

Words Out

Lucas watched as Ryan hugged Emmaline. Valerie linked me, “I’m so sorry, Alpha.” I replied, “This isn’t your fault.” Valerie whispered, “I promised her I’d let her know if he was here.” I sighed. That would’ve been helpful, but it still wasn’t Valerie’s fault. I pointed out, “She would’ve been miserable and tried to hide from him. You were trying to tell her. That’s why you kept looking for her, right?” Valerie nodded.

Dylan linked me, “Are we going to kill him or what? I’m not above putting him in the dungeons. It’s dark down there, but Valerie could visit him. There will be no more runaways in this pack. I can’t watch you go through that again.”

I was stunned, “What?” Dylan said, “Lacy and I had walked outside when warriors and Alex were asking Emmaline to swim over to them. She was shaking, and Haley told us it was emotional for water fairies to turn to water. What does that even mean? Alex didn’t know either. I have such questions with no answers.”

I explained, “Emmaline was standing here with me, Eric, and Haley. When Ryan burst into the house, she just turned to water leaving her clothes behind.” Dylan frowned, “And I missed it. I am liking this Ryan guy less and less. A person turning to water. She’s Jesus in reverse... or not... in some kind of way. We should work on water to wine... OH NO! Whiskey. We need water to whiskey.” I growled, “Really, Dylan?” Dylan replied, “Yes, that would be a very useful skill.”

Eric and he linked me, “Haley is going to use her truth telling powers on Ryan. She assures me he cannot talk about Emmaline’s life here.” I sighed.

I linked Dylan, “We aren’t doing anything to Ryan. I was him. I understand how he feels. You’re upset, but you do too.” Dylan replied, “If you’re going to make perfectly valid points when I want to join the Alpha DNA of act first question later; I just can’t talk to you right now.” I snorted, “You’ll be talking to me in a few minutes. You have a running commentary in your head you have to share.” Dylan smirked, “Is this opposite day? I’m the one who knows things!”

We listened to Emmaline and Ryan talk. I linked Eric, “Of course they couldn’t report her missing. Even if they did the cops would’ve found her emancipation record, and they couldn’t have done anything. David just couldn’t have his children finding that out though. They would’ve gone to the station to ask for the status of the investigation. They would’ve been informed she wasn’t a runaway.”

Dylan linked me, “I think that it actually physically pained him to call you her fiancé.” I admitted, “He’s not thrilled.” Dylan answered, “Does this bother us? Me,

myself, I am unbothered.” I answered, “We are all unbothered. She’s emancipated and she said yes. He can shove it where the sun doesn’t shine. Emmaline is mine.”

After a minute I linked him again, “I want to know all the packs who are our allies in California. David Forrester just became untouchable. If he has a business, no werewolves will go there ever. You get the point.” Dylan nodded.

Eric linked me, “I know what you’re thinking. Let me do it.” I asked, “What?” Eric pointed out, “David knows Haley was looking for Emmaline. If I put out the word he’s not to be dealt with, it makes sense. Haley being frustrated about not finding her would play, and he wouldn’t think we’d found Emmaline. He’d think she was pissed Emmaline wasn’t with him, and they were rude to her. If you do it, he could look into why and find her.”

I growled, “He’s dead either way.” Eric snorted, “I’m aware. He should suffer first though. He should feel the pain before he dies for what he did to Emmaline.” I considered, then agreed, “All right.”

I started listening to Ryan again and found it interesting Dustin no longer talked to their father. I linked Eric again, “I think Dustin and Emmaline were quite close. I bet Dustin blames his father for Emmaline’s disappearance.” Eric responded, “He has no idea how right he is.” I felt Emmaline tense when Ryan said Uncle Walter was their biggest helper.

I looked at Eric linking, “That’s what Marcus meant. Her siblings think the uncle is helping them, but Emmaline told me her uncle drove her out of town that day.” Eric snarled, “Coward. He had other options. To do this to a thirteen year old is disgusting. They were adults, and she was just a kid. I will have Marcus give me what he knows about David Forrester.”

The anger I felt for David while hearing this story was unparalleled. I snarled to Eric, “How could he do that to a child he raised?” Eric sighed, “I don’t know.” I saw the war happening on Ryan’s face while Emmaline talked. He was getting the feeling his father had done this, but he didn’t want to believe it. It was there for a second though, the realization and the horror.

Dylan linked “OHHH look at him. He’s got some Beta sleuthing senses about him. He believes his father is capable of this.” I answered, “I know. I saw that look.” Dylan said, “Lacy is screaming in my head. She’s pissed.” I retorted, “We are all pissed.”

Dylan pointed out, “Haley doesn’t look surprised, but she does look mad as all get out. I sense this is bad, since normally... her facial expressions are locked down so tight a Beta can’t get a clue.” I looked over at Haley. Her eyes were blazing gold

and she did look furious. I couldn't be bothered to care. A furious Haley helped my plans.

I linked Eric, "Did Haley already know Emmaline's story?" Eric answered, "Haley said Emmaline told her the story the other day in the treehouse. Marcious popped to us to convince her not to kill both David and June. Marcious said David was his to kill. Haley was not convinced about June. Marcious is distraught. He wants to hear June's side since she's his mate. Haley gives no fucks about her side. I told her you'd requested Marcus and Bjourn help, and that you needed this too. My argument swayed her. Clearly, I should've asked for names when they had this conversation, because then we could've avoided this. I would've known Ryan was her brother." It wasn't his fault. I should've known better.

Dylan linked me, "At least we know why we couldn't find anything about her name change. We were foiled by magic. I blame myself. I should've gotten a witch involved. It shall not happen again, Lucas. I am taking notes." Of course, he was. I replied, "Well, at least we know whoever Craig is, he's damn good."

I linked Eric, "Ryan is this upset and he doesn't know there's a bounty on her head." Eric replied, "Shit... Haley doesn't know that. I hadn't mentioned it to her yet." It did not go over well with either party. I could tell Eric and Haley were linking. Her eyes were even more gold now if that were possible. Blade had materialized in the corner of the room watching Haley, then his eyes slid to Emmaline.

