

His Beta 174

Chapter 174

Lanie

I walked with Malachi to the edge of the enchantment line.

He turned to look at me, taking me in from head to toe.

“You look so much like your mother,” he said.

I looked down at myself, I still had on the same rumpled oversized t-shirt and cardigan I’d worn the last

two days, plus some cargo pants I’d taken from my closet at home. I felt like a mess, but the

compliment still

made me smile.

“Not as much as my sister does,” I said.

It was true, they shared the same eye color and the same heavy freckles across their noses. Suddenly

it hit me why Malachi had looked so familiar: his eyes were the same green as my mother’s and

Selena’s.

The same green that Stella’s eyes were slowly morphing into.

I took a closer look at him. It really was hard to believe that this man who looked so young and full of life was not only my grandfather, but also an ancient, probably hundreds of years old.

“I know,” he said, the corner of his mouth quirking up in a devious smile. “I’ve been keeping an eye on them for a long time now. And on you, too.”

I didn’t know whether to find this comforting or creepy.

There was something trustworthy about his face, but I also got the feeling that this was a power of his: winning people over with his charms.

“I’ve been sending Braden out to check on them every day now that the Council has called away your dads and left your mother and sister vulnerable,” he said. “Don’t worry, though. They’re not working on the hybrid project.”

I breathed out a sigh of relief. When my mother said my fathers had been called away on a secret project, it made me sick to think they might be working with the men who were kidnapping and killing she-wolves like us. I was more than glad to hear they weren’t.

“So does that mean you knew that my sister was meeting with Orion?” I asked.

“Yes. And I know you followed them to that bar,” he said. “Not a very wise decision, Lanie. If he’d

smelled you or even gotten a glimpse of you... Well, we might never have met like this.”

My face scrunched in thought. If he was so all-knowing and all-powerful, then why didn’t he do

something

about Orion? Then Mason and I wouldn’t have had to sneak around like that.

“You’re an ancient vampire, right?” I asked. “Doesn’t that mean you have some kind of undead.

superpowers or something? So why don’t you just kill Orion yourself?”

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who were of shifter descent. But then he set his sights on you and Stella and that’s when things got

personal,”

We both turned to watch Mason as he stood outside the cabin, bouncing her lightly.

A lump formed in my throat, and my eyes swam with tears. All these strong, powerful me protect me

and my baby.

i were here to

“And besides,” he continued, turning back to me, “When I kill Orion-and I do intend to one day soon-then the treaty is broken, and another war will break out. We vampires must be ready before that happens.”

Another war? It seemed so unfair that even once we dealt with Orion it still might not be over.

“Does my mother know you’re here?”

He laughed lightly. “Your mother doesn’t know who I am anymore” Malachi explained. “When she had the spell cast on herself to conceal her vampire side, she forgot who her family was.”

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He looked out over the forest, a sad smile on his face, “Her mother died when she was young, and it took away the pain she’d felt after her death, but it also meant that she no longer knew who I was.”

“That must’ve been so hard,” I said. “To lose your wife and your daughter.”

Malachi nodded. “I’ve lived for centuries, and I’ve loved more people than I can count,” he said. “But she was one of the hardest to let go.”

My ears perked up at that. “Have you ever loved more than one at a time?”

He c ocked his eyebrow, then turned to look back at the cabin again like he knew exactly why I was

asking.

“Of course I have. And if you want my advice,” he said, holding me with his bright green gaze. “Take what you want. When you’ve lived as long as I have, you start refusing to settle. Keep the doors open, and use the power you have”

I looked back at Mason, still holding Stella, then Zane across the yard carrying wood inside the cabin,

In my perfect world, I wouldn’t have to choose. But was that really possible?