

Chapter 65

We decided to adjourn for the day with a plan to check in on Benjamin, having not discussed the new law at all.

“I’m sorry we couldn’t get to it today, Molly,” Peter tells me as we walk down the stairs to head to the dining room for dinner.

“It’s OK,” I tell him. “I’m sure we’ll get to it eventually. Pack safety comes first.”

He puts his arm around me and squeezes my shoulder. “My son couldn’t have been mated to a better woman.” He releases me, walking a bit faster to catch up to my dad.

“He’s right, you know,” Seth tells me, grabbing my hand. “I couldn’t have been mated to anyone better. For me, or the job, or werewolves.”

“I really hope I’m as good at this as you and your dad seem to think that I will be,” I tell him quietly.

“You will be,” he says as he stops walking as we reach the dining room. He pulls me to his chest, holding me tightly. “Are you sure you want to go in? It’s OK if you’re not ready yet.”

I look up at him and smile at how sweet this man can be sometimes. “Yeah, it’s ok. After getting measured and fitted this morning it’ll be fine. They’re nice, but neither of them can keep their mouths shut. There’s rarely that many people here for dinner, anyways.”

“Whatever you want, Love,” he tells me and leans down to kiss me, leaving me breathless. “I missed you today. I’ve enjoyed having you to myself for a few days and I find that I don’t like you not being around, or sitting across from you in a meeting.”

His admission is sweet, but it makes me giggle. “I think you’ll find that you enjoy having time away from me soon. I’m a lot to live with,” I tell him with a small laugh, and he places his forehead on mine.

“I’ll never be tired of you, Love,” he tells me, kissing me again. “Never”.

Seth releases me and takes my hand in his, opening the door to the dining room for me with the other. When he opens the doors though, it’s not what I was expecting at all. Usually, there’s not a ton of people. Most wolves in our pack like to stay at home for dinner with their families. Typically, it’s just my family, the spouses and kids of the warriors who are on patrol. You’ll find a few of the single wolves hanging out at a table or two in the corner.

Tonight though, tonight the dining room is packed. Seth looks down at me, a worried look on his face.

It’s not too late to run downstairs.

It’s ok. I should have known they’d have already told everyone.

I think this is probably normal when the new princess comes from their pack.

I consider telling everyone not to bow, but I glance up and see Audrey already seated at the head table, so I know I’ll just get in trouble if I try it. I take a deep breath to steady myself and step inside. To my surprise though, few people move to bow. Actually, it’s just a handful. Instead, I hear sounds of happiness, and congratulations.

“Molly, you finally got your wolf!”

"Her eyes are so green now!"

“All you needed was your mate!”

“Will we get to see you when you shift?”

"They look so perfect together!"

It’s honestly one of the sweetest moments I’ve had with my pack and I struggle to keep my emotions at bay.

See, My Love. Everyone loves you just as much as I do. I hear my mate in my head as he squeezes my hand. Your family is going to bow to you to signal to the pack that it is how they should treat you now. Don’t be upset, just sit down when we get to your seat.

It makes me uncomfortable

You’ll have to get used to it. You’re their Princess. They need to show you the respect you deserve.

I don’t bother trying to argue the point. Now’s not the time and we’re at the table. My mom and dad both bow, and my brother stands up and does the same. It feels weird and I don’t like it, but thankfully my back is to everyone so they can’t see me frown as I sit in the chair that Seth has pulled out for me.

“See,” he says as he takes his seat. “That wasn’t so bad, was it?”

“It honestly felt like a real tragedy,” I tell him with a small smile and he chuckles a little.

“Is this supposed to happen every time I see you now?” Robbie asks me.

I begin to tell him “never again” but it’s drowned out by Seth saying “only in public”.

My mom is sitting next to me and leans over to me, kissing my cheek. “You’ll get used to it”.

“I don’t know,” I tell her, doubting her words. “I think having my parents bow to me is something that I will never, NEVER get used to.”

Our dinner is served and I note that I have a very healthy looking salad with a large portion of salmon while everyone else is eating something else that appears more appetizing.

“I talked to Oliver. I’ll be planning your meals until after you shift,” my mom tells me and I roll my eyes at her. “I thought it’d be better to handle it myself instead of poor Seth having to do it and be on the receiving end of your wrath.”

“I’m not that bad,” I tell her.

She laughs at me. “Just wait until we get to dessert.”

I don’t know why she’s acting like this. It’s not like I don’t have complete access to the pack kitchen and the ability to make whatever I want myself. I’ll play along for now though. I’m sure it’s being inspired by her wolf and after our talk today, I think I could stand to show her wolf a bit more respect.

Dad looks over at us and smiles. “Is everything alright, now?” he asks and we both nod to him. “Good. I think you know, but we love you more than life, Molly. We’re happy you’re ours.”

His words bring tears to my eyes. “I know, Dad. I’m happy that you found me.”

“Twice,” he adds with a smile. “The goddess brought you to me twice. I just didn’t know that until this week.”

After dinner, Seth and I go downstairs and change clothes so I can drag him outside for a sunset hike. It’s a beautiful evening and I’ve not spoken with him about the conversation I had with our moms yet, so the more time we spend outside and not in bed, the better.

“Molly,” I hear Seth say from behind me. “Slow down. You’re running through here.”