I linked Eric, "Blade feels protective of Emmaline, doesn't he?" Eric answered, "Blade cares about anything that brings Haley happiness. He told Marcus that Haley and Emmaline had so much fun the other day that he thought Emmaline was really good for Haley." I smiled, "Then it seems I have a Hackura guard who doesn't want anything to happen to my mate."

Haley whipped out her phone and began typing furiously. I commented, "She's typing with a purpose over there." Eric said, "She's telling Gunner to find the bounty. No one will question me putting out the word about David. Haley is going to let it be known when she finds the bounty what he did. David won't suspect she found Emmaline because he already knows she was looking. David is going to be having a VERY bad day shortly."

I pointed out, "It might not still be active. She's been in Tennessee for a while, and I haven't gotten word of a bounty hunter in the area." Eric replied, "Neither has Nick, but we know that won't matter in our community. She was thirteen when he put that hit out, and as far as everyone knows, she is his daughter. Haley said she can get it cancelled if it's active."

My eyes widened. I quickly asked, "How?" Eric smirked, "Titus. She asked him that if Gunner found it, if he would put the word out that anyone who takes it will come up against their wrath. They will become an enemy to the Hackura, and they will never be given assistance; even if they can pay." I replied, "Damn. Your mate is terrifying sometimes, but I love it." Eric smirked, "She is my better half."

We listened to the conversation for a bit before Eric linked me, "That's the only way our mates are selfish. They don't want to die, and they will kill to live. Thank the goddess for that. Now, if we could just get that little bit of selfishness to shine through in other ways." I snorted, "When you figure that trick out, you let me know." He didn't look like he thought he'd figure it out anytime soon.

I wasn't surprised Ryan knew about my mate being hurt by our council. He was pissed. I linked Eric, "I guess word about what happened went around the supernatural community." Eric nodded, "Of course it did. The werewolf council was killed by my wife, and Ryan would've found out what he could about Valerie's Alpha." I nodded. That was true. In his position I would've done the same for Emmaline.

I linked Valerie, "Did you tell him that Emmaline and Haley were cousins?" Valerie answered, "No, he already knew when I told him about the incident with the Ducants." I winced.

I told Eric, "He's either really good at research, or the supernatural community has nothing better to do than to gossip like old women." Eric snorted, "We thrive on rumors and gossip. Everything about Haley interests many supernatural groups. The Council trying to end the cousin of the fairy princess after not investigating? That's noteworthy, and it's not even gossip. It's true."

I was surprised Haley was protecting Emmaline's siblings from fairies. I asked Eric, "Did she really do that?" Eric nodded, "Yes, they are partial fairies. She protects all of them, and she couldn't talk to them. She didn't know if they knew about Emmaline, but she didn't think they did. The fairies aren't currently messing with June because of Marcious."

Dylan linked me, "Don't you just bet the Forrester children thought their little sister was oh so powerful since none of them could turn stones to water. David seems like the kind of lovely, egotistical person that would hate his own child being more powerful than him."

I snorted, "From what we know, Dustin is more powerful than David." Dylan replied, "And Ryan said they don't talk anymore. They have no relationship. I bet dear old dad held Dustin back. When Emmaline left and Dustin was on his own, he became more powerful. I'd win so much money on this bet. I wonder if I get King

Alpha Prick over there to take me up on it. I love taking his money.” I rolled my eyes, but his line of thinking had merit.

Eric linked me laughing, “Your trackers and Red Run’s lost a sixteen year old... twice? That’s sad.” I grumbled, “She knew they were following her.” Eric snorted, “She didn’t even pop away. They should’ve been able to follow her. Barring that, they should’ve pulled back realizing she knew they were there and then followed her scent. Even if she was concealing it, she hasn’t mastered that. It was there to find.” I sighed. That was true.

I heard my warriors downstairs enter the house. Brad growled, “Your brother is fine. He’s upstairs.” I heard who I assumed was Dustin say, “I want to check on him. I know the doctor said he was fine, but hallucinations don’t usually mean someone is fine. He’s my little brother, and I want to see him.” A woman spoke, “Dustin, we will see him, just calm down. Let them get their Alpha. That’s what wolves do.” I didn’t groan but I wanted to.

I linked Eric, “Oh, good. This just keeps getting better.” Dylan linked me, “Let me at him, let me at him.” He started jumping around with his hands up in the air. I rolled my eyes. That’s my big kid Beta. I linked Brad, “Keep them downstairs for now.” Brad replied, “Yes, Alpha.”

After some discussion, Haley was going to talk to them. I linked Eric worriedly, “Will she kill Aubree?” Eric replied, “No. She might be extra sassy to her, but she won’t hurt her.” I confirmed with him, “Haley will keep doing her truth seeking thing, right?” Eric nodded.

I heard Aubree’s squeak at Haley’s appearance. Haley asked, “Hello. How can I help you two?” Dustin sputtered, “You’re... you’re the fairy princess.” Haley snorted, “Nothing gets by you Dustin Forrester.” I laughed and so did Eric.

Dustin asked, “Why do I feel at ease in your presence? You don’t seem to like me.” Haley replied, “Because the very small part of you that is a fairy recognizes another fairy. I don’t dislike you per say... I just tend to dislike warlocks and witches until they prove they aren’t pieces of shit. I came down here at the request of someone else. I need you both to promise in blood not to talk about Emmaline/Evelyn’s life here. Then you are free to go see her and Ryan.”

Aubree gasped. Dustin yelled, “What the hell kind of joke is that? You’re saying Evelyn is here? Emmaline... she changed her name to Emmaline? Your cousin Emmaline whose mate is the Alpha here? What the fuck!?! GET OUT OF MY WAY! I NEED TO SEE HER!” Eric was moving to the door, but Valerie quickly eased out. I linked Eric, “She’s got this.” His eyes narrowed. He didn’t like it.

Valerie spoke, “She’s really here, Dustin. She’s scared about anyone finding out her new name. Ryan doesn’t want to leave her right now. He sent me out to talk to you.” Dustin asked, “Did you know Valerie? Did you know she was here?”

Valerie admitted, “No, but I should’ve. She’s the one who told me about Ryan. She’s the soul searcher. She made me promise not to tell anyone that she’d told me. I should’ve put it all together, but I didn’t.” Haley said, “Yes, it’s all a massive miscommunication clusterfuck. Promise me, then you can see her.” Dustin yelled, “Fine! I fucking promise. Here’s my damn hand.”

