

Enchanting the Prince

Chapter 1: Aolis

“So, tomorrow is the big day?” My father asks me as I finish packing my bag.

“Yes, Lily finally turns 18.” What I leave unspoken is my fear that she won’t accept me. Things between us have gotten more and more strained as she’s gotten older and gotten closer to her birthday. It used to be that Lily was excited to see me, almost unable to help herself, running and jumping into my arms. Being ten years older than she is, I’ve always been very careful with my relationship with her. She’s been too young for me to start any kind of intimate relationship and I’ve been respectful of those lines.

However, I’m afraid that it’s almost backfired on me. I can tell that Lily has put me in the ‘brother’ category. My feelings for her are anything but familial, I’ve just kept them in check for eighteen years. Now I’m hoping that the pull of the mate bond will help her see past the brotherly feelings she has for me and see me as the man who has wanted her for her entire life and most of mine.

“What gift will you bestow on her?” My father asks, breaking me out of my thoughts.

“I had our metal workers make a necklace that is a crescent moon with an ice blue heart-shaped stone hanging from the top of the moon. I added magic to it so it will always glow with my love for her.”

“I assume you chose the ice blue as it is the color of your eyes?”

“Yes. I was going to make it more of a sapphire color, more like her eyes, but it’s meant to be my heart that she’s wearing, so I made it the color of my eyes.”

“She’ll love it.” He says, coming to stand behind me and looking at me in the mirror. He puts his hands on my shoulders. “No matter what happens tomorrow, it will be okay. You are the future of our kingdom. You are Fae royalty, the future King of Araphyra.”

“Thanks dad.”

I travel to Canyon Ridge overnight. I’ve been given a permanent room since I’ve been chronicling the history of the Guardians since I was a child. My father passed the role on to me once he realized I was Lily’s mate. It has given me plenty of opportunity to spend time with her over the years.

This generation of Guardians is very different from all the previous generations. This is the first generation where the Guardians have been born rather than receiving one of the two Guardian spirits that were created by their Moon Goddess.

Our stories have chronicled hundreds of years of Guardians and this is the first time, in all that time, the Guardians have been able to find their mates and create a new generation of Guardians. My notes have indicated that the Guardian line has been passed only through the female line in this current generation. The sons of the original Guardians are all stronger than normal Alphas, but it's the daughters that are carrying the Guardian trait.

It makes me wonder what my children with Lily would be like. If she accepts our mate bond, she's a Guardian, I'm descended from a long line of Fae Royalty. We would have very powerful children.

I'm stopped at the border of the pack lands, but once they realize it's me, the border patrol lets me through. As soon as I walk into the packhouse, I can smell my mate. She's always hated her vanilla and honey scent. I love it, it reminds me of the flowers that bloom in Araphyra.

I find my room and lay down. As much as I want to sleep, today is a huge day and I won't get any sleep. I know the border patrol alerted Alpha Rik of my presence, so I don't feel the need to immediately inform him that I've arrived.

I close my eyes, centering myself, reaching out with my senses and feeling the forest, the land and the gardens around me. This pack has many sprites, like the other packs run by Guardians, which means that the lands are more lush than most.

As I reach out, I feel their light, the light of my people. The sprites are only one part of the fae. Our kind is composed of many different types of species, including the elves, fairies, gnomes, dwarves, and many other types of fae. That doesn't include the magical creatures that live in Araphyra. Magical creatures that the humans frequently write about in their fantasy novels. One day I will be King of all of them. And my Queen will rule at my side.

Around lunch time, I finally shower and get ready for the day. I walk into the dining hall, intent on saying hello to Alpha Rik and Luna Cara. However, I find that the hall is abuzz with the upcoming party. I can smell that Lily has left, most likely with her mother to get ready for tonight. There will be many Alphas from neighboring packs here, just in case she chooses to reject me. My heart begins pounding just thinking about it.

"Sir Prince Aolis. Sir Prince Aolis." I hear before I can get to Alpha Rik. I see his head look up and he gives me a smile, nodding that he understands that I need to say hello to my people before getting to him.

I am swarmed by sprites. Of all the fae, they are the most gentle of all. There is nothing mean, fierce or cruel about them. They would never intentionally hurt another. And now that the rift between the wolves and the sprites has been mended, there are more mates between the wolves and sprites than there have been in over a century. They make a good pairing. The sprites are gentle, kind and completely adore their wolves. Whereas, the wolves, are strong, fierce and protect their sprites.

"Hello my bright lights. How are you?"

“Oh, Sir Prince Aolis, we are so happy here.”

“We love our wolves.”

“I’m mated to a wolf, see my mark?”

“We’re so happy you’re here.”

As is the norm, they all talk at once. Some of the Alphas in the packs struggle with the high level of excitement of the sprites, but I adore them. They are my people. Not only that, their consistent kindness and lack of request for anything from me or my father is a welcome change from the others we rule over.

I take my time, speaking to each of them. When they are done, I head to Alpha Rik’s table.

“Prince Aolis, please join me.” He says.

I don’t want to ask, but I can’t help myself. “How is Lily?”

“She’s good. Her mother and Leana are with her, doing their hair and nails for tonight.” He puts his hand on my shoulder. “I hope I can officially call you my son-in-law very soon.”

Alpha Rik has always been welcoming and understanding of the mate bond with me and Lily. “I hope so too.” I tell him.

“I know it seems off that we would invite other Alphas, but…”

“I understand. She needs to know she has options if being mated to a fae isn’t what she wants.” It hurts to say, but it’s true. I would never force her to be my mate. The Guardians have been forced into mate bonds too many times in their history.

“Let’s see how it goes.” Alpha Rik says to me.

Later that evening, I’ve dressed for the party. I look at myself in the mirror. I’m in standard royal Elven attire with a long-sleeved undershirt and a short-sleeved navy blue overshirt with elvish stitching across the chest and sleeves. I complete the look with a silver sash that wraps around my waist. My navy-blue pants and knee high boots match the overshirt.

I arrive at the party after most everyone else has arrived, but before Lily. She will arrive last, making a grand entrance for her big day.

When she arrives, I see her nose go up in the air. Her wolf, Hera can smell me. She’s beautiful. She always is, but whether intentional or not, she’s wearing a dress fit for a future Queen. I wish I had known what she was going to wear. If I had, my silver sash would have been gold. Her gold dress is flowy from the bodice to her toes. The bodice is a snug, nude colored under layer

covered with what looks like gold leaves. From there, the dress flows in chiffon layers to her feet. On the back the layer starts up at her shoulder blades, looking like a delicate cape.

Lily looks at me and I can't help the smile that spreads across my face. "Mate." She whispers and the room goes silent. Her eyes are glowing gold with her wolf.

"Mate." I say back to her.