

# Hard Conversations

Emmaline groggily opened her eyes and reached for Lucas. I felt a small hand already on me. I opened my eyes wide, jerking away, only to see Katie in bed with me. She smiled. I asked, “Where’s Lucas?” Katie told me, “He’s dealing with things.” I frowned, “I thought I calmed him down.”

Debbie chimed in, “You did. Now he has to deal with the threat and get answers. Someone hit you. He will find them, and they will pay.” I grumbled sleepily, “I hit all of them. Are those two other guys coming for me like Lucas is for them?” I didn’t want to panic, but I was a little.

I heard a pop and relaxed completely; the presence was so comforting. My dad spoke, “No one will come for you and live. I may have failed you when I hid you from other fairies, specifically Fabian; however, I will not do so again.”

I turned, stunned to see him and Haley. She smiled at me. I sputtered, “Dad? What are you doing here?” My dad smiled, “Haley called and told me what happened. I wanted to see for my own eyes that you were alright. It’s an added bonus that my presence will comfort you. Haley assures me your wolf will handle the situation appropriately.” I nodded, “He will.”

My dad nodded and came forward and spoke in Fealish to me. His hands glowed a greenish blue and I felt at peace. I looked up at him with a question in my eyes. He said, “I can’t grant you calm like Haley and Bexley can. That is up to the earth which I have no elemental power in anymore. I can grant you the peacefulness of water. It is quite comforting to water fairies, you especially as the soul seeker.”

I nodded. I asked, “How are we related to Haley then?” Marcious laughed, “I was fighting with my family when the Holloran’s Rosé to power. We are their cousins, we used to have sky and earth blood. I was raised in the water territories, having mostly water blood. When the throne was seized, our family was named the royal house of the water fae.” Still confused.

My dad continued, “Unlike the ruling family, and its King or Queen, we cannot have more than the blood of the ruling element. When a family is declared the royal house of its element, they agree to forego any blood in them that links them to these other elements. There can be no option to attempt to claim the rights of royalty to another house. There is a ceremony to name you royal, and a ritual is performed to forego your other lineage. Our family completed the ritual, and we were rid of the earth and sky, becoming a full water fairy. But a fairy’s soul will always recognize a relative.

Family is a bond deeper than blood alone,” he smiled, “Besides, I did not have many talents in the sky or earth elements anyway.”

Haley snorted, “Pure blood asshats.” I mean, she might have a point. I asked, “Did it hurt?” My dad shrugged, “For a time, it was long ago.” Haley rolled her eyes. My dad’s version of granting peace was different than Haley’s to me. This seemed to be a part of me. With Haley’s, I knew it wasn’t my peace. I wondered if that was because I was mostly a water fairy.

I got up and hugged him, “Thank you, dad.” He kissed my cheek, “I must go.” He turned to Haley, “Cousin, you are going to work your wolf into a tizzy again. It’s marvelous and such good fun.” Haley rolled her eyes and my dad popped away.

I asked, “Why would Eric be in a tizzy?” Haley sighed, “Eric is dramatic when it comes to me, that’s why.” I bit my lip, “What did you do?” Haley pointed out, “The questioning process will go faster for Lucas if I’m here to help. That’s just a fact.” I laughed, “Did you tell Eric you were coming?” Haley replied, “Technically, yes I did.”

Lacy pointed out, “Technically? Evasive, little fairy.” Haley sighed, “UGH! Just because everyone is taller than me, doesn’t mean they should call me little. It’s so unfair it’s Fabian’s fault I’m short. GOD, I hope I get to see the version of myself I brought to my dad as a baby again. Then everyone can know how fucking tall I was supposed to be. I left Eric a note on his pillow explaining where I was going. I might even get back before he reads it.”

I smirked, “Is that the reality you went to this time? You found the baby you?” Haley said, “No, that was the last one. This one... I had to explain to myself who Marcus was, and why she should stop running from him. She didn’t try to escape at thirteen because Aiden came looking for her before she left. He took care of her. He took her to the doctors, ones not on my uncle’s payroll. He found out what my uncle was doing to me and punished him. She wasn’t raped anymore, but Uncle Fabian promised her to Axel Price in marriage. She ran a week before her sixteenth birthday. When she entered this realm, she ended up in Eric’s territory driving his wolf insane. Then she ripped off her bracelet that suppressed her sorrow and connections to our Hackura family. Marcus and Bjourn was the closest to her. She was being chased by Fabian, Axel, Marcus, Bjourn, and Benjamin. My brothers were actually impressed that she managed it with no training. They are not easy to run from.”

Haley continued, waving her hand, “They were observing her patterns and were about to break down her door. I opened it to explain everything to them. It was...

Interesting.” I blew out a breath, “I don’t even know how you deal with all the decisions people make. It’s so strange to think that one decision sparks a new reality.”

Haley smiled, agreeing, “It is. I’m glad I can help myself in them. I’m also glad to know Aiden would’ve helped me. I never thought he would, even if he knew before he took the throne. I will be giving my brother a hug the next time I see him. I think it will comfort him to know that I know for a fact he would’ve helped me. He told me he would’ve, but I didn’t believe him. Or Arion.”

She looked sad when she said Arion’s name. I searched her soul, finding anguish and sorrow. I grabbed her arm and squeezed it reassuringly. She smiled sadly at me. “Anyway, I found you in that reality too. We are both in better places. I’d better get to helping Lucas, before Eric loses his shit.” With that statement Haley popped away.

I sighed, “I’m going to have to warn Lucas that Eric didn’t exactly know she was coming.” Lacy laughed, “Eric won’t be upset with him.” Katie added, “She’ll be with Logan too, she’s guarded. I told him he had to do horrible things to the warlock since he had me carted off to the Hackura realm when we found out what was happening.”

I kissed her forehead, “He loves you. He agreed to let you come see me, so you don’t have to sneak away.” Katie sent me a scathing look. I rolled my eyes, “Don’t you give me that look. You’d have the shadows bring you to our realm, and we both know it.” Katie nodded slowly, “I just... Evie, don’t do that again.” She crushed me to her, “We just got you back and I...” Her voice broke, “I love you so damn much. I missed out on almost four years. I won’t let anyone take you from me. I can’t.”

I smiled, running my hands through her hair. I assured her, “I’m here, Katie. I promise to work on my fairy instincts. Next time, I’ll pop out and bring someone back with me, or something like that. I’ll come up with a better plan.” Katie said, “Just keep yourself safe. Ryan, Dustin, Aubree, me, and Lucas would be devastated if anything happened to you.” I smiled, “I want to keep you all safe too.”

Katie sighed, “You’re my baby sister. Keeping you safe is my job. I’ve already failed, just help me keep you safe, please.” I pulled her close, “I won’t be reckless, I’m sorry you worried.” Katie smiled as her eyes drooped. I said, “Sleep, Katie Cat.” She nodded and closed her eyes.

