

Chapter 31

“You’re right, sir.” Seth begins, “I am absolutely not good enough for your daughter.”

Seth walks over and sits down on a barstool, placing his head in his hands, looking exhausted. “I thought that Molly was the most forgiving wolf I’ve ever met and was confused by it. I didn’t even think about the bond causing that.”

“The bond enhances it, but it doesn’t cause people to act out of character.” Dad says to him, releasing me to turn to him. “Molly has always been very forgiving, but she may be a little bit too forgiving with you.”

Seth looks up at me, meeting my light green eyes with his exhausted, blue ones. “I’m so sorry. I never should have spoken to you like that, or yelled at you. And I should have never, ever slammed the door like that.”

I nod at him in response, not exactly sure what to say, or how much he heard. I feel uncomfortable with my dad being here for this conversation. Dad moves to sit back down and I pour some coffee for Seth, handing it to him.

“What if part of the door had hit her?” Dad asks him, and Seth looks at me quickly, panic on his face.

“I hadn’t even considered that. s**t, Molly. You are OK, right?!” He asks, jumping up and walking over to me, looking me over. “Would you tell me if you were hurt?”

“I’m ok. Nothing hit me.” I say to him, giving him a small smile.

“You have to learn to control your anger where Molly is concerned.” Dad begins to say. “Molly deserves to be treated well, but you also have to consider that she’s more delicate because she can’t heal herself. You have to consider that in every choice you make now.”

“I’m sorry.” I whisper, feeling slightly like a burden.

“This isn’t a conversation I wanted to have in front of you, Molly. But I think we need to,” he says and Seth nods in agreement. “I wouldn’t trade you for any other kid in the world. You’re the most amazing person, truly. But, raising you could sometimes be complicated. You’re so adventurous and daring, but you’re more delicate than even you realize. Well, delicate physically. I think the entire pack heard you yelling right back at your mate last night.” He says with a chuckle. I hadn’t realized we were THAT loud. I guess everyone knows about me trying to reach my wolf now.

“Seth, you have to realize that she’s not property. She’s going to make her own choices, no matter how much we may disagree, you can’t stop her.” Dad says to him, his tone deadly serious. “We raised her to be her own person and be confident in who she is.”

“I know, sir. But how am I supposed to just sit back and let her walk into danger?” Seth asks Dad, but his eyes never leave me.

“It’s tough, but you just have to and trust that she won’t make choices to put herself into danger.” Dad tells him. “After breakfast I’m going to meet with Robert and your dad and we are going to work on the best plan to keep Molly safe while she goes to meet the witch.”

“I’ll meet you in your office.” Seth says, but my dad shakes his head at him.

“No, Seth. You won’t.” Dad tells him, unafraid. “You will not know the plan, and Molly will not, either. As far as either of you will know, Albert will walk Molly there as requested. We will have safeguards in place, but neither of you will need to know them.”

“Absolutely not, Randall! She’s my mate!” Seth says, outraged at my father’s idea.

My dad just looks at him impassively. “You being her mate is precisely why you will not be involved. Molly going is risky, and the bond demands that you protect her. If you know, you could increase the risk.”

Seth looks so stressed and like he wants to say more, but I think he’s accepting the situation. He runs his hands through his hair before abruptly standing and walking back into the bedroom and we hear the shower turn on.

“Thanks for the coffee, kiddo.” dad tells me with a smile, placing his cup in the sink and walking over to kiss the top of my head. “Will I see you upstairs for breakfast or are you going to cook here?”

“I don’t think I can handle breakfast.” I tell him “Dinner was very strategic and easy.”

Dad smiles at me a little. “It made you happy though?”

“Yeah” I tell him, beaming a huge smile at him. “It really did. Are you really leaving me alone with him now?” I ask, a hint of humor evident in my voice.

Dad chuckles, “Yeah, I think he’s been properly reprimanded now. If he so much as raises his voice again though you link me.”

“And you’ll come running to the rescue?” I ask.

“Absolutely not!” He says, faking offense. “I’ll send your mother to deal with him.”

After dad leaves I walk back into the bedroom and go look in the closet to decide what to wear for the day, but I’m not sure what I’m doing today. I decide on a plain pair of jeans and a brown, long sleeved t-shirt and place them on the foot of the bed. Once Seth exits the bathroom I silently pass him and get into the shower- using a clip to hold my braided hair up. I manage to keep my finger dry and my hair mostly dry this time. I go back into the bedroom and find myself alone. I can smell him still, so I think he’s just in the living room.

