

A Human's Guide to Surviving Magical Mishaps by Kit Bryan Chapter 9

Rule 9- When in doubt, assume everything is photoshopped.

Once we are settled and eating, I repeat my question about the glamours.

“Fae are required to wear glamours to blend in when in this realm. Many fae have very distinctive features which are best not advertised.” He tells me, that’s new information.

“Really? Will you tell me an example or is that not allowed?” Ashton shrugs.

“Things like a tail, some have horns or scales. There is a lot of variation among the fae. Far more varied than humans at least.” I can’t help but stare. This is certainly a lot of new information. I was sure I would have read it somewhere if it wasn’t. I work to compose myself and wonder how many people would kill to be in my place right now. I have an actual fae sitting on my couch eating take out and answering my questions.

“What about you, do you have a tail or something?” I ask. It is half intended as a joke, but I really am curious. If this perfect-looking face isn’t his real one, I would really like to know so that it might become less tempting.

“No tail. I have a glamour over my eyes, head, ears, and my skin.” I raise an eyebrow. That’s a lot more than I expected. Practically everything except his hair as far as I can tell.

“Can I see? Or is that not allowed?” I ask cautiously.

“It is not allowed. But there’s no one here to object as long as you promise not to say anything.” My disappointment at what I thought was a refusal turns to excitement and

Ashton winks at me.

“I won’t tell anyone, cross my heart.” I promise. Ashton tilts his head, confused.

"It just means I'm sincere in my promise. I think it used to be a religious thing. Like cross my heart and hope to God. But now pretty much everyone uses it." I inform him, predicting the reason for his confusion. Ashton nods, his expression serious.

"Very well." He closes his eyes for a second, and for a moment, he seems blurry. Like a badly

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taken photo, **except** he is real and sitting right in front of me. Then he comes back into focus, and I **gasp**. His skin **is** COVERED in swirling patterns, almost like tattoos except they **are** white. They could almost be scars, but his skin is too flawless, too smooth, and the patterns are too delicate. Even his face is covered in the pale markings. There is nothing feminine about them; they remind me of Celtic knotwork, seemingly endless and interlocking designs. His eyes also change; they are brighter and almost seem like they are glowing. There is no way I can miss the moss-green colour of them now. It is so clear. His ears are elongated **into** the stereotypical elf ears, and I find I really want to touch them to confirm for myself they are real. Peeking out from his dark **hair**, I can see what look like two small, dark horns, maybe only a couple of inches long and barely noticeable past his hair. Aside from these changes, though, Ashton's base features remain the same. He has the same dark hair and handsome **face**. His perfect abs are apparently also real. I am almost mad about it. I had been expecting him to be less attractive, but the designs on his skin are amazing, and his eyes seem almost hypnotising. This is completely unfair. I am going to develop an inferiority complex.

Ashton seems a little uncomfortable under my scrutiny. "Katerina..." he trails off and I take a deep breath, composing myself.

"Wow, that is not what I expected. It's really cool." Ashton seems upset by my response; he blurs for a moment, and when he comes back into focus, he looks human again. Well, like an insanely attractive human at least. A movie star or model, after Photoshop because I doubt

even the most handsome human is as flawless as this fae without some kind of makeup or

editing.

“You dislike how I look without the glamour. I apologise; I had hoped it would not offend you.” Ashton seems quite hurt by this. I am completely baffled. What did I do to give him the impression I don’t like how he looks!?

“What do you mean? I didn’t say that at all!” I object. Ashton tilts his head.

“You said it is cool. Cool is the opposite of hot, is it **not**?” I shake my head harder than is

strictly necessary.

“No! I mean, well if you are talking about temperature then **yes**. But when talking about appearance? No, it’s a compliment. It can also mean... um... like, fashionable or attractive.” Ashton sighs in frustration.

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“English is confusing. Why must **every** word have ten different meanings? And how am I to know which meaning is actually intended? It all seems rather absurd.” He complains and I

laugh.

“It is rather absurd really. You have to take into account the context. For example, just now it was highly unlikely that I was giving commentary on your temperature, so you can assume I meant to comment on your appearance.” He isn’t the only person to hate English. It’s kind of a crazy language, particularly if you didn’t grow up with it.

“I understand. Ah, thank you for your compliment then.” I smile at him.

“You’re welcome. Can all Fae make glammers?” I continue my questioning.

“No, but those who cannot will often pay others to make one on their behalf should they have need of one.” Oh, so it’s something you can buy. What would it be like to wear a glamour? I wonder if Ashton would let me try one sometime. Then again, if removing his glamour is against the rules then that might be pushing it a little too far. I wouldn’t want to get him in trouble or anything **if** someone found out.

“So, what exactly is a glamour?” I ask.

“It is like a layer of magic that covers me. It shows what I wish it to show.” he answers.

“That doesn’t sound too complicated. It just shows what you want?” Ashton shrugs.

“Sort of, it is a little more difficult than that. I must focus on what I want it to show and keep that image in the back of my mind. It is distracting, and almost impossible to maintain while sleeping.” He adds.

“Ah, that makes sense. So you look like yourself when you’re sleeping then?” Ashton nods. I consider his words. Holding a glamour sounds like it might get tiring after a while.

“If it’s so distracting then you don’t need to do it when it’s just us right? You may as well

relax.” I point out. Ashton hesitates.

“It will not make you uncomfortable?” He asks. I **shake** my head, determined not to make this

weird or to make him more uncomfortable.

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“No, why would it?” Ashton shrugs.

“Other fae who have visited the human realm have reported that many humans seem uncomfortable or upset around fae, particularly **if** they look different from humans or if they seem to be using magic.” Ashton explains.

“Oh, well, I’m not like that. The way you look doesn’t change my opinion of you. This isn’t my real hair colour, but having natural hair wouldn’t change who I am underneath it.” Ashton beams at me. He must have liked my answer. He blurs again and returns to his natural appearance. I have to fight to not stare at

his gorgeous eyes... Or his abs... or really any part of him. The guy is the best kind of eye candy, even if he does have horns.

"I completely agree. I was wondering about your hair. It was reported that human hair colours were rather limited. I do not recall blue being one of the colours." I laugh.

"I dye my hair blue. It's just chemicals that stick to my hair and change its colour. I have to redo it every time my hair grows out or when the chemicals begin to fade off. My hair is blue because I like it and I choose to wear it this way." I confirm.

"Do you dislike your natural hair colour?" Ashton asks curiously.

"No, not really. I just like this colour better. Maybe one day I will dye it a different colour, purple or pink maybe. Or maybe I'll let it go back to being blonde. But for now, I like it blue. If I want to have a serious career one day I will probably have to swap to a more natural colour. Some people can be very judgmental about bright hair colours. It's kind of silly, but there's nothing I can do about it." I have to actively remind myself to stop talking. I am blabbing, feeling slightly awkward around Ashton.

"That does seem like a silly thing to be concerned about." Ashton agrees, and I shoot him at smile.