Lacy said, “You could try to sleep too.” I smiled, “Pot meet kettle. I can’t sleep without Lucas.” Debbie said, “At least rest your eyes. You’ve had a trying day.” I sighed, “Didn’t we all?” Lacy agreed, “No joke.” I looked at her, searching her soul, “Don’t feel guilty about this, Lacy.”

Lacy looked away, "I should've gone with you." I snorted, "I would've disappeared from your side. The holoport was only meant for me. It couldn't have brought you, whether we'd been two steps apart or holding hands."

Lacy rolled her eyes, "I'm joining Haley on team witches suck." I teased, "It was a warlock." Lacy raised an eyebrow, "Your cousin hates them too." I said, "She doesn't hate Ry or Dusty." Debbie laughed, "She doesn't like them yet either." I shrugged, "She came around on Katie pretty fast."

Lacy pointed out, "As her brother's mate, Haley was automatically feeling Katie could be trusted. Katie proved herself, too. Haley has bigger trust issues with the male gender than female." I said, "I would too. Actually, I would never trust anyone ever again."

Lacy changed the subject, "Alternate realities. That's pretty cool." I said, "Unless she goes to one and sees Eric with Claudia or as she calls her Claudzilla." Debbie laughed, "Then that horrid bitch will die far quicker than she deserves. Our Haley did that right, Claudzilla is quite the apt name."

Lacy gasped, "MOM!" Debbie raised an eyebrow, "I would've helped Haley rip her to pieces if I'd known what she'd done to you, Lacy. You have no idea the hell your father and I went through. We couldn't move on. Everyone told us to accept you'd left. The Conners family and Lucas were the only ones who told your father and I to keep going. Eric even helped us."

Lacy was quiet, "I was trying to save everyone." Debbie nodded, "I know that sweetheart. It doesn't mean we didn't go through hell. We tracked you all over the damn country. It destroyed Lucas wondering why you were running from him, from us. Your father was a mess. You are his little girl." Lacy looked away with tears in her eyes.

I offered, "At least Haley knows about you now. Other realities won't suffer that problem." Lacy looked back, "You think Haley would do that?" I nodded, "Haley always finds a way to save everyone she can. She will involve Lucas because of me." Debbie said, "She'd probably let Marcious know what happened as well."

I glanced at Katie, "I think she'd tell him and get my siblings in on the plan. I think she'd bring us all away from California to Tennessee. She told me fairies can sense their mates their whole life. Lucas would protect me because he would know I'm his mate, as long as he was at least eighteen."

Lacy smiled, "That's a lovely thought to be honest. I'd love to be here when I turned eighteen. I'd find out Dylan was my mate at midnight on my birthday. He always hated those guys that found out that way, and he'd be one of them." I agreed, "That would be nice. I bet it happens in some reality. Even if Haley just places me with a family in Tennessee and not with Lucas. She'd kill Christy and Claudia before leaving."

Lacy grinned, "She would, wouldn't she?" I nodded and laid my head on the pillow. "You guys should try to get some rest too. We don't know how long the guys will be off doing what they are doing." Debbie laughed as she laid her head down, "Not as long as they would be if your cousin wasn't with them, that's for sure."

I closed my eyes, resting them, "She's going to get in trouble with Eric. That's what's for sure." Debbie chuckled, "Sometimes getting in trouble is fun. Fairy's just risk it more often than us she wolves. I might take a page out of her book. She has herself a grand old time." I sleepily replied, "Her book is fun." Lacy mumbled, "Is it ever."

A pop sounded. Haley whispered her space unheard chant, "The wolves are out I see." I asked, "Shouldn't you get back so that Eric doesn't notice you're not there?" Haley bit her lip, "He found my note about a half hour ago." I snickered, "How mad is he?" Haley said, "Not as mad as he will be when he finds out I popped the guys to the warlocks and back."

I opened my eyes and sat up, "They have them all?" Haley nodded, "It's handled. I need you to talk to Lacy about training Thursday. I have a different program ready, but you two need to learn to fight together. I have absolute faith in all the Beta females, but especially in Eric's pack. Miley and I fight with precision and trust in all situations. Luce has been training with me, and we are learning each other's styles. You and Lacy need to have that too."

I asked, "You want Lacy to join our training sessions?" Haley nodded, "I do. Miley, Astrid, and one other person to be determined will be joining as well so you both can work on fighting multiple assailants." I gulped, "You want Lacy and I to fight the future Queen of the Hackura?" Haley nodded, "She doesn't have an easy mode either. I'm throwing you both to the assassins, but threats are forcing my hand."

I laughed, "It's wolves, or the deep end." Haley tilted her head, "What?" I smiled, "The saying is throwing you into the deep end, or to the wolves." Haley said, "Neither of the people I mentioned fighting you are wolves. They are assassins." I nearly laughed, "True."

Haley smiled, "I've got to get back. Eric is getting quite upset." I teased, "Wasn't that your goal?" Haley shrugged, "No, my goal was to resolve the threat, and possibly get back before he noticed. Eric is upset I didn't take anyone from his pack or family with me."

I questioned, "Why didn't you?" Haley said, "Logan is here. I thought that would count." I considered then said, "That's fair. I'm sure Eric will understand." Haley snorted, "The man is not understanding, especially about me." I gave her a look, "Mates, I guess." She nodded, "Werewolf mates. I love that man with everything in me, but He has GOT to find himself some chill. I am perfectly capable of handling my damn myself." She leaned forward and gave me a kiss. I told her seriously, "You know he won't ever find any, right?" Haley nodded, "Probably not. I'll see you Wednesday." I waved as she popped away.

I closed my eyes to rest them again, waiting to hear Lucas come through the door. I heard the sheet rustling by the bed and rolled, startled. I barely opened my eyes to see Logan. I smiled at him, "She's been out for some time." Logan nodded, "Thank you for telling Katie not to be too upset with me."

I responded, "I've searched your soul many times since we met. Your concern, above all, is Katie. I understand why you are worried about her being here. Here's a word of warning though, if she doesn't want to stay where you have her, she'll call on the shadows. I think the only reason she didn't today is because as much as she wanted to help me; she wants your child to be safe too. Katie has always wanted to be a mom. I know your people are always several steps ahead of everyone. Just don't forget about the shadows. They are powerful, and they allow my siblings to use them. They would probably give Katie anything she asked since they agreed to kill for her."

Logan considered me before asking, "Why would you tell me that?" I raised an eyebrow, "You already knew, but I'm telling you for her." I kissed her forehead, "I could never live with myself if anything happened to Katie because of me."

Logan started negotiating, "She feels the same about you. Will you fairy promise, as my sister has, to keep your phone on you at all times." I sighed, "I promise to do my absolute best to keep my phone on me." Logan smirked like he'd won something, "In that case, I'd like to have Gunner put a GPS tracker in your ring. I've never seen you without it."

My jaw dropped, "You have GOT to be kidding me. Who's Gunner?" Logan rolled his eyes, "I'm sure you know him as Harper's boytoy lover. I do not kid about security measures." I laughed, "Gunner... That somehow fits. Haley wouldn't let you do that to her." Logan smiled, "Is that your only reservation?" Now I smiled, "Tell

you what, you convince Haley to let Gunner put a GPS in her ring; I'll let him do it to mine too."

