

Bonus Scene – Forgiven: Con (The Four, #3)

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Con

I was surrounded by white.

White walls.

White marble floor.

White window coverings.

Lots of white.

I smiled to myself as I made my way to the small room near the back of the chapel... the *Elvis-themed* chapel. Never in a million years would I have thought my little brother would take me up on my impromptu suggestion to get married in Vegas by the King himself, but here we were.

Upon reaching the door leading to the small dressing room, I could hear soft voices coming from inside. The door was cracked a bit so I pushed it open just slightly, enough that I could see my brother and his soon-to-be husband. They were standing close to one another, their fingers linked. Gideon was speaking in a low voice, his mouth by Lex's ear. I couldn't make out what he was saying but I didn't want to either. I just took a moment to drink in the sight of my little brother. It was like he'd finally come alive after years of battling the war his body had waged from the time he was a little boy.

I was beyond grateful to know that he never had to fight those battles alone ever again.

I pulled the door closed and gave the men a few seconds before knocking on it.

"Come in," I heard Lex call.

This time when I opened the door, the men had put a little bit of space between them and Gideon was working on tying Lex's bow tie. Even though the locale of their first wedding (their first because they were still planning a larger, more personalized ceremony at some point) was as informal as one could get, both men were decked out in tuxes and the guests, myself included, had gotten equally dressed up.

"It's almost time, guys," I said.

I saw Gideon take in a deep breath and almost instantly Lex's fingers closed over one of Gideon's wrists. "Cold feet?" my brother asked, though there was absolutely no nervousness in his voice.

"Babe, it's all I can do not to throw you over my shoulder and get you down that aisle as fast as possible."

I chuckled and watched the men share a soft kiss before Gideon went to work on Lex's bow tie again.

"Gideon," I said softly. When he paused and looked at me, I stepped further into the room and said, "Do you mind if I—?" before motioning to Lex's bow tie.

Gideon studied me knowingly for a moment. I liked that he hesitated at first. It meant he knew that I wanted more than to just tie my brother's tie and he was concerned that I might upset my brother in some way.

Yep, he was perfect for my Lex.

"It's okay," Lex murmured, his sightless eyes staring straight ahead.

Gideon sighed and leaned in to press a kiss to Lex's cheek. "Don't keep me waiting," he growled. With that, he left Lex and strode past me, the look of warning in his gaze hard to miss. I didn't blame him. I'd been an ass to Lex and although I might not have said anything ugly to him with words, my actions had done just that. I'd ignored his efforts to reach out to me for a real conversation about his decision to confide in King about his condition and not me, and when I finally had spoken to him, I'd brushed off his apology and explanation like it hadn't mattered.

I moved to stand in front of Lex and automatically reached for his tie. Even if my brother hadn't lost his sight, someone still would have had to help him with the thing because he was all thumbs when it came to stuff like that.

My fingers worked on autopilot as I said, "You look gorgeous, little brother."

Lex let out a soft rush of air, like he'd been holding it. His fingers came out to explore my face, then my shoulders.

"You look... at peace," Lex whispered.

His words caught me off guard. How could he possibly *feel* that? He was absolutely right, of course. Knowing my future included Micah had brought about a sense of calm I couldn't explain.

"I am," I responded. "Lex—"

“Are we good, Con?” Lex cut in. His fingers closed around my wrists where I was working on the tie.

I knew what he was asking me. I’d prepared an entire speech around the apology I owed him, but Lex was telling me in his own way that he got it. I could also feel his own apology in the way he was clinging to me. His eyes might not have been able to speak for him in the way that they once had, but there was no missing the worry in his expression as he stared unseeingly at my chest.

I leaned forward and pressed a kiss to his temple and then wrapped my arms around him. “We’re good, little brother,” I responded.

Lex let out a little cry and then his arms went around my back. We were still embracing when King called out from the doorway, “Groom’s getting a bit antsy out there, fellas. And Lex, I love you like nothing else, but fucking Elvis?”

Lex and I both laughed before pulling apart. I worked quickly to finish the tie as Lex looked in the general direction of King.

“I know you’re disappointed, King, but all the Celine Dion impersonators were booked,” he responded. “Maybe I can book Celine herself when it’s your turn. I’m sure if she knew what a big fan you were...”

