

**Excerpt from *A Drop of Magic*:**

“You think someone is trying to restart the war?” The idea that anyone could think a return to war was a good thing was horrifying but, sick as it made me, I couldn’t deny the possibility.

“It’s something to consider. Even if that isn’t the killer’s primary goal, it may well be the result. We can’t seek assistance from the human authorities without admitting the fae were aware of unregistered halfers living off the reservation, something that would constitute a breach in our peace agreement. However, if we seek our own justice and the criminal turns out to be human, the human government will see it as an unwarranted attack by the fae. In either case, the humans will react as they always do when frightened. They will lash out.”

Maggie’s black forest cake roiled in my stomach, threatening to come up. To think my friend’s death could mean an end to the peace between faeries and humans was inconceivable, but I could feel the truth of his words settle over me like a cloak weighing on my shoulders. “Please tell me you’re here to make sure that doesn’t happen.”

“That’s one of my tasks, yes. I was sent to identify the killer, recover the stolen artifacts, and prevent a return to war.”

“Yeah, sure.” The giggle that escaped sounded a little hysterical to my ears. “Why not, right? ’Cause you’re all of one guy. No problem.”

He scowled, “You doubt my ability?”

“No offense, but that’s a pretty tall order.”

He puffed up with self-importance. “I’m not just one guy. I am a Knight of the Realm, and I am not alone.”

That brought me up short. “Who else is working on this?”

He lifted an eyebrow. “You.”

The bottom fell out of my stomach even as the giggles bubbled up again.

I needed to get a grip before I fell apart completely, so I took a couple deep, calming breaths before replying. “Look, I don’t know who you thought I was when you came here, but you’re wrong. Yes, I was Aiden’s friend, but I’m just an artist. A human artist. There’s nothing special about me. If I had any crazy skills or powerful connections to help catch Aiden’s killer, I would have used them already. I can’t help you.”

He watched me carefully as he said, “I’m afraid you’re quite wrong, on all counts.”