Logan looked far too happy with that response, "Perfect. Gunner will be here tomorrow to have your ring fitted with a tracker." I whisper yelled, "You didn't even ASK Haley yet!" Logan winked, "Haley's is already done." My eyes widened, "Does she know?" Logan nodded, "She does."

Haley and I were going to have a chat about that. I couldn't go back on my word now, but my independent streak was getting riled up. I grumbled, "Fine, Gunner can do this tomorrow, but for the record the phone PLUS the GPS is overkill."

Logan shrugged, "You can never be too careful. As good and as prepared as she was; Haley was still kidnapped. As prepared and as careful as we were; you were able to be abducted by Christy, then warlocks. No one is perfect, but we have backup plans for a reason. You having your phone, and a tracker in your ring is a backup plan."

I gritted my teeth, "Gunner can remove the tracker once Alpha Hammond is apprehended, right?" Logan nodded, "He could, yes." I raised an eyebrow, "Will he?" Logan shrugged, "I'll consider it after Katie has given birth. I can't have her being worried about you being kidnapped with us having no way to find you. Don't get me wrong, I would've found you when the warlocks took you, nothing can stay hidden from my brothers or I for long. But I will do everything in my power to give her peace of mind."

I wanted to slap him. He smirked as if he could sense that. I searched his soul and replied, "I can tell you want to manipulate me, but that you're also concerned about Katie." Logan shrugged, "I won't deny either of those things. I am who I am, and I get what I want." I scoffed, "I see that. Just for the record, your manipulation wouldn't work if you weren't right... Katie's safety and happiness matter to me though."

Logan pointed out, "That's the only way manipulation works. Making the person you are manipulating care for someone or something else." I said, "I can't decide if I want to slap you or give you a hug for caring about my sister so freaking much." Logan moved and gave me a hug, "I love her, Emmaline. I already told you, but because of her you are my family now too. I'll always help Lucas seek justice for you or find you if need be. Your safety is important to me. Not just because of Katie, or my sister. Family is the most important thing, above all."

I patted his back, "Alright. I'll help you in the ways I can for her as well. Maybe you, me, Lucas, and Katie could all go on a double date sometime." Logan tensed, "In the Hackura realm, sure." I said, "Why not here?"

Logan brushed that off, “Ask Haley. I’m sure she will tell you. I need to get Katie to our place so we can both rest.” I nodded, “Thank you for taking such good care of her. You may be a feared Prince of the Hackura, but you're gentle with her in a way I’d never expected to see of your people.”

Logan shared, “Such interactions are reserved for our family, our people, and our mates. No one else deserves it.” I nodded to him. He picked Katie up, shivering as he walked away. Logan Cambridge was just as scary as his brothers. I was glad he was on my side.

I closed my eyes waiting for Lucas again. I heard the door open this time as opposed to when Logan came in. I realized I didn’t even hear him until he was next to me. That was moderately terrifying. I’m pretty sure I only heard him because he wanted me to. He wanted to discuss my ring getting chipped with a GPS.

Dale was a few steps behind Lucas, he picked up Debbie. I felt a little bad. I hadn’t asked her how she felt about being pregnant yet. Dylan walked in a few moments later and grabbed Lacy whispering something to her. She mumbled a few replies to him, but mostly stayed asleep.

Lucas walked over to the bed stripping down, and as soon as everyone was out of our room, he cuddled in next to me. I felt his soul and managed to utter my love for him before I was out.

I woke to my alarm. I stretched, surprised I didn’t feel sore at all from fighting yesterday. Haley’s healing power certainly packed a punch. I popped to the gym and several warriors blinked in surprise at my appearance.

Alex came over, “Emmaline, you should rest. You fought three warlocks yesterday.” I smiled, “I took one punch, and my cousin healed me. I’m ready to go.” Alex observed me, “Fine, you’ll be training with another warrior on the equipment today. You won’t actually have an opponent.”

I wanted to argue with him, but Lucas trusted him to train the pack. I decided to do what he said. I headed over to the heavy bag, and an instructor handed me gloves. He quietly told me, “It’s not a comment on your abilities. You are our Luna, and our Alpha cannot be himself without you. We do not want to contribute to his concern for you.”

I sighed, “I understand. I worry about Lucas too.” The man nodded and he put me through drills. Once class ended, I spotted Lacy fighting, and waited for her to get done. Once she finished, I smiled and waved her over to me.



I told her, “Haley asked me to ask you about training on Thursdays with us. She wants us to start working together as a team.” I heard Alex groan. Lacy’s jaw dropped, “EXCUSE ME?! Haley, the Hackura and fairy princess, Alpha Eric’s mate, and Luna, wants to TRAIN ME?”

Lacy started jumping up and down. I laughed, “Yes, and since you appear to be having an extreme reaction to that piece of information, brace yourself. Astrid and Miley will be fighting with her to train us.” Lacy stopped then screamed, “THE FUTURE QUEEN OF THE HACKURA?! You’re messing with me, right?”

I noticed several warriors and Alex had stopped and were staring at us. I told her, “I’m not messing with you. Haley thinks as the Luna and Beta females we need to learn each other’s fighting styles. She says we need to fight seamlessly side by side.” Lacy yelled, “YES! YES! YES! I AM SO IN!” She gave me a hug, “I love that you are my brothers mate!” She ran off screaming for Dylan, “DYLAN FROST WAKE UP! THIS IS GOING TO BE SUCH A GOOD DAY!”

I laughed and popped to Lucas. He was already up, “Dylan is... conflicted over Lacy training with you on Thursdays.” I frowned, “Sorry. Haley told me to ask her, and Lacy got really excited.” Lucas looked at me with worried eyes, “Astrid is joining your training?” I nodded.

Lucas said, “She’s just as fierce of a fighter as Bjourn, and she’s his mate.” I nodded, “I’ve heard those rumors about her skills too. It’s good practice for us, and Haley pointed out Lacy and I need to be a team. Just like you and Dylan are.”

Lucas closed his eyes, “I REALLY hate that Haley makes such damn good points.” I kissed him, “It will be fine. They wouldn’t seriously hurt us, and we clearly need to be more prepared.” Lucas groaned, “Don’t you start making valid points too.” I laughed, “When did I make a bad point?” Lucas said, “When you wanted to take Alpha Hammond on alone because Haley would.”

I disagreed, “That wasn’t a bad point, as much as it was a bad idea.” Lucas said, “To each their own. Get yourself into the shower.” I popped us both there, snapped us naked, and then tried to snap the shower on. Lucas and I both gasped when I did it. I screamed as the cold water hit me. Lucas laughed, “Next time, go for warm water.” I stepped out of the stream, shivering.

Lucas turned the shower nozzle to warm. We gave it a second and I stepped back under, still shaking. Lucas whispered in my ear, “Let’s get you warmed up, baby girl.” I shivered, this time in anticipation, as Lucas kissed me. I felt his finger on my clit for a moment before he entered me. I gasped at the suddenness of his moves.