I chuckled and managed to just finish the bow tie when King pushed between us and wrapped his arms around Lex. “You get one of those in a lifetime, brother. You just cashed out.”

Lex laughed and pushed King away. “Go tell my fiancé I’m on my way.”

Like me, King pressed a soft kiss to Lex’s temple before turning to do Lex’s bidding.

“Oh, and King,” Lex called, stopping my brother in his tracks. “Walk fast.”

King sent me a smile and then he was gone. I understood Lex’s last words to King when he reached his arm out and said, “Get me down that aisle now, Con.”

I hadn’t planned on walking him down the aisle, but I was beyond thrilled to do so. I didn’t give a shit if it wasn’t the best man’s role. Handing my brother off to the man who’d brought him back to life was an honor I would always be grateful for.

As soon as we reached the vestibule, my eyes landed on my own man. Micah looked up from where he’d been giving last-minute instructions to Rory who was twirling around in her new flowy white dress that she’d been wearing since the moment she’d tried it on at the store almost twelve hours earlier. She was gripping a basket of flower petals in her hand.

My chest exploded with emotion as I drank in Micah in his crisp suit. I couldn't wait for the day that we'd be making this same walk. I had no clue what kind of wedding it would be, and I didn't particularly care. I just needed everyone to know he was mine and always would be.

While I might not have a plan for the ceremony, I'd at least gotten the wheels rolling by finding an engagement ring that I knew would fit Micah perfectly. Now I just had to plan the most perfect way to ask him.

I was forced to set the thought aside when music began playing over the loudspeakers. I smiled when I realized it was "Can't Help Falling in Love" by the King himself.

"Now?" Rory asked excitedly.

"Not yet," Micah responded. I smiled when he dropped a hand to her shoulder at the same time that he leaned in to press a kiss to my mouth. No doubt he was worried about our daughter starting the ceremony without us.

"Hey," Micah said to me.

"Hey," I whispered back. I was more than a little bit tempted to drag him into my arms and show him what a proper greeting looked like, but the tremble in the arm Lex was using to hold on to me with was reminder enough that the day wasn't about us.

A quick glance down the aisle showed that everyone was in place. "You ready?" I asked my brother.

"Very," Lex returned. I could feel the need to be with his man practically vibrating throughout his entire body.

"Well then, let's get you down that aisle," I said. I sent Micah a nod and then he released his hold on Rory and whispered something in her ear. Like a pro, the little girl was off and running, though thankfully not literally. She took her time making her way down the aisle, dropping flowers as she went. Micah gave me one last look before hurrying to his seat.

As I began to lead Lex down the aisle, he suddenly pulled me to a stop.

"Lex—?"

"Thank you," Lex said in a hushed voice as his sightless eyes connected with my chest. "You and King saved my life in so many ways, Con, and I don't think I ever told you that—"

I gave Lex's fingers a squeeze which silenced him.

"You did, Lex. You told us by living your life and taking a chance on love and giving your heart to someone who deserves it. You saved us too, little brother. More than you'll ever

know.” I tugged Lex so he was nearly pressed up against my side. “Now let’s do this because your man is giving me the evil eye.”

“No, he’s not,” Lex scoffed.

I didn’t tell my brother that I hadn’t been lying about Gideon and the whole evil eye thing. My soon-to-be brother-in-law looked none too pleased at his fiancé’s delay in walking down the aisle and was clearly blaming me for it.

“Still, I like my face the way it is,” I said, then gave Lex a tug to move him forward.

After that, everything went by in a blur.

The cheesy Elvis voice that worked extra hard to interject Elvis song titles into the ceremony, the almost unnatural silence of the room as Gideon and Lex spoke their own vows to one another and exchanged rings, and the applause when they were declared husbands. Through it all, I could barely take my eyes off my own hopefully soon-to-be fiancé. I realized then that it didn’t matter how I asked him or where, just like it didn’t matter what kind of ceremony we ultimately had.

Here and now, Con.

That was what mattered. The here and the now. I would plan like I had a lifetime with Micah, but I’d live each day like it was my last.

When the ceremony was over and Micah found his way back into my arms where he belonged, I patted the ring in my pocket just to make sure it was still there.

Tonight.

It would be tonight.

I didn’t know how or when; I just knew there was no need to wait even a day longer to show Micah what we both already knew.

That he was mine and I was his.

Here and now.

Forever.