Chapter 18

Seth and I make our way, hand in hand, upstairs to the banquet room. There's still so many visitors here that the dining hall isn't big enough. Thankfully, the banquet room isn't set formally for breakfast. We walk into the room that's already quite filled and make our way to the head table. As we pass, I can feel everyone's eyes on us and our connected hands and even more as Seth pulls my chair out for me to sit.

Robbie looks up from his phone at me. "Good to see you guys. How's the hand?" he asks me, glancing back down at his phone.

"It's great. It would probably feel better if we didn't have phones at the table, though." I tell him with a glare.

"That's good." he tells me and continues as he realizes what I said with "Wait. what?".

"Becoming Alpha doesn't mean you get to break the rules, Robbie." I tell him with a giggle, reminding him of all the times Mom got mad at us for bringing phones to the table.

My mom places her hand on my knee. "It's Alpha Robert, dear."

"Oh, pardon me." I say sarcastically and turn to my brother. "Sorry about that, Alpha Robbie." He doesn't say anything but just glares at me and turns back to his phone. I look around and note that no one, not even the King and Queen, seem bothered that he's paying such attention to his phone.

"Seriously though, Alpha Robert" I begin, with emphasis on his actual name, "What's so important over there?" I ask.

Robbie lets out a deep sigh. "Albert left this morning and insisted he go alone so he wouldn't draw more attention to himself. I've been tracking his movements to make sure he's OK."

"Oh, I didn't mean for him to be in so much danger" I murmur. "Does everyone here know?" I ask shyly, looking around.

"We do, dear." King Peter says, confirming my fear. "I wish you had said something sooner. We could have sent a royal guard yesterday as soon as the accident happened. We tried to send someone with this Albert fellow but he refused." he tells us all.

"I'm sorry, Your Highness." I tell him, feeling completely admonished that I'd kept the medicine that helped me a secret.

"Molly, dear. I know Seth hasn't marked you yet, but we're family now. Unless we're in a formal setting, I don't want to hear you utter any titles. We're just Audrey and Peter to you. We have been so close to your parents for so long. I'm honestly sad that I didn't get to know you better when you were younger. Alas, Royal and Alpha duties kept us all so busy we never spent as much time together in person as we'd have liked." Queen Audrey tells me.

"Thank you, ma'am." I tell her, not meeting her eyes.

"Molly" Queen Audrey says to me and reaches her hand out across the table for me to take. As I reach out and place my hand in hers, she continues "we always wanted more kids but my pregnancy with Seth was so rough we never dared to try. I'm so glad he finally found you, dear." she tells me and squeezed my hand gently.

"I'm really glad I finally found him, too." I tell her softly and feel Seth place his arm around me and pull me close to him.

"He's back in the packlands", Robbie states, breaking us all out of our conversation.

"Good." Seth says. "He's coming straight here?" he asks, and my brother nods at him.

"Well, that's wonderful" my dad states. "We're going to have to talk about this, Molly. How old were you when you tried to leave the packlands?" he looks at me pointedly. So far, the entirety of this breakfast has left me feeling like a child.

"I was 18, dad." I tell him, hoping that he'll just drop the whole conversation.

But he does not. "Oh, so old enough to know better then," he says, and I realize that he's not mad at me, but he's hurt that I hadn't asked for his help.

"I'm sorry dad. Things were really bad in the pack. We were having all the issues with the neighboring packs. You were so stressed and tired. I didn't want you to have to risk sending someone into the human world. If I had told you, you would have immediately sent one of your top warriors in to get the medicine for me." I begin to tell him.

"You're absolutely wrong, Molly." He interrupts me in a raised voice and I notice some people turn their heads at the noise. "I'd have gone myself and acquired you anything you needed."

"I know, dad. And that would have been even worse. I didn't want to make things worse for you or for the pack. And honestly, I was hurt pretty bad." I tell him, glancing down at my current injury. "It would have made the whole situation even worse for everyone."

Thankfully, the Omegas enter and bring in breakfast and this time they head towards the head table first. Before I can stop her,

Stella walks right up by Robert and leans down in front of him to place the platter on the table.

Don't say a word to her I mind link to him as soon as I see him trying to hold back his wolf.

He's visibly struggling, though I'm not sure if anyone else can tell. I'm trying. Please don't talk to her though. I need her to leave.

"Good Morning, Molly" Stella says to me, her cherry self. Sorry I link to Robert before turning to her. "Good Morning, Stella! I've missed seeing you all!" I tell her and it's the absolute truth.

"Is everything ok? There are some crazy rumors going around the kitchen- everything from you've met your mate to you getting hurt! I told them I'm sure you were just spending time with your family though," she says, always the voice of reason in the kitchen. But this time, she was the one who was incorrect.

"I'm ok, Stella. I think. I did get hurt though" I tell her, holding up my injured hand. "I sliced my finger cutting some onions yesterday. Gotta go back today for the Doc to take a look. And, umm, I did also meet my mate." I finish and glance over at Seth who looks a bit surprised I'm telling someone, but not unhappy about it.

"Oh, Molly! I'm so happy you met your mate!" She beams at me and I can't help but return her smile. She's an absolute delight and will make a wonderful Luna. "How long are you in the kitchen today?" I ask.

"Once I'm done serving I have to go to school but I'm heading back as soon as I'm done to help prep and serve dinner." She tells me.

"Awesome! I'll try to come by later and update you about my finger once I get it checked out." I tell her, trying to head off any more questions she has.

"Ok! It was good to see you Molly. Umm, Princess Molly? Alphas, Luna, Your Magesties" She says and bows awkwardly.

"Just Molly. I'll always be just Molly." I tell her with a smile and turn to Seth, hoping she'll move away from Robbie.

Is she always so friendly? I hear Robbie in my head and it makes me giggle.

Yes. She is. She's going to be an amazing Luna. You really couldn't ask for better. I tell him and it's the truth.

We begin to eat and everyone chats in between their bites about everything and nothing. It's very relaxed and it's so good to just be with my family.

I feel my mom lean over to me and she asks "You told Stella you met your mate. Does this mean you two are ok now?"

I nod to her. "Yeah. We talked a lot. I think we're going to be fine. It's still a lot to take in, but it's good".

"I have some work to do today, but I should be able to pull away a bit to take you to get your hand checked." Seth says to me.

"That's ok, Seth. I'm sure it's important. I can go alone." I tell him, slightly sad at the thought of him not being there, but he is the prince and I'm not sure exactly what he does all day but I'm sure it's important.

"Molly, I can go with you so you're not alone." I hear my mom offer and I'm relieved that someone will be with me.

"I hate to do that", Seth says, and he looks torn.

"Son, we really need to get this matter wrapped up." Peter tells Seth and I know it must be very important.

"I'll be ok, Seth. I'm sure it will all be fine." I reassure him. "Breakfast has been lovely everyone, but I need to go talk to Oliver finally and turn the kitchen over to him now." I say and stand to go face my best friend and hand over the thing I love most.