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impassive. Prince Timothy obediently got up from the mattress and took his seat at the table in his room. Kyle sighed and rubbed the back of his neck, realising that the conversation ahead of them wasn't going to be smooth. "Look, whatever decision you make, I will respect it. So stop sulking "You want to leave right." 11\_11 "Please be honest with me." The young prince looked at his self proclaimed best friend in the eye. "When have I ever not?" Kyle snorted and took a seat opposite him. "Eat with me!" "Alright just wait!" The blonde haired boy smacked his forehead as the prince ruined the moment by disrupting his train of thoughts. Quickly filling up his plate just to please Prince Timothy, he thought about how he should go about this. "Look, I am a human being who is made to do things freely and think freely. We are not meant for a life like this. Slaving away until we die. What? You can't tell me that I was born to be a slave right?" Kyle added with a chuckle, attempting to lighten up the conversation. When the prince didn't crack a smile, he knew his desire to be free was going to hurt his master more than he expected it to. Nevertheless, Kyle had to be honest. So with a heavy heart, he continued. "I don't want this....I can't live life like this," he sighed and looked up at the prince. "I know you've been good to me and I will be ever grateful for that. You have not only been kind to me but you have also protected me and showed me that not all vampires are evil..." "But ..?" "But I don't want to be a servant, trapped in this castle with only one I know it's hard for you to understand, I really do. I mean this is how you've been brought up. With the idea that humans mean nothing more than laborers and blood bags. Tim you need to understand that humans are people with emotions. We are beings that are created with a soul, mind and heart. We are made simple with no superpowers or extraordinary gi s but we too, are blessed with intelligence and talents. We are meant to use and share those humble gi s with the world. We're not....we are not puppets. You should know that I'm not merely speaking on my behalf." The prince had stopped eating. He listened to every word that came out of Kyle. A er a moment's pause, he blew out a heavy breath while he pushed his plate. Then he stared at his friend. "Where will you go?" he asked sardonically, like he was losing something. "What do you mean?" "Where will you go if I set you free? Will you go to Golden Haven or will you go back to your homeland?" "Not Golden Haven for sure and my homeland? It was not very far from the village really," Kyle said carefully. He didn't want to venture into those horrible memories. "You had a family here?" "Are you reading my mind?" "Only when you try hard to block me out. Come on tell me what happened, please. I open up to you so telling me something about

your past is the least you can do. I want to know." The prince gave Kyle a pleading look. The servant groaned and looked away. Silence. When Kyle looked back at Prince Timothy, he was still looking at him with those big eyes, hungry for a story. "Look, it's not very nice okay." "Okay," the prince leaned forward in anticipation making Kyle release an exasperated sigh. The small brat was impossible. "We used to live in the outskirts of town. My family and a few others. Our small houses were surrounded by many trees so that helped us to keep ourselves safe. Safe from the monthly collection among other things. Vampires don't come looking for anyone who lived in the outskirts seeing that they had enough prey in the village. So we thought we were always going to be safe. If we could escape from the collection, then we were pretty much secured. That's what anyone would think right? At least that's what I thought. Then it happened. The reality of the world we live in, hit me like punch in the guts. One night we were attacked by rogue vampires. They were turned bloodsuckers and some of these vampires are the kind in which their transitioning didn't go so well. They were more animalistic and wild with their hunger being nearly impossible to satisfy. Long story short, me and another boy my age were the only survivors. We kept each other alive, for a while. Until I had to killhim." Kyle looked away from Timothy for a moment. He paused to hide his emotions and to keep himself from breaking down in front of the kid. He then cleared his throat and sat up straight with his arms crossed. "See my friend Peter was bitten by one of them when we were fighting to escape. The one who bit him, did it for the purpose of turning my friend. We were unaware that he was slowly transitioning into a half blood. Two days into our survival, Peter's eyes began to change color. His gums began to bleed as the fangs pushed themselves out. He was in so much pain and I did everything I could to help him. At least that's what I thought. I didn't want to lose my only friend but whatever I did, it simply wasn't enough. I was in denial. I thought that I could stop the transitioning. Deep down, we both knew what was going to happen soon but I simply refused to fully understand what was at That night as I sat under a tree thinking about our fate, Peter dragged himself to me. He was breathing hard and coughing uncontrollably. His skin was deadly pale with veins showing. Before I could reach out to hold him, he grabbed my arm and placed a big stone in my hand. 'Do it,' he said. 'Do it now, before its too late. If you let me change, I will kill you, my friend and I don't want to be a monster who would kill its own friend. End my su ering now, don't punish me by waiting for me to change into one of the damned. Pl..please....please do it. You are still clean Kyle. Y..you can still survive and live out your days.'  $\preceq^6$ 'So can you! We'll figure this out!' I yelled at him, gripping the huge stone in my hand. He only shook his head and coughed up blood. 'I won't survive and even if I do, it wouldn't be me. I won't be Peter.' He

