” It stung that he was right.

Marcus reached out and broke Cason’s finger. He simply said, “His name is Prince Alpha Eric, not wolf.” Cason gritted his teeth and kept talking, “Whatever. The princess just got even more confused. I spoke the words the fairy gave me to force her to be unable to move. I told her she never loved me. She got mad saying you were her mate, husband, her whole fucking world, and the father of her children. I couldn’t help myself hearing her say that. You should’ve never had children with her. I can’t believe she had sex with you when she wouldn’t even let me touch her fucking hand! She would have a panic attack if I even WENT to touch her. I’ve known her for six years and you just fucking swooped in and stole my princess! She didn’t even fucking KNOW you and she was at ease with you instantly! She FUCKED you for Christ’s sake. I grabbed her and asked her why it was you. She didn’t understand AGAIN! She kept saying how she only ever wanted you. I just couldn’t stand it! She needed to stop FUCKING saying that... I...” He trailed off. His eyes went wide with terror realizing what he was saying.

Jackson growled and asked, “You what? What did you do to my sister in law?” Cason back tracked, “I just wanted her to stop talking.” I growled, “WHAT did you do? She wouldn’t have stopped trying to convince me she loved me.” Cason looked at the ground. He admitted, “I slapped her.” I roared along with my brothers.

Evin slammed his fist into Cason's nose and blood poured off of Cason’s face. He had the audacity to cry to us, “I know. I didn’t mean to! She just kept saying she loved him!” I growled, “You LOOKED like me! You wanted her to consider your feelings when she had NO FUCKING CLUE you have feelings for her! You SLAPPED MY MATE WHILE LOOKING LIKE ME!” Thor was snarling in my head. He was enraged and it fueled into my own. I reached out and broke Cason’s hand. I felt something placed in my other hand. I looked down and saw Darrin had placed a hammer in it.

I swung it until Cason’s hand was minced meat. The Hackura’s pain tolerance annoyed me because all too soon Cason was talking again. He said, “The princess just looked at me in shock. I truly didn’t mean to hit her. I didn’t mean it. I love her.” I growled but he continued, “I told her to stop getting hurt.” I stared at him incredulously and yelled, “YOU FUCKING HURT HER! YOU BASTARD!” Cason managed to laugh. He told me, “The princess said something similar. I moved to console her. Her skin just felt so right under mine. I...”

I growled cutting him off, “You told her lie back and fucking take it! YOU were going to RAPE MY WIFE!” Cason looked away in shame. He admitted, “She’s always turned away from my touch. She just let me touch her multiple times, and it was a dream. I couldn’t control myself.” Jackson growled, “She couldn’t

FUCKING move you asshole. Plus, you looked like MY BROTHER who is her FUCKING MATE! She didn't even understand what you meant." Cason chuckled, "I know. That's so Haley. She asked what I wanted to give her and she sarcastically said another slap. Then she called me a fake Eric. She mocked me saying I didn't know anything and I..." He trailed off.

No fucking way. I grabbed a fucking bat and yelled, "You HIT HER AGAIN?!" Cason looked away but nodded. I swung that bat with all my strength. I heard two distinct cracks. I looked over surprised to see someone else had hit Cason's other knee. Haley's brother Drake's eyes were blazing gold. He nodded to me. Cason was yelling and cursing in Latin.

When he stopped and steadied himself. He whispered, "I deserved that, I never wanted to hurt her, I just saw red when she kept saying she loved you." I growled, "She's my FUCKING MATE AND WIFE!" Cason hissed, "I love her and not because she's my mate." I punched him, "I don't love her just because she's my mate! I'd been trying to marry her for two years before I even knew she was my mate. I would've fallen for her regardless. How could I not? She's smart, funny, beautiful, innocently sexy, and everything kind in this world. Despite what she's been through. She came to my home to agree to save the stupid fucking fairies after everything they did to her. She'd probably do it again despite all they've done now. That's who she is. She's the mother of my pups!"

Darrin interjected, "Clarify something Cason, if you were the backup plan for Haley; What about the pups? The fairies wouldn't trust you with them." Cason sighed, "The fairies wanted them." I growled so loud his lips moved from the force. I punched him in the face.

