



**The
Halfblood
Club
Book 2**

AFFINITY
VIOLA GRACE

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BOOK TWO OF THE HALF-BLOOD
CLUB

BY

VIOLA GRACE

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To anyone with a close group of friends. You know, the ones that you can see every week or once a year, and it is like you were never apart.

PROLOGUE

Moonlit skin writhed on the silken sheets. The couple on the bed had been twisted together for hours, their magic swirling in the air around them in a wild cloud.

His lips caressed her throat while his hips worked in a steady beat. He groaned his release against her ivory flesh as his body shuddered in completion. Councilor Wyx fell to the side of his companion and closed his eyes as he struggled to regain his breath.

"So my granddaughter will be tested by the council?" Isowyn fixed her gaze on her companion and arched one brow. Sweat ran down her sides and coated her willowy limbs with a fine sheen that made her glow in the darkness. Her silvery hair was tucked behind one delicately pointed ear.

"Yes my dear Isowyn, at the next full moon your granddaughter will be brought before the council." He opened his golden eyes and met her steady gaze. "You do realize however that I am not guaranteeing her passing the tests, only that

they will be administered.”

“I understand that, Wyx, but I need her to have this chance. She is all that I have, and there is no guarantee that Erak will ever reproduce again.” She brought her lips down to meet his and in a few seconds of dueling her tongue with his he moved to cover her once again.

“A pleasure doing business with you, Isowyn.” His hips rocked forward and his turgid member slid home once again.

She arched her back, welcoming her fey lover. This was what her kind did best. Those of the faerie were very good at sex—after all, they had plenty of time to practice.

Her granddaughter needed to know the pleasures of her own kind.

CHAPTER ONE

“Ok Gran. How is this outfit?” Esmerelda Hawks pivoted in front of the mirror, her aqua silk dress flaring out at the hem, then drifting to gently caress her legs once again. The scooped neck showed a hint of her impressive cleavage, but the long flowing sleeves gave the dress a demure cast. She knew her grandmother would hate it.

“Don’t you have anything that shows more skin?” Isowyn’s voice came through the mirror. She was always a little exasperated by her granddaughter’s choice of clothing. She prided herself on being in the height of fashion at all times. Esmerelda’s fashion sense had never ceased to cause her despair. It showed every time that they were together and she tried to convince Esmy to let her buy her some new outfits.

Esmy rolled her eyes at her reflection. “Gran, it doesn’t matter what I wear. These tests are only to confirm that I have the talents of a fey,

remember?"

It was amazing that a voice that was reminiscent of chiming bells could be so condescending. "It always matters what you wear in the courts and clan functions. You know how appearance fixated the fey are. You have enough of a disadvantage being born to a human without looking too much like one." It was another of her disappointments that Esmey hadn't taken after her father's golden good looks. As far as she was aware, Esmerelda had ended up on the human side of the coin toss.

"No kidding," Esmey muttered under her breath. Then louder, "Gran, I just wanted to warn you, I am going to drop the glamour as soon as I get into the council hall. I look a little different than I did the last time you saw me."

"Nonsense, I am looking at you right now. You look like your mother, but you have your father's complexion." Isowyn was impatient now. "I will see you in precisely three hours. Don't be late."

As the mirror flared and then stilled, Esmey sighed. Her grandmother had not seen her true face since she had learned to disguise it. That had been over twenty years ago. She had overlaid her more delicate features with a slightly sturdier, more human version. She downplayed her height and flattened out her figure with the aid of magic.

The glamour she learned to use let her run and play with other children from the age of seven. No

one could tell that her lineage was not completely human unless she let them see the real her. As her power grew she took on the task of cloaking her friends in the half-blood club, a group of women which George had assembled after they all met at a county fair. Each of the others had a reason similar to hers for wanting to blend in.

George wanted to choose, not be chosen. As a dragon of impressive strength, she was a desirable mate for any of the males in the clans and councils. Her mother's choice had been to hide her daughter from the notice of the dragon council.

Arabel had mated while in dragon form, then laid an egg. When the egg hatched forty years later, Graylin—George—had been born fully grown with all of her mother's knowledge. Her father did not even know she existed and Arabel had no intention that he ever know. His position in the High Council of Realm would make her daughter a prize for any of the shape shifters of the dragon clan.

Though George was physically an adult, she was emotionally immature when they met and the girls had formed an instant bond. This was in part because, even though George was only fifteen years out of the egg, she could drive. It opened the boundaries for travel, shopping, and mischief for the club.

In contrast, Jinx was relatively free of obligation. Her mother, Emily, was born to a

werewolf clan, but left when she was eighteen to join the mundane world. As a beta female, she had the enhanced senses, but was unable to shift her form to that of a wolf. Her rank in the clan was a low beta, so no one challenged her decision to leave. She took a job working in a bar as a waitress and fell in love with the bartender. Two years later her daughter was born. Emily's clan had no interest in the half-breed child and aside from inviting Emily alone to the annual events and meetings they had no further contact with the family.

Melissande—Jinx—developed her peculiar talent at the age of ten. She could write spells. New spells. Spells that no one had even conceived of before.

She was an archive. All magical knowledge was hers. The trick was that she could not use it herself. She could only write the spells that her friends requested, or the ones that were dictated by the moment.

Jinx had needed to hide strictly because of what she was, not who. Having her as a clan or council member would instantly give any clan an advantage over the others. Her ability to create new spells—never before recorded—was one that occurred every thousand years. The last Archive was locked in a room by the Magus Guild and forced to create new spells on command.

Jinx did not want to end up that way.

Hex was helping Jinx. She provided her with wards on all of her properties and her car. Hex was an extremely powerful witch, born to a mother who had minor talents in healing and a father who had been destined to rule his clan until he met Isobel. When Isobel turned up pregnant, Sirius left his clan to marry her. His arranged marriage was cancelled and he was disowned by the rest of the Marlin family. When Izzy Junior was born, he was ecstatic. His little darling was the jewel of his existence. When she began to display hints of magical talent, he took it upon himself to teach her everything he knew. Soon she eclipsed her teacher.

When Hookey met her at a fair, they formed an immediate friendship, giggling and making up names that would not trigger any *listeners* from either the fairy or warlock councils. This let them discuss magic freely.

Esmey smiled as she thought about her friends. Hex was based on the German word for witch, Jinx because her luck seemed to be destined to be bad, with men, magic and any government paperwork she happened to touch. She had been audited more times than anyone Esmey had ever known. George had gotten her name from the tale of Saint George and the Dragon. They had all had a good laugh at the tale, as the true history of the encounter had been somewhat skewed. The dragon had been female, and George had

definitely not been a saint. Enough said.

Hex had christened her Hookey the time that the boys from the local high school had begun to flirt with them and Esmey had used her glamour to turn invisible. The boys had been startled, to say the least. Hex ended up using a memory spell that Jinx had written for just such an occasion, sending the boys on their way.

Esmey sighed again. Watching herself in the mirror was causing melancholy. Everything ended. Even the closed-in, tight knit group of friends. They would no longer be in a bubble alone, hidden from the outside world. They would be open, exposed and vulnerable, and it was all her fault. Shaking her head, she checked her watch. Two hours and forty five minutes to go. She had better be on her way.

She got into her car, a sensible navy sedan that made her grandmother cringe. Seatbelt in place, she began the two hour drive to the Realm High Council Hall.

Two hours and fifteen minutes later, she sat in the parking lot of the High Realm Magical Council. After turning down what most would see as a dead end lane, she was through the quicksilver portal and in Realm. It was an alternate dimension used for centuries to hide the more exotic magical species and those who had to flee persecution in their homes. Different species

had different means of arriving in Realm. Some used mirrors and Esmy could as well, if she so chose. But she preferred to drive. It took longer and helped her to steady her nerves.

Only thirty minutes until the moment when she dropped the glamour. She really hoped that her friends were somewhere safe when it happened.

CHAPTER TWO

She dawdled in the courtyard as long as she could, trying to still her shaking hands. When she could delay no longer, she walked into the Fey hall and met her grandmother. Her dress billowed and swirled around her in the magical currents that filled the hall. It was a wild and frantic pulse in her veins. Gooseflesh broke out on her arms and legs as her personal magic tried to fight the invasive touch. It really didn't like the touch of the strange magic and she had to fight to control the urge to turn and run. Or burst into magical flame, whatever.

One of the most fantastic and graceful of creatures ever created bore down on her and embraced her.

"You're right on time, Sweetie. The council is just convening now. Are you ready?" Isowyn was stunning in a deeply cut midnight gown that left nothing to the imagination. Her silvery hair flowed down her back in a metallic wave. Every

inch the elven lady, she was the picture of supernatural grace and breeding. Her eyes were warm as she looked over her human-seeming granddaughter though—she genuinely wanted full rights and acknowledgements for Esmerelda.

“Yes, I’m ready.” With a deep breath, she dropped the glamour that she had held for the last twenty years and walked into the council hall. Isowyn’s gasp followed her back as she strode to meet her fate. She felt a frisson of guilt for deceiving her grandmother all these years, but it had been for her own benefit. The elves would have claimed her and her talents if she had been visible earlier.

The walls of the council hall seem to flutter in reaction to her power. The delicate stone lattice-work and carved flowers moved as if in a summer breeze. The architecture was a crowning achievement for a species that had a short attention span.

All eyes turned to her as she walked down the center path cleared by the gathered assembly. At the far end of the hall was the triumvirate that she was about to face. Jaws dropped as she glided up the pathway and stopped in front of the councilors.

