

# Enchanting the Prince

## Chapter 3: Aolis

I had hoped that giving Lily time would be what she needed to finally decide that she wanted me for her mate. However, nearly a year after she's turned 18, she still hasn't come to me. I've given her space and I've heard through the sprite grapevine that she's been dating, or some semblance of dating. I know she hasn't done anything with the wolves she's dating, I would have felt it if she did.

My father, after realizing that Lily wasn't going to immediately accept me as her mate, decided that he would throw parties for me every month. Every eligible member of the fae monarchy has been in attendance. The fae monarchy is similar to that of the humans. So, every Marchioness, every Countess, every Viscountess, and every Baroness has been in attendance. While royal parties are not unusual, these are obviously meant to give me a chance to choose a different mate.

My father is ready to pass the torch of the fae monarchy to me. He wants to spend time with his Queen, my step-mother, Anastasia. She is an Alpha werewolf by birth, and my father's second chance mate. While my father is 267 years old, he has been King for over 200 years. He's ready to live his life without the demands of being a King. Since he met Anastasia, his need to quit the monarchy has only grown stronger. He wants to enjoy his time with his mate. While elves live much longer lives than werewolves, his lifespan will not outlast hers. Anastasia's life will extend because she is mated to my father, and at thirty-nine years old, she still has a long life ahead of her. But my father waited a very long time for her, and he wants to enjoy the time they have left.

I've also taken up my seat at the supernatural council. The council was created by the Guardians nearly two decades ago. Once the supernatural community realized that werewolf Guardians were stronger than any other supernatural creature, the supernaturals began asking them to preside over issues among their kind. The aptly named, Custos Regni, or Guardians of the Realm as the vampires termed them, created the council which includes a minimum of two Guardians, a werewolf from another pack, a vampire and a fae. I'm currently in the rotation as the next fae King. Once my time is up, I'll elect another fae to sit in to represent the fae on the council.

So, between my duties on the council and my father's monthly parties, I've been keeping myself busy, trying to not think about what Lily is doing or who she might be choosing to spend her time with, since it's obviously not me.

Tonight, I'm standing in our grand ballroom. The lights strung up by our sprites are glinting against the glass walls of the building, making everything seem more magical. It's beautiful and I wish I could enjoy it, but my heart isn't here, it's in Canyon Ridge.

"Prince Aolis." I turn to see Lorelai, a Marchioness, next in the line to rule her parents' Duchy. Of all those who have attended these gatherings, Lorelai is the only one that has given me pause.

Her people love her. They would follow her anywhere. That kind of dedication and love is good to have when you're a Queen.

"My Lady Lorelai. How are you this evening?"

"I am well, my Prince. I couldn't help noticing that you looked a bit melancholy. I hope that the party isn't what is causing that sad look on your face?" She asks me.

I shouldn't be showing my sadness. My people are good people and deserve to have their Prince in full attendance at these parties. I push my thoughts of Lily out of my head.

"On the contrary, the sprites have done a wonderful job, as usual, wouldn't you agree?" I say, looking around the room.

"Indeed. The sprites that live in Araphyra do love to decorate with lights. It makes the glass walls shimmer with warmth."

I turn and look at her, giving her my full attention. Lorelai is a beautiful elf. She has long, straight brown hair, unlike Lily's whose hair has big curls like her mother. Lorelai's hair falls to bottom and it's thick, rich, and dark brown, like the color of walnuts.

"Would you give me the honor of a dance, My Lady?"

"I would be honored, My Prince." She says and gently puts her hand into my outstretched one.

Lorelai and I dance around the room. She is an excellent dancer, as one would expect from a Marchioness and she is able to maintain a conversation that is light, but not frivolous. Unlike some other women I've danced with who can do nothing but giggle the entire dance and I have to work to make sure they don't step on my toes, Lorelai is perfect.

I look at her more intently. There really is nothing about her that wouldn't make a perfect Queen, except for one key point. My heart belongs to another.

I push those thoughts away and begin to focus on enjoying my evening. I spend my time dancing and chatting with the single female fae interested in being the next Queen. In truth, there is only one, Lorelai, that I would choose as a mate and my future Queen.

Because of that, I spend more time with her than I have in the past.

"Would you walk with me in the garden, Lady Lorelai?" I ask her.

"I would be honored, Prince Aolis."

The gardens are lush here in Araphyra, even in the winter. My father's love of Anastasia is the reason. As royalty and more importantly, as the King, his love for his mate propagates in the gardens surrounding our lands.

“I always love how beautiful your gardens are here. So much so since Queen Anastasia came to live here.” She says.

I chuckle. “Did you ever hear the story of when they met? They were in Safe Haven Pack and the gardens and forest surrounding their land became the most lush it has ever been.”

She laughs prettily. “I don’t imagine that is something that the werewolves see very often.”

“It was a first for them.” I say looking over the beauty of the gardens.

“May I ask you a bold question, My Prince?” She asks me.

I turn and look at her. “You want to know how long I will wait for my mate to decide she wants me?” I guess.

“Yes. It’s been a year. Well, it’s been nearly 20 years. I was just wondering, how long you were willing to wait for her.”

I look out over the gardens, jealousy of what my father has trying to take root before I pull it back. I have to remember he lost one mate and lived his life alone for hundreds of years. I’ve only been waiting for my mate for nineteen years.

“I don’t know, Lady Lorelai. I truly don’t know.”