

## Chapter 30

“We can talk after you fix my door that you broke.”

I close the door to my bedroom behind me and make my way to the dresser, pulling out pajamas. I hear voices from the other room and try to focus on what I can hear.

“Robert, can you send someone to fix the door?” I hear Audrey ask.

I’m about to call out that Seth can fix it himself when I hear Seth say that he’ll do it, if someone will bring him a new door. Well, at least there’s that. I go use the restroom, wash my face and brush my teeth. I go to change clothes and manage to get the buttons on my shirt undone, which seems like a small miracle, but I’m unable to unhook my bra myself.

Can you send mom in here? I ask my brother.

Yeah. Are you alright?

I’m fine Robbie. I just can’t get out of my clothes with my damn finger.

Oh, right. She’s coming.

My mom gently knocks on the door and opens it, sliding into my room. She doesn’t say anything, just walks over behind me and unhooks the bra for me.

“Thanks.” I whisper, embarrassed that I need so much help still.

“Of course, Molly,” she says and sits on the foot of the bed. I manage to get out of the rest of my clothes and into my pajamas with no problems, thankfully. “Come here.” Mom says, and I see that she’s grabbed a hair tie. I sit as instructed and she moves behind me, gently touching my hair and she begins to braid it.

“You haven’t let me do this since you were a little girl” she says with a wistful smile on her beautiful face. “He seems to truly be sorry about how he acted.”

“I know,” I say with a small sigh. “I can feel it through the bond.”

“You told your dad he refused to mark you.” she says flatly. “He’s very angry. I can feel it through the bond.”

“I didn’t mean to, it just kind of came out.” I say, ashamed. I feel so humiliated that everyone knows now.

My mom stops her movements for a moment and reached forward, gently squeezing my shoulder. “He just wants to keep you safe, Molly.”

I know she’s right, but it still stings. I can’t help the tears that begin to fall. “I’m just not good enough, mom.” I tell her, pulling my legs up to my chest, hugging them. The door clicks and I smell Seth walk in. Mom ties the end of my hair, kisses my cheek and walks out silently, but not before grabbing Seth’s hand and giving it a squeeze before closing the door behind her.

“I love you, Molly.” He says, slowly moving towards me, seemingly unsure of how I’ll react to him being near me. “I’m sorry for how I spoke to you, for my anger. Honestly, I’m just really scared.” He sits on the bed next to me, but still leaving space between us. “I’ll never forgive myself if anything happens to you.”

I sniffle, trying to stop crying. “I’ll never forgive myself if I don’t meet her. If I don’t find out if it’s possible,” I say, looking at him and meeting his eyes. “I can’t live my life not knowing with all certainty that it’s impossible, that my wolf is truly broken.”

“I realize that now.” he says, placing his arm across my shoulders, gently pulling me towards him and kissing my head. “I’m so sorry,” he whispers into my hair, kissing me again.

I’m not sure how long we sit there, but it feels like a lifetime, content just being next to each other.

“You told my parents I wouldn’t mark you.” he states and I tense up.

“I didn’t mean to. I was just really upset.” I whisper to him.

Seth pulls me away, gently guiding my face to look upwards, meeting his eyes. “I told you why. I won’t take a chance of ruining your wolf.”

“I know,” I begin, trying not to cry again. “I understand, but that doesn’t mean that it doesn’t hurt.”

He scoops me up and places me on his lap, wrapping his arms around me tightly. “Hurting you is the last thing I ever want to do. I’m sorry. I don’t want you to feel this way, but I don’t know how to fix it.”

“I don’t either.” I tell him honestly. “I think I just need time to get over it.” and he kisses my temple.

“My mom really likes you,” I tell him, attempting to change the subject.

Seth smiles at me, the first genuine smile I’ve seen since he’s been back. “Of course she does.”

I can’t help the giggle that escapes me. “She said we won’t give her ugly grandkids.”

“Oh, no. They’ll be the most beautiful pups the kingdom has ever seen.” he tells me, moving to stand and place me in bed and walks around to the other side, climbing in the covers next to me, pulling me into his arms.