Titus ripped Cason's arm out of socket. He hissed, "You would give the fairies the children? MY GRANDCHILDREN?! After what they did to my little girl?!" Cason winced, "To save Haley... yes, I'd give them the mutts." Jackson punched him this time. I was plotting my next move. I looked at the time realizing it had passed by quickly. It was almost sunrise.

I asked Cason, "Did you think Haley would ever forgive you for letting anyone take our pups from her?" Cason spat at me, "You think you're so fucking smart because you knocked her up. Tying her to you with those kids. She would've gotten over it." Marcus snorted, "Then you don't know my little sister as well as you think you do, Cason." Cason smiled, "I'd just give her more children to replace them. I've wanted her tight body since I saw her. He put in no effort with her, and he just gets her virginity? Fuck that." I growled and saw red. How dare he speak of Haley that way.

I ripped him off the table and put him on his feet. I told him, "Fight me, you coward." Cason smirked. He put his hands up in a fighting stance. I was on him. I

punched him so many times, but I still saw red. Jackson, Harold, and Darrin pulled me off him as I yelled, “She’s MINE! DO YOU HEAR ME? SHE’S MINE! She is twice fairy light bonded to me. Being away from me would kill her!” Cason coughed up blood.

His eyes shot to me in horror. He sputtered, “Wwhhatt? No!” I growled, “Yes, she’s mine you fucking bastard!” Cason tried to sit up. He told me, “You don’t understand. You have to save her then; they will take her.” I snorted, “The fairies won’t get to her. I’ll kill them all.”

Marcus yelled, “FUCK! The guards! The texts, it was Kace!” Titus turned, “What are you saying? You think more people would betray us?” Marcus grabbed Cason by the shirt, “It’s Kace right? He texted the children’s guard that Haley’s guards needed help.” Cason nodded, “Kace, Phillip and I always wanted her. Masium came to us with an offer to help them. In exchange, he said we could see her. We were going to save her; Phillip was waiting for them to come out with her. He was going to take her from them.”

I growled, “She’s dealing with killing her fairy brother because you called the guards away. One of them would’ve done that for her had you not this. Or they would’ve kept him for us. You’ve hurt her very soul with your actions!” I turned to my family. I said, “Brothers stay with them and show this piece of trash how you feel about him hurting your Luna. I’ll link you once I find Haley. Then we can all go deal with these other pieces of shit who want to take what’s mine and harm my pups.”

Jim ran in to the room. He said, “Veronica says she feels something is off. I went to check on Haley. She’s not in her room. The stable guys said she took Pirate out. I realize that’s not a problem but two guys just went off on the same trail after she did. I know she can handle herself, but...” I growled, “I was just about to go find her anyway.” My anger was at an all-time high. I quickly I realized it wasn’t just my own. Haley was angry too.

I ran outside and shifted. I ran towards the ocean knowing I didn’t know the trails around here. I did know Haley would take one that led her to the beach. I swear to GOD if those bastards try to take her safe place from her; I’ll rip their fucking heads off. I made it to the beach, but I didn’t see Haley. I could hear Thor talking to me, but I couldn’t focus on him. All I could think about was my worry for Haley. It was consuming me. I felt her pain and betrayal slam into our bond. I growled. I quickly too off following her scent. The closer I got I could hear both Phillip and Kace talking to Haley. She was beyond pissed at their words. My fury mounted again hearing what they planned to do with our pups.

Thor and I agreed, we were going to fucking tear these guys to pieces. Thor spoke, “Since you’re listening to me now, I told you if they touched her, I’d kill them. I

meant it.” I linked him back, “I already told you before, I agree.” I heard them declare their love and saw red. Haley was MINE! I heard her call them liars. I couldn’t help but snort. My Angel didn’t see herself clearly. I was furious realizing they were going to attack her. I roared in anger. FUCKING COWARDS! I tried to link Haley, “I’m coming, Angel hang on!” Nothing in response. What the fuck? How could they stop us from linking? I was fucking sick of people trying to take what’s mine.

