

Chapter 13

Molly

I felt terrible that I didn't take the twins to see Carolyn last night but with the way everything unfolded, I just didn't have the energy. I'm sure my mom would have, but it didn't seem right.

"Thank you, Molly," Audrey tells me, placing a kiss on Cora's head. "I know this whole situation is awkward."

"No worse than my own family secrets," I tell her with a smirk.

Audrey turns to look at me with a shocked expression on her face as Seth lets out a chuckle.

"It's going to be ne, Mom," he tells her, placing his hand on her shoulder as we stop outside the house. "Is this where you grew up?"

"It is," she says with a small smile. "Dad never lived in the packhouse once Austin was born. He wanted to keep family separate from work."

I smile and squeeze her hand. "That sounds lovely." Reaching up, I knock on the door and it opens immediately, revealing Carolyn.

A smile spreads across her face as she looks at Cora, and then behind us to Andrew. "They're beautiful," she says, stepping back. "Come in. Come in."

"Thank you," Seth tells her as Audrey leads us into the living room. She surprises me as she sits on the oor, placing Cora next to her and reaching up to Seth for Andrew. He happily hands him down to her, but as soon as she sits him down, he stands right up and tries to walk away.

"He's walking already?" Carolyn asks, a bright smile on her face.

Seth walks closer to him, ready to redirect him, but he doesn't intervene. "He started a few weeks ago. Cora hasn't yet, though."

"Because you're always carrying her," I tell him with a smirk. He glares at me, but there's a smile in his eyes. He knows it's true.

"They have your eyes, Molly," She says, looking up to me with a smile. "I met your father once. I don't remember much about him, but I don't think I'll ever forget those beautiful, green eyes."

I nod. "They were a different color for so long. It's taken some getting used to now."

"I'm sure," she says, motioning for me to sit on the couch as she sits next to me. "That must have been so dicult for you, but you do have such a lovely family."

"Thank you," Seth says, grabbing Andrew's hand as he tries to open a drawer on a table, turning him away from it gently. "We're very proud of them."

"It was such a shock when Audrey was mated to Peter," she says wistfully, looking at Audrey on the oor. "King Joseph came and spoke with Ralph. I remember thinking how strange it was to have the King in our home. It's hard to believe I have the King, Queen, former Queen and the future King here now. And the sweetest little princess."

"Sometimes I forget I'm the Queen," I say with a giggle, knowing how much Seth hates talking about titles when he's with family. "I was a chef at my pack. It's weird how much things changed."

"I'm surprised your father let you do that," she says with a small laugh. "He was so protective of Celeste, though I guess there was reason to be. I honestly assumed his children would be absolutely spoiled brats. You're not though."

"My brother isn't either," I assure her. "They integrated the schools at Lunar Falls. I always hung out with the Omegas. They were less bothered that I didn't have a wolf and Robbie... well, he always just hung around to make sure I was alright."

Cora, squeals and claps. I don't think any of us know why, but we all join in excitedly. Her enthusiasm is contagious, and I hope it always stays that way for her.

"Molly, I need to ask a favor of you," Carolyn says and I turn to her, giving her my full attention. "When you talk to your mother, please tell her that I am quite sorry. For everything."

I make my way back to the packhouse with the head of my security, Michael, neither of us saying anything, but that's just been how been for us. I like him, and I'm glad he's remained with me.

"She's upstairs," he tells me as we enter. "She said she'd meet in your room."

I nod to him and smile as he closes the door behind us and I make my way upstairs, but I'm surprised when I smell my dad and no hint of my mom.

"Hey, kiddo," he says with a small smile as I walk in, closing the door behind me. He's seated on the couch in the room, completely at home. "This was your mother's room when she lived here. Austin hasn't redecorated at all. It's exactly the same as the day I left here with her."

I smile at him, walking over and taking a seat next to him. Immediately, he puts his arm behind my shoulders. "I was expecting Mom."

"I know," he tells me with a nod. "She can't handle that yet, though."

I furrow my brow in confusion. She can't handle talking to me?

"She left here sedated," he tells me. "It all happened so fast, but she went into heat and wanted to be sedated instead of me marking her then. She woke up in Lunar Falls and I handed her the phone to speak to David. He told her the truth, well... a part of it, renounced the title of Alpha and the bond broke. She didn't leave our bedroom for weeks. She barely spoke to me, barely ate at rst. It was so hard for her."

I turn to him, not understanding. "Why didn't she tell me?"

"She's always been embarrassed," he tells me with a sad look on his face. "I wasn't your mother's rst, but she was mine. I'm not sure she's ever truly forgiven herself for that, even though I truly don't care."

"Oh, Mom," I say softly, feeling so bad for her.

"Your mother's life was more dicult than she ever wanted you kids to know about. But David used her so much. We know that you need details, but she's not ready to talk about them. That's why I came."

I nod, leaning into him. "Can we talk tomorrow? I have something more important to take care of."

I make my way down the hall and into the room my parents are staying in. Dad had told me she wouldn't let me in, so I don't even bother knocking. I open the door and walk in, nding her curled up in bed just as Dad said I would.

I toe off my shoes and climb in, pulling the blanket over my head like she has so I can see her. It reminds me so much of those rst few days after they found me in the woods and I slept between them, in a space I felt so safe. I hope that now, my mom feels safe, too.

"Whatever happened doesn't matter now, Mom. I love you."