I traced my hands over his body. I grabbed his dick and moved my hand in rhythm with his own. I sped up with his hand, he gritted his teeth, "FUCK! I'm close." I managed, "Me too." We screamed each other's names moments later, breathing heavily.

We completed our tradition of washing each other before we hopped out. I snapped both of us into clothes and popped us down for breakfast. Gemma startled, "I'm still not used to that. Good morning Lucas, Luna." I frowned, "I told you to call me Emmaline." Gemma smiled, "Of course, Emmaline."

Lucas kissed me on the forehead as Dylan and Lacy walked in. Dylan looked like he'd eaten something sour. I asked, "Are you alright there, Dylan?" He glared at me, "I'm peachy. Perfect even. What could possibly be wrong? Could it be that the fairy's want the Duchess and Queen of the Hackura to fight my mate? Why would that be a problem? It's hanging out with King Alpha Prick. He's trying to RUIN my fun sized fairy for me. I SHANT ALLOW IT!"

I laughed, "I don't know why that would be a problem. Lacy will receive excellent training from the literal best fighters besides the King and Prince's of the Hackura. Isn't that what you would call a good thing?" Dylan kept glaring at Lacy.

She snorted, "I love you, Emmaline." Dylan complained, "I hate fairy's and their logic." I smirked, "You love the fairy show, Dylan." Dylan said, "Most of the time. Lacy doesn't get hurt, alright?" I stuck out my tongue, "I'll have her back." Lacy smirked, "As I'll have yours. Let's get going and hope the sour patch kid can get into a better mood before we get home." Dylan grumbled some more as we grabbed something to eat on the road and left.

I commented, "I've never seen him in such a bad mood." Lacy said, "He's pouting. He will get over it." I wasn't so sure that he would. Lacy continued, "He expects me to accept that he will fight, but he can't accept that I want to fight too. I was raised in a pack, and you weren't. Changes are coming and male wolves need to get on board." I laughed, "They could be just a little less sexist."

I drove myself, Lacy, Valerie, Ry, and Brad to school. When we got there, I handed Ry the keys. He gave me a quick hug, "We are having a sibling meeting after you get home." I was confused but shrugged, "Alright."

I walked into school and was immediately mobbed by Sam and Chelsea, who pulled me into their hugs. Sam was crying, "This is my fault. I left you a note asking to meet me, and then you just blindly went to meet Lucas." I pointed out, "It was Lucas'

handwriting. I would've gone to meet him even if you hadn't slipped me a note to meet you earlier."

Sam tried to brush off the tears from her face. Drake gave me a grateful smile. I continued, "There was nothing abnormal about the situation, and nothing anyone could have done. Besides, you sent your mate to help find me, you did everything you could to help me. You too, Chelsea." Both had tears in their eyes, but their souls accepted my explanation, their guilt began to ease.

Drake walked me to class, "You may not be an empath, but that soul seeker thing is a bigger deal than I thought." I shrugged, "Haley says I can sense people's emotions from their soul. She says I'll know when people are lying, which I'm getting the hang of. I can't make them tell the truth like she can, but I'll know if they are being honest. I can sense their feelings. Sam and Chelsea both felt guilty, but they realized what I said was true. Their guilt was receding when we left them."

Drake said, "I did not know you could do that. It makes sense though. When Peter and I followed you to ask about Ryan that day, you sensed we were worried. I thought you just figured it out." I shook my head, "I was starting to work on understanding my power. Haley sent me a text of how to work on it." Drake just nodded.

The rest of the day flew by. Chelsea and I stayed an hour past the last period bell catching up on everything I'd missed. We did a few labs together and turned our work into the teacher. Peter was waiting outside the classroom, and he texted someone. When we got outside Drake pulled into the parking lot with Sam. Ry, Valerie, and Lacy pulled in behind them.

I realized Brad was missing so I turned around and found him, two steps behind me. I rolled my eyes, "You don't have to walk behind me, Brad. Lucas told me you'd be closer than normal." Brad said, "If that's what you'd prefer." I amended, "Well, not in the hallways because there are lots of people, but everywhere else I'd prefer you beside me." Brad nodded, "Alright." Brad and I jumped in our SUV while Peter and Drake swapped out driving.

Once we got home, I asked Ry, "Where's the meeting?" Ry said, "We set up some chairs on the other side of the lake." I nodded, "Ok, wait here. I'm going to say hi to Lucas. I'll pop us over to the meeting afterwards." Ry nodded his agreement.

I popped to Lucas. I blushed realizing he was on a call. I linked him, "Sorry." He shrugged, "It's not a big deal." Out loud he said, "Eric, Emmaline just got home." Eric said, "I figured since I heard the pop." I winced, "I forgot to tell you Eric didn't exactly know Haley came to help last night." Lucas smirked, "Don't worry. We found

that out.” I asked, “He’s not too mad, is he?” Lucas said, “No, he wasn’t mad at me at all.” Dylan muted the phone.

Lucas asked, “How was your day?” I smiled, “It was pretty good. Uneventful, but I feel after yesterday I was due.” Lucas laughed, “If you could keep having uneventful days, I would be grateful.” Dylan shrieked, “You would be grateful? I am underappreciated and forgotten!” I sighed, “Well, I have to go have a chat with my siblings about something.”

Lucas asked, “You really don’t know what it’s about?” I said, “Well, I have a few things to say. I don’t exactly know what they want to talk about, but I assume it has to do with yesterday.” Lucas nodded, “What do you have to say?” I sighed, “I’m going to tell Dusty to get over the fact that you and I are in a relationship.” Dylan spit out his water.

I frowned, “What?” Dylan said, “Just like that. You’re going to tell him to get over it just like that? Using those exact words?” I nodded, “Yes, just like that. He can accept it, or he can stick it where the sun doesn’t shine.” Dylan smirked, “And my regularly scheduled fairy show is back on track. There was a minor disruption this morning, but my normal show has returned.”

Lucas rolled his eyes, and I gave him a kiss. I pulled back, “See you later.” Lucas pulled me back against him, deepening our kiss. When he pulled back he said, “You’d better walk away, baby girl. Don’t pop or I’ll chase you.” I smirked before walking to the door.

Once outside I popped to Ry. I grabbed his hand and popped us to Dusty and Katie. Ry sat down immediately, and I wondered if since he had fairy blood popping wasn’t hard on him. Dusty gestured to a chair for me to sit in.

Katie said, “Do your unheard chant, Evie.” I laughed, “You can do it, Katie Cat.” Katie smiled and spoke the words. I nodded to her, and she smiled. Dusty chimed in, “We want to come up with a code word.” I raised an eyebrow questioning, “A code word for what?” Ry explained, “Lacy and Lucas have a code word. When they use it, the other does what the other one says. No questions asked.”

Katie and I had one, but the group as a whole didn’t. I frowned, “I’m fine with a code word with some ground rules.” Dusty’s eyes narrowed, “What ground rules?” I said, “You can’t use the code word just to keep Katie or I out of what you feel is a dangerous situation.” Ry stood, “We needed one yesterday. It was not a good idea to try to take Alpha Hammond on alone.”