I could see Pirate straining to get loose from a post trying to help Haley. I pushed Thor to go faster. I jumped over Haley snapping my jaws around Phillip’s head, ripping it clean off and launched it at Kace. He screamed louder than any pup I’d ever heard.

Thor linked me, “I understand why he’s a tech guy and not a fighter. He’s pathetic.” I shifted back to my human form. Thor took control punching Kace over and over. He betrayed my mate. He made her carry this guilt over Arion’s death when I should’ve been the one to end Arion. This asshole knew we were walking into a trap when Haley would need us!

I was surprised when my horse, Treasure ran into the clearing. Thor linked me, “Check the saddle bag, Eric.” I opened the saddle bag and saw cable ties. In my confusion, Thor took back over. He tied up Kace and leaned down. He whispered, “You will listen to her scream my name. She will say she’s mine over and over and maybe then you will fucking get it.” Thor spoke to our horse, “Treasure, if he so much as moves a fucking inch, trample him.” Treasure snorted. I whirled, locking eyes with my mate.

My blood was pounding in my ears, my need to claim her at an all-time high. I slammed my mouth on hers and broke to tell her she was mine. Since Thor was in control I told him, “You have to make sure she’s ready for you Thor. We are not small, and we don’t want to hurt her.” Thor growled, “You do know we’ve had lots of sex and I already fucking know she needs to be wet.” I snorted. Sarcastic wolf.

He purred at me when he felt her core was already wet, “Mate is always soaking wet for us.” I agreed, “Yes she is.” We made her say she was ours a lot. I looked out of the corner of my eye to see Kace sobbing. I smirked at him and made sure he couldn’t see any part of her. My need for her was constant. The need to prove to myself she was mine and only mine.

We talked for a little bit after we finished. I linked Jackson, “You guys can come to us now. We are about two miles in from the beach. Marcus probably knows this trail... hell, they all probably do. I’m sure your wolves will love this terrain, Thor does.” They didn’t answer. Seriously? Now I couldn’t link them either? Haley

quickly explained. Fucking fairies. I didn't regret ripping off Phillip's head even though he hadn't touched her yet. I was also glad Kace wasn't dead. That fucker was going to be put through the hell for Haley and our children's sake.

Haley asked about Treasure. Thor linked me, "I told you already. I can communicate with him. I told you he was coming, but you weren't listening." I rolled my eyes, "I was worried about our mate, and getting to her. I didn't mean to ignore you." Thor sighed, "You would've known he was coming if you would listen to me." He closed our link.

That was weird. I moved us to the tree line. I linked Jackson, "We are in a clearing. They were going to take her. I'm sure her brothers know the way here." They came storming into the clearing a few moments later. Jackson linked me, Harold, and Darrin, "Jesus Christ, Eric. It reeks of you two and sex. Did you fuck her for the hour and half we waited to hear from you?" I answered, "Yes." Jackson snorted, "Just yes he says. Just like that." I replied, "Thor's need to claim her combined with mine didn't calm until she turned her head so I could see her mark." Darrin replied, "I get it. When that guy was going to challenge me for Shana, even though you handled it Eric; I couldn't calm down for several hours." I nodded.

Jackson linked me asking, "What did you do to Kace? He doesn't look that bad, but he's crying more than a newborn." I snorted, "I made him listen to Haley scream she was mine as I fucked her. Which she did... a lot... at various decibels." Harold snorted.

The Cambridges wanted answers for their betrayal. The second the word friend zone was mentioned I felt Haley's anger barrel into me. I pursed my lips and bit the inside my mouth to keep from laughing. I linked my brothers as I looked at the sky, "She doesn't understand." Darrin answered, "She probably doesn't know what the friend zone is." I glared at him, "Don't you dare make me laugh right now. She's so pissed, laughing is not the right move."

I linked my brothers again, "I'm angry they love my mate, yet I'm deeply amused that she doesn't believe they love her." Darrin replied back, "This is going to be good. I feel like a good Haley speech is coming." Jackson snorted. Darrin shouted, "I FUCKING knew it! I told you guys! Haley has no goddamn idea what the friend zone is. Did I call that or what?" I was trying so hard not to laugh, but that was getting harder with every word my Angel was saying.

