

## The Unexpected Princess – Part 3

By TheSpiralledEye

The weeks began to drag, each day blurring into the next; wake, work, count the merge gold he possessed, sleep. Every night he would have one eye on the door, hoping to see Aden walk through and explain his strange behaviour the other night but he never did.

“I wish you would tell me what ya squabbled about.” Marcy sighed, “Aden’s one of my best regulars and you scared him off.”

“I don’t know.” Hale sighed, “I really don’t.”

At first, he thought Aden was angry because he expected a blushing virgin but then he went and apologised for wronging him. What Aden thought his slight was though, Hale could not figure out. He had been fairly clear he was a willing participant in their little roll in the grass, Hell, *he’d* been the one asking for more. A fact that now made his face burn in shame. So, what exactly did Aden think he’d done wrong?

These thoughts occupied Hale’s mind almost every second of each day. No matter how much he tried to distract himself or deny it he eventually had to face the truth; he was developing feelings for the knight. He’d finally given in three nights ago, pressing a finger to his new clit and stroking until he came. It didn’t feel nearly as good as when Aden had pleased him with his tongue, in fact, despite his better judgment, Hale found himself fantasising about that very act as he touched himself. That was what made him realise just how bad he’d fallen without even realising it.

Hale considered a rebound; plenty of men would love a roll in the hay with the pretty new tavern girl. He’d still yet to have a man inside him and Hale would be lying if he wasn’t tempted. If just a tongue had bought him such bliss, being properly fucked would no doubt be exquisite. But the idea of going to bed with any man still frightened him; well, with one exception.

So when said exception finally walked through the front door after weeks of pining Hale found his mouth going dry, slinking back into the shadows of a corner so he wouldn’t be spotted.

“Aden! Finally, I was beginning to think you’d died.” Marcy grinned, “Here to woo your pretty bar maid?”

“Is she here?” Aden look distinctly uncomfortable, ignoring Marcy’s teasing entirely.

The bartender gestured her head in Hale’s direction and Aden’s eyes followed, locking onto Hale’s and he found himself frozen in place.

“You know, I think we’re low on ale.” Marcy sighed, leaning against the mostly full barrel, “Hailey, why don’t you go get another, Aden, give her a hand why don’t ya?”

Damn you, Marcy.

Almost in a trance, he made his way out the back toward the store room, his temper increasing with each step. How dare he show up here now? After making him wait weeks? This stupid knight, playing with his heart this way, if he were still a man and saw one of his brothers treating a young lady this way, he’d punch them. Maybe that’s what Aden needed, a good hit to the head, then maybe he could think straight. The quiet thud of the wooden door closing was the final straw, now that they were finally alone, he spun around to face him, face thunderous.

“Well?” He demanded, “Let’s hear it.”

Aden swallowed; clearly Hale had taken him by surprise with his brusque attitude. Good.

“I wanted to say I’m sorry for the other night.” He started, “I shouldn’t have taken advantage of you and-“

“Taken advantage? Aden, I was...” Hale blushed, “I’ll admit I am a little ashamed of my loss of control but let me be clear. I very much enjoyed that night...I wanted more.”

“I know.” Aden winced, “But I thought maybe that might have something to do with the spell you’re under.”

Hale froze, did he know? How could he had figured it out?

“I know you don’t want to talk about it but I thought maybe it was some sort of compulsion, so that when... a man showed interest you wouldn’t be able to say no.”

Hale felt a pang in his chest as relief and affection for the knight flooded his chest. Aden was a better man than he’d given him credit for.

“I like you and I’d love to get to spend time getting to know you better but given the...situation, that’s probably not wise.”

“The spell was just to make me look more...appealing to Prince Aldric.” Hale insisted, taking a step closer, “My judgement is my own and if I am honest, it’s always the highlight of my day when you visit.”

Hale felt strange speaking this way to another man; he’d never felt this way about anybody before regardless of gender. When it came down to it, he liked Aden and Aden liked him, there was the little hiccup of his true identity was there but doing no harm really. Why not let himself indulge?

“You’re sure?” The tension seemed to melt out of Aden’s shoulders a little.

“I’m sure.”