stake for Peter. again begged me to kill him and I did the unthinkable. I ended his life and buried him. I couldn't bury my parents so I buried him properly and prayed for his soul." "Is....is that why you hate our kind so much?" Kyle nodded, unable to form any words. "Lunderstand," Prince Timothy said, "And human?" he called. The servant looked up with watery eyes. "It wasn't your fault. He wanted to die a human and you fulfilled his last wish. You didn't do anything wrong so let go." Kyle sni ed and closed his eyes to ease himself. "I'm not really sure what I'll do or where I would go if you set me free. I just.....I just don't want to be a servant Tim." "So that's it. You just don't want to be a servant." "Yeah," Kyle shrugged. Prince Timothy's face lit up at once. "So don't be! Don't be a servant. Work in the castle-" "Isn't that the same thing?!" "Shut up! Work as in like a job. A professional job where you get paid. Once you finish work you go home to wherever you want to live. It can't be far from here though." The blonde haired boy leaned in, all ears. The little brat would actually do that? Kyle didn't have homeland to get back to and he always lived in this Kingdom. He never wanted to settle down in a dierent kingdom so if he could get a job here, he could have a future. On the brighter side, from what Kyle heard, King Caelestinus will give up his crown soon and hopefully the Dark Prince will improve the well-being of humans. He simply can't make things worse, especially if he wanted his sister by his side. "You can do that?" "I'm a pure blood prince stupid human. I can do a lot." "You would do that? Why? You are going through great lengths for me. Why?" "Because you're my friend." Prince Timothy shrugged and looked at Kyle. "Is that all little brat?" "You take care of me even when you say you don't like me. There are many people who say they like me but don't really care about me. So there! You're one of a kind." "I appreciate you saying that. Really touching and all but you need more friends your age." Prince Timothy rolled his eyes and made a face, indicating that he didn't care about what Kyle said. He had friends but he just didn't enjoy their company as much as he enjoyed his crazy human's. "So this job thing, I might be interested." "Might?" "Okay, okay, I'm interested." Prince Phoenix's POV. "I can't wait to meet them. It's been so long," my Little Flower smiled