Dustin burst through the door like a stampede. Their reunion was emotional. Dustin did not react to Emmaline’s story any better than Ryan had. Eric linked me, “Their uncle might need to watch out. Ryan and Dustin together are formidable. He managed to piss them both off.”

I asked, “What about the sister? Katie?” Eric answered, “She’s not as into witchcraft from the file we have. She’s powerful, but she just doesn’t really care. I think she misses her sister; she has a PI license. She spends most of her time looking for Emmaline.” I frowned. I wondered once her siblings brought her here if she’d be more interested in her supernatural side.

I told Eric, “I’m going to tell them I’m going to kill him.” Eric assured me, “Haley still has the truth seeking ability going on all of them. We will hear their honest reactions to your statement. It’s always nice to know when to expect problems.”

Aubree was silent but the relief at hearing David would die was present in her eyes. I wondered what had happened between her and David. Surprisingly, both brothers were on board. Dustin even offered to help.

Eric commented, “That went about how I expected. They really hate their dad. I find Aubree’s reaction interesting.” So did I. I could feel Emmaline’s exhaustion. Dominic growled, “Mate needs sleep. She’s overwhelmed.” I agreed. I ended the conversation for this evening. Valerie and Emmaline hung back to talk.

The rest of us stepped outside. Dustin spoke first, “You have to know that if my siblings or I had any idea our parents had done, we’d have lost it. I’d have tracked Evie down somehow without my uncle. He led us away from her, I just know it. I have walked into so many damn morgues. I have seen more dead little girls than I’d ever cared to. That fucker led us on wild goose chases.”

I assured him, “I offered to help Emmaline find you once she was comfortable enough to share her story with me.” Dustin sighed, “She’ll always be Evie to me.” Well, she’d always be Emmaline to me.

Dustin continued, "I knew our dad was losing it, but this... To do this to a child, a child who was such a daddy's girl. I'm... Katie won't leave California until Evie's presents show up, but I'm telling her to come join us. She'll promise in blood to you too, Princess Haley. I won't leave her in the clutches of those filthy liars without Ryan or myself present."

Haley said, "She should have the presents by Wednesday." Eric raised an eyebrow. I asked, "Why can't you conjure the presents to her now?" Haley sighed, "Because we sent it through a human service. They can't just disafuckingpear. They have tracking numbers and it could literally just disappear from a humans hands." That was a good point.

Dustin nodded, "I can work with Wednesday. I'll book her a flight for Thursday." I asked, "Won't your parents find it odd you all are coming here?" Dustin shook his head, "No, they know Valerie is Ryan's wick. Katie will want to meet her, and Valerie is the one who still has school. With Aubree's job sending her here, which now I see as mother earth giving us back Evie, it's reasonable we are all staying."

Haley rolled her eyes when he said mother earth. I had to bite my lip. Witches and Warlocks believe in mother earth as wolves believed in our moon goddess. Haley clearly didn't agree with them. Dustin continued, "It won't look strange that we bring Katie out here with us. We are always together."

Ryan spoke, "Anytime you're ready to apologize for telling me I was hallucinating Dustin, I'm ready to listen." Dustin snorted, "I'm sorry I thought you'd taken a hit so bad that you hallucinated our little sister being with you." Ryan smiled, "I sense sarcasm in there, but I'm running with the apology."

Dylan said, "None of you pay attention to the important details. My lovely fun sized fairy, do share your thoughts on mother earth. I saw that look. I am here for you." Eric shot Dylan a glare. Haley picked at dirt under her fingernail. She said, "Every other supernatural group has a god or goddess. They say they have mother earth. Sounds like fucking bullshit to me. They have a god or goddess." Dustin frowned, "We have mother earth." Haley rolled her eyes again. She actually had a point. The warlocks and witches had to have a god or goddess.

Before anyone else could comment, Valerie and Emmaline stepped out of the room. Valerie instantly went to Ryan. Haley and Emmaline spoke. Haley said the chant so we couldn't hear them. The Forrester group looked confused. I took pity on them and told Eric out loud, "I hate when she does that." Eric snorted, "Get used to it." Everyone walked or popped away.

I linked Dylan, "I want warriors stationed at our borders. Have someone at the front door and where her tent used to be in Red Run and our territory." Dylan

replied, “Maybe they are already there. Anticipation, my dear Alpha. I anticipate your needs, but I don’t think Emmaline is running.” I hoped he was right.

Emmaline and I reconnected. It felt like we both needed it. We discussed David. I WOULD go after him. He would die for what he’d done to her. I’d leave him be for now because I knew he was going to be in a world of pain soon, but I’d be watching David from now on. If he so much as suspected Emmaline was Evelyn because her siblings came out here; he would die.

I’d make sure he’d know why he was going to die too. I’d have her brothers watched for the time being just to make sure, but my instincts told me they loved her. They were going to be my allies in protecting her. Aubree wouldn’t hurt Dustin by going against him. Plus, Aubree was clearly afraid of David.

After she fell asleep, I stayed up for several hours making sure she wasn’t going to pop away. Eventually, my eyes shut with my arms wrapped tightly as I could without waking her. When I heard Emmaline’s alarm go off, I got up with her. I just couldn’t let her out of my sight. Her saying she had to leave was repeating on a loop in my mind.

Emmaline quietly questioned, “Lucas? Are you getting up?” I nodded, “Yes, I’m coming with you to training.” Emmaline smiled, “Oh yeah? Dylan said you weren’t a morning person.” I teased, “I’d be a morning person for you, baby girl.” She laughed and snapped us both into workout clothes then popped us to the gym.

One of the warriors startled at my appearance. He greeted, “Alpha...” I told him, “I will be working out with you today.” All the trainers nodded. Alex was there too giving me a knowing look. He linked me, “This is about yesterday, isn’t it? I was at the lake with Gemma. We heard her saying she had to leave but couldn’t.”

I sighed admitting, “I just can’t let her out of my sight.” Alex linked, “Fair enough. I don’t think she was ever going to leave though. I think that was her problem. She’s been on the run so long; she knew she should; she just couldn’t.” I nodded.

