

Chapter 109

I wake to the blaring of my alarm. Seth releases me with a groan as I roll over and turn it off. I'm so tired, probably from crying so much last night, and Seth definitely doesn't want to be awake this early.

"Go back to sleep," I whisper, laying my head on his chest.

"I thought you wanted to go for a hike to see the land," he tells me, playing with my hair and making absolutely no attempt to get up.

I smile, running my fingers through the hair on his chest. "We're both tired. Maybe we can slip away this afternoon. I really want to see the land they're willing to die over."

Seth nods once and is right back asleep almost instantly. I lay with my head on his chest, letting the sound of his breathing and the beat of his heart lull me back to sleep as well.

I wake in the meadow, Sage lying in the thick green grass right next to me.

"Hey," I tell her with a smile and she lifts her head, but doesn't really move. "Are you really OK?"

"I'll be fine," she tells me. "It's just taking so much of my energy, all of it. I need to rest, but I'm still here."

I pet her on the head and she leans into my hand. "Will you be OK after the next full moon?"

She shakes her little head at me. "I won't be able to shift then, but I'm here. I'm always here."

"It's alright," I tell her. "Take however long you need, Sage."

I lay down next to her, and she quickly falls asleep.

BANG BANG BANG

The sound startles Seth and he jumps, waking me with him.

"What the hell?" he says, gently moving me off of him and sitting up to go to the door, but when he does, he sees the clock. "Shit. We overslept."

He rushes over to the door, opening it but walking away and straight into the bathroom. I sit up, but I see Gus step into the doorway. I, thankfully, remember what I'm wearing and pull a blanket up over me, but am unable to get up.

"Good morning, Princess. Overslept?" he asks and I just nod. "Very well. I'll just wait outside the door."

"Thank you, Gus," I tell him with an appreciative smile as he exits the room, pulling the door behind him.

I can hear the shower turn off and the sounds of Seth slamming things in the bathroom. He rushes out of the rest room, towel around his waist, and moves to his clothes.

"I'm never f*****g late," he mutters, drying himself off and beginning to get dressed. "This f*****g place."

"I'm sorry," I whisper, going to grab his hairbrush for him. "I should have set another alarm when we didn't get up."

He sighs and looks at me, leaning down to kiss my forehead as he takes the hairbrush from me. "It's not your fault. I just quit setting alarms because you always wake up so inhumanly early."

"I know," I whisper. "Sage said she's taking a while to regain her energy, and I guess it's draining me, too."

"It's my own fault, Love," he tells me and I hear his stomach growl.

I smile at him. "I'll get ready and I'll bring breakfast to your meeting for you."

"Thank you," he says with a big smile as he ties his shoes and he looks around, clearly looking for Gus.

"He's outside the door," I explain. "I think he realized I was trying to cover myself with the blanket and excused himself."

He chuckles and leans down to kiss me quickly. "I enjoy these pajamas very much, but we've had entirely too many people enjoying them as well."

"I agree. I'm never bringing them on a trip again."

With that, Seth quickly exits the room. I can hear Gus greet him and ask if he's OK as they walk down the hall.

I jump into the shower, pulling my hair back so it doesn't get wet, and dry off as quickly as I can. Audrey had assured me that I could dress casually today, but still a nice version of casual, so I put on a very nice pair of dark jeans and a button-down top, completing it with my hiking boots and a fleece jacket. I shove a knit hat into the pocket of my jacket and head downstairs, in search of Daphne and Lydia.

Thankfully, I find them just outside the dining room. "I'm so sorry I'm late," I tell them as I approach.

"Oh, it's just fine, Princess," Daphne tells me with a smile.

"Would it be OK with you if I grabbed some food to take to Seth quickly?" I ask, hoping they say yes.

Lydia smiles at me. "Of course, the kitchen is this way," she tells me, motioning me to follow her down a hall.

"I know it's inconvenient, but this works out for me. I was hoping I could talk to Katie-May again," I tell them as we head to the kitchen.

"Who is that?" Lydia asks.

Before I can tell her, Daphne speaks up. "One of the young girls in the kitchen."

"May I ask why you make orphaned children work instead of attending school?" I ask, not really directed to either of them. They both stop and look at each other, and both look a bit terrified.

"Every family in the pack must contribute to the pack," Lydia finally says quietly, looking down.

I look at her, feeling a bit of anger rising inside me. "They are not families, though. They're orphaned children. How many kids have you put to work after their parents died?"

"There's only a few," Daphne tells me.

Only a few? Even one is too many. "And how did their parents die?"

"They died in an attack," Daphne says, like it's obvious.

I resist the urge to roll my eyes. "An attack caused by a land dispute? A dispute that can't be settled reasonably? A dispute that did not involve them in the least?"

They both refuse to look at me as we stop outside the door to the kitchen.

"Those children will NOT be working by the time I leave. Am I understood? I don't care what has to be done. It is not acceptable," I tell them and open the door, not waiting for any kind of response before walking in.

When they hear the door open, all the people inside turn to see what's going on, and immediately bow when they see me.

"Would it be too much trouble to get some food for me to take up to Prince Seth?" I ask.

"Of course, Princess," a man says to me. "What can we get?"

I smile at him. "Whatever you have. He's not picky. If you've got anything left over, that would be great."

"Yes ma'am," he says and turns around, but turns back to me quickly. "Would you like anything?"