Before he could over think it, Hale surged forward, capturing the knight’s lips, and kissing him deeply. Aden responded in kind, wrapping his arms firmly around Hale’s lithe frame and holding him tight. He felt as though he were melting, tilting his head back and submitting to Aden’s tongue as it pushed against his own. As a man, he was supposed to take charge but now as a woman, he had another option. He felt his desire build as he submitted, letting Aden’s hands roam over his back and hips, squeezing his ass. Gods, it felt so good to let go.

“Please,” He begged, “Don’t stop this time.”

Aden swore under his breath, hitching up Hale’s dress and cupping his round ass fully, Hale moaned. He couldn’t think straight, all he could feel was Aden’s hands on him, lifting his tiny body with ease and placing him down against the back wall of the storeroom. Hale was crushed between the stone and Aden’s body, it was wonderful. Desperately he tugged at the man’s tunic, lifting it off with ease allowing his fingers to trace over the skin of his bare chest.

“I’ve wanted to do this since I found you in the woods.” Aden said huskily, pulling on the strings of Hale’s bodice and letting them come undone.

He couldn’t help but sigh in relief as his heavy breasts were released from the tight bodice and he didn’t hesitate to wiggle his arms free so that his entire torso was bared. The cool evening air brushed against his nipples before Aden’s hands found them and Hale whimpered. Those rough fingers felt so delicious pressing down on his sensitive skin, rolling the nipples between thumb and forefinger till he was a mewling mess. As Aden lowered his mouth to suck on them Hale moaned

loudly, unable to keep quiet despite knowing a full Tavern's worth of people were only one room away.

"Please. Don't make me wait any longer."

He needed to be fucked. He needed it weeks ago. There was a new, primal sort of hunger building inside him that Hale knew could only be sated by being filled. He felt so empty that it almost hurt and judging by the large tent in Aden's pants, he was in a similar position. Hale reached forward, unbuckling his belt and pulling down the knight's trousers to reveal his length. It was thick, a bead of precum already glistening on its tip. Hale couldn't resist pulling them flush together, quivering as the length slid along the folds of his pussy. The pleasure was intense, he couldn't imagine how good it would feel *inside*.

"Quiet now." Aden chuckled, "We don't want Marcy teasing us later, do we?"

"I can't help it." Hale sighed, bucking his hips, "s-so good..."

Aden shuddered, cupping Hale's ass and lifting him against the wall. On instinct Hale wrapped his legs around the man's square hips and pulled back, allowing Aden's cock to slowly penetrate his pussy. Hale was glad the knight was holding him against the wall, because had he been standing his knees would have given out. It felt indescribably good, having his inner walls stretched and pleased. He couldn't even speak, only whimper as gasp as Aden pushed inside fully only to withdraw and thrust in again. The bliss that movement caused made all the air flee from Hale's lungs; it was ecstasy like he had never felt before.

He needed more.

He forgot all about the tavern or being quiet, all he cared about was the pleasure and how much more he could get. His legs squeezed Aden tight, bucking their hips together faster and harder as the pleasure began to build. Hale could feel his muscles tightening as he rapidly approached the edge, he wanted to slow down and make it last but couldn't, he was out of control. Moaning, babbling incoherently. He was so close, almost there...just a few more thrusts...

Aden's cock brushed against something deep inside Hale's pussy and he cried out, wetness flooding out as he writhed against the wall, cumming harder than he ever had.

"I-I should pull out." Aden grunted, "I'm about t-to-oh fuck!"

Hale felt him pulse against his inner walls and warm speed flooded him; he wailed, cumming again at the realisation and squeezing the cock tighter. The two of them shuddered, bodies going limp as Aden gently lowered Hale back to the floor and pulled out; juices and seed coming with him.

Hale's pussy throbbed and ached in the most gratifying way, finally sated after weeks of deprivation. Somewhat awkwardly the began to dress, neither wanting to break the silence and until final Aden took the plunge.

"That was...good."

Something about his somewhat sheepish delivery made Hale giggle, then laugh; next thing he knew they were both bent double, tears of laughter stinging at their eyes.

"Really? That's all you have to say?" Hale laughed, "After everything?"

"Well, you weren't saying anything!"

"I was still coming down! That was...good."

The repetition made them both start giggling again and for the first time since his change, for the first time in a long time really, Hale felt light.

"If you two are finished out there, we've got some thirsty customers to serve!" Marcy voice called out and Hale felt himself turn pink.

He *had* been pretty loud.

"Well, that's not staying a secret." He said ruefully.