The rest of the class filtered into the gym. I was surprised when Dylan walked in behind Lacy. I linked him, “Are you feeling ok? You link me about your pillow missing you when I make you get up this early.” He snorted, “I could ask you the same thing snarky haven’t had my coffee Alpha of mine. I knew you’d be here, and I knew why. So, my happy self is right here with you. You’re my best friend. King Alpha Prick is lurking trying to take my title, but he can’t have it. It’s mine. I AM THE BESTEST BEST FRIEND OF LUCAS LYONS.” I clapped him on the back.

Everyone was split off. Emmaline was fighting a pretty good warrior. Dylan said, “You and me in the ring. I’ve been working on my skills.” He began doing a fighting dance around me. I smirked, “You want to fight me?”

Dylan said, “Want to fight you? Are you insane? Of course not. Who else is going to fight you? Alex over there is scurrying for cover. Beta Caleb probably hasn’t read my texts and memos about needing King Alpha Prick’s assistance in said area. Or any Conner’s really. So, you’re stuck with me. I’ll be expecting my best Beta and Bestie for life medal in the mail. I’ll also take a trophy. Let’s go.”

We got in the ring together. Dylan put up a good fight, but I’m an Alpha. I beat him every time we fought. At some point, the class must have ended because when our last fight ended with Dylan on the mat.

He muttering, “Being besties with your Alpha comes with such sacrifices. If I was human, I’d be limping. I’m just saying, I’d some need ice. Yes, human Dylan would.” Emmaline started clapping and everyone else followed her lead. I walked over and kissed her as the class was officially dismissed.

Emmaline popped us back into our room. She stripped her clothes off on the way to the shower. She stepped in and I was right behind her. I grabbed the loofah and washed every inch of her body. Trailing feather light kisses all over her as the water washed away the soap. When I finished, she did the same to me. I gently kissed her mouth, shut the water off, dried her off with a towel, and then led her to the bed.

I laid her down, cupping her breast and kissing her slowly, enjoying the taste of her. I slid my tongue into her mouth. I cupped my hand between her legs, I was greeted with her slick folds. She was always ready for me. I played with her clit with my fingers building her up before sliding one finger into her.

She felt so right. She was made for me, and I loved her more than anything in this world. I wasn’t going to be rushed this morning. I didn’t care if she was late to school. Hell, I didn’t even care if the world was falling apart around us. I needed her. She moaned my name and breathlessly came as I thrust into her. I groaned as I came, “I love you, Emmaline.”

Emmaline played with my hair for several minutes before asking, “What’s wrong?” I looked at her surprised, “What?” Emmaline frowned, “You’ve had this look since last night. You look a little scared. Your soul tells me I’m right. Talk to me.” I kissed the top of her head pushing that off, “Maybe we can discuss this later, you have school.” She frowned, “All right but you can talk to me.”

My anger came roaring back. I snarked, “Unless you leave me.” She stared at me in shock asking, “What?” I slowly pulled out of her and fell onto my back and

closed my eyes. She waited silently. I whispered, “You said you had to leave. You said it to me, and then outside.”

She frowned, “I also said I couldn’t leave. The thought of leaving you is unfathomable to me. I was afraid that David would hurt you. The thought that he could hurt you is the thought that had me turning to water. I can’t bear the thought of you being hurt.” I closed my eyes in frustration.

I explained, “And I can’t bear the thought of you leaving me. I’ve had warriors up all night stationed around in case you tried to leave.” Emmaline’s jaw dropped. She sat up and crossed her arms, “I said I wouldn’t leave.”

I countered, “You said you wouldn’t leave last night; you’ve never promised not to leave me. You would, wouldn’t you? If you thought it would save me, you’d leave.” Emmaline looked like a deer caught in headlights, which told me I was right.

She argued, “Would you if the roles were reversed? Would you leave to save me?” I growled, “No. I would find another way.” Emmaline considered my words. She pointed out, “I asked you what I should do. I was frozen and I came to you. Does that not matter?” I growled, “Of course it matters, but it scares me. To my very core that you could just pop away and leave me.”

Emmaline purposefully put her hands in mine, “I promise you that I will never willingly leave you, Lucas Lyons. If something happens and you can’t find me, I’m not gone by choice.” A glow surrounded us. That was strange.

Dominic told me, “Mate can’t leave now. Her fairy side wouldn’t allow her to leave on her own. She wouldn’t make it across our borders if it was her intent.” I kissed her again. She pushed me back on the bed, lowering herself on me. She set a fast pace bringing us both to our release quickly. She kissed me again. She emphatically stated, “I love you, and I’m going to marry you. I just need you to understand I have been operating under a flight response for almost four years. It will take time to break it, but I want to. For us.”

I kissed her. I admitted, “The thought of being without you now... I can’t ... it hurts me. I love you so much, baby girl.” She nodded, “I’m sorry I hurt you, that wasn’t my intention.” I kissed her, “I’m sorry you were scared, but I’m not some fragile thing. I will always stand and fight, especially for you.” She nodded then snapped her clothes on. She gave me a quick peck on the lips saying, “I have to go to school, but we can talk more when I get back.” I nodded and she left after.

Dominic spoke, “You have abandonment issues, and she has been programmed to run. She lived like that for a long time.” I sighed, “I know. It doesn’t make it easier

to hear.” I walked into my office. To my surprise, my parents were there. I nodded to Dylan. He was the one I expected to see.

I told him, “Have the warriors at the borders swapped out so they can get sleep. I want Emmaline’s regular guard plus the two additional guards at school.” Dylan nodded mumbling, “You just think I don’t do my job grumpy pants Alpha.” My lips twitched into a smile. Dylan clapped in triumph, “AH HA! A smile. I win.”

My dad asked, “Son, what the hell is going on?” I sighed, “Emmaline’s birth name is Evelyn Forrester.” My mom gasped, “Forrester as in the one mated to Valerie?” I nodded, “Dustin and Ryan are both here. Emmaline... came home in a panic saying she had to leave because they saw her.”

My dad growled, “No! She won’t leave!” I nodded, “She just promised me that she would never willingly leave me.” Everyone relaxed. Dylan said “Well, I had such plans to calm you down. Alas, they will have to wait for another day. My Luna swooped in with her binding promises. I’m find I’m not even mad.”