“You think your dad is going to stay out there all night?” he asks, snuggling his face into my neck.

I smile at the thought of my dad, always there to protect me. “Probably, he was really mad. If you weren’t the Prince he’d probably have tried to kill you.”

“No need, Rob took care of that,” he says, and we peacefully drift off to sleep.

I’m in the meadow, again. The grass is so thick and green, with flowers blooming, and the creek babbling away. I look around, the sun shining on my face. This is easily the most beautiful place I have ever seen. I realize though, that I don’t see the little wolf this time. I stand from the place I’ve been lying and walk around, along the edge of the creek. From among the trees on the side I’m standing comes a big black wolf- Altair. He comes up to me and nuzzles my outstretched hand.

“You understand why I have to go, right?” I ask him and he nods his head once at me. “Do you know where she went?” I ask him, looking around but not finding my wolf. We walk a bit, looking around, Altair sniffing and looking along the way, but there’s no sign of her.

I sit on a rock, sticking my feet in the crisp water, and Altair comes to sit next to me. “I hope she’s ok” I tell him, finally accepting that she isn’t here this time. I go to lay back but Altair stands quickly and moves behind me before I do, so that I can lay against him. He’s warm and his fur is soft, but not as soft as my little wolf. We sit there like this for a long time before I feel myself drift off to sleep.

I wake up trying to roll over but find I can’t. I crack my eyes open and realize that Seth’s arm is across me and the reason I can’t move. I look over and see that it’s 5:00, that awkward time when it’s too early to be up but late enough it’s impossible to fall back asleep. I finally decide to get up, wiggling until I’m free from Seth’s hold, careful not to wake him. I use the restroom and tiptoe through the bedroom, carefully closing the door behind me. I turn and realize that I’d forgotten about my dad and he had, in fact, slept on my couch.

I stand there, hand still on the doorknob, unsure what I should do. I don’t want to wake either of them and I feel a little trapped, but my dad cracks an eye open. “Morning, Kiddo” he says gruffly.

“You really slept on the couch?” I ask him, a small smile on my face.

My dad sits up and looks at me very seriously. “Of course I did. I was unhappy with how he spoke to you and acted. I’m not leaving until I decide he’s paid his penance.”

“He apologized, dad. We’re OK.” I tell him, walking to the coffee maker and moving around to start brewing it.

“He’s your mate. The bond is helping you to forgive him.” He says to me and walks into the kitchen, sitting at the bar and grasping his hands together. “You’re my only daughter. I will not be forgiving him so easily.”

“OK, Dad.” I tell him, knowing that there’s nothing I can say to help him feel better about it- it will all have to come from Seth. “He wouldn’t hurt me, though. He got mad because he was afraid I would get hurt.”

“I didn’t think he would, not on purpose.” He says calmly, “But what if a piece of the door had hit you?”

He has a point. I hadn’t really considered that being a possibility. I chew my lip a little, contemplating what he’s said while pouring two cups of coffee for us, and passing the sugar to my dad.

“He’s a nice guy, I know he cares about you. But he’s never going to speak to you or lose his temper like that again.”

“Yes, sir.” I say to him. He’s given me a lot to think about and he’s right. The feelings through the bond really complicate my actual feelings.

“Let’s talk about him refusing to mark you.” Dad says, taking a sip of his coffee. “Are you OK?”

“Yeah, I am.” I begin to tell him, feeling the shame of letting that information slip again. “He said his wolf was worried it could hurt me. Well, hurt my wolf, and being able to fix her.”

My dad just nods at me, contemplating my words for a moment. “It was probably a wise choice, Molly.”

“I know, it just hurts.” I tell him, honestly. “I just don’t feel good enough, sometimes. Most of the time, really.”

“Stop. You’re more than good enough.” Dad says, standing up and walking to me, wrapping me in a hug. “You’re mate isn’t good enough, that’s for damn sure.”

We’re both startled as we hear a voice from the bedroom doorway. “You’re right, sir.” Seth begins. “I am absolutely not good enough for your daughter.”