

The Happiest Day of My Life

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I marry Jason today. Oh I have butterflies! I don't know how well our families are going to get along though. Of course, he's met my parents (they were fascinated) and I've met his (they were stunned) but our extended family... might overreact. I mean, our wedding is a little unconventional. Fairies rarely wed humans after all.



I set my diary down on my bedside table and went to the vanity across the room. My friends would be here soon to help me get ready. I sat at the vanity and stared at my turquoise-blue skin and lavender hair in the mirror while I drank my coffee. The beverage wasn't like anything I'd known back home, but I'd grown to like it. I fingered my pointy ears and thought - not for the first time - that my life would've been easier if I'd been born human. That way Jason and I could have a normal wedding and a normal life with normal kids. But no. Instead, we'd have to balance two cultures, and two worlds, for the rest of our lives.

My thoughts were interrupted by a group of three young women bustling into my room. I stood up and hugged each of them. Two of them, Echo and Ambrosia, were fairies like me; the third was Jason's sister Leah. Leah and I had become very close over the past few years, and I was so thankful. She helped me understand her society and was one of my few human friends.

"What's wrong, Acacia?" Echo asked, seeing the expression on my face.

"Oh nothing," I replied, "just thinking about species."

I was met with quizzical looks from my friends.

"Species! And fate! And... birthright!" I said, throwing my hands in the air and beginning to pace, "By the accident of birth, or some alignment of the stars, I was lucky enough to be born in the same century as Jason. Not just the same century but the same decade as the man I've fallen in love with. By *chance* we were lucky enough to meet. But the - the cosmos or, whatever, didn't decide to make me a human or to make him a fairy." Sighing with exasperation, I fell backwards onto my bed, "And if we really are soul mates, if such a thing exists, was our story made intentionally difficult or is it all one big string of coincidences? Is it for a reason we were given this burden or... is that just our lot in life?"

"For the last time, you love each other, and that should be all that matters," said Ambrosia. "You and Jason are doing something beautiful here. Now let's do something with that hair."

A few hours later my hair was pinned up in a simple classy bun, my make-up was done with shimmery metallic tones of purple and silver, and I was in my wedding dress.

"Oh Acacia you're so beautiful," Leah breathed. "The dress really is perfect."

I had to agree. I'd put a lot of effort into finding a dress that merged our two cultures so well. The colour was just white enough to satisfy human tradition and just silver enough to satisfy fairy tradition. The bottom of the skirt was silver-white mesh with lacy green vines and leaves. It was simple but breathtaking. It had a halter neck, and was backless, of course, for my wings. A couple shades darker than my skin, my wings were very large with black outlined panels.

I opted not to wear a veil or carry a bouquet, and instead, in keeping with fairy tradition, would walk down the aisle with my hands in front of my face. I wore a silver circlet that had been masterfully weaved into my hairdo by Ambrosia.

Suddenly my mother came in, bringing some breakfast items. She looked like a shorter, rounder version of me, with tired eyes and greyer hair. This morning though, her eyes were shining with pride and joy, "Oh darling

you look stunning!" She said as she laid down the breakfast tray, "I have something for you." She produced two small, wooden, heart-shaped earrings. "For your tradition," she said, "I wore them on my wedding day."

"Something borrowed," I hugged her, "Thank you mom!"

"I know how important that human tradition is to you," she smiled.

She was right, that was one human tradition I simply loved: *Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue.*

The circlet was old; I had inherited it from my grandmother. The dress, of course, was new. The earrings were borrowed, and I was blue!



When we arrived at the venue it took my breath away. It was just last night that we decorated, but I couldn't believe how beautiful it was in the morning sun. The clearing in the woods was perfect. We'd set up two rows of wooden benches with an aisle in between. At the front there was a large, flowing, weeping willow tree that we'd hung a tire swing from. We could even hear a river babbling nearby. As everyone arrived and took their seats, I found a rock near the river to sit on. I was deep in thought when I was approached by my great aunt Yasmine. "Hello dear," she said. "Oh you look beautiful - but so white, and so long," she said, gesturing to my dress. It was customary for fairy brides to wear skimpy dresses in silver or green.