“Esmerelda Hawks?” Councilor Wyx was astonished at the appearance of the woman in front of him. Her features were all fey. She did not

match the description that Isowyn had given him, but with her puzzled grandmother trailing behind her, there was no one else she could be. Waves of midnight hair rippled in a magical current, her delicately pointed ears alternately revealed and concealed. Her glowing pearl skin framed the cat-like emerald eyes that almost seemed too large for her features. Her lips were pure human though, full and pouty, drawing every masculine eye in the room.

She drew up her shoulders, looked him straight in the eye and answered him. "Yes. I am Esmerelda Hawks, daughter of Erak Elsmeth. As my grandmother, Isowyn Elsmeth has arranged, I am here to be tested by the fey council." She curtsied deeply to the one male and two females sitting at the council table.

Esmy assumed from the intent way they were looking at her, that they were the ones about to take her magic apart. She wondered how they were going to deal with her special talent when it came up in the process.

A murmur of interest behind her reminded her that it wasn't a private matter and she sighed in resignation. The audience in the chamber was a nuisance, but they would move back once the fireworks began.

The male who seemed to be the spokesperson of the council finally made the introductions. Most

likely, he was the elf that her grandmother had seduced to get this hearing. "Yes, of course. I am Councilor Wyx, this is Councilor Madeel and to my left is Councilor Treyla. Treyla will be conducting your tests. Are you ready to proceed?"

"I am." Her gem green eyes were solemn in her pearlescent skin. This was not going to be pleasant. Treyla looked far to cheerful for this solemn testing.

Looking curious, yet condescending Wyx announced, "Councilor Treyla, will you please begin?"

"Of course. Esmerelda, will you please step forward?" The councilor rose from her seat at the table and brought a number of instruments out of a rosewood box that was on a podium behind her chair.

As the first test for her power level began she took a deep breath and co-operated, slowly. It would only extend the testing process and give her a few more precious moments until her special talent was exposed. She jumped through every hoop they gave her. Literal and figurative, several of the tests involved illusions inside circles.

By the end of the testing, Esmy was sweating. Magic was swirling loose in the room, sparking against the walls and bouncing onto the floors. The magic returned to Esmerelda when it had finished its rounds, then started its journey again. She shivered to the bone with each returning pulse

of energy. Her magic was mixing with that of the fey in the room and returning to her supercharged. It was actually almost arousing, which wasn't all that surprising as the bulk of her magic was sexual in nature.

Greenery was springing up inside the hallways, wrapping around tables and writhing over chairs. The building was delighted to have her magic within it and had begun to hum with the power.

Spectators from the fey community had gathered in the gallery surrounding the hall. As her magic was taken through its paces, they ooohed, and aahed, clapped and whistled. Apparently entertainment was in short supply. When it was all over, the councilors drew together and consulted for a few minutes. Wyx darted speculative glances at her while Treyla discussed her findings about Esmy's particular branch of talent.

She could only make out a few words here and there, but she thought she heard Wyx ask if Treyla was sure about the affinity. Affinity...huh. That would explain what happened when she got too close to a fey guy. Or any guy really.

"Esmerelda. Would you object to a test of Treyla's findings?" There was an unwholesome look in his eyes. This was too creepy. She had seen that look in human eyes before, but it wasn't that...hungry. He had obviously heard of her talent before, and was looking forward to testing

it. Since this talent didn't pop up frequently in magical circles, he wanted to try her himself. Definitely creepy.

Her mind dredged up her basic self-defense classes as he approached. "No, but I would like you to remember that this is only a demonstration. Nothing further will occur." Her voice was firm. She gestured for Wyx to come closer.

As he moved closer, Esmy felt the change coming on. Her eyes were lightening and her breasts were shrinking in size until they were pert B cups. Her skin took on a golden tone and her hair began to ripple and twist into a shining green cape. She was turning into his fantasy woman right before his eyes, and his eyes were hungry.

"That's close enough. Councilor Wyx, that is close enough!" She sent a blast of power through one hand and he was flung back against the wall. As soon as he was five feet away from her, her body returned to its normal state. Pale skin, blue-black hair, large breasts and rounded hips. She sighed deeply and looked at the other two councilors. They looked back with pity in their expressions.

Applause and whistles were filling the chamber. Those who had seen her shift forms and had understood what they were seeing quickly filled in the rest of the masses.

Affinity was a polite word for a female who had the talents of the ancient sirens. They had

been able to draw in all men, but not by singing as the legends told. When a male approached one of these creatures, she transformed into his ideal woman. It was a mating response that was out of her control. The ideal mate for one of these particular women was a man for whom she did not change. It was the holy grail for fey with this particular talent, she knew. She had been looking for it her entire life.

Esmerelda pondered the ramifications of being outed as a siren. With the audience in the above gallery spreading gossip as fast as they could, there was no way she could go back to her non-descript life.

She looked over at Isowyn and found her on her cell phone, talking urgently. It had always been a great mystery to Esmy that the cell phones worked in Realm. She hung up quickly, looked over at the councilor still slumped on the floor, and the audience talking in a muffled roar in the gallery above.

“May I take her now?” Isowyn was deferential to the female councilors. They nodded quickly. Isowyn grabbed Esmerelda’s hand and pulled her out of the meeting room in a flurry of skirts. She took her to the transportation chamber and keyed open a mirror. Esmy smiled for a moment—Jinx had created the mirror spell specific for the fey transport, Hex had tested it, and George had marketed it to the clans without anyone learning

the origin of the extremely handy spell. Before that, only Warders had been able to use the mirrors.

They stepped through the mirror as it rippled into a silver pool. On the other side, Esmerelda found herself at her grandmother's house. The elegant proportions and graceful décor gave it away the instant that she saw it. That and the wards that kept visiting neighbours at bay.

"I think that it would be a good idea if you stayed for a few days. We have some matters to discuss. And we want the fey community to calm down after the grand announcement being made tonight. It has been centuries since a siren walked the halls of Realm."

CHAPTER THREE

“I also need to tell you that your father has been invited here to help us come up with a battle plan.” Isowyn cringed at the words, even though she knew that Esmerelda needed no more surprises. “I called him from the council chambers.”

“Why? Why does he have to be here?” Esmyn had her arms crossed and was scowling at her, a face that Isowyn hadn’t seen since her granddaughter was five.

“He knows the court, knows the warriors available, and as a parting note, he is your father.” Her arms crossed over her chest as well and she glared right back at her granddaughter.

“What would we need warriors for? We are not planning on staging a coup.” Her voice was still petulant, her lower lip was out so far, Isowyn was tempted to pinch it.

“They will come in very handy.” That was the last time they spoke until the door chimed and

Erak Elsmeth entered his mother's home.

She grabbed his arm and dragged him into her rooms to brief him on the status of his offspring.

* * * *

For a mature elf, he was rather petulant. He strode into his mother's private rooms and grimaced at her where she sat at her writing desk, making a list. "Alright, Mother. What do you want?" Erak stood scowling at the feminine room around him. His mother's chambers were unmistakable. He walked forward and stood glowering at her as she primped in the mirror on her desk as she paused in her scribbling. There were mirrors in every room — Isowyn loved her own reflection.

She pinned him with a no-nonsense look. "I want you to do your duty by your daughter."

That was the last thing that he had expected. "What? Why would I do that? She is perfectly happy in the human world, and she blends in perfectly." He had only seen her a handful of times since her birth. She couldn't have changed that much.

"Not anymore. The council has ordered her to desist from using glamour to conceal her features. Apparently she has been altering her appearance for years."

This was beyond strange. "Mother, why is the fey council giving her orders at all?"

"She was tested today." Isowyn looked down and fidgeted.

He crossed his arms over his chest and tried to stare her down. "What was the result?"

"You might want to sit down for this." She looked a little sheepish.

He sought out a chair and was going to take her advice. "Why?"

His mother baldly stated, "She has Affinity, for males."

Erak missed the chair he had been aiming for and crashed ignominiously onto the floor.

* * * *

From two floors away, Esmyn heard her father's roar of rage. "Oh, goody." She paused for a moment, then continued to create the flower arrangement that she had been working on. She would have to face Erak at dinner, and that was soon enough.

She didn't see him until dinner was served, as she had anticipated. He stared at her throughout the evening meal, saying not a word. After dessert, he leaned back and began the inquisition.

"Esmerelda, how long have you been concealing your appearance? I know it has been some time since we have seen each other, but you looked somewhat different five years ago."

"Oh, since I was about eleven. Right about when the hormones kicked in and I stopped looking human." Her face was bland.

He leaned forward intently. "What about the Affinity, how long since you developed that talent?"

"When I was seventeen. I have had the pleasure of hiding from men for the last eleven years." She shrugged and reached for her coffee. "I understand family members are immune, so lucky you."

"So you have no lover at this time?" Erak met her gaze and waited for a response.

"Uh, no. I don't get out much. And this is getting weird for a father-daughter chat."

"How many lovers have you had, total?" He seemed resigned, and vaguely amused.

Esmy was reminded quite forcefully that the fey were very open about sex. "You honestly expect me to answer that?"

"Yes, Esmerelda, how many?" He crossed his arms over his chest and leaned back in his chair.

"Two. Only two."

"Were they both human?"

"Yes. Of course." What the hell was he getting at?

Isowyn looked at her son. "That leaves a minimum of three. Can you choose three?"

"Sure, I have had some in mind since you informed me. The first is a safe start at any rate."

“Three, three what exactly?” This was getting out of hand. What were they talking about?

They both paused and looked at her as if she had no business interrupting their discussion.