I nodded, "I agree. Using it yesterday is a perfect example of an acceptable use of the word. But you both have tried to exclude Katie, Aubree, and me already. With the same Alpha even. We can handle ourselves. If you want a code word, you have to trust us in certain circumstances."

Katie smiled, "I agree." I pointed out, "I'm not a little kid anymore." Dusty said, "You're our baby sister." I said, "Yes, but I'm not naive, and you seem to be hell bent on remembering me as the little girl you knew. I'm not her anymore. I grew up. I've hidden from adults, run from them even. I kept my head down to survive. I've fought for my life, and I've killed others in that pursuit. You want a code word, then recognize that I am powerful too." Dusty's jaw ticked and he looked away.

Ry admitted, "We never wanted that for you, Evie." I sighed, "Neither did I. Do you think I wanted to be away from any of you? I saved for months birthday presents for you guys some of those years. I didn't buy new clothes from Walmart sometimes so I could purchase something. I always wanted you to know I cared."

Dusty looked back, "I understand why you did it, but it didn't feel that way. We were worried sick about you. We fell apart after seeing countless dead little girls looking for you. I know it's not your fault, but it hurt getting cards and presents from you, because you still knew where we were. You were hiding from us too." I replied, "I didn't have a choice."

Ry asked, "Were you ever in those places you sent presents from?" I nodded, "I was in Oregon when I sent Dusty's. It's when I found out about the bounty. I was more careful after that. I sent them from places I didn't stay. Look, I know this situation wasn't fair to any of us. I know you went through hell, and you saw mom and David fall apart. But I wasn't exactly living the cushy, picnic life over here."

I pinned my brother with a look, "Dusty, you have to stop this. You can't be ok with Lucas and I one second, and ready to kill him the next. I love him, he's my mate. Accept it so we can all move on."

Dusty looked pained, "You're my little sister." I glared at him, "So is Katie, and you have NO problem with Logan whatsoever." Dusty looked at me, "It's different." I stood, "Why? Because she's older than me?"

Dusty stood up too, "Katie has always been more independent than you, Evie. You are all of our baby sister. You're just a kid, and we just got you back. Now you've got your mate." I stared at him, "You got me back because of my mate. Even before he knew my story, he offered to reach out to you guys quietly. He wanted us to all get in

touch because he knew how you felt. Lacy was running from him, and he was always your advocate.” They all made a face like they knew something I didn’t.

Dusty asked, “Then why? Why didn’t you want Ryan to know how Valerie found him?” I looked at him like he had two heads, “Are you kidding? Your dad wants to KILL me. I didn’t know what your relationship was with him now! I had just found Lucas. I finally felt like I belonged somewhere again. I can’t lose him, he’s my home. You and I both know David would hurt him to hurt me. Or he’d try. I saw David at his worst.” I stopped talking.

Ry asked, “What do you mean?” Katie stood, “FINALLY! Tell us what happened that day dad took you out when you were ten. You didn’t talk to him for two months after that day. You were constantly skittish around him. What happened?” I looked away.

Ry encouraged, “Evie, please let’s not do this. I want no more secrets, not with us.” I sighed and put my head in my hands, “He killed four people.” Dusty asked, “The Malvern meeting? Dad killed those coven members?” I knew I had tears streaming down my face.

I whispered, “Yes, he told me to stay in the car but he’d been in there so long I snuck in. David was arguing with their leader about something. He killed the leader, his wife, and their children. He appointed a new leader who agreed to David’s terms. I don’t know what else happened. I ran back to the car. The little boy’s screams still haunt me. He was so little.”

Dusty hissed, “Five. He was five and their nephew. Motherfucker!” He stood and paced, “He’s a monster.” Katie pulled me into a hug, “I’m sorry you saw that.” I admitted, “David confronted me after I stopped speaking to him. I begged him not to kill me like he’d killed that little boy. He was surprised and chanted something. Then I wasn’t afraid anymore, and my memory was fuzzy. I couldn’t remember what really happened that day, until...”

Ry said, “Until you left the state. OF COURSE, dad didn’t totally repress the memory. He didn’t think you’d ever be leaving California for good.” I shrugged. Ry and Dusty appeared to have a silent conversation.

Ryan grunted, “We can’t do anything. If we did, dad would know you’d told us. He’d start to grow suspicious, and he could find you.” Dusty glanced at me, “And you’re not ready for that yet. Are you?” I shook my head. Dusty let a big breath go, “One

day, we will right that wrong.” I got us back on track, “This situation doesn’t deflect from you being a jerk about me and Lucas. Stop being so mean to him.”

Dusty said, “I’m not mean to him.” I disagreed, “Sometimes you are. Like when we came home after my concupiscence. You were ready to rip him to shreds because you thought I was pregnant. You were excited for Katie though. Do you even realize how hurtful that is?” Dusty sounded sad, “Evie, you’re sixteen... I mean seventeen. You’re a little young to have a baby.”

I angrily spat out, “That’s not your choice! My body, my decision. I’ll even take it a step farther and say no uterus, no opinion. If Katie wants to talk to me about that, then fine. She can at least be respectful of how I feel. You haven’t even asked me what I want. You don’t care if I’m happy or disappointed I’m not pregnant. You just care about YOUR feelings about MY life.”

Ry’s eyes were misting over. Dusty disagreed, “That’s not true. I just want what’s best for you.” I glared at him, “According to who? You? Lucas is what’s best for me. Get used to it.” Dusty clenched his fist, “I’m trying, but it’s hard.”

I cried, “Why? Why is it hard? I gave Ry his wick even though it terrified me that your dad could find me; I wanted Ry to be happy. I brought Katie to Logan because I wanted her to be happy. I’ve accepted Aubree, and I’m trying to be closer to her for you. Why can’t you just stop acting like such a jerk to Lucas sometimes?”

Dusty yelled, “Because I’m your big brother!” I turned to Katie, “Were you aware Dusty wasn’t your big brother?” Katie bit her lip, but a chuckle escaped her. I saw Logan appear at the tree line with a grim expression.

Dusty waved his hands, “That’s different. Katie is older.” I said, “Katie didn’t live on her own, forced to run from those she loved most. Katie wasn’t abandoned by our mother, and the man she thought was her father that raised her. Katie didn’t find a way to survive with little to no money. Katie didn’t shuffle from state to state, glancing over her shoulder at every shadow. Katie didn’t kill five rogue werewolves on her own using powers she didn’t know she had. Logan didn’t have to hunt Katie down to keep her safe.”

Dusty’s face was going through conflicting emotions. I pressed on, “Lucas found me, and I didn’t make it easy. He could’ve given up, but he didn’t. I know when I’m being followed. From the moment we met, he had me shadowed. He refused to let me leave

his home to go back to the woods. He brought me to his home, made his Luna, and showed me love. He's a good man, Dustin."

Dusty glanced up quickly, "You never call me Dustin." I rolled my eyes, "It's your name. Accept that Lucas and I are a package deal. I just got you all back, and you're hurting my feelings. It's killing me. I'm getting married on Christmas Eve."