"Guess not."

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As time passed Hale began to forget his plan; he lived each day in anticipation of Aden's visits. More often than not they would sneak away together, stealing kisses in the store room and frequently

more. They couldn't keep their hands off each other; Hale was so desperate for him some times he came within seconds. It was wrong, he knew that. His disgust at his female body was melting away and he had no idea how to feel about it. At first, he'd simply been guilty at enjoying the pleasures of his new body but with Aden by his side that shame began to subside. Hale stopped thinking of his body in terms of gender and rather simply enjoying it for what it was. His. Somehow, when Aden was around, that was so much easier to do.

Instead, he began to feel more guilt at his own lies. He had to tell Aden the truth about who he was but at the same time, he didn't want to lose him. Regardless of right and wrong, Hale was falling in love with him, it was obvious. Aden made him feel safe, listened to, understood. And he understood the knight in turn, letting him complain about the pressure his father had him under and his desire to simply be seen for who he was rather than any noble title. It was a struggle Hale could empathise with.

Slowly, he began to entertain the idea of staying Hailey; saving his coin up for a little house at the edge of town for he and Aden to live in one day. If he'd even be open to that idea. It was basically his plan anyway; except he'd have company. Wonderful company; company he surely wouldn't keep were he to become Hale again. Now that he'd spent time in her shoes, Hale was starting to like Hailey. Hailey was more popular and happier than Hale ever had been; he'd already given up most of what made his identity as Hale just by running away anyways. Still, it tugged at him, like he was playing pretend and his 'real self' was only one spell away. Deep down, Hale still felt like a 'he', but at the same time, his body felt right being female, so what did that make him? He desperately wished he could talk to Marcy or Aden about it but each time he tried to build up the courage, it fell through.

"Do you miss your home?" Aden asked one evening as they laid together by the river bank.

It was one of the rare occasions where he was able to visit before dark. Between his knightly duties and status, he could only come every other evening so he'd learned to treasure the time they had. Hale hummed in thought, did he miss home?

"No." He said finally, "I never really fit in there."

"Growing up among so many brothers must have been trying."

"Oh yes, trying is putting it lightly."

"I always wished I had siblings." Aden sighed, "It was lonely, growing up...alone."

"That's why you sneak out?"

Aden nodded, picking at the grass.

“I just had so much responsibility, being my fathers only son. Having the burden of carrying on the family name. One day it all became too much and I snuck out. I was barely old enough to grow a beard then but I found my way to The Last Stop and met Marcy. Her father owned it back then and we became friends. The rest is history.”

Hale felt a strange lurch in his stomach.

“If you’re a lord’s only son...you must be expected to marry a noblewoman.”

“Hailey, you’re literally a princess.” He snorted, “You’re about as blue blooded as they come.”

“Yeah, but nobody else can know that.” Hale sat up, mood suddenly serious, “I still see palace guards out looking for time to time. It’s not as if you could ever settle down with me...”

The idea of a little house they could share rapidly began to evaporate and Hale chided himself for ever thinking of it. He wasn’t even a real woman for Gods’ sake!

“Let’s not talk about this.” Aden said after a moment pause, “Let’s just enjoy the night while we can.”

Hale opened his mouth to question him when the sound of hoofs beating on the ground made him stop. Roughly, Aden shoved him into a nearby bush and motioned for silence. A second later a knight on horseback appeared from behind one of the small buildings, silhouetted against the setting sun.

“Your highness! There you are!” he greeted, “What on earth are you doing out here so late at night dressed like that.”

Hale didn’t hear his reply, the blood rushing in his ears was too loud.

*Your highness.*

King Leopold had only one son so that could only mean that Aden was the very man he'd been running from this entire time. So many things, little comments his knight had made suddenly fell into place. In his mind, Hale could hear the universe laughing at him. It sounded suspiciously like his brothers.

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He'd bolted, not caring if the knight saw him; let *Aden-Prince Aldric*, explain that.

Idiot. Idiot!

Not only had he let that prince distract him from his goal but Hale had actually started to fall for him. Like the dumb, naive princess he was now. His eyes started to burn and his vision blurred; he was helpless to stop the tears. God he was pathetic. Somehow, he made his way back to the tavern, stumbling in the back door as a sob finally broke loose despite his best efforts.

"Hailey! What happened darlin'?"

