

Chapter 6

2544 Words

"I'm surprised you weren't in here sooner" Oliver says with a smirk as I step into the kitchen. "I can't believe you're making another appearance. Don't you trust me?" he says, faking hurt.

"Oh, Oliver. You know that I don't." I respond jokingly and stick my tongue out at him.

"How was the ceremony?" He asked.

"It was an Alpha Ceremony. Nothing amazing, kinda boring, there's a new Alpha."

"Oh really? Because I heard our dear Alpha Robert punched an Alpha visiting from another pack."

"Umm, technically that happened before, so he wasn't Alpha Robert... yet." I tell him with a smirk. "And it wasn't exactly a punch."

"You want to talk about WHY Robbie was punching people you walked by just before being named the Alpha?"

"No. Not really. But you know how it is being me. Someone always says SOMETHING." I'm just so exhausted from the day and I don't want to think about being a broken wolf for a while. "So, how's it going for dinner? Can I help out?"

"Molly, I'm capable of running this."

"I know, I know you are. I'm here to help if you need. I'm not taking over for you."

"I think we're good. Honestly. Someone decided to delay the dinner a few hours while they were running away from their very attractive mate and gave us more time to prep. I assume you're not ready to talk about that?" he questions me.

"No. I'm absolutely not. I've not had a moment alone to even really think about it myself. I think tonight is the first full moon that I'm glad to be left out of."

"If you want me to stay with you to talk just let me know. I really don't mind."

"I appreciate it, Oli. But I think I just need some time alone to just think. It's been really overwhelming."

"You're really not going to mention that your mate is the Prince?"

"Nope. I'm not ready to even think about that." I tell him, looking around and everything appears to be going very well for my brother's dinner.

"Molls," Oliver says to get my attention while I'm looking around the kitchen, "Why don't you sleep in tomorrow and I'll handle breakfast."

"I'd hate to do that to you. There's a lot of people with all the visitors staying tonight." I tell him, feeling guilty at the thought of throwing a second meal service on him.

"Honestly, I'd really appreciate the chance to show the Alpha that I'm capable of liling your shoes. When you're marked, you'll be moving with Seth and I want to be able to prove I can handle this."

I hadn't considered leaving with a mate, ever. I'm sure Seth will come to his senses at some point and nally reject me, but Oliver is right. He's not had many chances to prove himself as head chef. I know he's completely capable and deserves the chance.

"Ok, Oliver. Breakfast service is yours. And if, by some miracle, Seth doesn't reject me, I'll put in a good word with the Alpha- though I don't think you have anything to worry about." I tell him with a small giggle. It's so weird to think that my brother is the Alpha we're talking about. I turn to leave but have an idea for tomorrow. "I'm just going to check and see if we have stuff to make something tonight during the run and then I'll leave."

"Thank you," he says. "I promise, it'll be amazing."

"I know it will be!" I tell him and I turn to the pantry to check for the ingredients I'll need. I look around and then move to the fridge and verify that everything I need is on hand. I turn and walk out the door and head down the hall to my suite. I've worn two dresses today and neither of them were really my choice. It's been a long day and I decide to change into something that I'd like to wear for the rest of it.

I walk in and go straight to my closet, looking around. I nd a dress that I love and while it's probably a little bit too formal, I decide to go with it anyway. I head to my bathroom and pull my hair back so that it's off my shoulders nally. I put on a little more makeup to darken my eyes just a tad more and switch from a nude to a red lip. The dress is an off the shoulder black satin dress in a mermaid cut. It's basic, but classy and it feels so much more like how I would usually look. I pull out some black strappy heels and look at myself in the mirror. I realize I need to put on a necklace and put on one that was handed down from my mom, that was her mom's. It's a white gold necklace that's just a whole lot of diamonds, but it dresses up the dress that's so plain.

I look in the mirror and it's perfect. I look and feel like myself, and my parents will still be pleased. But then the thought comes that I wonder what Seth will think. With a sigh, I stop just a moment to think about everything that has happened today. I really, never actually thought I'd have a mate but if I did, I was sure they would reject me on the spot. Instead, I have a mate who is a prince and had said, and not given any indication, that he plans to reject me. He hasn't thought things through though, and he has a wolf, so what he's feeling from our bond is probably stronger than what I'm able to- and it's a lot. I don't have a wolf, and I can't shift. The only wolf I can mindlink is my dad, and it's probably only because he's the Alpha, or was. I'm not built like a wolf. What if I can't get pregnant with the heir to the kingdom or worse, what if I can't carry a wolf pregnancy? The entire wolf kingdom will surely not accept me, and probably wouldn't accept Seth as King for keeping a broken wolf as a mate.

He does seem kind though. I'm not sure what he was told about me before I made it to dad's ooe earlier, but he's friends with Robbie so he has to know a lot. He's reassured me a few times today that he's not going to reject me. He called me "his" earlier and it made my heart utter with hope. And the way he was pressed against me in the hall was more than I could have hoped for.

I sigh. There's not much I can do at this point and I need to not worry about it so much. I am who I am and while he's given me some hope, I don't want to have my heart crushed in the end when he realizes I'm no good. I'm just going to have to go with it and see what happens. It's out of my hands.

