

20-Prepare for the Royals

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Ari's POV

Finch is beside me. I can face them. I can do this. My parents love me but were completely manipulated. I will be okay.

Juliet- We got this. It's our parents. We can face them.

Me- What if they hate Finch?

Juliet- Then fuck them, who needs them?

Me- Do we really want to disown our family?

Juliet- Finch and, I dare say, the boys are our family. The goddess has brought us to a family, and they are ours.

Me- They are ours. All four of them. I am stepmother to my former mates. I'm not okay.

Juliet- Yes, you are. I promise. I know you inside and out. You are okay.

Just then, my phone goes off.

Melissa- I know you can't see this but just know you are missed here on this earth. Your smile and friendship will outlive you.

Oh, shit! Everyone thinks I was with Kale.

I hop on the group text with Mellissa, Courtney, Andrea, Jacob, Carl and Lewis. Kale is on here too, but I can't bring myself to erase it.

ME- SORRY GUYS! I AM OKAY. I FOUND MY SECOND

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CHANCE MATE AND I AM WITH HIM. KALE WAS ON THE PLANE. I HAVE BEEN SO LOST IN ALL THE EMOTIONS OF LOSING HIM AND MY NEW MATE THAT I DIDN'T THINK TO REACH OUT.

MELISSA- ARIELLA YOU ARE FORGIVEN!

COURTNEY- SEEING THIS IS BITTERSWEET. WISHING I WAS STILL ON CAMPUS TO HLEP YOU THROUGH THIS.

ANDREA- I HAVE BEEN CRYING MY FUCKING EYES OUT! JACOB AND CARL ARE WITH ME. WE ARE ALL THREE SO GRATEFUL YOU ARE ALIVE.

MELISSA- WHO IS YOUR SECOND CHANCE? IS HE LETTING YOU GREIVE?

ME- HE IS LETTING ME GREIVE. IN FACT, HE LOST HIS FIRST MATE. SO HE IS TEACHING ME TO COPE WITH THE LOSS. HE ISN'T BENING JEALOUS OR ANYTHING. HE IS LOVING ME THROUGH THIS AND I AM THANKFUL FOR HIM.

ANDREA- SOUNDS LIKE THE PERFECT GUY. SO MATURE. WHO IS IT? ANYONE WE KNOW?

ME- MATURE IS ONE WAY OF PUTTING IT. HE IS FINCH CONRAD.

COURTNEY- AS IN THE TRIPLETS FATHER?

LEWIS- I DID NOT JUST READ THAT. NOPE I'M OUT! YOU WEREWOLVES ARE INSANE. YOU ARE FUCKING THE TRIPLETS DAD?

ME- NO, WE ARE NOT FUCKING. WE ARE GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER. AND HE HAS BEEN SO AMAZING THE LAST DAY HELPING ME NOT JUMP OFF A

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BUILDING. HE UNDERSTANDS HOW MUCH KALE AND I LOVED EACH OTHER AND ISN'T FORCING ME TO "GET OVER IT" HE IS LOVING ME THROUGH THIS LOSS AND SHOWING ME HOW TO COPE.

MELISSA- I AM GLAD YOU ARE NOT ALONE. WE NEED TO GET TOGETHER AS SOON AS TERM STARTS AND HAVE A FRIEND MEMORIAL FOR KALE.

ME- I WOULD REALLY LIKE THAT. HE IS SO SPECIAL TO ALL OF US.

COURTNEY- I TOTALLY AGREE.

ANDREA- THREE MORE VOTES YES.

LEWIS- I'LL BRING THE BEER!

MELISSA- WE NEED TO HAVE IT IN THE TUNNELS.

ME- KALE DID ENJOY THOSE TUNNELS. (I'm smirking remembering how much Kale loved the tunnels. We would sneak down there if one of the triplets was being particularly annoying.)

COURTNEY- I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ANY DETAILS BUT SURE THE TUNNEL WILL WORK.

CARL- THERE IS A SPACE UNDER THE COURTYARD WHERE ALL THE TUNNELS MEET.

ANDREA- OH BABE! THAT WILL BE PERFECT!

ME- YEAH, THE JUNCTION WILL BE PERFECT.

"Sweetheart?" Finch comes into the room. "They are here. Romana's sister wanted to see them, do you mind?"

ME- GOT TO GO. MY PARENTS ARE HERE.

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"No," I smile and with a deep breath, I head downstairs. My phone dings with goodbyes from our friends. Our, mine and Kale's. I miss him so much.

But I don't have time to dwell on that!

"Oh, my goodness, thank you so much!" A bubbly blonde I don't know comes running over to us. "I'm Caroline, Romana's sister."

"Caroline," Romana calls with a huff. "Let them come downstairs."

"It's fine, Romana," I say with a smile. "She might be my brother's mate."

Caroline smiles.

"Not that your brother isn't totally hot, but he is really not my type. I am really hoping your sister and Tristan are here. I ship them," Caroline giggles.

Juliet- I would love to ship them to another planet.

I try not to laugh at Juliet.

Caroline stands off to the side as Finch and I lead Turk and Romana to the front steps.

The car pulls up and I'm shocked to see my mother open her own door and run to me.

"Darling," Mom wraps me in a tight hug. "Are you alright? I know it hurts losing him. But I am so glad you found your mate."

Mom holds me until Dad wants to hug me.

They trade places.

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"I am having the crash investigated thoroughly. I can't believe I was so close to losing you," Dad is almost crying.

"Alpha Conrad," I hear Mom say.

"Finch please, Your Majesty," I hear Finch say.

"Then, you will call me Tiffany," Mom smiles. "And he will be Joshua."

"Maybe someday but until I am sure my baby girl is happy, Your Majesty is just fine," Dad growls, still hugging me.

"Come on, Father, he is your age," Caleb teases. "Can I call your Finch or does a man your age demand a title from a kid like me?"

"I call him Alpha, but for a for different reason," I tease my brother.

"Gross," Caleb makes a face.

"I'm never calling him Alpha," Dad says, making us all laugh.

"Finch," Finch holds out his hand.

Dad looks at the hand and looks at me.

"Father, I love him, please," I say.

Juliet- And We will choose him over you any day! 1

Me- Please don't say that to his wolf!

Juliet- I'm saying it to you. Geez.

I see Turk and Romana both smile.

"Joshua," Dad takes Finch's hand.


+20 BONUS


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"Well, isn't this cozy?" I hear her voice and hold my father.

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