

Chapter 27

I'm awakened by the sound of my mom moving around my room, in my closet and messing with my makeup. "Morning! I tried to let you sleep in but you've got to get up. Your father and Peter have requested you in the Alpha office after breakfast. How did you sleep?"

"Mom, It's too early for this." I tell her, turning to see my clock says 8 AM, so it's very much not that early. "I didn't sleep very well. I was so restless and kept waking up."

"I expected as much. Go hop in the shower. Keep your finger and your hair dry." she demands, and I groan, but roll out of bed.

I try my best to keep my hair and finger dry in the shower, but my hair got a little damp in a few places. After drying off, I walk into my bedroom to see my mother immaculately dressed and waiting expectantly for me at the chair at my vanity, hairdryer in hand.

"Didn't trust me with my hair?" I say with a small giggle.

My mom smiles. "I thought you might have a little trouble, but this seemed better than me helping you in the shower. I'll leave that job for Seth", she tells me with a mischievous smile and gets to work on my hair. After a few minutes, my hair is perfect again and she starts to work with my makeup.

"I think I can handle my makeup, mom." I tell her, embarrassed that she has to help me so much.

"Nonsense," she begins, "I don't know how much longer we have until you leave. This is probably my last chance. Once your mate returns, do I'm sure he's not going to let anyone near you for a few days." She continues doing my makeup and I can't help the forlorn feeling I have thinking of leaving her. Whenever things were hard as a kid, my mom was always right there to encourage me and help.

Tears start to well in my eyes and I turn my head to look at my mom. "What am I going to do when I leave and things get difficult. You won't be there."

"I'll be just a phone call away, Molly." she tells me with a smile. "It's going to be difficult at first, yes. But the Goddess would not have mated you to that ruggedly gorgeous prince if you were not equipped with all the makings of an amazing queen."

"I think you may be more attracted to my mate than I am." I tell her with a giggle.

Mom just smiles back at me. "You may be right. But we can all be sure that I won't have any ugly grandchildren."

Mom helps me into the clothes she's picked out for me- a black pencil skirt and white blouse. I'm not sure what Dad and Peter need me for, but it seems to be some kind of actual business as my mom hands me a pair of black stilettos to finish my outfit. I look nice, but I just don't feel like myself. I suppose, though, that this is likely just the new me and I should start to get used to it.

We head upstairs and sit down for breakfast with Dad, Peter and Audrey.

"Good Morning, Kiddo. Dearest," my dad says in greeting, standing to pull the chair out for my mom. "I see your mother told you that your help is needed today. You look nice." He says to me with a smile.

"She told me I was needed, but not why." I say, hoping for more information.

"We'll save the business for after we eat," Peter tells us.

Breakfast is brought out but when I look up, I see Oliver bringing a plate towards us.

"Hey Molly. Luna, Alpha, Your Majesties." He says with a bow towards everyone but me. "I heard about your hand. I made your favorite." he tells me, placing the eggs benedict down in front of me, leaning down to hug me and kiss the top of my head. "I'm so sorry" he whispers in my ear and I can't help the tears that come to my eyes.

To my surprise, he reaches forward, grabbing the knife and fork and cuts my food for me, because my best friend has realized I can't do it myself. "Thanks, Oli" I whisper, not trusting my voice.

"Of course. Just promise me one more hike before you leave here, OK?" he asks and I nod in agreement before he leaves us.

"He seems like a nice fellow," Audrey says kindly.

I nod to her, still trying to hold back tears. "He is."

"What if he's who you hire as your assistant?" she asks and my mom enthusiastically agrees.

"No, that would never work" I tell them, ruining their plan. "He loves cooking too much. He'd do it if I asked him to, but he wouldn't be truly happy."

"You're a good friend, Molly." Audrey tells me, sympathy in her eyes, leaving me uncomfortable with all the emotions I'm feeling at the breakfast table with my future in-laws.

"So," I begin in an attempt to change the subject, "Have any of you heard from the guys?"

"No, we haven't." my dad speaks up. "They're too far away to mind link any of us."

I sigh, sadly. "I assumed, but I was still hopeful," I tell them.

"I'm sure they're fine, Molly." Audrey says, reassuringly. "The hardest part was getting them to let them on their land. I'm honestly shocked they let them."

I realize they know I went with them now and I feel a little uncomfortable with how they're seeking information. Maybe they're just genuinely curious, but I'm not sure that's the case. I decide quickly that I need to give them some kind of information, and I decide on the truth. Well, a version of the truth.

"They were willing to let them in when we told them I was hurt and couldn't heal." I tell them and they both seem to accept this answer easily, which surprises me.

We've all finished eating and my dad places his napkin on the table and stands. "Molly. Peter. It's probably time to get to work."

We both stand and follow Dad upstairs. Once in the office, I close the door behind us and turn to see how the seating arrangement is working. There's been quite a lot of people working here this week, but I'm surprised to see George sitting in there as well, now.

He looks up at me and smiles, pulling out the chair next to him at the conference table. "You're working with me today, Kid."

Thank the Goddess. I was worried I'd be working with Peter and the entire situation, and the lack of information that anyone is providing me has made me nervous. I go sit next to him and he hands me a stack of papers. "Want to fill me in?"

"There's a pack in danger of going under. It looks like they've been overspending, but they're in so much debt now I'm not sure they can get out from under it." He tells me and I realize while looking through that it's the pack of the Alpha that asked me to show him around.

"Has Chris taken over the pack yet or is his dad still running it?" I ask and Peter must have overheard us because he comes to sit across from us.

"You know them well?" He asks me, grabbing another copy of the papers for himself.

"No, I just met him at Robbie's ceremony." I say, glancing through the papers. "He asked me to show him the kitchen program and the gardens. He mentioned wanting to make his pack more sustainable, but he didn't tell me it was THIS bad." I'm honestly shocked at the numbers I'm seeing and decide that there must be a mistake somewhere.

"Chris brought the matter to my attention," Peter says. "I thought at first that he was attempting to push his dad out as Alpha so he could take over, but I think there are some serious issues at hand. He provided me with all the information he could get, and it is quite a lot."

"These numbers don't make any sense for a pack of that size. And who are they in debt to?" I ask, not really to anyone, just seeking more information.

Peter pinches the bridge of his nose, looking very stressed. "I believe he's in debt to my brother."

"Oh, I can see how that complicates things for you." I say to him, unsure of the situation between him and his brother, but there's definitely issues there.

"This is confidential information, but since you're the Prince's Mate, we decided to pull you in. We're going to remove the Alpha and put his son in charge. Unless we get the truth out of someone about where their money has gone, the pack doesn't have enough to get by for very long once the young Alpha takes over, and to no fault of his own." My dad tells me and I nod in understanding. This is really bad for them. "We're hoping that you can help come up with some creative ways to move money around within their pack to keep them afloat and give the poor kid a chance. I think you and George will honestly be a great team and the perfect pair for this."

"We'll get to work on it immediately." George tells them and my dad and Peter leave us to go through it.

We spend hours working, we work through lunch and late into the evening coming up with a plan. There's definitely been some questionable handling of funds and the pack would be fine if it wasn't for the huge amount of debt they incurred. George and I have come up with some pretty decent ideas for them, but it's going to be tough.

We're about to break for the day and have a really late dinner when my dad walks up to us, looking very displeased. "Molly, Robert and Seth are back. They want you to meet them in your room. Alone."