

**[A4A] But I Should Be [Fantasy] [Yandere] [Manipulative] [Fae Speaker] [Human Listener]
[1.5K Words]**

[SFX Suggestion: Birds chirping, perhaps slightly distorted sound.]

[The listener wakes up beside Lark.]

Good morning, honey. [Interchangeable pet name, meant to mirror the first line from part 1.]

[The listener pulls away, not tricked by Lark's illusions.]

Hm. I had a feeling you would see through my illusions.

An unfortunate side effect of the dreamsap.

Well, no matter.

[Lark removes the illusions, showing that they are in their bed chamber at their estate.]

You looked so peaceful while you slept.

I tried, many times, to go about my day; but every so often I would find myself wandering back to this room, needing to gaze upon your face.

I fear I may have spent more hours by your side than I did away from it.

You cannot blame me.

Every night, for years, I have dreamt of what it would be like to have you here.

Now that you have finally landed in the place you were always meant to be, I find myself almost drowning in the wealth of joy your presence provides.

[The listener demands to know where their spouse is.]

[scoff] Why are you so concerned with *them*?

Can you not see that you are *exactly* where you should be?

Forget your daily toils, forsake your mundane life.

I could give you a far better life than *they* ever could.

You could be waited on every hour of the day, be adorned with the finest jewels and metals, don the most elegant of attires, and fall upon the softest bed sheets at the end of every day.

How could you turn that away?

How could you turn *me* away?

[pause] Ah, I see.

It's because I have neglected to remind you of our shared past.

You cannot embrace the future until you have untangled yourself from the past.

I understand.

You must wonder at the affections I have so freely given you.

Where do they come from? What is their purpose?

My dear, I assure you that my heart is full of only the purest love.

Once, you saved me. Now, I will save you.

Yes, it was some time ago, especially for a mortal such as yourself.

I had taken the form of a fox, intent on exploring the forest through new eyes.

Then, a hunter and his dog caught my scent.

They chased me through the trees until I was forced to take refuge in a bush of brambles.

The thorns cut at my skin and sank into the pads of my paws.

Even once they left, I could not free myself due to the pain every movement caused me.

I feared I would be stuck there forever.

Then, you appeared.

You had come with a small basket, perhaps for collecting blackberries from the very bush I was stuck in; but you tossed it aside when you saw me.

I became the most important thing to you at that moment.

You worked for hours, slowly unweaving the net of vines and branches that kept me prisoner.

Even when the thorns caught your skin, drew your blood, you did not abandon me.

The sun that had shone through your hair and illuminated every perfection of your face had begun to set by the time you finally got me free.

Gingerly, you scooped me up.

You told me that I would be okay, that I was safe now.

You left the basket on the floor.

You had not a care in the world, save for ensuring my wellbeing.

For days, you sheltered me, fed me, cleaned my wounds, and nursed me back to health.

You named me Lark and I discarded any former name I might have held.

We formed a bond, the likes of which I had never before known.

You taught me what it was to be loved and cared for unconditionally.

Once I had finally regained enough strength to reclaim my innate form, however...

Everything changed.

You returned home from a trip to the nearby town.

I meant to surprise you with the truth, to show you that we could be together, as lovers instead of friends, but you pulled away from me.

You claimed that I had tricked you, lied to you...

When you learned what I was, that I was fae, you were all the more vehement to send me on my way.

In the days that followed my exile, I did not understand your fury.

Eventually, however, I was able to make sense of it.

I had gone about things all wrong.

All those days we spent together... It was time shared between a fox and a human.

You did not know me as I am.

It was an oversight on my part, one I was eager to remedy.

I resolved to do things in the proper, human way this time.

I approached your family. I knew how important they would be in any life we carved out for ourselves.

I asked if you were open to courtship only to learn that you had promised yourself to another.

For several long moments, I could not believe what I was hearing.

Then, it was as though all my blood had turned to ice.

My heart became just another organ.

I was inconsolable... until I realized what was truly happening; for what great treasure has ever been won without turmoil?

And ours would be the greatest treasure ever conceived.

Of course it made sense that we would have to strive for it; that I would need to strive for the honor of loving you.

You, who is stronger than any stone, gentler than any breeze, and brighter than any star; for your value eclipses that of the richest vaults.

How could I think that winning you would be an easy feat?

This infatuation you have busied yourself with is but an obstacle, don't you see?

They are nothing but a hurdle to be cleared, a river to be crossed.

They could never love you as much as I do.

[The listener asks, again, to see their spouse.]

[pause]

[shocked, hurt] Still? Still you cling to them?

Why? Because they are familiar? Because you feel *duty bound* to them?

[Lark storms across the room, throwing open the window. SFX Suggestion: rapid footsteps, creaking window or door swinging open, whooshing of wind.]

Look! Look at all that I can offer you: fields that never die, wells that never dry, flowers that never wither!

You could know security and peace that no mortal realm could ever provide you with.

I could make you happy.

[The listener points out that Lark said they would bring them to their spouse.]

[pause]

[sigh, scoff, or bitter laughter] I suppose I did say that I would bring you to them, didn't I?

What is it about them that you find so endearing?

Tell me and I promise you I will play their role better than they ever could.

You already know that I can wear their face.

[The listener refuses.]

Fine. Perhaps you need more time to recognize the truth.

[pause] I will bring your *beloved spouse* to you. I will even allow you to return to your home and continue your life on your farm.

All this, under one condition.

I will not let you go if you will not bargain with me.

What I ask for will not be so unreasonable.

I want you to spend your winters here, with me.

While you're here, I will show you immortality. I will show you why we are meant to be together.

If, after seven winters, you still do not feel anything for me, I will let you go.

Fine, I will also agree to not harm your... spouse.

Agree to this and I will let the both of you go.

[After a moment's consideration, the listener agrees.]

Good. Then, allow us to make a pact in the way of my people.

[scoff] No, it is not an oath that will kill us if we break it. What do you take me for? A bloodwitch?

The spell will allow us to know if the other has broken their word.

I would argue it is more to your benefit than mine. After all, with the spell in place, you will know if I have harmed your lover.

I'm glad you agree.

Come here. Give me your left hand.

[The listener surrenders their hand.]

With this chain, I will finalize our agreement.

I would tell you to wear it at all times but once it is on your wrist it cannot be removed unless the pact is broken.

There. I think it suits you.

[Lark hands the listener a matching chain.]

You will need to clasp this one over my left wrist.

[The listener does so.]

Not the metal I wish we shared, but it will do. For now.

Yes, yes, I will bring you to your lost puppy.

Would you refuse me if I asked to hold your hand on our way there?

[laughter] I expected as much.

[SFX suggestion: fading footsteps as they make their way down the hall.]