And with that decision I decide to head upstairs and nd my family. And maybe my mate. I still don't want the whole kingdom to know, but I really do enjoy being near him.

I reach the door to the dining room and can hear that everyone is already inside. I crack the door and slowly slip in, hoping to go unnoticed, which I didn't need to worry about since everyone was walking about mingling and hadn't been seated yet. I see my mom across the room and head towards her. I haven't been able to spend any time with her since meeting Seth and I just really need her hugs.

"Hi Mom," I say as I approach.

"Oh, Molly. You changed clothes. You look lovely!" she tells me, and she's genuine in her compliment.

"You look absolutely stunning" I hear from my side and see Queen Audrey as she approaches me. "That lip color suits you." she continues and I can't help but glow a little as not only the queen, but my mate's mother complimented me so generously.

I remember myself and bow. "Thank you, Your Highness. I feel more myself with the red." and I should have stopped there, but I never know when to quit talking until it's too late. "Truthfully, I don't wear much makeup."

"Oh, really dear? Because you wear it so well."

"I appreciate that." I tell her. "I don't wear it often, but my mom taught me well." I tell her and mom smiles at me.

"How are you doing, dear? I know it's been a pretty exciting day for you." Queen Audrey asks me.

"I'm ok, ma'am. I'm looking forward to some time alone tonight to think about everything while you all go for the run, though." I tell her honestly.

My mom realizes that I'm not quite sure I'm ok and comes to my side to hold me in a hug. "I'm sure it's been a bit overwhelming, nding your mate and realizing he's so damn attractive." and that's just what I needed to calm me some. I start giggling and with the stress of today I just can't stop.

I smell him, and then feel his hand on my lower back and he comes to stand on my other side and pulls me to his side. "What's so funny?" Seth asks me.

"Just some girl talk" Queen Audrey says to him, probably to be sure I wouldn't tell him my mom was drooling over him. Again.

Seth releases me and I suddenly feel a bit sad, but he steps forward and hugs his mother and kisses her cheek. He releases her and turns back to me, grabbing my hand. "Take a walk with me?" he asks and I nod. He leads me outside to the balcony where it's not nearly as crowded. It's a little bit chilly out, but it feels like a perfect fall night.

"You look absolutely stunning" He says to me when we reach the railing and stop.

"Thanks" I respond. "It's the first dress I got to pick for myself all day."

"It's perfect, Molly. You're perfect." he says as he places his arm behind me and pulls me to his chest. "The Goddess blessed me when she made you." He murmurs into the top of my head and I let myself sigh and just be content for a moment. This moment feels so perfect and if he rejects me, at least I had this precious moment.

"I honestly wasn't sure you'd be back upstairs" he tells me. "I take it everything was ok in the kitchen?" he asks.

"Yeah, all was well. Dinner was going well and Dad's cake was still good." I say and realize I let the surprise slip.

"Don't you mean your Brother's cake?" He inquires, looking down at me.

"I mean, I didn't check on that one. I assumed they could handle it. But there's a surprise for my dad, too." I tell him, placing my nger on my lips, indicating it's a secret, and he smiles at me.

"I'm going to skip the run tonight. My parents will be there, that will be enough for the people." He tells me and I realize that he's worried about me being alone.

"Umm, I actually have plans tonight now." and he raises an eyebrow at me. I can tell he's not happy about me telling him I don't want him to be with me, so I explain. "Sorry, it's nothing exciting. I'm going to lock myself into my suite and bake. It helps me relax and think clearly." I tell him, hoping it won't offend him.

"I'm just worried about you being alone." He tells me.

"I know. Being around someone with a broken wolf is new for you, but it's been my whole life. Do you really think my dad would leave me here alone if he didn't think I was completely safe?" I ask him and I can tell he's considering it. "Please don't miss out on something that would make you happy just for me. I'll feel terrible if you do."

"But what if something happens to you while we're all out?" he asks and I realize there are things he doesn't know about my situation.

"I can mindlink my dad, and maybe my brother now that he's Alpha. I promise, I'll reach out if anything happens." and I can see that this knowledge relaxes him.

"OK, but make sure your dad knows I'll be near him at all times." He says and honestly, the thought that he cares so much, but is still respecting my decision warms my heart.

"I will. And thank you." I tell him and pull him down towards me and place a kiss on his cheek. I hear a low growl come from him and he places his forehead on mine.

"Aren't you worried someone will see?" He asks me with a teasing tone, but I can tell he's serious with his inquiry.

"A little, but I'm trying." I tell him and we stand like that for a while. Just being alone together in the quiet.

"If we stay like this much longer, everyone will be able to smell me on you" he points out.

"It's OK." I whisper to him as I break the contact with our foreheads, but only to lean into him, reaching into his jacket to embrace him, placing my head against his chest. He lowers his chin to the top of my head and we stay just like that until they announce for everyone to take their seats for dinner.

"Do you want to go in before me and I'll follow, again?" he asks me, and it's so kind and considerate of him.

"No, I don't think I do." I tell him as we separate from each other nally, but I place my hand inside his.

He looks down at our hands and then up at me. "Are you sure? People will denitely see."

"I know." I tell him. "I'm trying to trust you. I'm trying to be brave."

He beams at me with the biggest smile and leans over to kiss my head before squeezing my hand and leading me into the ballroom.