

## Chapter 53-2

“Where’s Robbie?” I ask, realizing he’s not here, and not just sleeping in.

“He had some ‘Alpha s\*\*t’ to take care of, as he so eloquently put it,” Oliver tells me, mocking my brother.

“And when do you have to get back to work?” I ask Seth, knowing that he will have plenty of his own ‘Prince s\*\*t’ soon.

Seth just smirks at me. “Honestly, that depends on how long it takes to work things out with my dad. He’s willing to let me get away with anything if I tell him it makes you happy.”

“If you have things you need to do, you can go,” I tell him, feeling guilty that I’m keeping him from important matters. “I’ll be fine, really.”

“Absolutely not, Molly,” Seth says, offended. “I just marked you, I thought you were going to die. I’m not leaving you to go work. Not yet.”

I smile at him and take his hand. There’s nothing to say to him, he’s clearly stated how he feels and honestly, it’s nice that he doesn’t want to leave me. I thought having my finger healed and being marked would be amazing, but it’s turned out to be an emotional disaster and I’m not ready for him to leave me.

Oliver finishes breakfast and places it on the table. It smells amazing and we eat in silence, no one really knowing what else to say. I’m thankful to my best friend for making my favorite breakfast for me, and for always just being here. I’m so nervous about meeting with Peter that I don’t think I’d be able to eat anything else.

After finishing breakfast, Seth and I begin walking towards the garden. Peter offering to come to Oliver’s was a kind offer, but I wasn’t ready to let him into somewhere that’s so comforting to me. I decided on the garden because it felt neutral, and something about being outside always makes me feel more calm.

As we approach, I can see Peter sitting on a bench in the garden. He’s dressed more casually than usual, in dark jeans and a jacket, but still in nicer leather shoes. I start to walk into the garden, but I realize that my mate is still following me.

“I need you to wait here, Seth,” I tell him, and I can see the concern on his face clearly. “I’ll be OK, but this is something I need to do on my own.”

“I don’t want anything to happen to you,” he says, wrapping his arm around my lower back and pulling me close.

“It won’t,” I tell him with a smile. “Besides, my dad is here somewhere. I can smell him.”

“Dad must have told him,” he tells me, looking around for him. “I swear that I didn’t.”

“Nothing is going to happen,” I say to him again and reach up to touch his cheek. “I have to work this out. I can’t live afraid of him.”

Seth nods in agreement and kisses me on the head before releasing me. He takes a step back and leans against the fence around the garden, letting me enter alone. I start to walk towards Peter and he looks up at me, standing as he sees me. I stop walking and take a deep breath, my stomach doing somersaults as I look at the man who I watched tear a little boy apart. A little boy who I loved so much.

I take another deep breath, hold my head high and continue walking towards him. He doesn’t say anything to me as I reach him, he just holds his arm out, motioning for me to sit on the bench. I take a seat and he follows my lead, taking a seat next to me.

“You killed my brother,” I state plainly, jumping straight into the conversation that needs to happen.

“I made many mistakes in my life,” he tells me, looking down at the ground in front of us. “Killing those boys was one of my biggest. I’ve regretted my actions, even before meeting you, but it’s tearing me up to know that they were your brothers.”

“It was my fault,” I whisper, trying my best not to cry. “I wanted to play hide and seek. They told me it wasn’t safe, but I ran into the woods anyway.”

“Nothing was your fault, at all,” he tells me. “You can’t be blamed for what happened. Your dad told me the truth of what happened. How you were hiding, and he found you and lied. If we hadn’t found the boys that day, we would have another. It was inevitable.”

“Would you have killed me? If my dad hadn’t lied?” I ask him, knowing that this is what I really want to know- what I need to hear him say.

“I won’t lie to you, Molly,” he says, tears in his eyes. “If your dad had brought you to me, and I had seen your eyes, the color they are now, I would have. It would have haunted me, but I would have. I was so terrified of our family losing the throne that I wouldn’t have looked at a little girl, the age of my own son, and thought you could have been his mate. I would have disposed of you immediately.”

I sniffle at hearing his words. I knew, deep down, that’s what his answer would be, but it hurts to hear.

“What about now?” I ask him, my voice shaking a bit. “I’m still Benjamin’s daughter, and the future queen, now.”

“I will never, ever hurt you, Molly,” he tells me seriously, and I can see him glance over to where Seth is. “You’re the most important thing to my son. You’re safe with my family.”

It’s comforting to hear him say that, and I truly believe him. But my mind wanders back to the memory of Jason, and my heart hurts. “He was just a little boy. What did you think he would possibly do?” I whisper, a few tears escaping and rolling down my cheeks.

“I thought one of the boys would challenge my son when they were older for the throne,” he tells me with a sigh. “The royal line is stronger than most other wolves, but you don’t remember Benjamin in those days. He was stronger than most. I was convinced that one of the boys would grow to be strong enough to overthrow Seth. I never, not for one second, thought he had a secret daughter who would be my son’s mate.”

“If Benjamin and Lily hadn’t hidden me, I would never have met Seth,” I tell him, and it adds to the guilt I already feel about Jason’s death. “He never would have been in rogue territory, and I never would have been out of it.”

“That’s possibly true,” he tells me, patting my knee. “The Goddess had a plan though. She would have brought you together somehow.”

I nod at him, unsure if I truly believe that though. “My wolf says we have an unusually strong bond. She’s sure that if something happens to one of us and the bond is severed, the other will not survive.”

“Most wolves continue to live, but a half life, after the passing of their mate,” he says. “It’s not common to have a bond strong enough that one won’t survive, though it feels like you could die.”

“He healed my finger before he marked me,” I tell him, knowing that we do, in fact, have a bond that strong. “My wolf had given hints for him to help me, but I didn’t realize at the time. He shifted and Altair licked the wound- and it healed almost instantly.”

“Randall didn’t tell me about that,” he says, clearly thinking as to why he wouldn’t.

“I didn’t tell him,” I tell him with a shrug. “With everything that happened, I didn’t think about it after I woke up. But I think you need to know.”

“I need to know?” He asks me and I nod in response.

“Yes. You’re my mate’s father, and the king,” I tell him very seriously and turn to look him in the eyes. “I don’t want you to take a blood oath. It’s not necessary. I’m choosing to trust you, but I also want you to understand that if anything happens to me, it will happen to Seth as well. There’s one thing I want in return, though.”