"I thought Jason would like it," I said as way of explanation.

"Now dearie, if you make all your decisions in marriage based on what your husband will like, very soon you'll have no life of your own at all you know," she tutted.

I sighed. I was already tired of living between two worlds - could I really handle a lifetime of this?

"Don't worry Aunt Yasmine," I said, trying to smile as if she'd told a joke. "Are they ready for me soon?" I asked, hoping to change the subject.

"Oh I have no idea love," she said dismissively, "I came to ask, what exactly is that...thing, hanging from that tree in the front?" She seemed mildly appalled.

"It's -"

"Acacia, there you are! Come on!" Leah helped me up from the rock and hurried me back to where everyone - including my future husband - was waiting.



As the bridesmaids and groomsmen walked down the aisle in front of me, the worries in my head were louder than ever. Both Jason and I desperately wanted children, but how would we raise them? All the possibilities and questions rushed through my head. Education, bullying - what kind of future would our children have? Who would want to hire some blue chick with no wings? Who would want to date some peach guy *with* wings?

What about our ancestors, our relatives, our future children - were we letting them all down? Was *I* letting them all down? By marrying a human and adopting human culture, was I assimilating? Was I making the human race think it was okay to march into our villages and ransack them, killing the men and violating the women like they did hundreds of years ago? Would mankind feel threatened by us, as more and more of us married into their race? Would they enslave us again? In my mind at that moment, history was repeating itself - and I was at fault.

"Acacia, you're up," my mother whispered. "Hey, are you okay?"

I smiled tightly, "I'm fine mom." Then I held my hands in front of my face and began walking, barefoot, down the aisle. I couldn't help noticing that everyone on my left was a shade of blue or purple, while everyone on my right was peach, beige, and brown. I was walking between two worlds, towards my eternity with Jason. I caught a glimpse of him through my fingers, and my eyes welled up with tears. I wanted to be with him so badly, but could we do it? If I wanted to back out, it had to be now. I felt my legs shaking as I

made the last few steps towards the altar. Two more paces and we'd be saying our vows. The wars and destruction of the past flashed through my mind, the difficulties our children would face, the hostility and prejudice we'd be subject to. One more step. I thought of my life with Jason, and how difficult it would be. I thought of my life without him, and couldn't bear it.

As I turned to face him, he took my hands from in front of my face and held them in his. When he saw the expression on my face, he looked worried.

"How?" I whispered with tears in my eyes, "How can we possibly pull this off?"

He squeezed my hands a little tighter. "Together," he said with a reassuring smile.

For the rest of the ceremony, all I could think about was that moment, that smile, that word: together. We would work this out - together. We could face the world - together. As I said my vows I meant every word. I filled each syllable with my love for Jason and felt each promise more deeply than I ever had. For better or worse - we'd be together. Till death do us part - we'd be together. We would spend the rest of our lives together! The thought made me giddy, and I remembered all the reasons I was marrying Jason.



There would be times during our marriage that I would look back on that day, the worries that I had, the anxiety, and how Jason had stilled all of it with a smile and a word. Like when our first child was born, a beautiful little boy named Fable. His skin was a much paler tint of blue than mine, and he had black hair and the cutest pointy ears. From the moment I saw him I loved him so much, and I knew he would have no trouble making a place for himself in the world. As he learned to walk and fly - even without wings - I scolded myself for ever having any doubts about his success in life. And on his graduation day, when he received his high school diploma, I cried and looked over at Jason who was beaming with pride. That evening Fable told us that instead of going to a conventional university, he wanted to move to the forest and learn the ways of the fairies. He had grown up to be a remarkable young man; he had my stubborn determination and Jason's ability to see and believe

in the good in the world - he never let anything stop him from achieving his dreams.

One day, decades after our wedding, Jason and I were sitting on the veranda of our retirement home, looking over the lake and drinking our morning coffee. We were both older and wiser, with grey hair and frail joints. I sighed with contentment as I felt the cool breeze on my wings. "How did we manage it all?" I said, looking back on the life we led, the people we met, the difference we made, and the moments we shared.

Jason grinned and winked playfully, sending my heart aflutter like we were young again, "Together."