as we waited for breakfast to be served. How is she going to react when she finds out that only the girls are coming? "You're going to have a great day today." I said while I admired her sweet smile. I'll let Alex inform her that the boy has chosen to stay back. Would she be sad about it? I mean, I know I'm beyond happy that blondie isn't going to come here with the three girls. "Enjoy today, because I'm taking you out again tomorrow." I said casually as our food arrived. She tilted her head and looked expectantly at me. "Where?" "Surprise." "Now that you've said it, I really really want to know." "Well, you can't. You have to live with it until tomorrow evening." I was enjoying her distress. Don't worry the wait will be worth it. "You're mean." I snorted at that so called insult. Being used to various di erent curses, mean is actually a very sweet way to describe me. "What did my father say? When you asked him about extending your stay here?" "He said it was fine but I know he wasn't very pleased at all. Quite painful to watch." She giggled at that. "You think that's funny?" I raised a brow. She nodded. "As my father, that is how he should be. You must have expected a reaction like that from him. We both know this isn't going to be easy." "That I am aware. The real work starts tomorrow." She squinted her eyes and looked at me slightly confused. "You make it sound like a mission." I stared back at her blankly. "It is to me. I need to make up for everything I did and more importantly I don't want you to fear me. At all." "I understand. It's going to take time." "Yes, but we'll get there. Plus, I have to win your heart quickly. Seeing all those male fae creatures eye you like they do, it drives me insane." "Eye me like what? I made a lot of friends here. Some of us are very close." I snorted at what she said. How naïve could she get? Couldn't she sense the lust in some of them? It was pretty obvious to me. "Don't stare at me like that," she whispered going all red. I smirked at her discomfort. "Do you have any plans before your friends arrive?" "No, not really. Why?" "What do you usually do? How do you pass time?" "Oh, I can show you. I mean if you like. If you don't then it's fi-" "I would like that." She smiled at me so ly. Then she started thinking.

"Although, it does involve pixies," she said in a small voice. Without giving her a reply, I ate my breakfast. **Princess Aeval Florentine's POV** "You can fucking give them life?" Phoenix asked in disbelief and shock. "Yeap." I shyly continued to strengthen the tree. It was di icult to concentrate with the prince observing my every move. I kept glancing at him from time to time. His good looks did nothing to help either. Moreover, I couldn't understand why my body was heating up under his observing eyes. Come on, tree! "Great! Iamdoneheisgoodnow. All good," I rushed the words out, relieved that the healing process was ended, I quickly landed on the ground and walked ahead of him. My wings folded themselves and they dragged behind me as I walked. I couldn't stand the burning "Why do you do that?" he chuckled to himself as he picked up the "I don't understand your question," I said refusing to look at him. I didn't know what he was doing. I mean he was just looking at me and then this weird feeling took over. I can't tell him that!! "Walk away all of a sudden, turn away from me. Like whatever you're doing now," I walked faster. "I don't do that-" "Doing it now." I stopped abruptly and faced him. "No I'm not." My voice wavered as I hugged myself. My body wasn't just warming up. There was also a funny feeling in my tummy. "You're flushed," he said lowly, stepping closer to me. I involuntarily took a couple of steps back, blushing hard. What was this feeling?t was uncomfortable and it made me squirm under his scrutinizing "Calm down, Little Flower," he said soothingly as he took a precautionary step towards me. I was already worked up so when he got closer my wings wrapped themselves around me like a defensive "Why are you scared?" "I am not." I whispered shakily. "I know you're anything but alright. What do you feel?" he asked as if he was talking to a child. I wanted the ground to swallow me. Please suck me in ground. Wait a second! Will it obey me if I actually asked the ground to swallow me?!