Dusty's jaw tensed, "I know." I snapped, "THAT! That right there, you stop that!" Dusty said, "I can't help it! You're my little sister." I snarked, "So you'd prefer I just keep having sex with him, and not marry him. Maybe pop out a kid or two first?"

Dusty admitted, "I'd rather you waited until you were out of high school to have a kid." I said, "Yet again it's about you, and what you'd prefer." Dusty hissed, "You asked me!" I gritted my teeth, "He's my mate. If I want to have kids with him, I will. Not that it's your business, but I'm on birth control. I want to be married before we have kids. I couldn't control anything in my life for over three years. I need something to be in my control. My life has been flipped upside down for years."

I started to cry, "I found out David wasn't my dad, and mom chose to stay with him instead of protect me. I found out David wanted me dead. I killed a rogue by turning him to water. I knew I was a fairy, but after that I was terrified if I touched someone I would accidentally turn them to water. Lucas is my calm in the storm that has been my life. You guys had each other to lean on. I was alone, until Lucas. I missed you guys as if a piece of my soul had been ripped away. Lucas started putting me back together."

I wiped my tears "We can have a freaking code word when you guys come to terms with that. I won't let you have some word to manipulate me, or hide me because you are testosterone filled, masochistic hypocrites. Lucas doesn't keep Lacy out of fights. I'm sure if he'd talked to her before she called me, he'd have used it to get her home. In a fight though, he has faith in her. Let me know when you can accept that." I conjured my phone to me and popped away.

I didn't even think about it. I gasped as I realized I was at the healing waters in Faerie. I tried to pop back out, but it didn't work. I yelled, "CRAP!" I called Haley. She answered, "Emmaline?" I heard pops and gulped. I whispered, "Haley, I accidentally popped to the healing waters in Faerie. A lot of fairy's just popped to me." Haley instantly replied, "I'm coming."



I heard a pop. Then Eric asked, "Haley, what the..." He finished his sentence in Faerie, "Hell?" He whirled around, growling, shifting into his wolf in seconds. Haley spoke to the fairies, "Leave, NOW!" One fairy said, "She came here on her own. She couldn't leave because she was upset. If the wolf upsets her, we should get to play with her."

Eric's wolf's roar shook the trees. Haley put her hand on Eric. She stood and started speaking Fealish. Lucas linked me, "Baby girl, where did you go? Gunner can't get a location." I winced, "I didn't mean to." Lucas asked, "Didn't mean to what?" I evaded, "I'll be back soon."

Haley flung her hands, and fifteen fairies flew at least twenty feet away from us. Haley grabbed me and Eric's wolf. She popped us to Lucas' office. Lucas was on his feet. He asked, "Thor? What happened?" I nearly laughed. Eric's wolf's name was Thor. Because... of course it was.

Eric shifted back and Haley snapped him some clothes. She didn't speak. Eventually Eric said, "I don't know what the hell just happened. Haley popped to me in the middle of the meeting and popped us to Faerie, where fifteen fairies were advancing on Emmaline. I shifted to protect them, and after some fairy exchange Haley popped us here."

Lucas' eyes went wide, "Why would you pop to Faerie, Emmaline?" I said, "I didn't mean to. I just wanted to be far away from Dusty." Lucas sighed, "Dustin is a wreck. You should go talk to him." I locked my jaw, "No."

Lucas was surprised, whereas Logan evaluated me. He put out his hand. I instantly knew what he wanted, finally noticing the man next to him. He was handsome with dark hair and light facial hair. This must be Gunner. I sighed and took off my engagement ring and handed it to Logan.

Haley asked, "You agreed to let Harper's boytoy lover put a GPS in your ring?" Gunner sighed, "For the millionth time, my name is Gunner." Haley said, "For the zillionth time your name is Harper's boytoy lover and you love it." He rolled his eyes at her, but when he turned, I saw his smirk. I searched his soul and discovered she was right; he liked her nickname.

I spoke, "Logan tricked me into it." Logan snorted, "I did no such thing. She agreed to let Gunner put a GPS in her ring so long as you agreed to have it done to yours sister. You had already agreed." I asked, "Why is that Haley?"

Haley sighed, “Our children can pop. It eased the minds of Eric and my brothers after Arion attacked and they were gone. Eric can say what he wants, it was about being taken by Arion and given to Damon. They all know I can handle myself, but for now this helps them all breathe easier. I don’t actually try to make the lives of anyone I love difficult.”

Eric snorted then teased, “Fairy’s love drama.” Haley raised an eyebrow, “It’s not my fault drama finds me. It’s clear that I don’t love drama, it loves me.” I laughed as Gunner handed my ring back. He told me, “We are all good to go. Don’t worry, just like with Haley I won’t keep track of where you are constantly. I would only check her location if she was missing. She’s just missing... a lot.”

Haley stuck her tongue out him. I took a deep breath, “I suppose that’s something. At least you’re not going to ping my location every hour.” Gunner laughed, “I do have other things to do.” Haley nudged him, “Yeah, like my brother and Cali.” Gunner teased, “That is at the top of my list, Hales.” Haley said, “I know. Emmaline and I will be right back.”

Both Eric and Lucas started to tell her no, but she’d popped anyway. We were in the same field Lucas claimed me in after my Luna ceremony. Haley asked me, “What happened?” I cried and explained everything to her.

Haley sighed, “Ok, then. When popping, always have a destination in mind. Somewhere in this realm. Fairy’s will always take advantage of a situation. I’m glad you called me though. Don’t be afraid to hit them with some snowballs or hail next time. Try to talk to Dustin tomorrow.”

I snorted, “I thought you’d be thrilled if I didn’t want to talk to him.” Haley frowned, “No, I would never want that because you truly don’t want that. I don’t trust your brothers, but that’s my issue. You love Dustin. I know the bond that’s possible between you and your brothers because of the ones I share with mine. You always had that with Ryan and Dustin. You grew up with them, and they treated you how brothers should. You had every right to say what you did. Dustin has every right to his feelings, but he needs to accept your life. He needs to remember you aren’t his thirteen, well fourteen really, but he thought you were thirteen.”

She paused for a minute then continued, “God that’s fucking confusing. Let’s say thirteen. You aren’t thirteen anymore. I think you are frozen in his mind at that age, and he needs to let that go. You have to give him a chance though, and now he knows how you feel. He can talk it through with your other siblings and Aubree tonight. He

deserves the chance to adjust. It would hurt you to cut him out, and I think you would miss him dearly.” She was right.

She hugged me, “From what I’ve gathered, you two were very close before you had to leave. I think it’s close to how I am with Marcus. I think Dustin would have been fine with you and Lucas finding each other if you’d never left home. I think he’s struggling because he feels like he didn’t protect you. He feels like he failed, and for dominant males that’s hard to grasp. That doesn’t mean he gets to dominate your life though. I seriously doubt it will take longer than until tomorrow for him to seek you out and apologize. If I have overestimated him, then I’ll kick his ass until he sees reason.” I laughed. That sounded more like her.