Marcy's warm arm was around his shoulders and Hale swiped at his eyes in an effort to stop the tears.

"Did that big lug Aden break your heart?" Marcy growled, "I told him not to go doing anything with you unless he was serious."

Hale hiccupped, a sense of despair washing over him. It is said that men often find their destiny while trying to avoid it. What was the point in fighting.

"Marcy...I have something I need to tell you."

It all came tumbling out. His real identity, the spell, how he'd runaway and fallen in love with the one person he'd been trying to avoid this whole time. The words kept spilling until there was none left and he found himself feeling numb. Marcy was silent for a long while but Hale could feel the intensity of her anger; both at him for lying and Aldric.



“And that bastard knew about the spell and seduced you anyway.” She tsked, “What an ass.”

“He doesn’t know I’m...a man.” Hale sighed, “Just that a spell was used to make me ‘more appealing’.”

“Still.” She huffed, “I’d say I wish you’d told me earlier but I probably wouldn’t have believed you. So, what now? Have you got enough gold saved for a decent spell, I hear some cost hundreds.”

“Nowhere near enough,” Hale sighed, “But it doesn’t matter anyway. It’s time I stopped running. Fate had decided I am to be Aldric’s bride, the Gods couldn’t have made it clearer if they wrote it in the fucking sky.”

“Hale...”

“No. Keep the gold, I won’t need it as royalty anyway.” He said bitterly, “It’s hidden under my sack mattress. I’m going to the castle.”

Marcy gave him a look filled with pity before pulling him into a warm, strong hug.

“You come see me if you ever need, okay? Hell, summon me to the damn palace if they don’t let you leave.”

Hale’s chest warmed with affection for the woman.

“Thank you, Marcy. For everything.”

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Going to the castle was a blur; he felt numb. Each step felt dreamlike, as if he weren’t in total control of his destiny. Hale remembered how it had felt, leaving home, thinking that with each turn of the coach wheels he was getting closer to his horrid fate. This was much the same, except this time it was his own two feet taking him there.

The lies came easily to each set of guards; how bandits had taken him, kept him locked in a cage and how oh so very scared he was till finally escaping. How saddening it was to hear that his mother left for home weeks ago. He let them bustle him into the high walls of the castle, face blank and eyes empty. It was easy, playing the part of the frightened princess; faking emotion was easy when you felt nothing on the inside. When he was finally bought before King Leopold, he had

scarcely finished curtsying when the doors flew open behind them and who ran in but Aden. Well, Prince Aldric. His face was pale, eyes shocked but Hale wasn't going to let him get the first word in.

"It is wonderful to finally meet you, Prince Aldric." He said in a flat monotone, "I do so hope we can still be married given everything that has happened."

"Hailey--"

"Haylyn." He corrected instantly, "It's a simple mistake."

"Haylyn...It's lovely to meet you as well."

Aldric took his hand and kissed it as was traditional, Hale tried to ignore the warmth that bloomed across his skin where those lips touched.

"Princess Haylyn has had quite the ordeal." King Leopold nodded, standing and placing a fatherly hand on his shoulder. "Come, I shall organise a lady's maid to help you bathe and dress, then I believe some proper food in in order, hm?"

Hale gave the king a small smile, the old man's face was warm and kind. Hardly the warmonger his father had often spoken of. He nodded, allowing a servant to lead him away to his new chambers, not sparing Aldric a glance as he passed. If the world wished for him to be Haylyn, the obedient, quite little princess, so be it.

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"Please, Hailey. Speak to me."

"Haylyn." He corrected for the hundredth time, "And I do speak with you. Every day on these walks, do I not?"

It had been decided that Hale and Aldric were to marry two weeks from his miraculous reappearance, in order to give his family time to travel for the ceremony. Each day, Aldric had come and offered to walk with him through the gardens of the castle. Each day he had said yes, as was expected, but gave nothing else. No flirting, no warm smiles; Hale was determined not to be made a

fool of again and that meant feeling nothing. No joy, no sadness; he would simply grit his teeth and bare existence. It was the safest way to avoid heartbreak.

“No, you just say whatever is the most obvious, expected answer to anything I say! That’s not talking.”

“It is in my book.”

“Hale, please!”

Aldric grabbed him roughly by the arm, forcing Hale to meet his gaze with wide eyes.

“How do you know that name?” Hale whispered.

