

| She'd wanted to be here with them. And she was probably pis sed that I'd interrupted whatever the f |
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| uck was going on when I walked in. |
| I clenched my fist and raised it high, and for one sweet, satisfying second, a look of horror flashed |
| across Xander's face. But then I spun around and brought it down hard against the mirror opposite the |
| showers. |
| The glass shattered, and blood poured out of my hand, but I didn't give a f uck. |
| I stalked out of the bathroom before Colt took over completely and I did something I couldn't come back |
| from. |
| If I touched even one little hair on their on their b ig-as s heads, I'd be thrown to the literal wolves of the |
| council. |
| I couldn't touch those mo therf uckers on their home turf, but Project: Bring Xander Down from the |
| Inside |
| • |
| was back on. |
| "Mason, wait!" Katie yelled down the hall. |

F uck. What was I gonna do about Katie? I thought she was different, I thought she was the one. I thought I loved her, and I thought she loved me back. Hell, I was about to make her my mate for real. But it was Alice all over again. Xander and Zane had stolen her from me just like before. And Katie had lain down and let them. "Don't, Katie," I said, not turning around. 1/3 "Please!" She caught my arm from behind, and I spun around, claws raised. But when I saw the fear in her eyes and watched her cower below me, all the rage that had flowed through me a second ago suddenly turned to ice in my veins. I dropped my hand to my side. "What?" I asked her bluntly. "What could you possibly say right now?" "Mason, I..." She took a shaky breath, and tears sprung to her eyes. She was guilty, I knew it. "Nothing really happened. Nothing like what's happened with you."

| I shook my head. My wolf retreated. I was done. |
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| "That doesn't even matter, Katie," I said. "You wanted it. You wanted them." |
| "But that doesn't mean I don't want you, too!" she cried. |
| She had no idea what she was talking about. |
| "I've already been through this s hit once," Mason said. "I'm not doing it again." |
| be |
| I turned away from her. |
| "It was a mistake to bring you here." I walked back down the hall, but this time she didn't follow. |
| Katle |
| My eyes blurred with tears and I doubled over, heaving. |
| What the f uck had I just done? |
| • |
| The G ods were punishing me and my wolf for being so unbelievably stu pid. |
| After what happened with Alice, it must've been so hard for Mason to trust again. And here I was |
| I reminding him why he never should've. |

| I thought about running after him, but what would I say? |
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| He was right. I had wanted it, and I had no excuse for it. |
| The one bright spot was that at least I'd been honest with him about it. Not like Alice had done. |
| Instead, I ran to the side door and out of the house. Distantly, I thought of Mindy and how I'd left her |
| alone, how when Gabriela found out, she'd probably have my head. But at least Stella was safe with |
| her |
| As soon as my feet hit the grass, I ripped off all my clothes and ran straight for the forest, shifting |
| before! |
| could even think about what I was doing. |
| Not thinking was good. I didn't want to think about the consequences of what I'd done, of how I'd face |
| everyone once I got back. I just needed to run until my body gave out |
| But Lily had other plans. She was pulling me in a certain direction again, to the same place we'd gone |
| the |
| dru baforn |
| |

| The sun was still rising in the sky as I reached the edge of the lake, and the light was sparkling on the |
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| water's surface. It would've been beautiful if everything else wasn't so f ucked up. |
| A branch broke close by, and I snapped my head toward the sound. I raised my nose high and sniffed |
| the air. What the f uck? |
| It was that same strange smell Lily had gone nuts for yesterday. She sent me pacing in circles. Clearly, |
| she was still going crazy. |
| And so was I, because now I knew what that smell meant. |
| |
| Vampire. |
| • Vampire. |
| I looked out over the trees, and then I saw him |
| • |
| • I looked out over the trees, and then I saw him |
| I looked out over the trees, and then I saw him An admittedly beautiful man with bright green eyes, cropped black hair, and a jaw chiseled by the go ds |

| I thought you'd gone missing," he said in a smooth, deep voice. "Looks like | e I found you." |
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