"Oh," I say, realizing I hadn't even thought of myself. "If you have any yogurt or fruit that would be great."

He nods at me. "Of course. I can bring it up to you in a moment."

"If it's alright with you," I say, looking around the room. "I'd really like to just wander around and talk to some of you while I wait."

He bows deeply. "Whatever you'd like, Princess."

I turn around, taking in the kitchen. It's not huge, but the pack isn't, so that makes sense. I see a few people cleaning up from the breakfast service, putting food away, cleaning counters. I see one person in a corner prepping some things, I assume for lunch or dinner. I walk down a small hall to my left to find a room with a sink and racks of dishes and locate just the wolf I'm looking for.

"Good morning Katie-May," I say, watching the little girl wash dishes in a sink that she can barely even reach.

She turns around and quickly bows to me, not moving to stand upright. "Good Morning, Princess Molly."

I smile at the sweet kid. "You can stand," I tell her and she does. "How long have you been working in the kitchen?"

"A few months," she tells me, turning back to move some dishes around. "I don't cook, though. I just help serve and clean."

"There's nothing wrong with serving and cleaning," I tell her reassuringly. "But there is a problem that they have you working, instead of in school. I'm going to make sure that it's taken care of before I leave here, alright?"

She looks at me with hopeful eyes. "Alright."

Before I can say anything else I hear Reginald, and he sounds angry. "This is supposed to be done and cleaned. Why can't you all do anything right?!"

I hear a man attempt to say something, but I can't make it out for the sound of pans clattering about.

"There's no reason to not be done! Why are you cooking anything now???" he bellows.

I walk out of the dish room and walk up behind him. "They're cooking because I asked them to."

He freezes and slowly turns around, a look of fury on his face. "I interrupted their cleaning, and they're graciously fixing food for the PRINCE. Is that going to be a problem for you?"

He smiles at me, but it's clearly a very fake smile. "It's not a problem at all, PRINCESS."

"Good. Is there a reason that you came here or was it solely to yell at hard working members of your pack?" I ask him, crossing my arms over my chest, and hoping in the back of my mind that Albert has followed me at some distance in case the man loses it.

Thankfully, he doesn't say a word and storms out of the room.

The gentleman I had first spoken with looks up at me, thanks on his face. "Would you like to eat with your mate?"

"If it's alright with you, I can take it now," I tell him and he hands me a bowl with a parfait that looks delicious. "Thank you so much. I know this was an inconvenience."

"It's not," he tells me. "Not for you."

I step back and see them fixing food for Seth and quickly eat mine. I hadn't realized how hungry I was until I started eating, but it is absolutely delicious. I walk back into the dish room when I'm done and move to the sink, cleaning my own dishes.

The man walks into the room behind me, face completely aghast. "Princess Molly, we can wash that for you."

"Nonsense. I'm nearly done," I tell him with a smile and place the dishes on a rack to dry. "Thank you. It was wonderful."

"Of course," he tells me, a pleased look on his face. We have the food for Prince Seth ready for you.

"I really appreciate you all," I say, following him into the kitchen and picking up the tray. I walk back down the hall and find the ladies waiting for me back in the entry way of the pack house.

"They are meeting in the conference room," Daphne tells me and motions for me to follow. We walk up a staircase and down a hall to a door with a plaque labeling it as such. I hear the sounds of deep voices arguing inside, one speaking over the other, back and forth.

"Both of you shut up!" I hear the sound of my mate yelling at both of them, sounding very frustrated. I lift my fist to knock on the door but before I can, I hear Seth again. "Come in, Molly."

I crack open the door and he gives me a very weak smile as I walk forward, but the closer I get, the more his smile falters.

"Everyone, get the f**k out," he growls out dangerously.

Both men look at each other, and then to me, as they slowly stand and walk out of the room. I take a step backwards, unsure what's going on, or if he meant for me to leave. He's, somehow, more angry than he was last night.

"Not you," he says to me, the anger and fury rolling off of him, causing me to swallow in fear as I slowly set the tray on the end of the conference table farthest away from him. "Close the f*****g door."

Someone behind me closes the door, and I can smell them walking away, wanting to get as far away from their angry Prince as they can.

"Seth," I whisper. "What's going on?"

"Why do you smell like another male?" he growls out, standing slowly, and walking towards me.

"What?" I ask him, confused. "I don't. I just went down to the kitchen. I saw Reginald, but I didn't even get close to him."

"No!" he yells at me, and this is the first time that I think he might actually hurt me. "This is someone new. I haven't met this wolf. It's all over you."

"I don't know," I begin to say but he grabs me and quickly lays me across the table, sticking one of his legs between mine and lying on top of me, sniffing deeply. I'm terrified, and I can't hold back the tears. "I'm sorry, I don't know. I swear, Seth... I would never. You know I wouldn't."

He inhales deeply, at the top of my head, my neck, my side. He looks back up and his face softens. "I'm so sorry, Molly," he tells me, lifting his weight off of me and loosening his grip, placing his hand on my hip as he moves to smell over my stomach.

"s**t, Love. I'm so sorry," he says as he lifts his head and smiles at me.

I can't stop crying, and I can't handle the swing of his emotions that I'm feeling from him because now he's elated, a happiness that I've never felt from him, not even when he marked me. He moves his hand from my hip and slowly slides it under my shirt, gently placing it on the skin on my stomach.

"Molly, Love," he whispers with a huge smile and tears in his eyes. "You're pregnant."