My beautiful, kind mate had no idea of her appeal to the opposite sex. To be fair if they didn't tell her they were friends; that was really on them. She was a fairy. They should know they have to be literal. Jackson linked "Oh god... she is priceless." Eventually I couldn't hold my laughter back. Not even her family could.

Harold asked us, “She really doesn’t see her appeal, or notice anything involving romantic interest, does she?” Jackson laughed, “Eric, you lucky bastard. She literally only sees you. I’m beginning to understand her family’s reaction to seeing you two together.”

I linked my brothers, “I can’t breathe. This is hilarious. Then thinking of her being propositioned by other women has me so fucking hard.” Jackson snorted, “We can see that, big brother.” I linked my brothers, “She’s so damn adorable.” Jackson laughed, “It is funny that a woman as deadly as her still stomps her foot in frustration.” I could barely stop myself from taking her here and now. Especially since her family wouldn’t give a flying fuck if I did. I’d already fucked her in front of them once. Their response was to be excited she joined their orgy.

Haley had enough she stalked over to Pirate and Treasure. I followed her linking my brother, “Run back with us. Her brothers will get Kace back to the torture building.” They nodded. We left riding side by side. Darrin linked me, “Damn, you two look like fucking royalty riding together.” I snorted.

Jackson replied, “Technically speaking, they are royalty.” I linked back, “That’s just fucking weird.” Harold interjected, “Your mate looks pissed.” I replied, “She’s confused and angry. She’s also feeling very betrayed.” Jackson linked, “At least she’s not feeling guilty. I was worried she would blame herself.” I sighed, “I hope she doesn’t feel any guilt about this. This wasn’t her fault. She didn’t know they had feelings for her. I did but she had no fucking clue. Even if she did know, she never led them on. This is their fault and no one else’s.”

We arrived at the stables. Darrin linked us, “I’ve got twenty bucks on Haley always giving Pirate an apple post ride by conjuring one.” Jackson snorted in reply, “No one is taking that bet.” I agreed. We followed Haley with interest as she stormed into the castle. If I hadn’t seen her fight knowing how deadly she was; I would say she was like a wet, angry little kitten. She was adorable and mine.

She spotted Harper, Evin, and Histeck who looked at her in surprise. We were already laughing the moment she started her rant. Darrin asked in our link, “Is he a boy toy or a lover? Do we think she knows there’s a difference between the two?” Jackson replied, “I don’t think she knows the difference. I met the guy she’s talking about. He’s a lover of Harper’s and Harper’s mate, Calista. He’s not a boy toy. He loves Harper and Calista. He’d never do anything to hurt Haley and risk losing either of them. I actually think the man sees Haley as a little sister.” I nodded. That was good.

Harold linked us all, “Oh god. I need to know how many guys want her that she unknowingly friend zoned.” I growled at him. Jackson grabbed Harold’s arm in warning. Haley was not amused. I linked my brothers, “It’s probably for the best she didn’t know about any of this; or we’d have to kill some people.” Harold

sighed and asked, “She really doesn’t see that she’s the whole package, does she?” I shook my head. I answered, “In her defense, I was very outspoken in my desire for her. No one else appears to have said anything remotely like they were interested. Then I entered the picture and they felt like they lost something. Which they did, she’s fucking mine.”

Haley wanted a specific torture device for fairies. I linked, “That’s fucking brilliant!” Jackson replied, “We need one too. We have fairies popping up our asses at this point.” I tried not to laugh but failed. Veronica was almost on the floor laughing. Miley was biting her lips so hard in an attempt not to laugh. I quickly spoke to Haley, explaining before leaving.

As soon as we stepped outside Harper asked, “Who told her I said Eric had a Magic Dick? She’s going to kill me!” I laughed, “She’s known for a while now. She mentioned it when the vampires had her.” Jackson agreed, “I’m pretty sure Marcus told her a long time ago.” Harper rolled his eyes, “Of course he did. What was she going on about the friend zone for?”