“Three candidates for your consort. If you are to avoid every single horny fey who wants a fantasy fuck, you will need someone in your bed.” Erak was amused. “Your grandmother called me in because we need to make a list of worthy males, contact them to see if they are willing, and choose the candidates.

“As your parent, I have the privilege of selecting the candidates. In fey families, the parents usually pick the first five lovers—you have had two—that leaves us three to choose for you.”

Her head was spinning. She couldn’t believe it, her father and grandmother were actually pimping her out for her own safety. She dropped her head into her hands and breathed deeply to stop the blushing. The fey society was a little too open for her peace of mind.

With a chipper falsetto she asked from her hidden position, “So how are you going to lure these specimens into my clutches?”

Isowyn looked over at her like she was a slow child. “We will have a dinner party of course.”

* * * *

After dinner Esmey went for a walk in the garden out back. She had to admit, the fey knew their gardens. Flowers that never bloomed at night were shedding radiant fragrance through the still warmth of the night, and the night flowers had a soft glow to illuminate the pathways.

"How is your mother?" Erak had slid to within a few feet of her without setting off her personal wards. It was something only her family and the club could do.

"She is fine. She knew that I was going to be in trouble when I agreed to the appointment."

"Did she know about your glamour?"

"Of course. She is my mother. That and the fact that Mom can smell magic a mile away, she has known for years. She even showed me how to cast my first illusion." Esmey smiled in remembrance. She didn't know why she had wanted to look like the sofa, but her mother had helped her to make it happen.

Sarah had always been supportive of her daughter. Even when the elven blood had outed itself.

"Father, why did you choose Mom? There must have been more attractive women there—it was a fey festival after all." She had never asked that question before, and the fact that she had asked it now spoke to her unsettled state of mind.

"Your mother had a smile that brought the room to life and invited one to laugh with her. I

wanted to bask in that light for that one time." His hand reached out to ruffle her hair. "I had no idea that she was fertile at the time."

Esmy shifted from foot to foot. This was the hard question. "Do you regret my birth?" She turned to meet his golden eyes with her clear green ones. Neither of them looked away as they took the measure of each other.

He answered, "No. I regret the circumstance, but not the result. You have always been an honored member of this family, and have brought honor to us by your very existence." A wicked smiled broke free. "Plus, knowing that I am a fertile male has made me very popular in the intervening years."

She couldn't help but laugh. This was the father that she had always known. Consumed with the pleasure of the moment.

* * * *

Erak spent the better part of a week finding males who were interested in being his daughter's lover. Her human blood made it more difficult than it should have been, but still he managed to lure the required three with images of his daughter sent via the mirror.

He then had to face the inevitable. Explaining to his daughter about taking feys as lovers.

CHAPTER FOUR

The first candidate for her affections was named Aegar. He was extremely dark, and very handsome. His talent was speed. In battle, none could move faster than he. Esmý really hoped that he didn't translate his speed to the bedroom.

His eyes were black within black and his hair was a rippling navy blue that wound past his shoulders to his hips.

Across the length of the table, his midnight eyes met hers, and smiled. She smiled back. The polite conversation worked on throughout the evening, and when Aegar announced that it was time for him to leave he held out his hand for her to join him.

Perplexed, she took it. She followed him out into the night. A horse of midnight with flaming eyes was waiting for him. For them. He lifted her into the saddle and swung up behind her. Seated thusly, with her thighs plastered on top of his, she could definitely feel his interest. While one hand

controlled the reins, he let the other roam over her breasts and belly.

“What are you doing?” Her voice was a little breathy, even to her own ears.

“Taking you home with me. Your father has asked me to take you as my lover. I have accepted the honor.” His mouth was bent near her ear and his breath snaked inside to send a shiver through her.

“Well, as long as we are clear on the details.”

His laughter rang out across the crystal clear night. He spurred his steed to increase speed and her laughter joined his while their hair whipped around them.

The heat of the animal and the elf beneath her thighs had her blood singing in her veins. A suspicious dampness made itself known to her and she blushed, glad that the wind gave her cheeks an excuse for their rosy glow.

Soon they reached his home. A stone edifice rising out of the nearby hills. The full moon was rising behind the house and gave the whole night a surreal feel.

He carried her off the horse and through the dark house, into his bedroom. Very romance novel cover.

He carefully laid her on the bed, then loosened her gown and slid it off of her shoulders. It caught on her breasts and he stopped to admire her caught in her own clothing. She gleamed in the

dim starlight coming through the windows. A few brief tugs and the gown was off, her only defense was a scrap of silk between her thighs and a lacy bra.

He bent over her, fully clothed. His shirt rasped against the soft flesh of her belly as he kissed her. His hands smoothed away the scrap of fabric at her hips, whisking it off and to the floor.

In reflex, one of her hands tried to shield her secrets. The other was mysteriously fisted in his hair. Holding him close for their kiss.

His long fingers tangled with the defenders to the gate at the juncture of her thighs. Sliding between them and touching the mysterious flesh within. Her hand relaxed and his fingers stayed with hers, learning her folds and how a grazing touch on her neck sent a surge of wetness to the core of her. He kept up his ministrations to her mouth, teasing his way inside and stroking her tongue into joining the play.

Her bra disappeared sometime after she began to twist in his arms. His fingers were on their own now, delving into her velvet heat to draw out the moisture. She was flushed and panting. When he finally discarded his own clothing and returned to her, gleaming bronze in the moonlight, he covered her with his body and entered her with a groan. She herself groaned at the release of the feeling of emptiness within her. Until that moment, she hadn't understood the craving within her to be

filled by a hot and hard cock.

He began to thrust deeply into her, stroking her breasts and gnawing at her neck as he plunged his hips in a steady beat. Soon she felt him moving faster, and took matters into her own fingers. She slid two between their heaving bodies and began to caress the nub at the top of her sex with every shift of his hips. A few moments later, she was bucking and crying out her satisfaction, and he followed shortly after grunting and shuddering with his own crisis.

He let his torso collapse onto hers and she wrapped her limbs around him as their heartbeats returned to normal. Aegar lifted his head after long minutes and gave her a sweet and tender kiss, then disengaged their bodies in a slow slide.

He tucked her against him and fell asleep.

When she woke in the morning, she turned to look in the mirror and sighed. Her eyes had changed and her midnight hair had golden streaks running through it. Her breasts were the same, but her narrow waist was even narrower.

He was not the one for her. She had transformed into his ideal, and it was not what she wanted in a long term mate.

She kissed him awake, explained her transformation and asked him to take her back to Isowyn's.

She briefed her grandmother when she got back and waited for the next candidate to be presented.

Affinity

CHAPTER FIVE

Tyne was even more handsome than Aegar. His talent was darkness—he could summon it at will. He was pale, with piercing blue eyes and golden hair. His features were stamped with arrogance and cruelty.

Esmerelda was hesitant about leaving with him, but all transpired as it had before. This time they transported through a mirror into his home. He led her to his bed, and things began to get a little weird.

He stripped her completely before laying her down on the bed. He spread her legs slightly and moved her arms out to her sides. He then removed all of his clothing and stood at the foot of the bed looking at her. He had not said more than a few polite phrases to her all night, and now he was looking at her as if he would consume her. A coil of fear snaked through her.

Suddenly, shackles of darkness wove themselves from out of the shadows around the

bed. They pulled her arms out to their full extension and dragged her heels apart until her thighs were straining for mercy.

“Tyne? What?” was all that made it out of her mouth before a strip of darkness gagged her.

The cruel lust in his gaze at her helplessness infuriated her. His member twitched at the picture of submission she presented and began to flare up and out.

He called another strip of darkness to him—he beckoned to it, stroked it and set it between her thighs.

Esmey felt the touch on her outer lips and felt the worming sensation of the darkness against her. It was cool and seemed to take the heat from her flesh. Steadily, it worked itself against her, rubbing and twisting in the most delicate region of her body. It would retreat, and her flesh would relax and warm, then it would return and although she was beginning to get moist with her own slick honey, the fear pushed aside and she was beginning to get angry at Tyne.

As the anger flared in her eyes, the darkness pushed against her. Sliding into her in one quick motion, it moved in a parody of sex that drove Esmey’s rage higher. At the same time, her hips were beginning to work against her control, moving with the thrust of the darkness and shadow inside her.

Suddenly and completely surprising to Esmey,

she climaxed. Her mouth gagged, she could only moan as ripples of satisfaction flowed through her.

She glanced down her body to Tyne, and found him stroking himself to completion. Walking closer to the bed as he came closer to releasing his cum, his hold on the shadows weakened. She drew one fist against her body and called her power to her. He was going to jerk off and spew his spunk onto her body. That she could not allow. Not after coming to him in good faith.

As his balls began to tighten, she watched his hand and cock closely. The second that his head fell back and his hand used short sharp jerks, she struck.

As the ropy cum began to exit the engorged head of his cock, she sent a wave of power toward him that sent it up into his face.

He fell back, his concentration shattered. She jumped up off the bed, grabbed her gown and underwear, and ran for the mirror. Quickly she chanted the spell to open it, then ran through it.

Arriving on the other side, she locked the mirror from entrance. A shimmering of the surface told her that someone was trying to follow. She had run to her own home out of reflex and didn't want that creep anywhere near her.

She walked over to a phone and dialed her grandmother's number.

"He's a freak, Gran. He bound me with magic,

raped me with shadows, and tried to jerk off on me."

"Are you alright, Esmy? Did he hurt you at all?" Her voice was genuine concern.

"I'm okay. But I never want to see that freak again. Please make that clear."

"Where are you?"

"I went home. I feel safe here."