I smiled and changed the subject. I asked my dad “Is the council done with the investigation with the Ducants, Allison McAllister, and her mate’s pack?” My dad nodded, “Yes, the Alpha was stripped of his title. He’s in council custody. We spoke to his mate, and the parents at length. We ended up taking his mate into custody since she admitted she knew about it. The son was appalled, and basically disowned them. Allison’s mate is his best friend. He’s going to speak to him today about whether or not he wants to return and be his Beta. He hopes that he will but understands if he doesn’t. He and his mate took over as Alpha and Luna last night. It seemed to strike a harsher cord with him because his Luna is also pregnant. He didn’t react well to being told Princess Luna Connors had to heal Allison, the pup, and her mate.”

I couldn’t blame him. I said, “I’m sure Nick will agree with that decision.” My dad nodded, “The pack is on a trial period, and they know we will be watching them. If anything, else goes wrong, their family will be removed from power. Alpha Kyle will be allowed to choose their next alpha or take over the pack himself.” I admitted, “Dad, I need you to know I’ll fight alongside Nick if he wants to fight them.” My dad evaluated me, “You wouldn’t be the son I raised if you didn’t. I can’t imagine he will though.”

I agreed. My dad left, and I called Nick Kyle. He picked up, “Hello Lucas, my son is quite upset I didn’t have Dustin under surveillance. I heard they made it to the family reunion.” I assured him, “It’s fine, it went well. Haley did fairy things and made sure everyone told the truth. I didn’t call about that though. I called about the council decision with Allison’s situation. What are you going to do?”

Nick instantly answered, "I spoke with Ben about that this morning. As long as their new Alpha can keep them in line he's fine with their decision. The pack didn't know what happened. His son in law still wants the Beta position. He wants to make sure things like this never happen again. Plus, you know how it is with your Beta. It's rare an Alpha and Beta aren't best friends. Allison is leery of going back there, though. Esther is going to go with her for a while." Ben hmphed.

Dylan snorted, "Have no fear my Beta buddy. I'll send you a my mate is going out of town kit. You'll get through this time away from Beta Female Esther. That's her name by the way Alpha Kyle. Wait, what am I saying? You all got your fairy she can just pop you in. Don't worry, that advice will be in your mate's on a trip kit." I covered my laugh with a cough.

Nick said, "Anyway, they are getting a new house in their territory as well. Allison refuses to go the cottage where she kidnapped from. They are taking Drake's little brother, Duncan McAlister, with them too."

Beta McAlister laughed before adding, "Taking him is a way to put it. Duncan refused to let them leave without him. We got his homework for the next two weeks from his school. I told him he has to come home then." I said, "That sounds like a good plan. If you change your mind at any time, we will fight beside you." Nick assured me, "I'll let you know, but I don't foresee that happening." We hung up.

We had been working for a few hours when there was a knock on my door. I called, "Come in." I wasn't surprised when Ryan, Dustin, and Aubree entered the room. My dad's jaw clenched while introductions were made.

Dustin spoke, "We need to talk, Alpha Lucas." I raised an eyebrow asking, "About?" Dustin said, "Evie." My dad growled, "Her name is Emmaline." Ryan sighed, "We've always called her Evie. I don't intend to stop because my stupid ass father forced her to change her damn name."

I asked, "What do you want to discuss? Because I'll tell you here and now, she's mine." Dustin's nostrils flared. Aubree laid a hand on his arm. Dustin gritted his teeth, "She's our little sister. We need to know she's taken care of. There's a contract out on your mate. You know that, right?" I growled asking, "Which contract are you referring to? The one out on her because she's my mate, or the one your father put out on her?"

Dustin angrily spat, "The one out on your mate. She's not safe here." I stood asking, "Where was she safer, Dustin? In her tent that was slashed by a rogue in the fucking forest?" Dustin shrugged, "Obviously not. I want to know what's being done to protect her."

I growled, “Everything. I have guards on her at school. Haley Connors is taking care of your father’s bounty on her head. I take her to fairy training once a week, and she trains everyday here. On Thursday with Haley Connors. She is never alone, and she won’t be.”

Ryan cut in, “We can help you.” I nodded, “So long as your help doesn’t mean trying to take her from me; I’m all for your help.” Dustin asked, “Will you wait until she’s eighteen to marry her?” I answered right back, “If that’s what she wants, yes. If she wants to marry me tomorrow, no.” Aubree said, “Dustin, supernatural’s don’t abide human customs.” Dustin said, “Alright then.”

The conversation stalled when Ryan’s phone rang. He groaned, “It’s Katie again.” I advised, “Answer it.” Dustin shot me another look. I growled at him. Ryan rolled his eyes at our posturing and picked up his phone. Dustin made a motion and Ryan put it on speaker phone.

Katie’s tone was full of fear when she shouted into the phone, “Ryan! Where the hell have you been?! Do you even know what’s going on? I don’t know what to do! Dad’s tried to call, but I won’t answer. Mom called and I declined them too. I even refused to let them in the building. Thank GOD Dustin’s wards don’t let anyone we don’t invite in, or dad and I would’ve had it out.” Ryan frowned asking, “Why?” Katie screeched, “YOU HAVEN’T HEARD?”

Ryan looked up at Dustin. He shrugged then looked at me. How was I supposed to know? I shrugged. Ryan asked, “What haven’t we heard?” Dylan linked, “PICK ME! I have the answer!” I rolled my eyes, “Why didn’t you say that out loud?”

Dylan threw popcorn in his mouth and replied, “Because I haven’t decided if they can have my helpful tidbits yet. They made my life very chaotic yesterday. I am holding this grudge. I have my axe and I’m griding it.” I shook my head.

Katie said, “The Hackura Fairy princess has been looking for Evelyn. Apparently, we are all partial fairies. Mom has got fairy blood. Why didn’t the fairy princess come talk to us, you ask? I have no clue! Apparently, because that’s not enough information to digest, while looking for Evie the princess found...” Katie’s voice trailed off.

Dylan linked me, “Goddess work hard, but our fun sized Hackura fairy princess ninja works harder. Not to brag, but I knew that’s what Katie was screeching about when the conversation began.” I nearly laughed out loud. I had to admit, I was impressed with how fast Haley worked. Word of what David had done was already out.