"Now you're making a funny face. You're making me worry. Are you feeling better now?" "No!!" He looked surprised at the tone of my voice. I didn't mean to shout but I couldn't help it. He simply sighed and reached out to me. He slowly shook his head, e ectively stopping me from taking another nervous step back. Very carefully, he stretched out his hand and gently touched my wings that were currently shielding me. His fingers so ly grazed along the strong glass like structure. I don't really understand why, but so tingles spread all over my body which also caused my wings to flutter. While we both stared at my wings in awe, they slowly opened up, as if inviting the Prince in front of me. "You were scared. Why?" he asked me again, this time with a hint of worry. I understood that tone all too well. Every time he saw fear in me, he would submit into his own gut stabbing guilt. "It's not you....I mean...I..I'm not scared," I struggled with the words. If it wasn't fear then what was it? "Alright, then what was that Little Flower? Your wings shielded you like an armor. It's a defensive stance." "Oh." "Oh?" "Can we just walk?" "Did I do it?" "What?" "Did I make you feel attacked, unsafe?" "No, no you didn't," I shook my head and looked away. "I wasn't scared of you..it's just that...when you look at me..." "Yeah?" "It made me feel...." My head began to hurt from all the thinking. Was I not a morning person When I looked up again, Phoenix was still staring down at me with those calculating eyes. There is was again! That odd sensation. "Did you have a weird feeling? Like something you've never felt before? Something you can't understand? It makes you blush and you feel all warm and fuzzy inside." I gaped at Phoenix. He took the words right out of me. Keeping my lips sealed, I looked at anywhere but him. "I felt the same way," He said a er a few moments. That's when our eyes met once again. "W..what?" "I felt the exact same way you do now. When I first saw you in my chambers. The warmth spreading in my chest. The increasing rate of my heartbeat. I was consumed by emotions that I never knew existed." He spoke so ly while looking deeply into my eyes. This time, I couldn't look away from those enchanting midnight blue orbs and the deep red irises that kept the blue contained. "What does.....it mean?" I whispered. "I don't have an answer for you Little Flower, but I only feel these things when I'm around you." He smiled and took my small hand in his, leading me along the stone path. "You don't have to be embarrassed about it you know. You don't have to hide away from whatever you're feeling. Talk to someone about it," he said knowingly. I wondered if he knew what I felt and just chose not to explain it to me. Maybe he thought it would scare me? "Okay, I will," His lips stretched into a wide smile as he looked ahead. Now, he was making a funny face. "I heard you're going to wear the crown really soon," I tried to change the topic. "I'm not really thinking about all that right now." He said dismissively. "My mind is filled with other pressing matters at the moment." Giving an incredulous look, I rushed to stand in front of him, blocking his path. "Being crowned as king is huge! It's going to happen soon! You're not even thinking about that? You know when I look at you, you don't

even seem interested." His smile immediately faltered. Uh oh. God, please don't let him burn the gardens. "Sorry," I muttered. "Stop apologizing like that. I'm trying very hard not to give you a reason to fear me." He grumbled and started walking again. "Okay....then answer this. Do you not want it?" "I do, I've been preparing for it my whole life. I simply have other-" "Like wh-" "Like you," he said stopping me. "So, um...am I a distraction?" I squeaked out. Was he blaming me now? "Yes you are Little Flower," once those words were out my wings immediately spread themselves. "I'm not finished!" he yelled heating up our surrounding temperature. "Don't shout! They are just.." "Over fucking protective." He growled out. I willed my wings to calm themselves and a er a few seconds, they did. "They should be, right?" "Not if they go on attack mode every time you assume I said the wrong thing." That made me smile. Now, he's weary of my reaction and what my gi s could do. How the tables have turned. "You wish to laugh now? Go ahead." He sulked and walked away. "No, no, I'm not laughing at you." I smiled and skipped towards him. up at him. "Don't be sti ." He sighed and took my hand again as we continued our peaceful between us." "Of course. Your have my word." "Are there any bloody pixies around?" "Leave those poor creatures alone, and no. They're not here at the moment." He nodded seemingly satisfied with my answer. Staring ahead, he began. eleven. The government structure of each kingdom, world history, di erent languages and so on. My father would always ask my say. Don't get me wrong, I love my family but because of my dark nature and being firstborn, life wasn't normal for me. the world, I had adult responsibilities and I needed to learn everything about everything. I only had a few goals in life. Don't cause damage, which was almost impossible. Try not to kill. Never get too close to people. Never unleash the full extent of my ambition Little Flower. even the woman I was supposed to marry. If you asked me to paint my whole four hundred and twenty seven years of my existence, I would simply throw a bucket of grey paint on the canvas. Then, I I felt a pang in my chest. A er listening to him, a sudden realization came to me. Even all the castle servants had more freedom in them than Prince Phoenix ever did. He was trapped and was told what to do for centuries. His earlier life was his own personal cage. "I did finally blow up and I eventually started speaking my mind. I against." "Like being crowned as king?" "Yes," he looked down at me with a certain tenderness in his eyes. I immediately blushed as my wings fluttered. "Sorry, I didn't know." I said so ly. canvas with the tiny crown? It changed over time." I brightened up said, feeling a lot lighter for him. my cheek lovingly. "I found you." at what he said earlier.

nervously.

