

Chapter 160-1

It’s been a month since Lucas opened the mindlink with Seth, allowing him to finally reach out to speak with him. Seth didn’t tell me the full extent of their conversation, but Lucas did request to meet at the Palace for a conversation with us in a month. He gave assurances that no more attacks would happen and, so far, there haven’t been any.

We leave for the palace today and Seth seems quite nervous about traveling with the twins. Perhaps he’s correct and this is some kind of set up, but I’m choosing to believe that Prince Lucas will remain true to his word. Regardless, Seth has assembled an entire team to escort us back to the palace.

My family is waiting for us in front of the packhouse, along with Oliver. I pull him into a tight hug first as my parents spend our last few moments here with the pups.

“I guess I’ll see you fairly soon,” Oliver says and I beam at him.

“So you said yes?”

He nods and looks at me, looking up to see how close Robbie is. “I haven’t told him yet,” he says, a worried look on his face. “I told Michael it will take some time as I need to help find a replacement. I didn’t want to tell Rob until you had left, though.”

I nod, understanding what he means. My brother and I have only gotten closer as we’ve gotten older. He’s also become very attached to the babies, especially Cora. Staying here was what was safest for all of us, but it made it even harder to leave.

Oliver hugs me again, and whispers in my ear. “See you soon.”

I walk over to Stella and pull her into a hug. “I’m going to miss you guys,” I tell her, but I notice that her scent is different. I pull back and look at her as she smiles at me, holding a finger up to her lips. “He hasn’t realized it yet. He told me yesterday that I smelled weird,” she says with a roll of her eyes.

Nodding, I smile at her, trying to contain my excitement. “Let me know how it goes,” I say and turn around to walk to my mom, but I turn back to Stella. “Just because my brother has to stay with the pack doesn’t mean that you can’t come visit without him.”

I walk to my mom who is holding Andrew, talking softly to him and crying. “I knew you would have to leave,” she says, looking up with a very uncharacteristic sniffle. “I didn’t think it would be this hard.”

“I know,” I tell her, trying to hold back my own tears. “I’m glad we were here, though. And Dad is retired. You guys can visit all the time.”

“It would be nice to see Audrey,” she says, running a finger down Andrew's cheek. In the month the pups have been alive, it’s become more evident of their strong blood lines. They’ve grown so much, but especially Andrew who lost the chubbiness in his cheeks in just the first week of his life. “We’ll come soon, just as soon as your dad is able.”

“We also have doctors at the palace,” I say quietly, knowing how worried she is about my dad. He had severely damaged his hip joint in the battle. The injury was bad enough that a wolf who didn’t have the Alpha gene would not have made it, but he somehow did AND managed to be there for me and the twins, hiding his pain the entire time. He was in the hospital wing for quite a while and has been using a cane to walk, and staying out of the public as much as possible out of embarrassment, since she finally released him.

Mom gives me a quick hug, not willing to put down her grandson just yet, and walks over to Seth who is waiting at the car.

“Leaving me already, Kiddo?” Dad says from the bench he's seated on with Cora in his large arms.

I nod and sit down next to him, laying my head on his arm. “Duty calls.”

“I hope you are able to work something out,” he says, looking down at his granddaughter who has been cooing at him with the occasional gurgle and spit bubble. “This little girl is going to give you hell.”

I laugh at that, looking at her. “I know,” I say, smiling. “Here’s hoping she’s a little less spirited than I was.”

We sit there a moment, watching Seth and my mom strap Andrew into his carseat, unsure who is actually doing it. They just keep adjusting and readjusting things, back and forth between them.

“Thank you,” I say to my dad and he looks at me, a sad look on his face. “I know it’s hard for you now. Thank you for risking it all for us.”

“Someday, Kiddo,” he says with a sad smile, “you'll understand that it wasn’t even a choice. You love your kids so much that you’ll run into any danger, uncaring of the consequences. It’s just how love works. To be clear though, I’d do it again a thousand times over.”

“You want to carry her to the car?” I ask and mom and Seth both turn to look at us, indicating it’s time to leave. Thankfully, Robbie walks up to Seth, buying us a few more moments.

“You better take her,” he says, handing her to me after I stand. “I don’t trust myself and the steps, not with something this precious.”

Dad walks behind me to meet Seth at the other side of the car as he takes Cora to hook her into the carseat. I turn back, wrapping my arms around my dad tightly.