Katie continued, “She found a bounty on Evie’s head... they say...” She started to cry, “They say dad took it out. It’s been active ever since she sent Dustin his first

birthday present. What's going on? It can't be true! You know how crazy he's been without her!"

Both brothers looked at each other. Dustin told her, "I've booked a ticket for you to come join us out here. I know you won't come before Evie's presents get there so I booked it for Thursday. If they aren't there, I'll have someone forward them to us here. You're not staying out there without us, and we aren't coming home."

Katie cried over the line, "I'm meeting Uncle Walter for lunch later. Maybe he will know what's going on." Ryan hissed, "Don't meet him." Katie was taken aback, "What? Why? Don't tell me he had anything to do with this? You can't believe dad actually did this. Right? He didn't do it guys..." She paused and neither brother answered her. Katie whispered, "Did he?"

Dustin spoke, "He did. Don't answer anyone's calls and check in with us daily until you leave. If Evie's presents show early, I'll fly you out sooner." Katie was crying asking, "Why would he do this? We need to get him help! Poor Evie... It's still active... so... so, she's not dead then. Right? That's what that has to mean." Dustin agreed, "If it's still active then no one collected, and they would. Don't go to lunch with Uncle Walter. Stay in the apartment. Do you understand?"

Katie yelled, "No Dustin, I don't understand anything! What the hell is happening?!" Dustin said, "I can't explain it right now, but when you get here you'll understand." Katie snorted, "Understand? I'm going to understand what the hell our father is thinking putting a bounty out on our little sister?! Because if she found out about it, she'd never come home! It's all over the supernatural community so if she didn't know she does now. The Hackura have basically declared our father their enemy. No one will take jobs from dad's coven. Everyone has jumped shipped from dad's business. Only ten members of the coven remain members publicly."

Dylan linked me, "What interesting word choices she makes. Publicly. So, people are still in it, but saving face. Team fun sized fairy Hackura ninja. Witches be bitches." Katie kept talking, "If the Hackura thing wasn't bad enough Alpha Eric put out the word that anyone who wants to remain his ally will have nothing to do with anything dad. ALPHA ERIC CONNERS! I mean I know he's the fairy Hackura princess' mate, but this went from bad to worse. Now we have fairy, Hackura, and werewolf problems you guys! I hope the fairy princess knows what she did. Dad's not right, obviously. He put a fucking contract out on his own daughter! Evie was his little princess. He needs help guys."

Ryan snorted, "He needs something alright. The fairy princess knows what she did, and even in his state of mind, dad isn't going to go after King Titus' beloved daughter. Call me later Katie and stay safe." Katie said, "Right, because who knows if I'm next. I'm not answering his calls, dad might just want me dead now

too because apparently that's how our parents operate. I'll call you later Ryan, and SOMEONE will explain this shit to me the SECOND I land. Capisce?" Ryan said, "Got it." Katie hung up and both brothers looked at me, curiosity written all over their face.

Dylan linked me, "To answer their unspoken question or not." I asked, "What is their question?" Dylan said, "They want to know why King Alpha Prick put out the word in the werewolf community instead of you. Hot head warlocks over there might lean towards Alpha instead of Beta. I thought otherwise, but I was wrong. I can admit that." I replied, "They have no werewolf blood."

Out loud I said, "Eric offered to put the word out there about your father to protect Emmaline's identity. It doesn't look strange that Eric did it when his mate is the one heading the partial fairy initiative. I agreed to let your dad feel the metaphorical pain for now."

Dustin's phone rang before he could say anything. He glared at it then answered, "Mom. What could you possibly have to say to me?" I could hear June sobbing. She begged him, "Dustin, please. Everything's gone so wrong. Katie won't talk to your father or me."

Dustin snorted, "Wrong? Dad put a contract out on Evie. Did you know? Did she run for her life all those years ago?" June cried, "I... I didn't... I thought everything was ok. I suspected, but I..." Dylan made a face.

She suspected there was a hit on her daughter and did nothing. Dustin lost you it, "You suspected your husband put a hit out on your youngest child and you didn't leave him?! You didn't even come to me, Ryan, or Katie. We would've done something mom!"

June cried, "I love him, he's my husband." Dustin snorted, "He's a fucked up, shitty father and husband. I can't believe you knew. Don't call me again." June sobbed, "Dustin.. Please..." he cut her off and hung up the phone.

Since the family was already in turmoil I went for broke asking, "Aubree, why are you scared of David?" Dustin and Ryan turned to Aubree eyebrows raised. Aubree stammered, "I well... I...umm..." Dustin asked, "Is there a reason past his issues with me?"

Aubree closed her eyes and whispered, "I'm pretty sure your dad killed my mother." Everyone paused. Dylan linked me, "That was a twist I did not see that coming. Holy family drama batman!" Dustin asked, "I'm sorry, what?"

Aubree sighed, "My dad suspected something happened with your sister. I think he knew about the bounty on her head. He was looking into it something secretly."

A few days later, I saw your dad leave our house after school. I was supposed to have practice, but it was cancelled. Both of my parents were worried, they were whispering every time I was around. A week later she was dead.”

Dustin stared at her. He cleared his throat, “That’s why your dad hated me until he found out I didn’t speak to my dad? Is that why you seemed scared of me when we met?” Aubree cried, “You are nothing like him, but when I heard your name; I thought you might be. My dad needed more convincing. Your dad sent me a letter once we moved in together saying I’d better keep myself out of family business or...” Dustin was beyond angry. He gritted his teeth, “Or what?”

Dylan linked me, “Or what? He can’t be serious. Or daddy dearest goes slasher warlock on little miss thing.” Aubree took a letter from her purse and gave it Dustin. Dustin’s eyes widened. He yelled, “He threatened to kill me and Ryan?” Dylan gasped and threw popcorn into the air, then his mouth. He muffled, “What an unexpected twist. He’s too egotistical to kill his own children. Everyone needs a Beta, I’m just saying.”

Emmaline’s smell hit me right before I heard a gasp. She dropped the carryout bags from Al’s. Everyone turned to face her. She stammered, “I... I wanted to surprise Lucas with lunch.” I stood, grabbed the carry out bags, and kissed her cheeks. I linked her, “I am surprised. This was a nice idea.”

