

Chapter 13-1

“What exactly is my brother doing?” I ask Oliver.

“I’m not sure, I didn’t see it. But I heard he came running out of the pack house and attacked Seth. It was, apparently, a decent fight. But I also heard the Prince wasn’t fighting back too hard.” He tells me the rumors going around the pack.

“I’m too exhausted to even think of dealing with that.” I respond because it’s the honest truth.

“We don’t NEED you here, if you want to go rest.” Oli offers me.

“No, I can’t rest. This damn mate bond won’t let me sleep.” I tell him, my voice laced with irritation.

“That’s because you didn’t let him sleep next to you, kiddo. Didn’t you pay attention in any classes?”

“I did pay attention. Last night was the run. He couldn’t. And he won’t be tonight either, because he’s a complete ass.”

“Oh, damn. You need to talk about it?” he asks.

“No, I don’t. I’m just ready to not think about anything for a bit. What do you need done?”

“I mean, if you’re offering, there’s onions and garlic to be cut.” He tells me and I can tell he’s halfway joking, but I’m more than thrilled to help with something that won’t require any thoughts. I grab my knife roll off the shelf and head over to the empty prep area with all the garlic and onions. I throw in my headphones and begin to work on the small mountain of garlic.

I thought this would help me clear my mind, but it’s just giving me more time to think. Maybe that’s what I need to do, because I’m still not exactly sure why I’m so upset. I’d always known my mate would probably reject me if I had one. When he stopped to talk, I’d assumed it was a rejection, and even though it wasn’t, I was still upset with the conversation. What exactly from all of this is really upsetting me? I continue to chop the garlic. When I’m done, I grab a lid and place the container in the main prep fridge, returning to my station.

As I begin chopping the onions I decide to evaluate the situation as if there were no Royals involved. Perhaps that is where the problem lies. But I can’t come up with a better reason from that viewpoint either. I realize that it’s brought up new feelings, so I look for new information and realize that it’s that Seth was with other women. I can feel myself become more upset and just as I’m about to take a moment to calm myself, I manage to slice into my ring finger on my left hand. “Shit.” I say to myself as I walk off towards the sink. I’ve cut myself plenty of times, but this is probably the most painful.

I rinse my hand and the blood just keeps coming. ‘This isn’t good’, I think to myself and decide to apply pressure quickly. I wrap it up in a few paper towels and decide to tape it up and put a glove on to finish the few onions I have left and deal with it then. I step back over and check the area for blood. Fortunately, there’s not much on the work space and I’m able to clean it all up quickly and with a new board and knife, I grab the next onion. It hurts pretty badly, so I decide to try to finish as quickly as I can and just ignore the pain. I’m on the last onion, finally, when I can smell him.

I hear the door open and turn around to see Seth with a look of complete worry on his face. At some point today he’d managed to clean up and put a suit on, but there’s some bruises and healing cuts on his face. “What happened?” he asks me quickly.

“What do you mean?” I return with confusion.

“You’re hurt.” he says matter of factly and walks over, grabbing my arms and noticing my gloved hand. He reaches to remove it but I stop him.

“What are you doing?” I ask him, pulling my arm away. “How did you even know I was hurt?”

“I can feel it, through the bond. Please, Molly, let me help you.” he says, and I can sense he’s genuinely concerned.

“It’s not the first time I cut myself, Seth. I’m fine. I’ve only got one onion left and then I’ll take care of it.” I tell him and turn back to finish my job. I expertly slice the last one and then lid the container and place it in the fridge next to the garlic. Seth had stood there waiting the whole time and when I return he reaches for my arm to pull me away. “I need to clean my area”, I tell him and turn back to put everything away and clean the counter.

I don’t bother saying anything. I know he means well but he’s hovering and it’s bothering me, so I just walk over to the sink and grab the first aid kit down again on the way. I take the glove off and realize that blood has soaked through the paper towels. I KNOW I need to go have it looked at but I don’t want Seth to know how bad it is. I don’t even get the chance to try to blow him off before he notices the blood and quickly grabs my arm.

To my surprise, he gently takes my arm in his hand and slowly removes the bloody towels. He gently places my hand under the water and when he pulls it back he’s carefully inspecting it. “You can’t heal, can you?” he asks me.