"Really?"

"I promise."

Three nights later.

"Okay marriage expert."

of weddings I've attended."

memorable one.

definitely be awesome.

how mine would be like.

That's all for now lovelies!!

an end

cream spoon.

"Oh," Of course he was an expert.

"Apparently, your brother is going to get married in a month's time." Phoenix and I were currently in a dessert place in the town of Golden

"Can you believe it?! It's so amazing and I've never seen my mother

"I've lived for a long time Little Flower. Your can imagine the number

"Tell me about the craziest one," I leaned in, waiting for a story.

"The Alpha King's wedding of course," he shuddered at the thought. I could somehow imagine Alpha Silvian's wedding. It must have been a

Due to recent conversations and all the preparations, my mind slowly dri ed o to weddings. I thought about how amazing my brother's wedding was going to be. Beth was creative and ambitious. It will

Shy and afraid to dive too deep into the thought, I also wondered

The thought was cut o when Phoenix tapped my nose with the ice-

I sneezed seven times straight with my ice-cream stained nose.

The more I write, the more I realise this story is slowly coming to

Continue to next part

Haven. We were both having strawberry ice-cream.

"It's going to be extremely hectic. Prepare yourself."

this energetic," he chuckled at my excitement.

how small my familiar world was." I wanted to shoot out so many things but unfortunately no words came out. I could only gaze into his eyes. "I finally think about stu that doesn't involve ruling. I have other goals I want to meet, other ambitions. All this is because of you." "I couldn't possibly have done this much for you Phoenix. Surely it wasn't just me." "But it was.....just you." fluttering again. What's with that? I mean PRINCESS!!!" "Please be nice." Both she and Tonya. You. Have. Wings!!!!" ran behind my brother. "What does that mean?" enjoys hercompany." girls giggled. knowing smirk. toes. They will never give up. inside of her cheek. "Weeeeell....."

were going to connect, we heard a twig snap. Oh, Bethany how I've missed you. was some otherworldly creature.

"People can only change you if you allow them to do it with an open heart. You changed yourself too, you know." I smiled up at him while I held both his hands. He leaned in, bringing his lips closer to mine and for the first time, I didn't instantly move back, flinch or freeze in fear. I was calm. As our lips were inches apart, my wings started their "You alright?" he asked me for the last time before he pulled me closer by my waist. I slowly nodded while blushing. Just as our lips "Where is she?!! She knows we're coming today right?! AAEEVAAAL?!! I chuckled while Phoenix looked as if he wanted to snap her neck. "No promises." I rolled my eyes and stepped towards her loud voice. a "Beth? I'm over here!" I instantly heard heavy footsteps coming closer. Before we knew it she was standing before me. Alex, India and Tonya patiently waited behind her. I could only wave at them before Beth blocked them out. Fortunately, they all understood her She covered her mouth with both her hands and stared at me like I "Aeval? Oh my gosh!! You look so beautiful!!" She squealed and