"I will talk to your father, he will deal with Tyne. You will not be troubled by him again." Her voice was grim.

"I will research the last one for you, carefully and thoroughly. You will only have to meet him." Isowyn's voice was quite clear. Only one more, then, if it didn't turn out well, she was on her own, they would not interfere. "I will make sure that he gains your official consent to sex, but would you prefer to meet him at your home?"

"Yes, okay. The last one can meet me here. Tomorrow. I will determine if I sleep with him or not." A sudden thought occurred to her. "He will count as my third, even if I don't have sex with him?"

"I will make sure that he does."

CHAPTER SIX

The next night she was wearing her most unflattering clothing. Baggy jeans and an oversized sweatshirt, with socks in a garish orange. She had taken a long bath in her Jacuzzi tub to take the feel of the shadows from her, and was feeling almost human...uhhh...elven again.

The doorbell rang promptly at seven. She walked over and opened the door. What she saw astonished her into laughing.

Two handsome and strong elven warriors in full regalia stood on her porch. They bowed as one, and spoke as one. "Esmerelda Hawks, we are your date for the evening."

"I am Orlyn, my talent is fire." His eyes and hair blazed in the colors of flame. His skin was a bronze hue, visible only at his face, neck and hands, which were the only parts of his body exposed beyond the formal tunic.

"And I am Boral, water is my specialty." He gave her an easy grin, from a face as pale as his

companion was dark. His eyes were an ocean blue, his hair a matching hue.

"So, which one of you is my date?" She looked down at her attire, and grimaced. She had thought it a good way to break the ice with the new candidate for her bed. But now she just felt stupid.

They turned and exchanged a glance. "We both are. We have been friends and companions for a few hundred years. We will not be separated by a woman." Orlyn's voice was toneless.

"So, you guys want to watch a movie and eat pizza?" She stood back and waved them inside. Her collection of frozen pizzas was second to none. She practically lived on the stuff.

Boral led the way, "Just pepperoni on mine. Don't get too fancy."

When she had loaded the pizzas into the oven she returned to the living room, where they had made themselves at home. She paused for a moment to admire them.

There on the middle of her comfy green couch sat two of the best looking guys she had ever seen and they were willing to watch a movie and eat pizza with her. She didn't even mind the pointed ears that were peeking through Boral's hair.

"Twenty five minutes 'til food, guys. What kind of movie do you want to watch?" She took the chair across from the couch and began to flip through her DVD collection.

"Do you have anything with both action and

comedy?" Orlyn spoke. His solemn face focused on her as she made a few selections.

She spread the movies onto the table. "Here, you pick."

"Can I get you wine, beer, soda, anything?"

"Beer." Boral was engrossed by the movies.

"Wine." Orlyn was letting his friend do the reading and was sitting giving his veto vote every time one was chosen.

She bustled about the kitchen, set out plates and the wine and beer. She put everything on the coffee table and by the time they had chosen a movie, the pizza was done.

She placed the steaming pizza on the table and sliced it into wedges. She looked up as she finished the necessary tasks and found two very interested pairs of eyes, focused on her cleavage. Esmey looked down, and saw that the opening of her sweatshirt was gaping open at the neck to show an alarming amount of creamy flesh. Her hand slammed to her collarbone in reflex, cutting off the view.

"Aww. That's not fair. We would let you look." Boral was amused at her face flaming with embarrassment. Orlyn merely kept a slight grin on his face.

"It wasn't intentional, and I don't recall you offering. Or me offering, for that matter." She grumped at them. She sat in the loveseat, ignoring the space for her that they had left between them.

They ate in silence. After the food was demolished, and a fresh beverage in each one's hand, she started the movie that they had selected.

As the opening credits rolled across the screen, Esmy relocated to the couch. It wasn't exactly her choice. When she sat back down on the loveseat and started the movie, Orlyn stood up and scooped her up. Without a word being spoken, he dropped her onto the couch between them and scooted so that her thighs were bracketed on either side by theirs.

"This is better." Boral draped one arm over her shoulder and drew her close. Sighing with resignation she relaxed into them and watched the movie. They had not made any weird advances, and she was content to be surrounded by two really good-looking guys who smelled great and had enough sense to keep her wine glass filled during the movie.

By the time the hero had solved the mystery and blown up the terrorists that held the entire world in their evil clutches, she had gotten more comfortable. Her head was on Boral's nicely muscled shoulder, and her legs were draped over Orlyn's lap. Based on the reaction she could feel in his trousers, he liked them there.

When she finally began to sit up and move off of her couch-warmers, they gently repositioned her so that she was lying across both of them. Boral leaned in to kiss her. He was gentle and did

not seek entry to her mouth.

"Your grandmother said no sex unless you said you were willing." Boral was completely calm.

Orlyn chimed in with a low husky voice, "Are you willing?" His hands drew slow circles on her denim thighs.

"Wait a minute. Hold on just a second." She struggled to a sitting position, her hips were pressed against Boral's, and he was definitely appreciating her position.

"Which one of you am I supposed to sleep with?" They both looked at her with calm eyes, and she had her answer.

"Both of you? Are you nuts?" She scrambled off of their laps and landed on her butt on the floor. Jumping to her feet, she backed up to the TV.

"You don't have to have sex with both of us at the exact same time, though that would definitely be pleasant. One at a time would be sufficient." Orlyn was completely reasonable in his tone, but his eyes had begun to burn with a banked flame.

"Okay, why both of you? Why do you two come as a set?" She was stalling for time as her hormones called out the possibilities. Two fey. In her bed. At the same time. Together. Wow.

They turned to look at each other and Boral spoke. "We have been friends for the better part of five centuries. After several relationships where we slept with different women, we found that the result was that we drifted apart. We felt it was

unacceptable. We swore we would only take on women who were willing to accept both of us as lovers. Even for a half-fey, you are the only one who has even considered it."

"Considered, not agreed. I want that clear." She knew she was going to give in—she was getting wet just thinking about it. But she didn't want them to know that.

They met each other's eyes for a moment, then stood up to walk over to her. "Is there anything we could do to convince you?" They spoke as one one again. Then proceeded to stroke her face and neck, one on each side.

She sighed at the contact, "Lord, am I easy." She closed her eyes and winced. "Alright, how is this going to work?"

"We don't know, no one has ever said yes before."

Esmý opened her eyes and saw two very delighted fey in her living room with demonic twinkles in their eyes. Boral scooped her up in his arms as Orlyn led the way to the bedroom.

"Small bed. Hmmm." He chanted a small charm and the bed began to expand.

"Hey, that sucker is plenty big." Two very derisive looks were shot at her and she subsided. Looking at their tall and impressive physiques, she concluded that if they were both in bed with her, things would be a little crowded. Heck, even one of them would be pushing it.

Once the bed was expanded to his satisfaction, Orlyn closed his eyes and whispered again. Magic filled the room and soon it was covered with silks of every color. Panels billowed from the ceiling and flowed across the floor. It looked like an *Arabian Nights* fantasy. On acid.

"Uh, isn't that a little over the top?" She was quelled again by a squeeze that let her know her quips were not needed. One more whisper and the lights went out to be replaced by twinkling fairy lights in the fabric itself. The room glowed like the inside of a treasure chest.

Boral slowly lowered her onto the bed, then stood back. "Would you like us to go first, or you?"

"Uh, you guys can go ahead. I'm good."

As one, they unbuttoned the neckline of their tunics. Corded necks were exposed as the clasps came undone. When they were sufficiently loose, they removed them over their heads.

"Wow."

Grinning at her admiration of their heavily muscled chests, they pulled off their footwear and unbuttoned their trousers. Keeping their eyes on her the entire time, they slid the pants to the floor. Exposing not only their erections, but the smooth and heavy column of their thighs. They stepped free of the cloth and looked at her.

"Your turn." They moved toward her and she didn't know where to look. It was all good.

She was startled when they removed her from the bed and put her at the foot of it, where they had been standing as she watched them.

“Any time.” Orlyn crossed his arms over his chest and sat against the headboard, as Boral moved his hands behind his head and watched her from a fully reclined position.

With hands shaking from embarrassment and excitement, she started at her socks. One orange monstrosity was peeled off and dropped to the floor, then the other.

She moved her hands to the snap of her jeans and watched their eyes flare as she lowered the zipper, then peeled off the denim and let it slide to the floor. Her sweatshirt covered her butt and panties, but she knew that it was the next thing to go.

She stood and pondered its removal options, then opted to simply peel it off over her head. She grabbed the hem and slowly dragged it up across her belly, exposing her tiny black silk panties to their avaricious gaze. She whipped it off over her head, and dropped it onto her jeans in a forlorn heap on the floor.

She glanced up at her audience, then fastened her eyes on the floor. Keeping them there seemed safer — the glowing eyes were too intense for her.

Her hands reached behind her to loosen the clasp on her bra, and she did it swiftly, then shoved her panties down over her hips and

stepped out of them.

Mortification colored her a delicate rose, and she could see the blush reaching her thighs. Her hands rubbed against her sides as Esmy plotted her next move. She had no idea what to do.

Thankfully, they took care of that for her.

Looking down as she was, she had an excellent view of the hands that now began to caress her. Two fastened on her shoulders and began to stroke down to her breasts while the other two caressed her from behind, stroking her ribs and caressing her ass.

"I think that we will handle the rest of the evening," Orlyn whispered in her ear, and she realized that it was his cock pressing into her ass as his hands kneaded the globes. He leaned over and began to lick and suck at her neck and shoulder. Boral moved from standing before her, caressing her breasts, to kneeling in front of her, suckling and kissing at her nipples.

