

Chapter 61-2

I nod, but when I look up and meet her eyes I can’t help the tears that begin. “I’m trying really hard. Everything has changed, or is changing. It’s just been really hard.”

My mom leaves the dresses on the racks and pulls me into a tight hug. “What’s going on in your head? I know Seth’s been talking to you about a lot of it, but I also know there’s something you’re not telling him.”

“I just don’t feel like myself,” I whisper to her and Audrey moves to place her hand on my shoulder in comfort as well. “I don’t even look the same. I’m worried Seth doesn’t actually like how I look and he’s just being nice because he’s stuck with me now.”

Audrey lets out a rather loud, rather un-queen-like laugh. “The sounds that have been coming from your room say that he’s very happy with how you look.”

I can feel my face turn bright red and I throw my hands up, attempting to cover my face. “Oh, Gods. Is it THAT bad?”

Mom smiles gently at me. “It’s not gone unnoticed. Your brother is uncomfortable. I’m fairly sure he’s considered having a talk with Seth. Your Father is mortified. It’s like he has forgotten what it was like when he met me.”

“Mom!,” I exclaim, mortified at the turn this conversation has taken.

Audrey laughs. “We’ve all been there, Molly. And you’re both lovely to look at. I’m sure I’ll have a grand-pup running around soon at this rate.”

I keep my hands on my face and look down at the ground. I just can’t with this entire conversation.

“Just a few more weeks, and then you can make all the grand pups you want,” my mom says and her words catch my attention, causing me to look up.

“Why… why would I need to be careful for a few weeks?” I ask her, confused about what she meant, but very nervous because we, in fact, have not been careful at all.

“You have to shift soon, and you can't shift while pregnant,” my mom says, like it’s the most reasonable explanation, but it’s not something I have ever considered. Like, at all.

I attempt to take a deep breath, but find that I’m struggling with the panic I’m suddenly feeling. “Mom. I… we…” I begin to say, slowly sitting down in a nearby chair. “Shit. Shit.”

“It’s OK, Molly. Take a breath,” my mom says to me, sitting next to me and rubbing my back. “It’s going to be fine. You SHOULDN’T shift if you’re pregnant, but you CAN.”

Audrey comes over and sits in a chair across from us. “I shifted a few times while I was pregnant with Seth,” she says to us quietly, looking around to make sure no one is listening. “It was… unavoidable. He’s turned out, OK. The doctor told us then that the bigger concern is when you’re further along.”

I’m about to respond when Candice and her mother, Mrs. Martha return. They both bow and bare their necks. I glance at my mom and find her smiling brightly at them, bowing at me.

“It’s lovely to see you again, Martha,” my mom tells her.

“You as well, Luna. Candice has caught me up on the situation,” she responds and turns to me. “Molly, umm… Princess Molly, let’s get you measured and then we can talk about exactly what you need.”

“Yes, ma’am,” I say and stand, following her to a small pedestal in front of mirrors.

Don’t call her ma’am, Molly. You outrank her, now.

It’s a habit. I’ll work on it. I tell my new mother-in-law It would have been helpful to get a handbook for all of this.

That’s what I’m here for, dear.

Martha grabs a measuring tape and begins to measure me. “You’re the only person I’ve ever seen to gain curves AND muscles at the same time,” she says with a small giggle, and I know she thinks it's funny, but I feel so self-conscious. “You’re a D cup now, so we should probably just get all new everything at this point.”

“Don’t look so sad,” Audrey says to me upon seeing my face. “Seth seems perfectly happy with you. Don’t think of it as having to get bigger clothes. Think of it as getting new wrapping paper for your mate.”

Martha looks up at me, clearly uncomfortable, and I give her the very same look. “It could be worse,” she whispers at me. “My mother-in-law HATED me.”

“You’re right,” I whisper back to her. “She’s been so kind to me.”

“I’m happy for you, Molly,” she tells me as she writes down my measurements. “Seems your curves are going to need a little more work. I’m not sure how well anything off the rack will fit, but I’m sure we can find something to work for a few days.”

Martha hands the paper to Candice and they both head to the racks, pulling out a few things for me. Candice brings them over and leads me to a fitting room while Martha disappears to the back room. I try on the dresses she had for me and they’ll work, though they’re a little loose here and there but if I try something smaller, it definitely going to be too small.

“How quickly could you shorten this one?” Audrey asks, looking me over. “I could have it done by this evening. I think I’ll pull the straps up some as well.”

“Marvelous!” Audrey says, delighted. “I’d like a copy of her measurements as well. I’ll give them to the seamstress at the Palace so we can get her set.”

“Martha,” my mom says, pulling her attention. “Maybe make her a few dresses that can flow. I think we’re all hoping for a baby soon, so maybe a few dresses that could accommodate that.”

I look up, meeting Martha’s eyes. A look of absolute shock, but also happiness is on her face. “It would be great if you could keep that to yourself,” and she nods to me, smiling.

“I just can’t believe you have your wolf, Molly,” she says and hands me another dress to try. “The whole pack will be so excited for you.”

I finish trying on what feels like every dress in the shop and Candice walks off with an arm full of dresses to be altered. Martha has a list of dresses to make for me, and shows me a few designs that I approve, with Audrey's blessing.

We're walking out towards the pack house when my mom takes my hand to stop me. "Would it be OK if we have lunch today, just the two of us?"

"Yeah," I tell her, nervous suddenly. "We probably need to talk, huh?"