



Elemental Mage

****Elowen POV****

I was still trying to process what the actual fuck had just happened when we handed Lachlan a to go cup and offered him a ride. He blinked, like we'd just handed him a damn puppy, then beamed.

"Ye serious? Just like that? Ye lot move fast." His accent could melt snow, and apparently panties too, judging by the way Taya was eyeing him with an amused smirk.

Ash just grunted. "We're on a timeline."

Dax snorted. "More like a fuckin' prophecy scavenger hunt."

Lachlan laughed, that rich, rolling kind of laugh that made you want to grin even if you were in a shit mood. "Aye, then let's grab my shite and I'll join yer fate parade."

We drove a winding five minutes through the Highland backroads until we pulled up to his tiny, moss covered cottage tucked beneath a grove of birch trees. It looked like something out of a damn folklore book. Lachlan jogged up the stone path, stepped inside, and two minutes later, emerged with a trunk that looked bigger than he was.

He waved his hand, muttered something in old Gaelic, and the trunk shrank down and zipped into his palm like a damn Pokéball. Jace let out a low whistle. "That's... sexy magic."

"I try," Lachlan winked, sliding into the SUV. Taya leaned over and whispered to me, "I like him. He's funny. And hot. You're gonna have your hands full, bitch."

"Like I don't already," I muttered, catching Ash glaring at Lachlan's knee brushing mine. Daxon caught it too but rolled his eyes instead. Lachlan just grinned at both of them. "If ye two keep starin' like that, I'll start thinkin' ye fancy me."

Ash blinked. Daxon barked a laugh. I choked on my fucking coffee.

The strike team in the front of the SUV radioed in to the Alpha King, and by the time we pulled up to the bed and breakfast again, we had the official word: Lachlan MacCrae, elemental mage and sarcastic Highland himbo, was welcome to join us in America.

He'd never left Scotland before. So naturally, he looked around the parking lot, lifted his coffee, and said, "Well then. Let's go piss off destiny, shall we?"

And I swear to the gods, my heart did a little flippy thing.

We clambered into the bed and breakfast like a bunch of half feral magical delinquents, boots tracking mud, voices too loud, energy off the charts. The moon was creeping higher in the sky, and I had less than an hour until I had to march into the woods alone and possibly detonate my entire soul.

No big deal. Just a typical Tuesday.

Dinner was already laid out for us in the cozy dining room, roasted chicken, herbed potatoes, warm bread, and something that smelled suspiciously like whisky, spiked apple pie. The innkeeper clearly had no idea the level of supernatural chaos she was housing, and bless her for it.

We all flopped into our seats around the big wooden table. I slid between Daxon and Ash, as usual. Rylen and Taya were attached at the hip like the glowing little mated dorks they were, and Jace parked himself across from me with a shit eating grin. Lachlan took the last seat like he'd been part of our mess from day one.

He took one look around the table, at the strike team, the lingering magical buzz in the air, the way Ash kept checking me like I might burst into flames, and raised an eyebrow.

"Alright," he said, slow and calm, his voice thick with that Highland lilt, "I think now might be a good time for someone to tell me what in the bloody fuckin' hell I've gotten meself into."

I snorted and reached for a bread roll. "You ready for the long version or the short version?"

"Short first. Then I'll ask questions and panic quietly later."

Fair.

I leaned back and looked him in the eye. "I'm a hybrid. Half wolf, half fae.

My dad was the Beta of this pack, and my mom was a fae noble. Their love broke a thousand year old law, so she got locked up in the fae realm, and I was hidden in plain sight with my memories erased.”

Lachlan blinked. “That’s... nae short.”

“Shut up, I’m getting there.”

Taya snorted into her drink.

I went on: “I’m the vessel of the Moon Goddess. Chosen. Marked. Meant to reunite the species that have been segregated for centuries. I’m supposed to find five mates, one from each major magical line, and bond with them to fix the balance and prevent a literal magical apocalypse.”

His brows raised. “Sounds a wee bit dramatic.”

“Tell me about it.”

“And the rest of them?” He motioned around the table.

“Daxon’s my werewolf mate. Ashrian’s my vampire. Taya’s also moon touched like me and mated to Rylen, our elite enforcer. Jace is our sarcastic pain in the ass. You just met everyone else.”

He took a slow sip of his drink. “And now I’m the mage mate.”

“Looks like it,” I said, my voice softening. “You felt it. I felt it. Lyssira, my wolf, is still drunk on you.”

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He grinned and shook his head. "I always figured I was special, but damn."

Jace coughed into his potatoes. "Don't get cocky. We've already got one diva."

"Speak for yourself," Ash muttered.

"Bite me, Nosferatu."

"Gladly."

Lachlan laughed a full belly laugh, like the sound cracked the tension right in half. "Christ, y'all are a fuckin' disaster. I love it already."

I smiled, warm and real, even though my chest was tight with nerves.

Then I pulled the little corked bottle from my jacket pocket and held it up. "Speaking of disasters... I have to drink this under the moonlight. Alone. Morrigan gave it to me, she's a seer, a goddess-blessed one. When the moon hits its apex, I have to return to her."

"What does the potion do?" he asked, suddenly serious.

"It strips the last of the spell that's been hiding my fae side. Unlocks everything. All my magic, my power, my birthright. But..." I swallowed hard. "If anyone touches me after I drink it, before the ritual ends, our bond could break. So I have to do it alone."

His expression darkened. "I don't like that."

"No one does," Daxon muttered.

"But it has to be done," I said firmly. "This is how I become who I'm meant to be."

Lachlan looked at me for a long moment, then finally nodded. "Then we'll be close. Just say the word and we'll come runnin', bond or no bond."

"I'll be fine," I lied. "I've got snacks."

The rest of dinner was quieter, a bit more thoughtful. We passed dishes, cracked a few jokes, and let the tension sit like fog around us. When I stood up to gather my gear, blanket, knife, and a packet of peanut M&Ms because I'm not an animal, the room followed me with their eyes.

I gave them a crooked grin. "Don't wait up."

Then I headed out the back door and into the waiting night.



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