The bolts of pleasure at their mouths on her were incredible. Boral moved his mouth lower, her ribs, her belly, and then used his hands to part her thighs. As his mouth closed on her heat, her legs gave way and she fell into Orlyn's waiting hands as he chuckled into her neck.

Boral used both his lips and tongue to caress and part her folds, then paid special attention to the tiny bud at the top of her sex that was now enflamed and shrieking for contact. As his tongue

flicked at her, he slid two fingers inside her, stroking into the wetness that had been spurred by their activity. Her hips bucked against him and she was grateful for the hands supporting her. Orlyn was not going to stand idly by though. He moved one hand from her ass, to her breast and began to tweak and pull at the engorged nipple. Goosebumps ran down her flesh as she squirmed in their embrace. Her flailing hands found Boral's hair and became fists, to lock him in his torturous position. She was so close.

A particularly viscous and sharp bite on her neck was all it took. She arched and wailed her release, locked in the grip of the two fey.

Before the spasms had eased, she was on her back on the bed and one of the hard cocks was sliding into her. She didn't know which, because in the few moments that she had been insensate with her release, they had slipped a blindfold over her eyes.

Her back arched as he slid deep within her slick and snug channel. Oh, gods, this was too much. She moaned and clutched blindly at the strong shoulders above her, hearing a deep chuckle. Orlyn. It was definitely Orlyn. Her hands stroked his arms, shoulders, chest and back. Learning the feel of him. Her hips rose and fell as with every thrust and twist of his hips he stroked a sensitive spot deep within her. Unbelievably she felt herself starting to cum again. Her body tensing and

heaving as it sought the pleasure and found it within easy reach.

A high keening wail sounded, followed by a hoarse shout from above her. She realized that he had been waiting until he could take her with him. She collapsed back into the sheets and was too exhausted to protest when an arm came around her and flipped her to her sweaty belly.

A pillow was tucked under her hips for comfort and a second hard member plunged into her wet cunt. She groaned as he worked inside her, the previous seed left within her slicking her passage so that he slid home easily. He set a slow pace, rocking forward, then retreating with knowledgeable precision. Every thrust sent the head of his cock past that sensitive area at the front of her vaginal wall. She whimpered and her hips began to rise to meet him. Her hands fisted in the sheets, and she started when male fingers unclenched them and tangled with them. A mouth found hers and kissed her deeply, in seconds she found her breasts pillowed on a chest that had slid under her at an angle. The male body beneath hers gave her an outlet for the need for contact that the shaft sliding within her ignited.

Her hands and lips were ravenous. She stroked every inch of skin she could reach and tangled her tongue with the mouth beneath her. His lips ate at hers and one of his hands fisted in the midnight blue of her hair.

The tension within her rose to a pounding need that eclipsed her previous experiences. She felt that she would be on this precipice forever, when she felt a sensation she was not expecting.

As his cock drove into her from the rear, one of her lovers' fingers had made its way to her anus. Using her own ample juices to lubricate it, it rubbed delicately at the little rosebud, then began to ease its way inside. She squirmed against the pressure, forcing it deeper. A second finger joined the first, and she was going to object when her orgasm slammed into her like a freight train.

She moaned, long and low, shuddering in the arms of her lovers. The man under her stroked her hair and kissed away the tears that had begun to seep out from the edge of the blindfold.

The male behind her began to drive faster, riding her hard, seeking his own release. A few moments later, he groaned his release and she felt his seed spurt into her in time to the jerking motions of his hips.

She relaxed against the chest beneath her and raised one shaking hand to the blindfold on her eyes. She was wrong—the body beneath hers was Boral. Orlyn may have laughed earlier, but he had not been the one inside her at the time. This was confusing.

She turned to look behind her and saw Orlyn, sweat dripping from his brow, resting his head on her back. He withdrew slowly and pulled his

fingers from her ass just as slowly. She winced.

"So how did you like his fingers in your ass?" Boral asked from beneath her.

She gave the matter serious thought. "It was...different. Not bad, just different. Do I have to think right now?" She broke off on a yawn.

"No, sweeting, you don't. Rest, we will be here when you wake." Orlyn lay beside them, then took her into his arms and cuddled her against him. Boral flanked her from the other side, one of his hands on her breast. She shivered at the cool air in the room drying the sweat from her body and suddenly a coverlet appeared over her.

This fey magic thing could be handy, if only she learned how to use it. Ah well, she closed her eyes, cuddled with her companions and slept.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Waking, as the early dawn light was sliding through the window, Esmý rose on one elbow and turned to look in the mirror. Her own face looked back at her. She smiled. Her reflection was completely her, marks of the night's passion stamped in a map on her pale flesh. As she watched, a hand came up to caress her breast, delicately trailing over her nipple, then scoring lightly with its nails. Another hand trailed behind the first, gently rubbing the marks that had been left during the last encounter.

"Why didn't you wake us?" Boral's sleepy voice sounded from behind her as Orlyn's hands continued their exploration.

She turned to kiss him deeply, "There was something I had to see, first." Her tongue delved deeply into his mouth as Orlyn began to taste the flesh he had so recently reacquainted himself with.

Tangled together as they were, soon she lost track of whose hands were doing what. Her own

hands roved over smooth, muscled arms, chests, backs, buttocks in a dizzying feast of the senses. As one male body thrust into her moist channel, the other began to ease into her rear passage carefully. It felt hard and slick and she realized that it had been lubricated for this purpose. She struggled against the pressure on her ass for a moment, then began to relax as devilish fingers began to circle her clit. She cried out and rocked gently against them both.

Her eyes closed to the sparks of magic that were flying between them. This was beyond anything she had felt before. The slow thrust and retreat of both hard members deep within her had her moaning in time to every movement. Her hips began to buck against them as she drove with her lovers to find release.

She clutched at Orlyn for support, kissing and biting at his throat as she tightened her muscles around them with every flexing of their hips. Boral's hands were on her breasts as he pushed and pulled his cock out of her nether passage, rubbing against his friends' hard presence within her through the delicate barrier of skin. Suddenly he groaned his release and slumped forward, driving her down onto the other hard cock impaling her.

"Oh gods!" The hard shove onto the equally rigid cock within her sent her over the edge. She worked her hips against him in the throes of her

release, bucking and clutching him within her slick walls. She gasped for air as the room spun around her and she felt Boral pull out of her ass.

Opening her eyes, she met Orlyn's heated gaze. "My turn," was all that he said.

He grabbed her sore ass, and tumbled her to her back. Boral looked on in amusement. When he met Esmy's startled eyes as Orlyn began to thrust hard and deep, he said, "Orlyn took it easy on you last time. I think his restraint cost him."

Esmy moaned as the coil of lust began to wind itself within her once again. The hawk-like features above her had a vicious ferocity that she had never seen before. Anywhere. Her breath was coming in gasps as darts of pleasure shook her with every impact. She began to climax once again. His driving rhythm did not let up and she began a breathless scream as the wave of pleasure continued without abating. Tears flowed from her eyes, magic swirled throughout the room, lighting tiny fires that flickered out. Finally he roared his release. Pounding his cock into the tight grip of her velvet heat and spewing its load deep inside.

He fell forward, his forehead resting on hers, his chest heaving like a bellows. His hips jerked in small spasms, then were still. With him remaining inside her.

Boral was laughing like a loon next to them. He was hooting his amusement at her astonished features until she reached out a limp arm and

swatted him.

Her body was completely boneless. She couldn't move. She closed her eyes and sighed.

A sweet kiss touched her lips. Her lids fluttered open and she met Orlyn's gentle smile.

"I think we need a bath." His voice was husky as he continued to kiss her gently.

"Good idea, I'll tell you when I can move again. Probably next week sometime." A weak grin was all that would make it past the fatigue she was feeling.

He chuckled. "Boral, if you would bring our lady?" He slowly eased out of her, watching her absorbed look as he pulled from her welcoming flesh. He flashed his friend a grin, then moved into the bathroom, running water into the giant tub.

"My pleasure." He scooped her into his arms and walked into the room after Orlyn.

He tested the temperature of the churning bath with his foot, then nodded and stepped into the tub with Esmerelda still in his arms. Orlyn took a seat next to the couple and leaned back in the water, turning his hair into a flaming waterfall of color. She felt the heat of the water climb her body as the water level continued to rise.

When it reached the juncture of her thighs, she flinched at the wet heat touching her sensitive flesh. Her ass was really in discomfort.

"Oh, poor baby, sore?" Boral rubbed her strained female flesh gently to ease it, with fingers

that petted and aroused while he soothed her.

She squirmed on his lap to avoid those fingers, but eventually had to reach down with her own hand to stop his.

"Enough, Boral. I am a little sensitive right now." She scooted off of his lap as he sat there, astonished that she had stopped him.

Orlyn was smiling. "I don't think that it was her cunt that was sore. You should have known better."

Esmy ignored them both as best as she could, and reached for the soap. She slicked up a cloth and began to bathe. Ignoring them was not that easy, as they were both within arm's reach and watching her with disturbing attention.

They watched the cloth circle around her breasts, and the way she bent her arms to wash her back, thrusting those same breasts high above the water. When the washcloth rubbed across her belly and continued lower, she had the focus of everyone in the room. Her fingers trailed over the lips of her sex, delving between them to wash the sensitive tissue free of the sticky residue of her evening and morning. She delicately touched the swollen tissues of her abused ass. Methodically she began to wash her legs, her thighs, calves, and then her feet.

When she finished, the water had turned cloudy with soap. Her companions were visible only from the pectorals up. Sweat rode on both

their brows, and the eyes fixed on her burned with lust.

