

Chapter 19

“Do you think that anyone noticed?” I ask Seth as I take out my earrings.

“If they did, they didn’t say anything,” he tells me, trying his best to calm my fears. “Surely Lily realized, but I looked and she didn’t make any kind of face if she did. I think everyone just thought it was the candles. Rob’s jokes helped distract everyone.”

I feel some relief at that. I was so shocked when it happened that I froze. I don’t know if Robbie realized something was wrong or not, but my brother was there to jump right in, pulling the attention on himself.

“Robbie probably realized,” I say softly, feeling the tears rise. “He’d never hurt her, though. No one that was here would.”

Seth nods to me and wraps his arms around me tightly. “I’m sure it’s ne, love. Let’s get you in bed. I think I’m going to shift and go for a run.”

“Go on,” I tell him, taking a soothing breath. “I can put myself into bed. The kids are out already. Everyone else has already gone out.”

He stops and looks at me, clearly torn about leaving me. “You’ll link me if you need anything?”

“Of course,” I tell him, rolling my eyes. We go through this same process every full moon. The same promise to link him, knowing damn well that nothing is going to happen. He always leaves one security guard on duty, forbidding them to shift. I don’t even know who it is this time as I never see them, because nothing ever happens.

He nods, placing a kiss on my lips. “Cora is safe, Love,” he tells me, looking deep into my eyes. “If she needed to use magic, a room full of people who love her was the safest place.”

He’s right, I know he is, I think to myself as I watch him leave the room. Still, it’s terrifying. We’ve let the entire kingdom know that our child is magical, it’s not any kind of secret, but knowing it and seeing it are two different things and I worry about what’s to come for her if she’s snung out birthday candles when she’s one with giggles. What else is to come?

Some left to go home after the party, but Benjamin and Lily stayed the night. It’s something I never thought would happen so easily, but Benjamin has, somehow, put the past behind him for me. I suspect it was more for Lily, and for his relationship with his grandchildren, but I’m glad that he has. Perhaps I can have them come up for lunch tomorrow and talk to Lily. I need to talk to her about this, and about David as well.

I walk down the hall and sneak into the nursery, peeking in on my sleeping pups. Andrew is on his side, nuzzled into the mattress as he always is— my sweet, predictable boy. Cora is on her front, butt in the air, thumb in her mouth, sound asleep. I sigh, looking at her so peaceful, so calm, and not using magic. How am I supposed to teach her to control it when I don’t even know how to myself?

A scream pulls me from my sleep as it continues, tearing through the still silence of the night. I jump up, racing down the hall. Andrew is sitting up, looking over at his sister silently as Cora screams, clearly in pain. I reach in to pick her up, but it just makes her scream more.

Seth, something is wrong with Cora.

I’ll be right there.

I hold her to me tightly as she continues, thrashing about. “Hey, I’ve got you,” I tell her, trying my best to comfort her, but I don’t know what’s wrong.

I lay her on the changing table and pull her sleeper off, inspecting her but nding that there’s nothing visibly wrong. She feels warm, but not THAT warm. Not for the way she’s acting. I pick her back up, bouncing her and shushing her, hoping that SOMETHING will help.

The door opens and Toby enters. “I’m sorry, Queen Molly,” he says, looking at us. “I know you don’t like to be bothered, but I just wanted to check on her.”

I look at him, I’m sure with a look of absolute fear. “I don’t know what’s wrong. Seth’s on his way, but she won’t calm.”

He nods once, understanding, but not willing to leave. Toby has taken his job as head guard for Cora so seriously and I couldn’t have asked for a better wolf for it, but right now, he looks as lost as I do.

“Would you like me to get the doctor, ma’am?” he asks and I nod, feeling so lost. His eyes glass and he moves to the doorway, but he doesn’t leave us.

I walk to the bathroom and ll the tub with water, hoping that maybe it will help. She loves the bath, so maybe. I look back to see Andrew, still sitting in his crib, just watching me with his baby sister like he’s worried, too.

“It’s going to be ne, buddy,” I tell him with a shrug, feeling like it’s going to be anything but ne.

I walk back into the bathroom and remove her diaper, slowly easing her into the warm water. She doesn’t stop, but her cries become slightly less. I hear my mate barreling up the stairs, running into the room as Toby tells him we’re in the bathroom.

“What’s wrong,” he says panicked, looking at us with wild eyes.

“I don’t know,” I tell him, feeling hopeless. “She’s calmed some, but something is wrong.”

“I’ve called for the doctor,” Toby tells him, standing behind him in the doorway.

Seth kneels next to me, reaching out to take Cora’s hand in his. “Hey, Baby Girl,” he says as calmly as he can, but he’s anything but. “What’s going on?”

She continues to cry, the thrashing coming back as it was before and I lift her from the water, realizing that it’s not safe any longer with how she’s moving. Seth grabs a towel and takes her from me, as he wraps her in it and pulls her to his chest while he sits on the oor next to me.

“I’ve got you,” he coos in her ear, gently patting her back as his terried eyes meet mine.

“They were both asleep,” I tell him. “I checked on them and then went to sleep myself. She woke me up screaming. I… I don’t know.”

“No one came in or out,” Toby adds, looking back to the door, probably looking for the doctor.

Cora lets out a wail that is full of pain, and it breaks my heart, but Seth’s face snaps back to me, a look of terror on it.

“Toby, do not let the doctor in,” he says. “Get Lily and have my mom take Andrew for the night. NOW!”

He nods once and runs out, closing the door behind him.

“Seth,” I whisper, scared of what’s going on as he takes our sweet girl and lays her on the oor.

“Molly,” he says, taking my hand in his as his other goes to Cora’s. I look at her body lying on the oor and realize what is, somehow, happening.

“Seth,” I say, my heart breaking. “She’s too young to shift.”