Emmaline was looking at Aubree. She apologized, “I’m so sorry. I did this. Finding out I wasn’t his child... God... He’s just killing people because of me. Now he wants Dusty and Ry dead too.” She ran from the room, and I took off after her. Dylan yelled, “Point of reference, no he doesn’t them dead. He’s too vain. He bluffed.”

I chased Emmaline to the lake on the dock and she dropped to the ground, holding knees into her chest. I consoled her, “Emmaline, you didn’t do this to him. He’s not right in the head. He threatened to kill your brothers, and they are his sons.”

Aubree, Dustin, and Ryan had followed us. She laid a hand on Emmaline’s shoulder. Aubree spoke “Sweetheart, this isn’t your fault or your brothers.” Emmaline gasped and jumped up. She yelled, “Oh my god... No! Your... your dad is Craig! No! David killed your mom because of me! No! No! No!” Emmaline buried her head into my shoulder.

Aubree was confused, “My dad's name is Neil.” Emmaline shook her head, “He’s the one who came to get me. My Uncle Walter dropped me off with him, he called him Craig.” Aubree seemed to be searching her own mind. She admitted, “I... I don’t know why he would’ve called him Craig. Are you sure?”

Emmaline nodded wiping her tears, “Yes, water fairies can see memories. I saw a flash of your mom and dad just now. Your dad is the one who helped me. You’re from Oregon. I stayed in your room for a week while he helped me get everything situated. He took out all the pictures from your room, so I didn’t know what you looked like. Your room is yellow, and you had blue sheets on your bed. You have a white desk with a MacBook, and a blue chair. You and your mom were touring colleges in California and you guys were stopping at Disneyland on your way home. Taking a mother daughter trip.”

Aubree’s eyes filled with tears. She admitted, “Dustin, she’s right. All of that is right except my dad's name.” Dustin frowned, “Your dad could’ve used a different name in case they thought David had Uncle Walter followed out of town.” Emmaline said, “I’m so sorry, Aubree.” Aubree grabbed Emmaline’s hands, “Hey, this isn’t your fault. It’s David’s. We will figure this out together.”

Dustin took charge, “Ryan, take Evie back to school.” Emmaline stood, “No, it’s ok. I popped home with Brad. He insisted he had to come. I’ll just go back. I’m sorry.” I gave her a kiss, “You don’t have to go back to school if you don’t want to.” She shook her head, “No, I should go back.” I smiled, “Thank you for bringing me lunch.” She sighed, “It went so well. I just wanted to apologize about earlier.”

I laughed and walked her back to the front of the house. I found Brad frowning, I linked him, “Don’t leave her side for a second.” He replied, “I won’t, Alpha.” I watched them pop away.

Ryan joined me. He said, “It’s not her fault.” I answered, “I know.” Ryan evaluated me, “You’re good with her. Evie has always been a sensitive soul, but you handle it well. I suppose you would since you're her mate. Her being the soul searcher makes a lot of sense.” I felt like I’d passed some test I didn’t know I was taking. I nodded to him and went back inside to get work done.

Dylan and I ended up eating the food Emmaline had brought. I was paying attention this time when Emmaline entered the house after school. I signaled to Dylan we were done for the day. I walked into our room and found Emmaline lying on the bed. I wrapped my arms around her, “Baby girl, you know Aubree’s mother’s death isn’t on you. We don’t know what really happened.”

Emmaline snorted, “Sure we do. Her dad helped me, and David found out.” I agreed, “That’s possible.” Emmaline said, “I don’t really want to think about it anymore because I go down a bad road.” I raised an eyebrow asking, “What road?”

Emmaline sighed, “The road where David tries to hurt you because of me. I’m sure he blames me for everything bad in his life. I don’t want to think about it anymore. What do you think about a winter wedding?”

I was really surprised by her subject change. I told her, "If that's what you want, we can have a winter wedding." Emmaline smiled, "Good. That gives me three months to plan. We can have it over winter break. Would it be totally cheesy to have a Christmas wedding?" I laughed, "You mean this winter?" Emmaline looked confused, "Did you want to wait until next year?"

I quickly tackled her on the bed. I said, "If you want a Christmas wedding, I'll give you a Christmas wedding. Actually, I would marry you tomorrow. Dustin requested we wait until you're eighteen." Emmaline shrugged, "I'll talk to them. I want to be married before I'm seventeen and have my fairy heat thing." I smiled teasing her, "That's not what fairy's call it, but I understand what you're saying." She smiled.

I watched her eyes glaze a little. She appeared to be linking. I asked, "Who are you linking?" Emmaline smiled answering, "Lacy. She wanted to have their wedding in October. I told her you're good with our date, which was the all clear for theirs." I smirked, "You'll be all mine in every official way in December." I started to kiss her. It was getting heated when someone knocked.

I groaned sitting up. I yelled, "Come in." Dustin, Veronica, Aubree, and Valerie came in. Dustin cleared his throat, "We were wondering if we could all spend some time with Evie." Emmaline said, "Sure, come on Lucas." I was trying not to laugh. Dustin definitely didn't mean with me. He almost said something, but Aubree tugged on his hand.

We all went downstairs. Things were a little tense with Emmaline and Aubree. Her guilt was practically suffocating the room. Aubree stood, "Hey Emmaline, why don't you come grab some snacks in the kitchen with me?" Emmaline linked me, "Can you say no?" I replied, "She's not mad at you. Go talk to her." Emmaline made a face at me but got up to go talk to Aubree.

I asked Dustin and Ryan, "What's your guy's timeline for being here? I know Emmaline would love it if you stayed." Ryan said, "I'm not sure. I used to think Valerie and I would end up in California, but I just don't know if I want to go back."

Dustin chimed in, "Aubree and I are here through at least August of next year. I don't know what we are going to do to be honest. I can't be in the same place as David. He hurt two of the most important women in my life. Hell, he hurt Katie too. So, all three of the women in my life. I just don't know." I nodded, "I understand. As Emmaline's brothers you are welcome in my territory." Both nodded their thanks.

We sat in silence until Aubree and Emmaline came back both wiping tears away with popcorn in their hands. I linked Emmaline, "Is everything ok?" Emmaline

answered, “Yes, just... clearing the air. She said her mother wouldn’t have wanted David to find me. That her parents made their choices, and David made his.” I nodded.