"Wow, guys, if watching me bathe gets you hot, you should see me make breakfast." She rose to her feet and began to exit the tub when a sharp tug on her hand yanked her back with a splash.

A searing kiss waited for her as she came out of the water with a splutter. Four hands ran over the territory she had just scrubbed, and two erections prodded at her from either side. She pulled away from Boral's mouth and stopped him. "Whoa, I was not kidding when I said I was sore. But maybe there is something else we can do. Get out."

"What?" Both of them looked perplexed. She smiled. She couldn't really blame them, their blood was not exactly rushing to their brains right now.

"Sit on the edge of the tub, both of you. I can't hold my breath that long." Finally catching on, Orlyn was the first to comply. As a result he got her mouth around his raging cock, her tongue swirling around the head and flicking across the tiny opening. She sucked and licked at him with devoted attention and reached out with one hand to gently roll his balls. His groan of contentment caused her to smile around his turgid organ and she redoubled her efforts while reaching for Boral with her other hand.

Boral groaned as her delicate fingers wrapped

tightly around his erection and began to stroke up and down with firm pressure. He watched her caress Orlyn and felt his blood boil at the vision of her standing to her waist in water, her breasts bobbing with every motion of her head. In only a few minutes he felt his seed pressing for release. His head flung back and tension corded his neck as he fought back his release.

Esmey saw that he was on the edge, and she withdrew her mouth from Orlyn. She released his sack to tug at his cock with her hand as her mouth replaced her hand on Boral.

His eyes flew open as her head replaced her hand with scalding wet heat around the head of his cock. His shout of surprise was garbled by his groan of release as his sperm shot out of him in a thick pulse. She drew back just as his cum flew out, and it draped across her shoulder in a pearly strand.

She once again replaced her mouth on Orlyn and felt the shudder that went through him as she resumed her ministrations. She continued until he shuddered in his own release, his hands fisting in her hair to draw her away from his member, up for a kiss as his cock twitched and spent against her soft belly. Boral had flopped back with his chest heaving and a foolish grin on his face.

As she met his lips, she felt his smile. A few seconds later, his laughter was echoing in the room. Esmey sat back in the tub with a splash and

waited for his laughter to subside. This was not something she had expected of him. According to Isowyn, he had the most serious mind of any of the fey that she had ever met. He never smiled and laughing was out of the question.

"Ok, I give. What's so funny?" She crossed her arms over her breasts, becoming uncomfortable at the amusement they were showing at her expense. She hadn't been self-conscious while pleasuring them, but she was starting to feel it now.

"If that is what you do when you don't want us to fuck you, we have to wear you out as often as we can." He slipped back into the water and cradled her against him. Boral did the same and cuddled against her from the other side, kissing the side of her neck.

"So, what do you think we should dress her in for the Winter Ball? I think as little as possible would be perfect."

"Mmmm...I would have to agree. Or some silk that promises to go transparent if it gets wet." Orlyn's mouth was on her shoulder, nibbling gently.

"Okay, I get it. You enjoyed that. Sorry. I am just not used to this kind of thing." She relaxed against the supporting arms.

"Darn, I suppose you will just have to practice. Diligently, frequently, enthusiastically, and with extreme focus on the goal." Boral was trailing his fingers slowly over her breasts. "I hereby

volunteer my humble body for your practice sessions whenever the impulse strikes."

Orlyn frowned at him. "How very selfless of you, but I insist that I be the one to suffer her attempts. It is the least I could do."

"Okay, you guys work this out, I am going to get breakfast. Let me know who will suffer my clumsy attempts. I'll send him a condolence card." Pushing their heads and hands away, Esmerelda exited the tub and wrapped a towel around her, tucking it over her breasts.

The debate on who would prove a better testing ground continued as she walked out of the bathroom shaking her head.

She set up breakfast, eggs and toast, juice and coffee, and waited for the guys to come down. They finally did, dressed only in their trousers from the night before, giving her a lovely view with her breakfast. Since her mouth was watering, she started to eat, studiously keeping her eyes on her plate.

"So, last night was fun. Will I see you again? I am not up on the etiquette." Despite her efforts to contain it, the query came out anyway.

"Didn't Isowyn tell you?" Orlyn looked surprised.

"Tell me what?"

"Now that you have been accepted as a member of fey society, you are to be trained in all your magics, not just the glamour you have been

using.”

“Though it is very powerful,” Boral added around a mouthful of bacon.

“Indeed. But raw power can be dangerous. We are your tutors.” Orlyn had to slap her back to stop her from choking on her coffee.

Boral shot her an impish grin. “Yep, everyday for the next three years. You have a lot of time to make up.”

Orlyn looked impatiently at Boral. “This is a serious matter. To properly get control of your magic, you need extensive training. We are here to provide that.” He paused, then continued. “Isowyn has given you a trust to support you for the next fifty years. It will allow you to focus on the business of learning to be fey. Our customs, traditions, and particular habits will be explained to you. Transformation magic will be shown to you, so that you may rearrange your environment at will.”

“For the next few weeks, we will reside with you. When you get your affairs in order, you will come with us and live at our residence. It will make the learning easier, if all of the proper tools and wards are in place.” He wagged his eyebrows at her, “Plus, we have a bigger bathtub.”

“This is a joke right? I am not moving in with you! I don’t even know you.” Esmy was appalled. And a little intrigued. This was definitely an interesting development.

She paused and ran over the events of the previous day. "Why didn't you tell me all of this yesterday?"

This time Orlyn smiled. "We wanted to get laid."

Esmy looked at the incredibly handsome, earnest faces and began to giggle. Then she began to laugh. Then a full throated howl broke from her mouth as she fell off of her chair, laughing like a loon.

Her new instructors looked at each other, bemused. This was not the reaction they had expected. They watched her roll from side to side, clutching her ribs. Finally the paroxysm subsided.

She lay back and gasped for breath, wiping the tears of mirth from her eyes.

"Okay, but you guys have to do the housework until I finish my two weeks' notice at work." Her voice was abruptly sober as she made her decree.

Orlyn looked at Boral and they both smiled. "Agreed. But we get to pick out your dress for the High Council Winter Ball. What you were wearing last night was hideous."

"Making draperies, fussing with women's clothing. Are you guys sure you're not gay?" Her brow arched in inquiry and two stony faces looked at her.

"Little joke, fellas, really, I know you're not... I mean I am guessing based on my information...I mean..." Her voice trailed off as they continued to

glare at her.

Suddenly Boral swooped in and flipped her over his shoulder. He swatted her backside with one hand as he made his way up the stairs.

"Orlyn, are you coming?"

"Just a second, I am looking for the syrup," was the last thing that Esmey heard before the giggles claimed her once again. Another swat on her butt as they reached the top of the stairs made her laugh even harder.

"Found it!"

As she gave in to her good humor and elfin lovers, she smiled to herself. It was worth a little sticky embarrassment with the syrup to enjoy the embraces of men who genuinely wanted to be with her and not some altered fantasy female.

CHAPTER EIGHT

She simply quit her job without explanation and they accepted her resignation with a good heart. Well, not really. But what were they going to do, drag her back to the office?

Her clothing and furniture was put into storage while she wasn't looking and Esmerelda found herself unceremoniously packed off to Realm without so much as a by-your-leave.

"So, this is your place?" she asked her escorts as they opened the transportation doorway in a courtyard of a castle, "It looks a bit drafty, are you sure that it is properly insulated?"

They looked offended and she giggled. "It is lovely, really. Can I go exploring?" She was almost bouncing with anticipation. It looked beautiful. Just what every fairy princess had ever imagined. Well, she was no princess, but it was still spectacular.

Mind you, she looked like a princess. The boys had taken control over her wardrobe and she was

dressed in a flowing gown of rippling blue. The shades of the gauzy material flowed from an ice blue to navy and back again as she walked. Today was Boral's choice. Orlyn dressed her in fire.

"You can explore as soon as we introduce you to the staff." They tugged her forward and she followed them gladly. Her lessons had begun that first morning, after the syrup. They were thorough and direct when it came to instructing her in magic, and the fooling around was saved for a reward system.

Esmy made it a point to study hard, and she could understand why they wanted to continue her education in Realm, from the screaming point alone, more privacy was required.

Isowyn had been delighted that she had accepted them as consorts and even more thrilled that she was agreeing to them as tutors. Esmy had called her after lunch, and after she had gotten in touch with the members of the club.

Hex was fine, hand-fast to her ex-boss and enjoying every minute of it. Mr. Sterling was reeling with the acquisition of the most powerful magus of this generation, but he was making the best of it.

George was playing with the dragon council's Rikard. Every time he thought he had her, she slipped away. It was more than a game—she was making him work for the child that she carried. Her father had even gotten into the act and

claimed her mother as mate at long last. Arabel was satisfied that Matthias had waited long enough and she herself had begun to think of more children now that her daughter was grown and mated.

Jinx was a nervous wreck. Her mother's family had finally appeared to take an interest in her life, now that she was on the map as the only living Archive in a thousand or more years. They were staging a set of werewolf games to find her a mate, and she had no idea where she was going to end up. Hookey calmed her with the promise of intervention if she found herself in an awkward situation. Jinx's voice relaxed and Esmy could hear the smile of confidence slowly returning to her.

With a promise to keep in touch at least once a week until they could have another margarita night, they hung up their respective cell phones and braced themselves for what was about to take over their lives. Magicians, wolves, warlocks and dragons, and not to mention fairies were now a part of their select group, they just didn't know it yet.

She carefully assessed every inch of the walkway to the door of the castle. Shrubs and flowers lined the walk, but they seemed a little recent.