I get myself dressed, only struggling with putting my bra on for a moment. Buttoning my pants is getting easier, though still not care free, but I managed. I decide on a pair of flat slip on shoes so I won’t have to ask for help. I look at the clock and have time, so I sit at the vanity and undo the braid my mom put in my hair and it actually looks really good as is. I put on a little moisturizer and some light make-up. It feels good to be able to take care of myself today and I look at myself in the mirror pleased.

Stepping into the living room, I find Seth sitting on the couch, reading something on his phone. I pour myself some more coffee and move to sit next to him. He doesn’t say anything, but he doesn’t move. The silence is making me uncomfortable, and he feels so distant. I’m about to say something but Seth finally looks up to me.

“I’m really sorry, Molly.” he tells me, and I can feel through the bond just how genuine he is.

“I know.” I tell him. “I’m sorry, too.”

Seth looks at me with confusion. “What do you have to be sorry about? You didn’t do anything. I did.”

“I yelled at you, too. We both did.”

“No. This is on me.” Seth says, shaking his head at me. “Your dad is right, the bond is making you want to forgive me too easily. I’m going to try my best, I swear. You don’t deserve to be treated that way.”

Seth holds out his hand and I place mine inside. “We’ll figure things out. It’s all so new.”

“I’d never forgive myself if I had hurt you.” He says, placing his arms around my shoulders and pulling me to him tightly. “The witch wants to meet you tonight. I’m so worried, but I won’t stand in your way. Just please promise me that you’ll be careful.”

“Of course, Seth.” I tell him, reaching up to place my hand on the side of his face. “I’ll be back before you even know I’m gone.”

Seth just holds me tightly to his chest, his chin resting on the top of my head. I’m not sure how long we sit there like this, but it’s so comforting. I’m about to drift off to sleep when I hear my mate speak. “My Love, if she tells you that there’s no magic that can help free your wolf, I’ll mark you tonight.”

“Really?” I ask him, trying and failing to hide my excitement.

“Really,” He says and kisses my nose with a smile. “Altair’s concern is that if there’s magic involved, marking you could hurt being able to lift that. If there’s no magic though, then there’s no danger.”

“You know I can’t mark you, right?” I ask, feeling nervous as Seth nods, slowly. “Are you really OK with that?”

“I’m not going to lie to you, it hurts knowing I won’t bear your mark,” Seth begins and I feel my heart sink. “Hey,” he says, pulling my face towards him, placing a tender kiss on my lips. “I’d rather have you and not have your mark than not have you in my life.”

“It’s just not fair to you.” I say to him, letting a few tears slip out.

Seth gently wipes away the tears on my cheeks. “The goddess doesn’t make mistakes. If your wolf can’t get out to mark me, then there’s a reason.”

“I’m worried the kingdom won’t take you seriously because of me,” I whisper, admitting yet another fear.

“There will be some wolves that don’t, but it’s not because of you,” he tells me, gently. “There will be wolves who disagree and think they can do things better. There always have been and it won’t change, no matter who my mate is. But there will be so many who love you. Yes, some will have issues with your lack of wolf, but they will find a reason to be upset about anything.”

I nod, knowing he’s right, but still feeling inadequate. It’s been an emotional roller coaster since I met Seth. People always talked about how amazing it was to find your mate, but they never talked about how difficult it was to navigate your emotions. Maybe the bond balances out once you’re marked. We’ve waited far longer than most wolves do, but I can’t help but feel wanted knowing that Seth will mark me tonight if my wolf is really, truly, broken.

There’s a part of me, though, that is hoping that the witch can help and fix me. Maybe Peter was right and they didn’t ask her the right questions. I know that, sensibly, if there was any magic that could be detected that she would have said something, but meeting my sweet little wolf has given me a glimmer of hope that maybe, someday, I’ll be like everyone else. That would also mean that I wouldn’t be able to pass it on to my kids, because it would be magic, and not genetic.

“We should head upstairs for breakfast soon,” Seth says and I agree. He helps me stand and we leave the room, hand in hand, to go join our families before life changes tonight- in some way.