Evin rolled his eyes and asked, “Seriously, Harper? Obviously, Phillip and Kace told her she friend zoned them. She doesn’t understand the term.” Histeck spoke, “She wouldn’t. They never told her they were interested in her. If they really were interested, they would know fairies don’t do subtle hints.” His brothers stopped to look at him.

Histeck asked, “What? I learned all I could about fairies when she came here, just like all of you did. If they really loved her, they would’ve too. Take our brother in law for example. He already knew about fairies. He let our sister plan their wedding with no stipulations. He told her directly what he wanted from her from the very moment they met. Sure, they’ve had some getting to know each other fights and pains; he actually cares for her though.”

I said, “Thank you, Histeck. I love your sister. For the sake of the story, Phillip didn’t tell Haley about the friendzone. I ripped his head off before he got the chance. Kace said it.” Evin nodded, “Right on! Why does Hales need a vat made of iron?” I laughed.

Darrin surmised, “My guess is it’s for Masium. Really, it’s an inspired idea. We may need to invest in iron barrels at this point, Eric.” I stopped walking. I started to laugh, “Iron vats and barrels. It really is a good idea. She’s done it again. We could also have silver ones made.” Jackson laughed.

We walked into the torture area. We were greeted by a seriously disfigured Kace. Bjourn and Marcus were very pissed. Marcus hissed, “You had the AUDACITY to have iron to shoot our sister with? She is your PRINCESS! You bugged her phone

and invaded her privacy!” Kace saw me and my brothers. He somehow managed to sneer.

I asked, “Was that a sneer, brothers?” Jackson studied Kace. He answered, “It’s hard to tell, but I think it was.” Kace spoke, “She healed your mates. Then you made her feel like a bad person! Her brothers can say what they want, but I know her well enough to know you’ve messed up. Somehow the princess and the wolf weathered the Claudia situation. Then rest of you fucked your relationship with her. It will eat at your family. She will never open up to you again.” I kept my face neutral, but I was worried he was right.

Jackson told Kace, “Whether Haley is close with our mates or not, it will not affect our family. They will fight for her and vice versa. They don’t have to be best friends to respect each other.” Kace laughed, “Maybe, but I’ve been to your realm. Your mates will push her. The more they push the more she’ll close off. They will resent her and they will want their mates to take their side. You really should’ve just let us have her.” I growled at him and punched him in the face.

I asked, “What fucking part of she is MINE do you not understand? Are you slow?” I punched him again. I told him, “THAT was for my pups and mate.” We spent hours torturing him. Eventually Jackson linked me, “Let’s step outside.” I nodded. Darrin and Harold stepped forward to take their turn with her brothers. When Haley told her brothers to do awful things to Kace, I wondered if she truly knew what she unleashed. Bjourn was on a whole other level of torture than anyone I’d ever known.

Jackson spoke once we were alone, “He’s in your head. That’s what he wants, Eric.” I sighed, “He could be right. Well, not completely. I think Haley has thawed with Molly. She said she wanted to train her when we got back.” Jackson smiled, “See? We have time to prove to her we mean she’s family. She doesn’t treat any of us differently. She’s hurt and quite honestly, she should be. She’s not cutting anyone out from the triplets’ lives. She could easily pit us against each other. Molly told me all about their group talk. Haley told them she wanted them at every event the triplets were involved in. She told mom she didn’t want her to leave. She just isn’t going to be open with them. We can work with that. We are all going to be around for a while apparently.” I snorted, “That’s true. I’m going to go find her.” Jackson nodded, “I’m going to shift and take a run. This place is great.” I agreed, “I had the same thought earlier.”

I went to find Haley. I found her putting down Alexander. I quickly saw he was the last of the three to be put down for his nap. I smiled at Haley as she closed the door to the nursely quietly. She turned and jumped into my arms.

She whispered, “Hi!” I smiled, “Hi back, little mate. Have you had a good day?” Haley smiled “It’s better now. Are you ok?” I sighed. I went with honesty. I told

her, “A little. Kace got in my head about some of the things he got off your phone.” She pushed back from me to look into my eyes. She asked, “What the fuck are you talking about?” I rubbed her cheek with my thumb. I said, “About my family. He said they would probably push you to open up and it would lock you down even more. Resentment would creep in. They would want my brothers on their sides. I will always choose you now, Haley. Even over them. If it comes down to your happiness or theirs; they lose. It just makes me a little sad.”