Lucas linked me, “Can you and Haley come back now?” I laughed and wiped my tears, “Lucas wants us back.” Haley rolled her eyes, “Worrying Walters, the both of them. They aren’t even very far from us.” I questioned, “What?” Haley smirked, “I can feel Eric with our Hackura bond, and I can feel Logan too. If Eric is close, then so is Lucas. We can freak them out.”

I asked, “How?” Haley smiled mischievously, “We are going to pop to them. It’s what they want after all.” She grabbed my hand and we popped into a tree above Eric, Logan, and Lucas. Haley put a finger to her mouth, and we listened.

Lucas asked, “Are you sure they are in that field?” Eric raised an eyebrow. Logan groaned, “For the love of god, yes. Do you want me to have Gunner ping Emmaline’s ring? Will that make you stop? We are close to them, they are fine. If I had any doubt, I’d go in there with my swords drawn.”

I bit my lip while Haley rolled her eyes. Lucas paced, “I don’t want her fighting with her siblings over me. They are important to her.” Eric pointed out, “That should be singular, sibling. Just the one.” Lucas sighed, “She loves Dustin.”

Logan commented, “Dustin needed a wakeup call, even Ryan and Katie agreed. He’s not going to walk away from Emmaline. He will think it over and apologize. He already apologized to you. He was a nervous wreck wondering where she’d popped off to.”

I felt a little bad about that. Haley sent me an ‘I told you so’ look. Maybe they were right. I could talk to Dusty after fairy lessons tomorrow night. Eric said, “I’ve never seen a man more upset about someone calling them by their given name.” Logan snorted.

Lucas said, "She always calls him Dusty. She had to be pissed to say his actual name." Haley shook with silent laughter. She grabbed my hand once Lucas and Eric were side by side. She started doing charades. I finally caught on that she wanted us to jump onto Lucas and Eric's back, like we were doing a piggyback ride. This would be fun.

Logan must have felt his connection with Haley. He looked at Eric and Lucas to see if they were watching him. Realizing they weren't, he looked up into the tree that Haley and I were in. Haley waved and he shook his head, smiling at her.

She counted to three with her hands and we both jumped onto our mates back. Both their wolves took over. Haley laughed. "I feel like I'm riding a sprittle! Don't you, Emmaline?" We both hung on. I laughed, "What the heck is a sprittle? In this realm, I think you mean we rode a bull. We are bull riders."

Haley explained, "A sprittle is an untamed animal in Faerie. As kids, fairy's go with their friends to try to find one and ride it. What's a bull rider?" Eric said, "Not what you did. You'd have had to hang on for eight seconds." Haley smirked, "I bet I could." Eric chuckled, "Of that I have no doubt."

Lucas pulled me from his back to his front. He asked, "Are you ok?" I nodded, "I will be." Logan said, "Hales, pop us all back to the house, so I can get Katie home please." Haley sighed, "You all worry too much. It's going to give you grey hair according to Google. Possibly even make your life spans shorter." Logan chided, "And yet we are all in perfect health. Try a different argument."

Haley snorted, "Why waste my breath?" Logan smirked, "You're beginning to understand." Haley said, "I understand. I'm just saying you all need to calm down. Just because we have vaginas doesn't mean we can't handle our own shit." Logan rolled his eyes, "Just because you can handle it doesn't mean we don't have to worry."

Lucas said, "Don't pop us back, we can walk." I nodded. Haley popped away with Eric and Logan. I apologized, "I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to pop to Faerie, I was just so upset with Dusty." Lucas smiled, "So he's already Dusty again." I shrugged, "He's always Dusty."

Lucas rubbed my back, "He apologized to me already. It was an apology I didn't need." I disagreed, "We both do." Lucas said, "No, he's being a big brother. He's annoying on occasion, but he's tried to help in every way he can to keep you safe." I sighed, "Don't be on his side about disrespecting our relationship."

Lucas kissed me, “I’m not on his side. I’m proud of you for standing up for us. I just get where he’s coming from. If Lacy had been mated to someone outside my pack, I really don’t know how I would’ve reacted. Especially, when I just got her back. I empathize with him, but I understand he needs to respect our lives.”

I pushed back from Lucas, “He doesn’t get a say in when we have children, or when we get married. He can be happy for me like he is for Katie, or he can be silent. It’s not fair.” Lucas sighed, “None of what’s happened between you and your siblings is fair.” I counted to ten in my head, “Stop being on his side.” Lucas frowned, “I’m not on his side. I’m just presenting his case to you.”

I pointed out, “I wasn’t unreasonable. I’ve given him plenty of passes. He wants some code word to control me because you and Lacy have one.” Lucas’ eyebrows raised, “The code word Lacy and I have isn’t about control.” I somewhat agreed, “For you two, yes. My brothers would use it to keep me out of any situation they deem dangerous. They see me as a child, and I’m not.”

Lucas sighed, “I don’t want you to fight with your brother because of me.” I was getting angry, “To flipping bad, Lucas Lyons! You are my everything, and Dusty needs to accept that. Katie does. Even Ry came around pretty quickly. Dusty is the one who has hang ups.” Lucas said, “I know that. I just see both sides of this.” I stopped by the lake and glared at him.

Lacy and Dylan walked up. Dylan skipped over when he saw us, “Hey guys...” Dylan trailed off looking from Lucas to me. Lacy asked, “Uhhh... what happened?” I turned to Lacy and grabbed her hand, “My mate thinks my brother is right. I defend our relationship to my brother, and then Lucas turned around and defends my brother to me.”

I turned and shot him a look, “It’s good to know that when push comes to shove, I’ll be standing up for our relationship alone. Lacy and I are going to have some girl time. Have fun with Dylan, you prick.” I popped Lacy and I back to the field Haley and I had been in.

I paced for several minutes Lacy commented, “That’s going to upset Lucas.” I turned, “Lucas can shove it, and go commiserate with my brother. I defended him, and he didn’t even say thanks for defending our relationship. CRAP!”

I took out my phone and called Haley. She answered with a laugh, “Go for fairy godmother.” I said, “I need you to do your treehouse thing for me. I’m where we had our chat.” Haley squealed, “I’ll be right back, husband of mine.” Eric growled.

He must have taken out his phone because I heard him growl Lucas' name before Haley popped back to me. She looked at me, "I sense we don't have the time to teach you this. What do you want your treehouse to look like?" I took out my phone and showed her the picture I'd looked at in school.

She held out her hands, and in minutes she had brought the picture to life. She grabbed my hand and Lacy's, then popped us into the treehouse. Lacey and I gaped. I told her, "You are good." Haley smiled, "Damn it... I forgot to say Bibbidi Bobbidi boo. One of these days I'll time that right. Are you ok?"

I sighed, "Lucas was a jerk." Haley frowned, "If only we got a notification when it was going to be asshole week in this realm. It seems to come around more often than once a year. Apparently, it's an every few months thing. I'm not mentally prepared for that. We will have to take a vacation to the Hackura realm now that we seem to have the schedule down." Lacy snorted.

