

## Chapter 12-1

I try to hold in my emotions but I'm unable to. I'm not even sure what exactly I'm feeling other than anger. I know the emotions are there, but I'm just too mad to even deal with anything else right now. "Deep breaths" I'm telling myself in my head, over and over. I don't want to meet my dad at the falls with tears still staining my cheeks.

To Seth's credit, he may be an ass, but at least he's not a complete i\*\*\*t because he's smart enough to not even try to talk to me. I know he's struggling to keep up with me. I've heard him fall a few times on the rocks that I haven't bothered to tell him are wet. There's some mud up ahead and you can be sure I'm not going to point it out to him either. I step across the mud and a few steps later I hear him slip and hit the ground. I also feel his pain and I feel a little bad, but not enough to stop.

We're getting close to the falls so I stop and try to pull myself together. Seth stops beside me, wipes his hand on the shoulder of his jacket (possibly the only part of him not covered in mud) and reaches to my face to wipe my cheeks clear of tears. "I really am sorry," he says to me and I know he's sincere, but I just need some time to think through all of this.

"The falls are just ahead," I tell him. I'd picked this path because they come out at the side of the falls and it's just a gorgeous view when the sun rises and it's behind the spray of the water, but I just want to get to my dad now, so I start going up. He doesn't deserve an amazing view now.

After a few more minutes, I take one last deep breath before we step out of the thick of the woods and we can see our dads. Walking up, King Phillip takes in his son and starts to laugh, but my dad is not laughing when he meets my eyes. He can tell I'm upset. I hear him in my head. Are you OK?

Yes. I don't want to talk about it. I tell him and, thankfully, he leaves me to my thoughts. I don't want to get upset again now. I take off my backpack and pull out the box of muffins. I turn so the open box is facing my dad and the King and they each take one. Then I reach in and grab one and toss it to Seth. He catches it, but I can tell from his face he's not amused. The men are standing there watching the sun rise finally and I sneak off to the side and sit at the base of one of my favorite trees.

The sunrise is beautiful. It always is here, though. I like to come here alone sometimes, well, as alone as I'm allowed to be. I see my dad walking down a bit and I realize he'd set his coffee cup down and he's going to retrieve it.

"Are you just going to leave your mate sitting on the ground alone, son?" I hear King Peter say.

"I think she just needs some time alone." I hear Seth return and I know I shouldn't be listening, but it's not my fault that everyone forgets I have wolf hearing.

"Did you tell her?" Peter asks him.

"No, she doesn't ever need to know that, Dad." What else could he possibly be hiding that's worse than what he's already told me?

"Seth, she seems like a reasonable girl. It may help put her mind at ease. But what did you do to upset the poor girl so much?"

"Dad, leave it. She doesn't ever need to know that I can't reject her." I hear Seth say and I feel my heart fall to the pit of my stomach.

"You can't reject me?" I say aloud to him and they both turn with panic-stricken faces, realizing I'd heard their conversation.

"What?" I hear my dad growl out from behind them and he looks more angry than I have ever seen.

"Randall, why don't we talk over here. I think it may be best for the kids to talk alone." King Peter says to my dad, turning to walk away. I leap to my feet and decide for once, to stand up for myself.

"Actually, I think it might be best to hear it from you. Since anything from Seth would only be the truth if it's convenient." I spit out, my voice laced with the anger I can barely contain.

"It isn't like that, Molly. I made a very stupid decision," Seth says.

"And then another, and another, and another. How many was it, exactly?" I spit at him and I can feel my emotions starting to spiral out of control. I stop and take a deep breath and I feel my dad come in front of me and gently place his hands on my shoulders.

"What's going on, kiddo?" he asks me and I close my eyes, trying hard not to cry even more. I don't know where to even start to tell my dad what Seth admitted to me earlier.

"Dad, I..." my voice cracks and I realize just how hurt I am by everything and I just can't handle everything I'm finding out today.

"Sir," I hear Seth speak up and I can't imagine what he's going to say here. "I made some mistakes that hurt Molly when I told her about them." he tells him. What a broad explanation.

"Randall, it seems the girl overheard us talking about the fact that Seth couldn't reject her, even if he wanted to." Peter offers. I'm sure they can feel the concern that is emitting from my dad. "He doesn't want to, though. I thought it might help her feel more secure but Seth thought not, thus why she didn't know yet." he continues.

"Why can't you reject her?" my dad quietly growls out, his eyes never leaving me.