Haley pulled me down to her level and kissed me slowly. She pulled back and said, “I love you for saying that Eric. My sweet, naive mate, it won’t fucking happen.”

I jerked my head up and asked, “Did you just call me naive? After the last time I saw you, you were ranting about not knowing what the friend zone was? And talking about my magic dick?” Haley laughed, “Harper does have a damn good point. It is magic. I also now know what the friend zone is and I maintain... they can’t be friend zoned if we were never fucking friends. That’s not the point.”

She told me, “Eric, I know how important your family is to you. I would never let anything get in between you and your brothers. I’d lock all us women in a fucking room together if the dynamic was making you unhappy. They wouldn’t even be able to leave because I’m a fairy. I’ve got tricks like you wouldn’t believe. I just can’t be like I was. They hurt me after I let them into the darkest parts of me.”

I sighed, “Not to throw stones or make waves, but I hurt you too. It kills me that I hurt you, but once we talked; we moved past it. I’m not saying you should do that with them at all. I think your hurt is justified. It just scares me for the future.”

Haley mused, “I have no fucking clue what stone or waves have to do with any of this. I’m telling you Kace doesn’t understand women. He thinks I friend zoned him when we weren’t ever friends AND he’s a psycho stalker. He’s more comfortable in front of a computer than a person. Which some days I get. None of those guys ever said anything to me about liking me. They are cowards. They only got mad when they saw us together. It was like someone had taken their shiny toy they put up on a shelf and didn’t fucking want. Then someone else took their toy down, and they wanted it back.”

I stared at her and asked, “Did you just call yourself a shiny toy?” She shoved me saying “It’s an analogy and it’s accurate. They didn’t truly want or like me. They may have liked the idea they had in their head of me, but in reality that’s not actually me. You love the real me. All of me. Yes, you were a fucking idiot and we fought. I hear couples do that from time to time. So, when I do something stupid, you’re going to get mad we will fight then we will fix it. When you’re a hardheaded stubborn alpha male we’ll fight again. You didn’t hide something from me after expecting total honesty. You weren’t in a position where you weren’t even entitled to my personal secrets and got them anyway... but they did that.

None of them were entitled to know anything in my scans, but they did because “no secrets.” You let yourself be manipulated. You thought you were doing what was best for me and babies. I can’t fault you for that, because I do understand the position of power you are in. I am here for you though; I am a princess by birth and your Luna. I can help you and I will. Being your mate, wife, and mother to our precious babies comes first. Part of that is your family. I’m not shutting them out of my life. I want them to be in our kids’ lives, and I want them around. I’m not going to ignore them or anything like that. Trust me, it will be fucking fine.”

I put my forehead on hers, “You never cease to amaze me little mate. Care to talk about you not giving me the full picture with Cason?” Haley felt mischievous in our bond. She smiled, “I am pretty amazing. I don’t want to talk about that just yet. I have other plans for this time where our children are napping, I hope you can catch me, Alpha.” She popped away.

I growled and ran, chasing her scent and the bond. I ran into the main room where Veronica, Miley, and Jim were laughing. I looked at Jim who shrugged. He told me, “Haley explicitly said I couldn’t help you catch the fairy.” I growled and focused again. After a second, I took off.

Once I got outside, I shifted and chased Haley all over the damn fucking place. I thought I had her on the cliff she said was a Hackura kids make out spot where I fucked her last time; then she popped away again. Then again on the beach. I was certain I had her in her treehouse, but she popped away again. I growled in frustration and followed her scent away from the beach and into a wooded area. It felt like I entered a barrier. I looked around. It was all very green. There were flowers everywhere. I whirled when I heard a splash and took off running.

I shifted back and took in the giant waterfall and little plunge pool created by the waterfall. I smelled my mate and jumped into the water. I found her just as she was surfacing. I wrapped my arms around her and whispered in her ear, “I caught you, little fairy.” Haley teased, “So you did. What’s the Big Alpha going to do now?” I growled and claimed her lips. In response, she wrapped her legs around my hips. She was naked. I couldn’t resist the temptation. I thrust into her and she bit my lip lightly. I growled and began moving within her.