I looked outside to see Lucas and Dylan staring up into the tree. I asked, "Can they not see us? Because they aren't looking where we are." Haley laughed, "You did not promise to include any of my brothers in a treehouse for you, and neither did I. They can't see us."

I bit my lip, "Who can find my treehouse?" Haley said, "Me, you, Katie, and Lacy." I laughed. Lacy laughed, "That's it?" Haley nodded, "Until Emmaline brings them inside, they can't hear or find us." Lacy said, "Damn, fairy's just go to a whole other level of needing space. That's not fair. We all need that, and fairies can actually get it done. You guys need to resource that service out. You'd made a lot of money with mated couples."

Haley glanced sharply at Lacy, "What do you mean?" Lacy laughed, "Anyone with a supernatural mate who can easily find them, would LOVE a space where no one can find them. Their mates wouldn't like it until there was a threat and they could just go to a treehouse where no one can find them." Haley considered it, "I'll speak to Aiden about that. I don't know if he would do it, but it could help with everyone hating full blooded fairies."

I commented, "I'm surprised you care about that." Haley shrugged, "I don't. I care about Aiden. He wants to harbor better relationships with other supernatural groups. Do you need anything else?" I groaned, "Advice?"

Haley sat down and gestured for me to go on. I gasped, "Oh gosh, I'm keeping you from your kids." Haley disagreed, "They are down for the night. What do you need?" I complained, "Why wasn't Lucas on my side?"

Haley rolled her eyes, “Because men like to fix things.” Both Lacy and I looked at each other. Lacy shrugged. I asked, “What?” Haley said, “Men have this innate need to fix things. You were upset, and Lucas didn’t like that. You wanted to talk about the problem and have him say you were right. Which, in case anyone is wondering, you are. Lucas heard a problem, and he wanted to fix it. You have to tell them you just need them to listen. Eric still doesn’t totally get it, but he’s getting better. In general, men just try to fix things. Astrid has many years of practice at this. She helped me with my relationship guidebook. I could give you a copy. When I make additions they are updated via charm.”

I groaned, “I don’t need him to fix it.” Haley smiled, “I know.” Lacy interjected, “I so want the relationship guidebook.” I laughed, “Me too.” Haley nodded and conjured a book for each of us. She said, “Just keep them hidden. We can’t have our significant others finding out about this book.” Lacy opened hers and started snickering. This was going to be good.

I turned my head realizing Lucas and Dylan were yelling at someone on the phone. I asked, “Do you know who they are talking to?” Haley shrugged, “He was talking to Eric when I left. Hold on.” Haley laughed, “They are talking to Eric.”

I asked, “Why is that funny?” Haley said, “They are mad I didn’t include them in the privacy spell. Well, they is a strong word.” Lacy corrected, “Lucas is mad.” Haley shrugged, “I told Eric I didn’t include him in mine at first, and no one said to include anyone in Emmaline’s treehouse.” Now I was laughing.

Haley conjured us ice cream. We sat and talked and laughed for a few hours. I asked, “Why doesn’t Logan want to double date with Lucas and me in this realm?” Haley winced, “Because Claudzilla tried to kill Torvi when Marcus brought her here for a date.”

Lacy and I looked at each other shock. When I recovered, I said, “I’m going to pop Lacy to her room, and then go to mine.” Haley looked outside, “Your mates are still down there.” Lacy crossed her arms, “Serves them right.” I laughed, “Dylan didn’t do anything.” Lacy said, “Dylan is always on Lucas’ side. Besides, he’s been linking me begging me to let them in.” I laughed.

Haley gave me a hug. I told her, “Thanks for including Katie.” She smiled and winked at me, “It’s something you would’ve done if you’d done this on your own.” I nodded, “Sharon wants in on our next badass girl gang day.” Haley laughed, “Who doesn’t? It’s quite popular. Marissa Kyle asked me to plan one for her friends...” She trailed off. She was worried about something. She waved her hand, “If you want Sharon

there, she can come. She was invited in the first place.” I nodded, “I’ll tell Garrett. Thanks, Haley.” With that she popped away.

I grabbed Lacy and popped her to her room. She winked at me, “Can you snap me into one of my outfits from the fashion show?” I nodded and snapped. She told me, “I’m linking Dylan.” She wiggled her eyebrows.

I laughed and popped to my room. I turned on the tub and poured some bubble bath into it. I had just stepped in when the door to our room bang open. Somehow, I didn’t think the locked bathroom door was going to stop Lucas.

Lucas spoke after trying to turn the knob, “You have two seconds to open this door.” I rolled my eyes, “I’m in the tub.” He broke the door down. I gaped at him, “What did you do that for?” Lucas’ eyes were pitch black, “NEVER do that again.” He wasn’t asking, he was demanding.

I raised an eyebrow, “I’m going to need you to be more specific.” Lucas said, “You walked away in the middle of a conversation and sat in some treehouse I couldn’t get in; FOR HOURS!” I shrugged, “Don’t be a jerk, and I won’t do that.” Lucas growled.

I said, “I suppose that’s not fair to you, Dominic. You didn’t do anything, Lucas did. So, I’m sorry you were worried because Lucas was a jerk. Next time, maybe you should come forward and we can talk instead.” That stopped Dominic for several moments.

I snapped and fixed the door to the bathroom. Dominic got in the bathtub fully dressed. I laughed, squealing, “Dominic! What are you doing?” He leaned over and kissed me, “I was worried.” I sighed, “You knew I was fine. I even took Lacy with me.”

Dominic admitted, “Monday is still weighing on me. Lucas doesn’t agree with Dustin, he just understands him.” I shrugged, “You guys are supposed to be on my side. I don’t need you to fix my problems. I need you to have my back.”

Lucas took back over, “I have your back! I was offering his side so you could see where he was coming from.” I said, “I didn’t need his side. I needed you to comfort me and tell me it would be ok. You wanted to fix it without giving me any time to get over the fact that he hurt me. I defended us to my brother. You could’ve at least pretended to be on my side for that fact alone.”

Lucas took a deep breath, “I am glad you defended us. Dustin needed a come to Jesus meeting. I had planned to speak to him. I just didn’t want you to fight with him after



you only just got him back.” I shrugged, “You can’t protect me from life, and you wouldn’t want me to get involved in something that was between you and Lacy.”

Lucas said, “Alright fine. Just please don’t do that because you're upset.” I asked teasingly, “Do what?” Lucas said, “Run and lock me out.” I countered, “It’s a habit to lock the bathroom door.” Lucas said, “Of our mind link. Don’t lock me out of mind link.”

I gaped at him, “What?” Lucas nodded, “There was a block I couldn’t get through to talk to you.” I looked away from him, “I’m sorry. I didn’t know I could do that, but I’ll talk to Haley about how to control it. I didn’t mean to shut you out like that.”

Lucas let that go, “I want you to show me the treehouse.” I nodded, “I will.” Mentally, I added eventually. He nodded and we got out. I snapped him a dry outfit and we climbed into bed holding each other.