

Chapter 102-1

I stand in my closet, suitcase open on a table, as I look around, trying to decide what to pack. What does one even wear to an Alpha Challenge? I've never been to this Pack before. Hell, I don't remember the name of it, much less how affluent the pack is. I don't want to bring anything that would be too much, but I also don't want to underdress.

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I sigh, unsure what to do. I don't want to bother Seth and ask. He left and went downstairs early this morning to get some work done, asking me to pack for the both of us as he walked out the door, a bagel and a cup of coffee in his hands.

Umm.. Audrey?

Everything OK, Deer?

Seth and I leave today and.. I... I don't know what to pack. I tell my new mother-in-law, embarrassed to admit it to her. Seth asked me to pack for him as well...

I'll be right there.

I feel absolutely ridiculous, but I think that I just need to call in someone who knows what they're doing. It's our first public outing since meeting each other, and it's important we look good... I think.

I hear a knock at the door and a few moments later Anne opens the bedroom door. "Princess Molly, Queen Audrey is here to see you," I hear her call in and I feel relief flood over me.

"Thanks Anne!" I call from the closet and hear the door close.

"He made you pack for him on his first trip?" Audrey says, walking into the closet.

I turn and smile meekly, embarrassed to have had to contact her at all, much less have her come here to help. "I don't think he really cares," I tell her, holding up the clothes I'm holding in my hands. "I don't know anything about this pack."

She smiles at me and walks over, taking the items from my hands. "It's ok, Molly. Next time you all travel, have him give you the pack information as soon as he tells you that you're leaving. They don't realize how much of an impact your clothing can have."

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"He told you about Lydie?" she asks, a look of concern covering her face.

"I asked," I whisper as I look at my feet, nodding slowly, too afraid to meet her eyes. "I needed to know."

"Oh, Molly. Are you OK?" she asks, reaching out and gently placing her hand on my arm.

"Yeah. I get it," I tell her, looking at her hand, but still unwilling to look up. "I didn't have my wolf."

She shakes her head. "It didn't matter, Molly. He was wrong."

"It's OK," I tell her, giving her a small smile. "We've talked about it. It's in the past."

"You're a better wolf than me," she says, moving her hand from my arm and walking over to my clothes that are hanging. "I'd have still scratched her eyes out for touching my men."

I chuckle slightly at that, the thought of this refined and poised woman going after someone else. "My wolf is still resting. The shift took away almost all of her strength. She may feel differently about it."

"The Blood Moon Pack used to be wealthy and thriving but, over the years, they've really started to struggle. Their Alpha died a few months ago and his son took over..." she says, turning to me. "He's an idiot."

"Do you know their main export?" I ask, hoping to understand them a little more.

"Gems, but the mines are drying up," she tells me.

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Their land dispute is making more sense to me now. They must think there's something on the land they're fighting over- or they know that there is.

"And the other pack? Seth didn't even tell me their names," I say, realizing I should have asked more questions.

She looks me in the eyes and I can tell there's something about this pack that she does not like. "The Buck Moon Pack. Their Alpha is a real piece of work."

"Oh," is all I can bring myself to say at seeing her so angry at just the thought of him.

"Before I met Peter, my parents tried to arrange a marriage between us. Alpha Thomas," she says, looking uncomfortable. "He was furious when I met Peter and we realized we were mates. Thomas was convinced I was lying to get out of our agreement. He... he killed my father as retribution for breaking their deal."

"Oh Gods," I say, covering my mouth with my hand in shock. "I'm so sorry, Audrey."

"He's an old man now- he was 15 years older than me then, but he's strong," she says, shaking her head. "I really hope the kid can take care of him." She looks down at the floor and I think she may be about to cry, but she squares her shoulder and turns back to the clothes.

"So, whenever you travel, you don't want to show up looking TOO nice for the area, but you also need to look a step above because you are the future Queen," she says, pulling a few items from the racks. "You also need to make sure that Lydie knows she's inferior, because you're Seth's mate."

I can't help but smile and offer up a small thanks to the goddess for sending me someone who can understand what I'm going through with everything.

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