I told her, “You make me so hard all the time. You will be the death of me, little mate.” She threw her head back screaming as she came. She popped us onto dry land and rolled on top of me. I wasn’t having any of that. We fought and rolled around for who would be on top. Eventually, I finally pinned her. I teased her, “I’ve caught the naughty fairy twice now.” She smirked, “It would appear you have.”

I fucked her all over the area. Her cries and moans weren’t even drowned out by the waterfall. When we finally fell apart she snapped clothes on us. I was glad. I

stated, “Your powers are back.” She smiled, “Thank fucking god they are, or you’d have caught me quickly. You’re faster than me. The triplets should be up shortly.” She popped us back to the castle. We made out lazily in her bed until we heard the triplets getting up on the monitor.

We went in and got them up. Haley wanted to take them out in their stroller and show them places in this realm. We took them all over the Hackura realm. Everyone fussed over them. I couldn’t stop looking at my mate and our three pups. Sometimes it didn’t feel real to me. That she was here. My long-awaited mate. She had given me three beautiful pups, and we were happy. She smiled at me as we went back to put the children down for bed.

When we got in her bed, she curled into me and said, “Remember. We have to get back for Bex’s shower.” I smiled, “I’ll get you there in time.” She kissed me softly and we fell asleep together. I woke when suddenly my arms that had been around Haley hit each other as if she wasn’t there. I opened my eyes. Haley wasn’t in our bed. I linked her asking, “Haley where are you? What happened?” She didn’t answer. Our bond felt strange. I heard running footsteps in the hallway. I opened the door stepping out to find Haley’s brothers scared faces. Seeing a Hackura scared is unnerving. Seeing nine of them made me anxious.

Bjourn asked, “What just happened? I... I mean we... we don’t feel Haley like normal. It’s like she’s here, but not.” My brothers ran out of their rooms at the commotion. I said, “I have no idea. She was here then she wasn’t. She’s not answering me in link, which she promised to do so she can’t hear me to answer. Our bond feels weird.” Harold groaned, “COME ON! This is getting ridiculous.” I focused on Haley and felt her confusion but only slightly. I growled, “I’m so fucking over this fairy fuckery!”

I paced and growled for an hour with her family in the main room. I kept trying to link Haley asking what the fuck happened. It was maddening. I could feel her as if she was in another realm, this one, then another one again. Now, it felt like she was back in this one, but she was nowhere to be found.

After a few hours, out of nowhere I felt Haley very near to me. I was sprinting up the stairs towards that feeling, everyone hot on my trail. I burst into Haley’s room ripping the door from the hinges. Relief hit me when Haley sprang up from the bed. It looked like she’d been asleep.

She asked “Eric? What are you doing in the fucking hall?” She studied me and frowned. She asked, “What’s wrong? Oh god, am I still dreaming? Are you going to act like you don’t know who I am?” I growled, “Dreaming? Fairies pop away in their dreams?” Haley frowned, “What? No. What are you talking about?” I couldn’t stop myself from going over to her and gathering her in my arms. I inhaled her scent to calm down. Her arms went around me.

Haley whispered, "Eric, I'm ok." I sighed and told her, "You disappeared from my arms. We could feel you but only distantly." She sprang back from me. She yelled, "HOLY SHIT! That was real? You're fucking kidding me? Alternate realities are real? Hey! How did you and Jackson escape that psycho rogue king in this reality if I didn't save you? You were just as possessive at twenty-one as you are at thirty-two, by the way."

My jaw hit the floor along with those of Jackson, Darrin, and Harold. I asked, "How the hell do you know about the rouge king?" Haley sighed, "I just saved you guys from his psycho ass. So, how did you escape him here in this timeline? Oh god! Alternate realities... I need to speak to Marcious. He called me a jumper or something in that timeline. He knows what this is." She ran to her phone as the rest of us gaped at her. What the shit had fairies done to my mate now?