

Chapter 44-1

-Seth-

I sink my fangs into my mate's delicate neck and taste the metallic blood. I feel her find her release and realize I timed her marking perfectly for her, and I retract my fangs, licking the spot to seal the mark and placing a kiss on it, because she deserves it. I continue my movements just a moment longer when I also find my release, deep inside her, holding her close to me, and release the customary howl when a royal finds their mate. I forgot to tell her about the howl. I hope it didn't scare her.

Any attempts to ever replace my mate were an obvious mistake, but this moment with her has solidified that for me. I smile and look down at her, but there's something on her face that tells me something is wrong. I move to inspect her neck, but her mark is sealed.

"I... I think something is wrong," I hear her say and her voice isn't quite the same.

"What's wrong, Molly?" I ask her, trying not to panic. Her skin feels cold and it's only getting colder. I grab the closest blanket and wrap it around her as quickly as I can. I notice the muscles in her arms and hands contracting, almost twitching. "I think you're having a seizure", I say to her, but she doesn't respond.

I take her face in my hands. "Molly, hey, Molly," I nearly shout but she's not answering. Shit. Shit. Her eyelids are getting droopy when they finally close and her body goes limp in my arms.

Randall, we have a problem.

What happened? We felt you mark her, but no one can link her.

I did, but... I don't know what happened. I think she had a seizure. She feels like ice and she's not conscious. I don't know what I did.

Bring her here. I'll meet you.

I quickly throw my jeans, socks and shoes back on and scoop up my mate in my arms. She's so cold and her lips look like they may be turning blue. I consider shifting, but there would be no safe way to keep her on Altair's back, even though I'd get there faster in wolf form. I run across the creek and field, entering the woods, thankful that I had marked the path as we came now.

We hadn't gone very far, but it feels like we were 100 miles away as I run back with my mate in my arms. Did I injure her? She didn't seem injured. Did I mark her incorrectly? That's so rare, and Altair is sure that isn't the case.

What did I do? I ask my wolf, feeling my heart break at the sight of my mate in my arms.

I don't think you did anything, Seth. She had a lot of magic in her.

I nod, knowing he's probably right. Lily herself said it was a terribly complex spell. She changed her looks, that can't be easy on her small body. But for that to be the problem, it would mean that the spell was lifted, and I'm too afraid to hope for that. I don't think I could hide the disappointment if I'm wrong when she wakes up. If she wakes up.

I'm almost to the area with the pine trees when I come upon Randall's large, brown wolf. He growls at me and I stop, but finally realize he thinks I hurt her.

"I swear, I didn't do anything to hurt her," and he just stares at me, finally turning around and we continue running back towards the cabin.

Lily is standing on the front porch and holds the door open for us to enter. I notice that Randall had at some point shifted back but I don't know, nor care, when or how that happened. I take Molly into her childhood bedroom where the covers were already pulled back and place her gently in bed, pulling the blankets back over her and reach out to feel her head.

"She's so cold," I say and Celeste reaches in the blankets, grabbing Molly's hand.

"What happened, Seth? Her body is like ice." Celeste says and I'm almost embarrassed to tell them.

"I, I marked her. I sealed it. We, uhh, finished and then she said she was cold and told me something was wrong." I tell her as Celeste gently rolls her to look at her mark and Benjamin steps up.

The two elder wolves inspect her mark and then look at each other. Celeste turns to me, "her mark looks fine".

"Altair thinks that it could be from the magic," I tell them and I can see Benjamin visibly tense. "I don't know though. I think she had a seizure." I tell them, trying to hold back tears.

Randall comes up and places his arm on my shoulder. "You need to get your parents here, and have them bring Sofia."

I start to protest but I see Benjamin sit down on the side of the bed, raking his hands through his already unkempt hair. Ultimately, this decision is up to him. He sighs deeply and I know this isn't what he would want, but we all love Molly and want her safe.

"He can't hurt her now. I marked her so if he does anything to her it would weaken me, and he wouldn't risk that," I tell him, taking a seat next to him. "The last thing he wants is for the kingdom to fall to my uncle. He wouldn't dare hurt her."

Benjamin nods slowly. "Have him bring Sofia, immediately. I'll have men meet them at the mouth of the cave."

Dad.

Congratulations, son!

Dad, she's hurt. We need you and mom to come immediately. Bring Sofia, their pack doctor.

Do we need to bring anyone in from the palace?