jumped on me, crushing me in a hug. I laughed hugging her back. I admired my dress on her. She looked good. Beth was definitely malnourished but I was going to make sure that she gets proper care. "You too Beth. I've missed you so much," I teared up in her arms. "Aww, don't cry. You're gonna make my tears flow. AAAAAHHHHHH!!! "Stop fucking screaming," came a threatening growl. She yelped and "How long has he been standing there?" she finally asked. "The whole time?" I giggled and ran towards Tonya. A er long hugs and catching up on things over tea, I finally decided to ask. "Where is Kyle?" Beth nudged Alex making him cough. Tonya looked sad while India gave me a meaningful smile. "Um, Eve. Kyle isn't here. He didn't come with the rest of us." "What?! Why?! Is he alright? Did he get hurt?!" "Whoaaaa, calm down. Let me explain Evie." I sat still, feeling embarrassed about my outburst. Alex went on to explain why Kyle chose to stay and the plans he had was happy for him. I was going to miss him though. A lot. "Where did Phoenix go?" Alex asked just realising his absence. "He le a long time ago Alex. When we were exchanging hugs." "He should really get used to hugs if he's gonna end up with you." "You love hugs Eve. You can't live without them and that guy is a plank when it comes to showing a ections," Beth slapped his arm before I could reply my brother. "You're are so ignorant you know that? The Dark Prince only "And he only enjoys herhugs and kisses," Tonya added eyeing me. India laughed with the rest. My face was literally a tomato. The three of them, excluding India didn't stop making inappropriate remarks about how they assumed Phoenix and I acted with each other. "Stop it! We don't do any of that stu!" I said feeling uncomfortable. "Good. I'm glad," Alex said proudly. I only glared at him for his weird thoughts. "We're just messing around. Don't take it to heart," Tonya "Have you guys kissed?" Beth asked seriously. India gave me a

with Timothy. I was surprised that the young prince was willing to get Kyle a paid job. Once Alex finished, I understood Kyle's decision and I chipped in. "It's fun to see our baby princess embarrassed," the three "I'm going to go now." I said turning to leave. "Wait! wait it's fine if you don't want to tell us," Beth pouted while Alex rolled his eyes and looked away. "So have you?" Tonya asked a er a while. I groaned and looked at my "Once." My voice came out so er than a whisper. Their cheering however shook the entire kingdom. Alex suddenly straightened up, obviously forgetting something. He turned to Beth and smiled. "Tell them. I have some work to do." He e me a peck on the cheek and walked towards the castle "Tell us what?" The three of us asked. Beth looked at us and bit the "Say it already!" Tonya shook her shoulders. I already suspected what she was going to say but the suspense was still killing me.

"Alex, he um.....proposed. He asked me to marry him and I said yes!" She looked at the three of us. Everything was quiet for a few moments then we broke it by squealing together. a "When is the big day?" Tonya was jumping up and down. "We have to speak with the King and Queen first," she then turned to me and took my hands in hers. "You okay with this?" she asked "Are you seriously asking me that Bethany? You're perfect for my brother. I wouldn't have it any other way! I always knew your liked him and you liked him when he was just Alex Kheelan not when he became Prince Alexander Fay Sindrion." a "I really do love him," she sni ed. That made Tonya tear up a bit. "I know you do Beth. Both of you were made for each other and don't be nervous about meeting my parents. They'll love you."

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"More than happy moments, my Little Flower," he whispered like he was thinking of something. Phoenix stopped walking and caressed <del>a</del> He brought me closer to him and rested his forehead against mine. My entire body warmed up as my eyes widened in surprise. Surprise "You walked in and finally painted my canvas with color, life and many other things besides the bloody golden crown. My other priorities I meant earlier, was winning you back. My desire and need for you, runs deeper than anyone could ever imagine. I have learnt so much about the world we live in, I thought I knew everything. Then you came along and showed me a di erent world, making me realise a a a a đ

"So, finish your explanation Prince Phoenix. I want to know what you meant and if it's not too much to ask, be more open to me." I looked walk. "Alright, but you have to promise me that this will always stay <del>d</del><sup>3</sup> ₫³ "The throne was always the center of my life. It was placed there, like a permanent mark. I was already learning about politics at the age of opinion about things beyond my age even if I didn't have anything to a I didn't spend my childhood like most children. There was very little time for fun and games. Instead of running around without a care in powers, because nothing good will ever come out of it. Last and most importantly, become king and fulfill my one purpose in life. I had no a Everything was already planned out for me. Until less than a year ago, would draw a tiny golden crown in the middle of that huge canvas." a also stopped listening to most people but certain things I couldn't go a "You didn't know so there's nothing to be sorry about. Plus, that grey when he said that. "That's good. So you did find happy moments," I

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