When they sat down we talked for a while. Eventually Emmaline asked, “So, you guys will be here this winter right?” Dustin said, “Yes, of course.” Emmaline smiled, “Good cause I was hoping that you two would walk me down the aisle.” Aubree gripped Dustin’s thigh. Emmaline looked at me and smiled. She missed Dustin’s grimace.

Dustin asked, “Are you sure you want to get married so soon, Evie? You could wait,” Emmaline shrugged, “I could wait, but I don’t want to. I’ve shared my light with Lucas, and we’ve marked each other. I’m the Luna already. It’s probably not a wolf hang up, but as someone raised around witches, warlock, and humans; I want him off limits.” I laughed, “Baby girl, I am very much off limits.”

Emmaline rolled her eyes, “Uh huh. Besides, I’ve been alone for so long I don’t want to be anymore. I didn’t get to really have my teenage years. I had to grow up and live on the run. I feel like I belong here with Lucas. I missed belonging somewhere from the moment David kicked me out. I missed you guys, but I’m marrying Lucas in a few months. I need you to be ok with it Dusty because I’m doing it.”

Dustin sighed, “I just wish you’d wait until you were a little older, but I do see your point. He is your mate. If you’re happy, I’ll be happy for you.” Emmaline smiled, “I’m really happy. Happier than I’ve been in almost four years. Especially now that I have you guys back. I miss Katie Cat though.”

Ryan chimed in, “She’ll be her Thursday, and the Princess can do her blood promise thing. Then you’ll have Katie back too. We will walk you down the aisle, Dustin, and me. I won’t lose you again.” Dustin agreed, “I’ll walk you down the aisle with Ryan. Now, can we talk about you killing a rogue?”

Emmaline laughed, “I guess. What’s there to say?” Ryan asked, “How did you kill the rogue that was going to attack me?” Emmaline said, “With an icicle I conjured. All that studying I did with Dusty for his EMT exam gave me a pretty comprehensive anatomy lesson. I go for the carotid. Since we are on the subject Ry, it was very sexist of you to ward Valerie inside. I’ve fought with her twice, and she’s fierce.” Valerie smiled at Emmaline. Ry said, “I’d have warded you inside too if I’d have known you were there.” Emmaline laughed, “I’d just pop out.” Ryan frowned and the siblings bartered back and forth.

Dylan walked into the house with a face that told me whatever he had to say was not good. He clapped, “Aww siblings reunited. That should be the motto of our territory. We are the reunifiers. Lucas, I need a minute or twenty of your time.

Probably twenty. No, definitely at least twenty minutes. This is such an odd feeling. I am not normally the party pooper; no Forrester coven member get the wrong idea.”

I stood, “Excuse me.” Dylan linked me, “The Forrester clan could be helpful. It’s about Emmaline.” I sighed. Great. Out loud I said, “Dustin and Ryan, your assistance would be appreciated.” Both stood immediately.

Dylan linked me, “They are so confusing. They know it’s about their sister already so Beta tendencies. Earlier they had Alpha. They must choose or they will drive me batty.” Aubree, Valerie, and Emmaline began talking about weddings. Lacy bounded inside. She squealed, “Count me in for wedding talks!” I smiled at her and walked outside with the males in the room.

Dylan was leading us towards the border. I asked, “What’s going on, Dylan?” Dylan sighed, “We got a message about Emmaline.” Dustin and Ryan tensed. Ryan asked, “Does it say Emmaline or Evelyn?” Dylan said, “Emmaline. Her identity remains a secret. You, however, remain a mystery of Alpha or Beta tendencies. You must pick one.” Ryan shot me a questioning look. I shrugged.

We walked to the edge of the territory where there five heads were mounted on pikes. I asked, “Are those the Ducant men?” Dylan said, “Why yes, they are. You might wonder how I can confirm this for you without looking it up. Through a series of events, I commandeered the Ducants files when we were there.” Dustin snorted, “You stole them.” Dylan gasped, “Such an accurate, yet boring word. Tap into that fairy blood you have. Be interesting.”

Alex handed me the note left behind:

Alpha Lucas,

Your precious Emmaline escaped me twice, but she won’t a third time. I was just going to torture her, and make you watch her die. Now, I’ll make you watch her be mine instead. I’ve finally seen what she looks like. She’s quite stunning. Besides, who could resist a fairy duchess and the power she holds? She will be mine and you will crumble. I’m coming to take all you hold dear Alpha Lucas.

Your Doom

I handed the note to Dustin. I asked Dylan. “We really think Alpha Raven is this upset? He has no reason to be this mad at me.” Dylan shrugged, “Uhh, no. This is very crazy. Alpha Raven might have sent Alpha Kyle this note but not you. Plus, your doom? He signed it your doom. I mean that’s just... sad and unimaginative.

Both Emmaline's brothers hissed as they read the note. I asked, "How did the heads get here? We have border patrols constantly going." Dylan said, "The group ran their patrol, but circled back. Alex has them running doubles. He's such a genius. They came by fifteen minutes later, and the heads up here with no scents." I growled asking, "How is that possible?" Dylan shrugged, "I have not figured that out yet, though it does seem like magic, no? Have no fear, I will find the answer."

I said, "I want a report ten minutes ago, and I want Emmaline's guard doubled." Dustin spoke, "We will cast some protection spells on her." Ryan said, "I can ride back and forth to school with the girls." I nodded, "Alright, let's head back."

I linked Dylan, "Set motion capture cameras up everywhere. I won't lose her, Dylan." Dylan answered, "Whoever it is doesn't understand they can't make Emmaline theirs. She loves you. This person is thinking of her like a regular full blooded, fickle fairy. As fun as she is, Emmaline is not fickle. Which just makes me love her all the more. She makes my job easier."

I looked back at the heads. I replied, "Whoever it is, isn't sane. They want her for power, and they don't seem to grasp that means they come against Haley. Which means the fairies and the Hackura" Dylan laughed, "Not to mention our favorite King Alpha Prick. They done messed up now."

I nodded, appreciating my friend trying to lighten the mood. I stepped back into the house and walked immediately to Emmaline. I pulled her into my arms and carried her upstairs. She waved goodbye to everyone. As soon as we made it our room, I said "I love you, baby girl. You're mine." Then I crashed my lips against hers.