

Chapter 1

****Seth****

She just sits there, like she does every day. Like she has for months now. She refused the chair again, no doubt that Alex thinks this is part of a game that she's playing as my pregnant mate sits on the ground in front of the bars on his cell.

"Please, Alex," she says, her voice sounding so broken. "I need to know so we know what to do. I just need to know."

He turns from her, presenting her with his back, just as he has every other time that she's come down here. If it were up to me, I'd have already executed him and moved forward, but she's far more kind than I could ever be. She's the better part of me, the part of us that sees what's best for the kingdom in the long run, never acting on her anger. That's why it surprised me when she told me to bring Lucas into the family, to make him feel safe in an attempt to let his guard down. It was a sneaky plan, and not anything I'd ever expect from her, which is what makes me think it could actually work. All three of our fathers were furious, all of them struggling with their need to protect her as she brought Lucas into our home. No one has suspected that we still have Alex here, or that she's the one with the upper hand.

We have to name an Alpha soon so we can make it an official pack, but she insists that we need to know everything, and the only one we have a chance of getting information from is Alex. She's asked time and time again to come alone, but I have refused, unwilling to take a chance with her safety.

"Please," she says, her shoulders sagging. "We have to name an Alpha soon, Alex. I need the truth."

"Are you going to name me Alpha?" he spits, his voice laced with venom and hate.

"You know I can't do that," Molly tells him softly. "But I can promise to make sure your mate and kids are safe and cared for."

His entire body goes stiff and Molly looks back at me, her eyes hopeful. I nod to her, encouraging her to keep going. I'd honestly consider naming him Alpha if it put a stop to her sitting down here every day. She can promise whatever she needs to in order to get the information that we need.

"Are they not safe now?" he asks, looking at her over his shoulder. It's the first time I've seen him even look at her in all these months.

She lifts a hand to the bars, causing me to hold my breath in fear. "They're still at home. Albert is still Alpha. Benjamin has been checking on them. Things are hard, but they're alright."

The look of anger that appears on his face surprises me, and apparently Molly as well, as she lowers her hand from the bars. I walk up behind her, standing as close as I can without upsetting her, ready to jump in should he try anything at all with my girl.

"I'm sure Benjamin is just waiting for the chance to kill them all."

I look down and see the pain on my love's face. "He's not," I speak up, the only time I've bothered to speak to him. "No one wants your family to suffer for what you did, especially Benjamin. He understands how hard it is for a child to grow up paying the price for their father's sins."

He turns around, looking Molly directly in the eyes, thinking about what I've said. It's true, for what it's worth. Benjamin has, every time, turned down any attempt I've made to give him money to make their lives easier. I know that made it especially hard for him when he came to me to ask for help caring for Alex's family.

"He told me once that whatever happened in the end with you," I continue, "That he wanted to care for your family. You spent many years with him, moving to the rogue lands with him and caring for Molly in times that were... difficult for him. He's not forgotten that."

"I never meant to hurt you, Molly," he says, not willing to look at me. "If I had known you would go into labor, I wouldn't have helped them."

She smiles at him slightly. "It's alright, now. It was scary then, and it wasn't what I wanted, but having Seth deliver our pups was really special in the end."

"I need things from you," he says and she nods to him. "I need you to move my family. Change their names, send them to another pack where no one will know what I did. I know that you will execute me, but please, wait until the kids are older. I don't want them to be around when Della feels it through the bond."

"I'm doing everything I can to keep from having to execute you," Molly tells him, and while I don't agree, we can argue about that once we have the information we need. "You giving us as much information as possible will help us."

He takes a deep breath, his eyes never leaving hers as he thinks about her offer. "Will you sit in the chair, please?" he asks her and she smiles. I reach down, helping my mate to her feet, reaching my hand to touch her stomach that's growing so quickly with our pup.

"Just one this time?" he asks.

I nod, moving the chair to the bars for her and helping her sit. "Just one, thankfully. I don't know if I could handle another set of twins so soon," I tell him and he nods in understanding.

"When did you start working with them?" Molly asks and he walks over, gripping the bars of the cell and leaning into them.

"After you were marked," he says. "I'd had my suspicions that Benjamin couldn't shift and hoped that you would make us a pack and name me Alpha. There was an attack and I managed to capture one of them. I tried to get information from him, but was approached by Lucas."

"My uncle?" I ask to clarify.

He nods. "Him and another man. Can't remember his name. I only saw him that first time, and then at the ght at the cabin when you gave birth."

Molly nods at him, instinctively placing her hand over our newest pup. We were both terrified that day, not sure we could get the pups here safely. She was in so much pain, and so much of that pain I also felt, but it didn't come close to the pain I felt being unable to protect my family.

"So, what exactly did they want from you at first?" Molly asks him.

"They had their suspicions about Benjamin as well and told me if I'd find out, for certain, if he could shift or not, they would leave my family alone. I did it, knowing it would be a little dangerous, but I knew that he would openly shift if you were in danger," he tells her. "You were at my home, outside, alone with him. It was the perfect opportunity. I didn't know exactly what they would do, but I didn't think they would actually hurt either of you, and I didn't expect them to try to take my girls."

Molly just nods, taking in everything he's saying, not offering anything to him. He sighs, looking up at me. "She was a special kid. No one knew about Lily for the longest time, so he kept Molly a secret. We'd come over and she'd be swinging outside, playing in the dirt, convincing him to sit and have a tea party. He wasn't always a bad father. The grief really got to him."

"I understand that," I tell him with a nod, unsure where he's going with it.

"I know you do. You're a father now, and a father who has already had his pups in a dangerous situation," he says firmly. "That's why I know you understand that I can't tell you anything else until I get confirmation my family is safe and hidden at a new pack. I can't take a chance that they'll come back for them."