“I’m not running,” I tell him with a giggle, turning around to find him a bit behind me. “Your legs are twice as long as mine. How are you so slow?”

“I just don’t know the area like you do,” he tells me, looking very irritated with me. “Some of these rocks are very loose and you keep stepping over them and leaving them for me to find.”

I can’t help but laugh at him. He’s probably right, but it’s not something that I even realized I was doing. I sit down on a large rock and wait for him to catch up to me. Before I can stand back up though, he sits down next to me.

“It smells terrible out here,” he says and I just laugh at him.

“It’s just how the outside smells,” I tell him, still laughing.

“No, it’s not,” he says and I can begin to feel his anxiety through the bond. “Don’t move,” he whispers to me, standing quickly and sniffing the air. He takes a few steps, clearly attempting to be as quiet as he can. Slowly, he unzips his jacket and throws it to me, reaching for the hem of his shirt to pull it over his head. I realize that he’s preparing to shift and I stop and sniff as well.

I can finally smell it, the small hint of a rogue. We’re fairly close to the border, but not close enough that the smell will carry. I turn back and see Altair just a few feet from me. He’s not acting offensively, as if he’s trying to attack the offender, but instead he’s moving close to me to defend me.

Robbie, Seth and I are near the far north side of the territory. There’s rogue scent.

I know, Seth already told me. I’m on the way. Let Albert know, he’s on patrol near you.

I haven’t had to link Albert yet and I’m still very unsure how to do all of this. Coupled with how nervous I am, and feeling Seth worried about protecting me, I’m finding it very hard to do. I close my eyes and try to concentrate and find Albert in my mind, but all I can do is think about a tree about 20 yards away from us. I try so hard to block it out of my mind and find Albert, but the tree is still there bright in the forefront of my mind.

I concentrate hard and when it is still there, unmoving, I think about throwing it out of the way. Once it’s moved, I can finally feel Albert, but I’m broken out of my concentration by a loud crack and a thundering boom. Opening my eyes, I find the offending tree lying across the forest floor, and a boy standing where it was, a look of horror on his face.

The boy starts to run, but Altair growls and takes off running after him. He pounces on him, pulling him to the ground. I know that it’s Altair, and Seth is still there, but all I can think of is seeing Peter shift and attack Jason.

“No!” I hear myself scream, not even realizing it is coming from me, and I find myself running over to them. “Don’t hurt him! He’s just a kid!” I scream, now crying as I reach them.

When I get to them, I find Altair has the boy pinned down to the ground, standing over him growling menacingly, but he hasn’t hurt him at all. Altair looks up at me, and back to the boy. There’s a look of hurt in Altair’s eyes, but I’m too afraid of what’s happening to register why.

Molly, it’s OK. He’s OK. Your brother is close. I’ll hand him over to Rob as soon as he’s here.

I take a deep breath, trying to calm myself. Slowly backing away from them, I realize that there’s no real danger because this time the wolf is my mate and the boy is a rogue who is on our land, but I can still see Jason die all over again in my mind. I continue to back away from them until I bump into a tree and I sink down slowly, pulling my knees to my chest and to cry. I struggle to breathe. It feels like there’s a weight on my chest as I just try to take a deep breath, and that causes me to cry even more.

I’m so lost in my fear that I don’t realize when Rob shows up, or Albert, and I have no idea who reached him. I just smell Seth get closer and then sit next to me, pulling me gently into his lap. I don’t know how long we’re there, Seth holding me and Seth rubbing my back, whispering assurances that I’m safe in my ear. I notice Rob and Albert take the kid away, towards the pack house, but I bury my face back into Seth’s chest and stay like that until after the sun sets and it’s dark out. The darkness though, reminds me of when Benjamin arrived, and all the things he said.

After some time, I begin to calm a bit and I lift my head up, looking at my mate.

“They’re taking him back to the packhouse to question him. No one, NO ONE, is going to hurt him, at all. I reminded your brother, but he didn’t need it. He’s a good Alpha,” he tells me and I nod at him. “It’s OK, Love. That’s never going to happen again. You’re making sure of it.”

He pulls me back to his chest and kisses the top of my head. “We do need to talk about you uprooting a whole tree, though.”

“I’m not even sure what I did,” I tell him honestly. “I was trying to link Albert, but I couldn’t find him in my mind because the tree kept popping up and blocking me. It wouldn’t move so I could find Albert, so I just threw it to the side and he was there... but then I heard it fall. I didn’t even realize there was someone behind the real one until I’d taken it down.”

“It was very impressive,” he tells me, and I can feel his pride through the bond.

I snuggle into his chest, realizing just how tired I am now. “We should go back. I’m really tired.”

“Whatever you want, Love,” he tells me and releases me. I stand and he follows, grabbing his jacket off the ground and shrugging it back on. “You can go straight to bed, or we can check on the kid in the morning. Or you can nap and we can see him tonight. Whatever you want, Molly. You tell me and I’ll make it happen.”

“Thank you,” I tell him and he grabs my hand, leading me back. We start up the rocks and when we get to the top he hugs me towards the left. “Uhh, Seth. The packhouse is this way,” I tell him with a small giggle.

Seth sighs deeply and I hear him mutter, “I f*****g hate the woods”.