

His Beta 167

Chapter 167

Braden

I heard stirring in the cabin a few hours after daylight had broken.

They

v. sol

didn't get much sleep, which meant tensions would be high. Thankfully, I had places to be today,

didn't have to listen to them bicker.

Zane's grumbling voice traveled through the front door, and I focused on it until I could decipher his

words.

"I'm gonna have to shift to heal my back after sleeping on that hard-ass floor," he complained.

I rolled my eyes, but I guess I didn't really know what it was like to have to sleep. It had been so long

since.

I needed to.

"I bet Mason slept like a baby," Xander hissed.

I had to admit, it was a little entertaining, watching these shifters try and fail to hide their jealousy, but I wondered for a second if I'd made a mistake bringing them here, knowing Lanie would get caught in the middle of it all.

As if I'd conjured her, Lanie stepped out of the front door, shutting it firmly behind her and plopping down on the porch steps next to me.

She was wearing an oversized t-shirt, tall fuzzy socks, and a black cardigan. Her hair was long and wild.

She looked beautiful but exhausted.

She scrubbed a hand down her face. "You couldn't have put us up in an enchanted high rise or something?" she asked.

I laughed. "Sorry, it's the best I could do on short notice."

She smirked and placed a hand on my arm. She squeezed lightly, but it felt more like a jolt. Her touch was

magic.

“No, it’s great. Thank you for letting us stay here. You’re literally a lifesaver,” she said. “Even though I’m definitely worried they might all kill each other before the day is over,”

We both glanced behind us at the closed front door.

“I am, too, to be honest.” She laughed this time. The sound was sweet, alluring even. “But it’s still better than the alternative.”

I

“How bad is it? How much danger are Stella and I in?” she asked, tucking her hands inside the sleeves of her sweater.

I could reassure her and tell her that as long as she stayed here, she’d be safe. But she deserved to know what was going on. They all did.

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Lanie’s eyes widened. “What do they do?” she whispered.

“They torture them,” I said simply. “Shoot them with silver bullets, stab them with silver blades, inject

silver directly into their bloodstream, burn them with torches. You name it. They want to see how

immortal

they really are.”

Lanie shivered, but she didn’t look away from me.

“But they’ve discovered that unless a hybrid is born from a pure shifter and vampire bloodline, this kind

of torture will maim them at best, and kill them at worst.”

Her mouth dropped open slightly.

“They don’t know if a hybrid’s blood is pure unless they torture them?” Lanie asked in a shaky voice.

“There is one other way.” I said. I knew she wouldn’t like to hear this. “If you can smell the vampire

blood of a hybrid pup, then that means they are pure.”

“But...” Lanie trailed off, her eyes drifting off to the distance. “You could smell Stella’s blood.”

“You know your maternal grandfather is a vampire, right?” I asked.

“Yes. He’s the vampire who sired you,” she said.

I nodded. There was more to it than that, but I didn’t want to overwhelm her right now.

“He’s an ancient vampire, born from the original line of vampires who walked the earth,” I explained.

“And Xander is a Constantine, one of the purest wolf bloodlines that exists. Which makes Stella...”

“The perfect hybrid,” Lanie finished in a whisper.

“That’s why it’s so important that you all stay here and figure out a way to make it work,” I urged her. “If

anyone leaves, they’re in danger, and so are you and Stella.”

Through the front door, we could already hear the rumble of irritated voices. Easier said than done.

Lanie dropped her head into her hands.

“I don’t even know if I should be telling you this, but I can feel my body changing,” she said, looking

back

un at me. “I think...I think I’m going into heat again.”

I thought back to that first time I’d met her, the way her scent had wrapped itself around me, trapping

me like a prisoner. And she’d tasted even better than she’d smelled. Da mn, I would give anything for

one more

bite....

“Last time this happened, we all went f ucking crazy” she said, her voice dropping lower, her head

leaning closer to mine. "I'm worried I might do something stupid,"

I had to do it. I had to taste her once more. Just to know that there was really nothing left between us.

"Stupid like this?" I asked.

And then I kissed her.