"Did you guys just plant these? They are gorgeous." She tried to pull them back so that she

could get a better look at the flowers, but they tugged her forward.

"There will be plenty of time to look at the pretty flowers and the maze in the rear gardens. C'mon. We want you to meet the housekeeper and the rest of the staff, in case you need anything."

"Maze? Cool!" She trotted to keep up and had to bite the inside of her cheek to keep from laughing as they opened the doors with a flourish. The staff they had mentioned was waiting.

"Please be welcome, Miss Hawks. I am Washi, the housekeeper." A spider goblin with six arms coming out of her torso bowed deeply. "This is Dacian, Treall, Vinson and Bendek. Treall will be your personal maid."

"Are you all goblins?" Treall seemed to be female, the rest were unidentifiable behind the fangs, snouts and warty skin. The number of limbs that they had varied as well.

"Indeed, Miss. Of the Laban family. We have served the Masters for over six hundred years."

Six hundred? "How old are you guys?" She knew that they were older than two or three hundred years, but six?

Orlyn answered, "Um, over six hundred?"

"Didn't you want to go exploring, Esmerelda?" Boral was quick with his own interjection.

"Yes. Yes, I did." She gave them a look that said that the discussion wasn't over and hiked up her skirts to bolt up the staircase. She gave the

banisters a longing look as she ran and promised herself a slide down them at the first opportunity.

The halls seemed almost endless. Dozens of rooms opened off the main hallway, and she opened them all one by one. Most were guestrooms, one was a library, another an office of sorts. The master bedroom had the marks of both men, and two enormous beds.

They really had been together for a very long time.

She ducked back out of the bedroom with one last look at those enticing beds. Just seeing them made her crave a nice naked nap.

She carefully examined the portraits in the halls, looking at the variety of dress that the boys had been in while being painted. From the Middle Ages with them depicted in a tapestry, to a modern portrayal of them both back to back.

Their bond had obviously survived the centuries and it made her shiver a little to think that it would last long after she was dust. It just wasn't fair.

A little depressed, she made her way down the staircase and sought out the entrance to the rear garden. She stroked the dewy petals of the roses that bloomed as she passed, lost in thought.

What did her future hold? How long would she be trained by Boral and Orlyn? What would she do with her Affinity after they had tired of her? Was her life to be one meaningless encounter after

another, searching for a man for whom she would not change? What about children? As a mule between species, was it even possible for her to get pregnant? And what if her encounters with her tutors bore fruit, would they want the child or send her away to raise it on her own?

Her heart was heavy as she paced along and when she took a look at her surroundings she was deep in the maze.

“Fantastic.” Talking to herself was probably not a good sign. Looking back the way she had come, she desperately searched for some sign of her passage. Nothing. Not one trace of footprints or broken leaves. She was stuck. Unless she solved the maze.

“Not bloody likely.” *Wait.* She had kept her left hand trailing across the flowers and hedges. She just might be able to trace her path if she turned one hundred and eighty degrees and used her right hand to find her way out. If her memory was correct and she had kept her hand on the wall the whole time. Otherwise, she was just going to get more and more lost as she progressed.

With her hand shaking slightly, she turned and stroked the green wall of the hedge. The guys would come for her, but in how long? They were so happy to be home that it may be hours before they came looking for her.

She kept her hand firmly in contact with the greenery and walked at a slow and determined

pace. Esmy didn't know how long she had been out already, but it felt like hours.

She came to several conclusions on her long hike. One was that no matter what happened to her in the future, she didn't regret meeting Boral and Orlyn. The second was that by gaining control of her talents she had begun to feel a comfort within her own skin that she had never felt before. For the first time in her life, she was around strangers who simply accepted her for what she was. A half-breed elf. And a woman. Nothing else mattered to them. As she continued her mulling over her newly serene status she stumbled out of the maze in surprise.

While she walked pensively back to the house, she realized that she had left her fears and panic in the maze. She had now to worry about, and that was plenty.

CHAPTER NINE

The goblins were huddled in a corner of the entrance chamber, and as she wandered in through the rear entrance they stilled and looked at her with relief on their homely faces. "Miss Hawks! We are so glad to see you. The masters had begun asking for you, and we didn't know where you had gone."

She curtsied gracefully, a skill that her tutors had made her practice. "I apologize for the confusion. In the future I will try and let Treal know where I am wandering to." The goblins looked astonished at the courtesy paid to them, and flushed an unbecoming indigo.

"That would be most welcome, Miss. Now, dinner will be served in an hour, and you need to clean up before the guests arrive."

"Guests? What guests are those?" She allowed her maid to hustle her up the stairs and waited for the gossip to flow.

"Well, Miss," Treal's husky voice drew quiet as

they passed one of the other goblins who was running up and down the halls with pitchers and linens. "The Masters decided that you needed more exposure to others to test your growing control over your talent. They also invited your father and grandmother, I believe."

She straightened from her conspiratorial pose. "Here are your chambers, Miss. There is a full wardrobe on the other side of the room, a bathing chamber off through that door over there, and a dressing table with a fresh selection of cosmetics. The bed will be turned down promptly at ten whether you sleep in it or not." With a smile and a wink out of one muddy green eye, Treall let her know that the staff was aware of her involvement with the masters and that no one cared.

"The masters have requested that you wear the gown on your bed this evening, they wish you to be at the height of confidence when meeting the guests."

The gown would certainly do that. It was one of the revealing/concealing outfits that Isowyn was always trying to get her to wear. She sighed and held it up—it really was beautiful, a dark rainbow of colors in an almost toga style. She smiled and laid it back on the bed. Shower first.

Treall was in the bathroom and Esmey was unsurprised to see that a bath had been drawn for her. She was taken aback when the maid started to tug at her clothing. "What are you doing?"

"I am taking on my duties as your maid, Miss."

"I am accustomed to taking care of myself, Treall."

The goblin's hands loosened her clothing in a matter of seconds and her dress slid to the floor. "Not anymore, Miss. In this house, the masters have given us orders to wait on you so that you may concentrate on your studies, and that is what we will do."

She gave up and let Treall strip her completely, then stepped into the bath. "Have they trained many people before me?"

"No, Miss, as far as I am aware, you are the first that has ever been taken into their home."

The goblin scrubbed at her skin in a no-nonsense fashion, soaping and rinsing her with brisk efficiency. It was short minutes later that she was hauled out of the tub and towed dry. It was the fastest and most thorough bath she had ever had. Her skin was glowing pink with the scrubbing and she had to ask, "What's the hurry?"

"I still have to dress your hair, Miss, and that will take some time. You need to be ready in half an hour—we don't have any time to waste." Shooing her charge in front of her, Treall bullied and poked her onto the stool in front of the mirror, and soon she was having a brush dragged through her hair with determined force.

The midnight blue strands separated and behaved immediately, falling to her hips

obediently. After they were dried in more towels, her tresses began to undergo their transformation.

Treal's clever fingers wove braids in the thick mass and Esmý held completely still as her head was transformed into a marvel of engineering.

From a box on the dressing table the goblin took a variety of gemstones and pinned them into the master work she had created.

"There. Now stand and we will get the gown on."

Esmý was beginning to sense that Treal was less of a maid and more of a handler. She obediently stood and let her drop the gown over her head. It snagged briefly on her coiffure and she kept herself still as the gown was settled over her. A few short tugs and the stroke of a hand settled it completely into place.

"Back to the mirror, please." Treal hustled her back into place and quickly and efficiently applied makeup to her hapless victim. Finally she stood back and let her prey stand and look at herself in the mirror.

"Holy crap!" Looking at her in the mirror was a nobly born elven woman of startling beauty and impeccable fashion. The masters of the house were right, she had never felt more powerful or confident. She was fantastic.

A knock at her door told her that Treal had been right to rush her. "Esmý. It's time—the guests will be here in a moment. Are you ready?"

She crossed over to the door and was almost spun around when Treal shoved her out of the way to open the door for her.

Boral and Orlyn were as astonished at her appearance as she had been. "Light and lady...you look wonderful." Boral took her hand and kissed the back of her knuckles. She shivered lightly and the waves kept going as Orlyn took her other hand and laid a moist kiss on her palm. "You look as you always should look. As a woman of your beauty and grace should always be seen."

She was a little dazed. The looks in their eyes had her skin flushing and a small ember began to flare to life in her abdomen. Oh. This was going to be way too long a dinner party.

They took positions to either side of her and offered her their arms. Linked through her, they progressed down the grand staircase just in time to greet the first of their guests.

CHAPTER TEN

Mitski was an elf of dryad extraction—her rich mahogany skin was framed by her wealth of emerald hair. She greeted both of her hosts warmly and then turned to her, “So, you are the new creature that has come into the council’s light? You are far more beautiful than Wyx had described you.” Mitski took both her hands and kissed her on the lips, her breath was warm and scented with honey. It was intoxicating to Esmy’s senses.

She leaned into the kiss and it was only the sense of her magic answering Mitski’s query that caused her to draw back and firm up control of her form.

“Pleased to meet you. But I rarely answer to creature now, my name is Esmerelda Hawks.” She politely drew her hands from those of the elf and gracefully retreated.

Mitski looked both disappointed and pleased at the same time, but she stepped back to let the

second arrival take his place in the greeting line.

Venril as well was an exceptionally attractive elf, his entire countenance kissed by the sun. Warm and glowing, his golden eyes were lighter than his golden skin, but darker than his metallic hair. He took her into a less than formal embrace as well, her body responding more naturally to being in masculine arms, but again as she felt the tug on her senses, she broke the contact and withdrew.