“Because,” Aldric winced, “After you told me about the spell, I dispatched a spy to go look into it. They couldn’t find anything about the spell itself but they did tell me that up until a few weeks ago nobody had ever heard of a Princess Haylyn and that your father only had sons. Five sons to be precise. The youngest of which, Hale, was rarely seen and a lot of people are now saying must have been misinformation.”

Hale swallowed.

“So, you know then.” He sighed as his cheeks began to burn, so much for staying numb.

“You were forced to become a woman just to marry me for an alliance.” Aldric stated, letting Hale’s arm drop. “No wonder you bolted when you got the chance.”

“Why didn’t you tell anybody? Your father?”

“Well, I only got it all confirmed a few days ago after you came to the castle and honestly, I thought you deserved the truth.”

Despite his best efforts to stay angry Hale felt affection bloom within his chest.

“You’re a good man.” He couldn’t meet the prince’s eye before chuckling darkly, “No wonder I fell for you. Gods, you must be so disgusted.”

Aldric’s hand found his chin, lifting it gently. His eyes were warm and kind, no sign of disgust or anger as Hale expected.

“Hale. I love you, not your body. These last few weeks, getting to know you have made me happier than anything. So, man or woman, if I can be with you I will.”

Hale felt his heart stutter.

“So, if you want to stay here and be my wife, we’ll rule together. Or, if you want to be a man again, I’ll help you find the spell to do it and we can run off to Gunston or something. Anything, I just want you to be happy.”

“You’d give up the throne?”

Aldric nodded.

“I meant what I said about the weight on my shoulders, that’s why I started sneaking out all the time anyway.”

“What if I don’t know what I want?” Hale asked, “I still feel like a ‘he’, my name is Hale but...I love this body. I love how I feel in it and I love...you.”

“Then just be you, Hale.” Aldric smiled, “Why get so hung up on what you are. Just be who you are. I’ll call you Hale, who’s going to stop me from giving my fiancé a ‘nickname’?”

Hale giggled. He still wasn’t truly sure how he felt about this but at least he had, if nothing else, a friend. For the first time in his life, Hale felt understood and what’s more, Aldric seemed eager to deepen that understanding. No more trying to fit in a box; prince, woman, man, wife, husband; he would just be Hale and see where that took him.

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Hale took a deep breath and opened his eyes, gasping in joy at his own reflection. His new lady's maid, Rose, had done a magnificent job organising his long hair into a detail bun, complete with braids and a golden tiara. It matched perfectly with his elegant white ballgown, emblazoned with mother of pearl and even a few diamonds. It was horrifically expensive; houses could have been built with the gold this dress must have cost but Aldric had insisted.

"Nothing but the best." He'd smiled, paying the tailor without a second thought. It had made the man's week; his family would be set for the next three winters with a payment like that.

"You look beautiful, your majesty."

"I feel it."

Hale would be lying if he said he was at peace yet. Marrying Aldric was still a frightening prospect, even with their reconciliation but he refused to let his emotions get the best of him. For so long he'd focused on the negatives in his life, it was time to do the opposite. He was fortunate to be marrying a kind man who understood and loved him for who he was, most were not so lucky. What's more, one day he would be queen, an idea that he was becoming more enamoured with each day.

"You mother and father wanted an audience before the ceremony." Rose reminded him, he just huffed.

"I am aware. They can wait, I have far too much on my mind."

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The ceremony was a grand affair of course, it wasn't every day the heir to the kingdom wed. When the doors had opened and Hale began his procession, he diligently ignored the familiar faces of his parents and brothers; he only had eyes for the man waiting for him at the front of the room. He had done his part, served his kingdom and now he was separate from them. When he spared a glance down at them during the vows, he couldn't help but notice his mother seething. Probably at the indignity of being seated behind a common tavern wench. Marcy, with her bright red hair and simple outfit stuck out like a sore thumb but when the future queen made her wishes clear, nobody was going to argue.

When they finally kissed Hale had to resist the urge to deepen it. Newlyweds were not supposed to be so familiar with one another as they were.

"You sure about this?" Aldric whispered, quiet enough that nobody but Hale could hear, "There's still time for us to run off together."

“No more running.” Hale smiled, “It’s time we faced things head on. Together.”

“Like your mother?”

Hale chuckled.

“If you’re there, I can do anything.”