This followed with the other guests that were attending, some members of the elven council, a Warder named Eylonwy who's very nature gave rise to the hint of great age. She wore a ring on her finger in giant fashion, the center finger with a large flat gem. Esmý made a note to ask her about it during dinner.

Once all of the guests had had the opportunity to bask at her talent and the control that she had recently learned, they went in to dinner.

The comments about her made her feel like a house trained pet for the first part of the dinner, until the comment, "So, what is it about her that made you petition for the honor of being her tutors? Not that Isowyn or Erak would deny any of your requests."

A polite row of giggles rang through the guests until Orlyn looked slyly at Eylonwy and asked her, "What elements are represented in our dear Esmerelda?"

Eylonwy finally understood her reason for being invited. "Why, she is made of Earth and Air. As is all of her magic. A perfect compliment to your fire and Boral's water. You have been looking for a woman like her for quite some time, have you not?"

"Indeed. She completes what we have felt all too keenly to be missing." Boral reached for her hand and gave it a squeeze. She smiled back, but her mind was whirling.

So that was why they had been so eager to take her on as a pupil, not to mention lover. She knew that they had elemental magic, but she had never associated her own talents with that most rare of fey skills. Elementals were drawn to complete a set. Normally, it would have been two couples or four friends, but with her odd pedigree they had circumvented convention with a single addition. How convenient for them.

She took a sip wine and asked the question that had been burning in her mind since she noticed it. "Eylonwy, that ring you are wearing is a giant wedding ring, is it not? Where is your husband?"

The conversation stilled and most of the other guests looked appalled. Eylonwy simply laughed. "My husband is asleep. For at least the next hundred years. Cormor will waken, we will have twenty years together and then he will sleep again for three hundred years."

"That's horrible! Is it a curse?"

“No, it was the fey and giant council’s decision, to keep us from creating too many children.” Eylonwy smiled at Esmý. “Unlike the majority of the fey, a fairy with Warder blood can keep to an almost human reproductive cycle. It was a matter of overrunning Realm with half-giants or making the slumber part of our marriage arrangements.”

“How many children do you have?” This was just too fascinating, even if the rest of the guests looked distressed.

“Cormor and I have nine children to date. Our descendants are in almost every species of Realm at this time.” Eylonwy looked down the table at Mitski and winked. The other elf looked discomfited at the reminder that she was not pure blooded. “Of course, the tainted blood is an embarrassment to some, like my granddaughter Mitski here. Her mother decided to ignore her warder talents and wandered off to find a male dyrad. It took her nearly two hundred years and multiple continents, but she did it.”

“Well, you have to admire her persistence.” Esmý pondered the situation for a moment, then got an evil grin. “Have you just considered getting your husband a vasectomy? Then he wouldn’t have to sleep and you could spend a lot more time together.”

Eylonwy was astonished. “Why didn’t I think of that? I remember glancing at an article on it twenty years ago, but hadn’t thought about it for

him. I'll have to ask him about it the next time I visit."

"You can talk to him?"

"Well, just because he is asleep doesn't mean he can't hear me. We have been communicating about our children and grandchildren for years. As well as the newest trends in magic and spells." She gave Esmey a piercing look. "Your friend Isobel has had access to a number of new spells recently. The fourth member of your little group is an Archive, isn't she?"

Wow, that was unexpected. Eylonwy had seemed so friendly and innocuous. "Yes, she is. She is currently in the custody of her family and they are seeking protection for her."

A murmur of astonishment went around the table and even her tutors looked surprised.

"What kind of new spells?"

"Anything, from summoning a taxi to slowing an elevator. The new mirror spells at use in most of the council halls are of her design. As are a variety of anti-detection spells to make life in the human world more accessible."

The table was buzzing now and she spent the next three courses explaining the details of a variety of one-use spells as well as an auto reverse command for any spells cast in the last forty eight hours.

When dessert was served she was relieved to be able to concentrate on the cheesecake stuffed with

fruit and drizzled with caramel. It was odd, but tasted *so* good.

It had to be a goblin touch that had them stuffing a New York styled cheesecake with wild berries—no one else would have enough hands to separate layers without shattering the original cake.

The rest of the party went by with only polite chit chat. Apparently the elves thought that they would be able to ask her questions about the Archive at a later date. It was well after eleven when the last fey guest passed through the double doors and the goblins closed them with a sigh of relief. They didn't seem to like the guests and Esmý could really empathize with that.

Aside from Eylonwy, only Mitski and Venril had bothered to engage her in regular conversation over drinks in the great library adjacent to the dining room. The rest of the guests could go back to their fairy castles for all she cared.

"Wow, that was a long night." She stretched her arms over her head and rose up on her toes. The hair hadn't interfered with her ability to think as much as she had anticipated. She had to give Treal credit, it hadn't even shifted during the evening.

"Yes, it was. Now we need to get you to bed." Orlyn swept her into his arms and Boral led the way up the stairs with what Esmý could only guess was an urgent pace.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Being carried around by one of the guys was not new to her but the restless energy in them was. They had something planned, she could feel it.

Instead of turning to her room or their own they proceeded to the wall at the end of the hallway. Stopping in front of the stone wall Boral placed his hand on it, Orlyn shifted her and followed suit. "Touch the wall, Esmy." The order from both was unmistakable.

Her hand was shaking slightly as she ran her fingers across the cool surface. It was cool as she touched it, but the instant that contact was made she felt a warming pulse through the wall. A swirl of energy came from their combined powers and a doorway opened in front of them.

"What the hell is that?" Her hand tried to draw back and it was stuck in the energy thrall of the vortex. The whirlpool of energy reached through the wall where a room was taking shape. It was an open archway in the hall that hadn't been there

before when she went exploring.

"It is our rooms. Yours, mine and Oryln's. We are the only ones able to access the room, and now that it is keyed to our combined magics, we are the only ones that will be able to open the doors."

The doorway had become a stable archway, they began to step through it. While Boral stepped through ahead, he halted just inside the new room. As Oryln moved to follow, Esmý saw why. The room was being created. Out of stone and their combined magic a room was being called into reality.

A bed large enough to land aircraft in finished forming along one wall, near one of the dozens of mirrors that dotted the walls and stands that sprouted. A vortex moved rapidly and a fantastic bathroom with a tub large enough for six and three sinks with mirrors was the result. A closed of area was obviously for the more personal of needs.

Dressing tables, closets, chairs, a fireplace all were spun into a room of their collective taste and imagination. The draperies took on the midnight rainbow of her gown. As a last touch before the magic swirled out, fairy lights dotted every corner of the room and coiled down every column on the bed.

When she could breathe again, "What just happened?"

"These are our rooms. Neither yours, nor mine,

nor Orlyn's. We all share them equally." He smiled at her in delight. "It was an experiment actually. Only an elemental of both air and earth could have joined with us to open this door and create this room."

"So, we created this room. Together. It wasn't actually here before." Her mind slowly processed the wonder of the occurrence that her eyes could not deny. A room had indeed occurred in front of them, and she hadn't felt power leak from any one of them.

"Yes."

"And that big bed is for us to share?"

"Yes."

"And we are standing in the hallway?" She began to laugh at the speed with which they moved. Her careful coiffure was down in seconds and her dress was up and gone before she could stop her gasp of mirth. A moan took its place as one hot mouth settled on her breast and two hands spanned her waist.

"Let your magic go, Esmerelda. There is nothing and no one here that can be harmed by it." The wet heat of Boral's mouth trailed lower and she fought against her own restrictions to let her talent run free. She heard a murmur of satisfaction as her hands sought and found the hot and hard cocks that she desperately wanted within her.

Orlyn's fire blazed in his eyes as she stroked

firmly down the shaft and thumbed the head of his erection. He shuddered and Boral moved back as she dropped to her knees to take Orlyn into her mouth.

He groaned in reaction and shuddered as she increased suction on the hot member taking up residence in her mouth. Hands drew gently down her back and she felt the cool rush of water around her as the fire in Orlyn swelled to all portions of his body.

The elements drew on her, pulled at her as she continued to work on her victim. When Boral thrust two fingers into her and began to circle her clit with his free hand they broke free. Her moisture called to him and his fingers were replaced with the smooth hard flesh of his cock as they now surged together, each seeking release.

Air, fire, earth and water were swirling around them as the rhythm of mating took them over. Sweat was running down their bodies as they slid together in unison, each body seeking their own release and driving to ensure the release of their partners.

As the air thickened with lust and magic, she moaned as Orlyn began to spasm in her mouth and Boral followed moments later. A sharp stroke of his magic across her clit had her convulsing around them and they shuddered together as their bodies spent.

The magic kept circulating in the room,

sparkling tremors of aftershocks through them all. With the fiery taste of cum on her lips, Esmy straightened and surveyed the scene of the disaster. She sighed in repletion, and a small smile played around her mouth as she announced, "Can you imagine how much more fun it would be if we actually made it to the bed?"

Orlyn groaned and then chuckled at Boral's dark comment. "That's it, get the syrup."

* * * *

The joining of the elementals was felt throughout Realm, and the waves of power were appreciated by all. After all, magic had to come from somewhere.

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Viola Grace was born in Manitoba, Canada where she still resides today. She really likes it there. Her hobbies have included cross-stitch, needlepoint, quilting, costuming, cake decorating, baking, cooking, metal work, beading, sculpting, painting, doll making, henna tattoos, chain maille, and a few others that have been forgotten. Her writing actively pursues the Happily Ever After that so rarely occurs in nature. A brilliant mind, with a twisted sense of humor.