

## His Beta 23

### Chapter 23

Lanie

“Did you just say the Great Wars?”

Braden stared back at me, shifting his weight from one foot to the other. “I did. I helped fight in them.”

What the hell? The Great Wars had been over twenty years ago, before I was even born. There was no way this guy was old enough to have fought in them. He looked thirty, tops.

And if he wasn't a wolf shifter, he didn't have the same extended lifetime we did, living up to a few hundred years.

\*I can see the wheels turning.” He grinned. “You're wondering how the hell I could have fought in them. when I don't look old enough barely be out of diapers when they happened.”

“Something along those lines,” I responded.

“I'm sixty-two.”

My eyes widened, and I stuttered, “But...but how?”

He threw his head back and laughed, then put his hands on his hips in an almost preening way as he

grinned at me.

“I take it you’ve never heard of the masas dima before.”

“The masa what?”

\*Masas dima. We prefer the Arabic name we were created with, not the stereotypical, sensationalized

‘vampire’ that pop culture uses.”

exist.

I’m pretty sure my jaw dropped to the ground.

There was no such thing as vampires. None. They were a myth, a legend.

The only supernatural beings that we had proof of were other types of shifters. Everything else? Didn’t

I said the only thing I could think of.

“You’re f u cking with me right now.” I narrowed my eyes. “What kind of shifter are you? You’re not wolf,

and I don’t recognize your scent. But I’ve only been around bear and lion shifters.”

Braden’s laugh had a group of birds in a nearby tree flying away as fast as their little wings could take

them into the sky. He composed himself after a minute, shook his head, and took in the expression on

my

face.

“Wait, you’re not joking, are you?” He furrowed his brow. “You seriously don’t know about the existence

of other paranormal beings other than shifters?”

Something in the confused look on his face told me that he was telling the truth. Had he been a wolf, I’d

have been able to scent a lie out, but his scent never changed.

Rather than admit to my ignorance, I stayed silent.

Which was probably an admission in itself, but whatever.

“I think this is a conversation for when you have more clothes on and aren’t quite so...emotional.”

“Excuse me?” I didn’t know whether to be angry at him for pulling a typical man move and calling me

emotional, or curious as to how he could tell what my mood was before I shifted.

“I know, I know. It’s cliché for me to call you emotional.” He held his hands out, palms up, in a gesture

that I think was meant to placate me. “I mean no disrespect. I can sense emotions, and when I came

upon you, I could sense very strong emotions from you.”

“Are you sure you weren’t just sensing my anger and irritation at someone sneaking up on me while I was relaxing?” I glared at him and crossed my arms over my chest, cocking my hip.

The asshole threw his head back and laughed at me.

Fucking. Laughed.

“Oh come on. We both know I didn’t sneak up on you. There’s no way you didn’t smell me before you saw me, and I was making no attempt to quiet my footsteps on the leaves.” He plastered a cocky grin on his face. “It’s okay to admit you’re upset about something. Boy trouble, love?”

Braden

The look on her face was priceless.

And knowing that I’d put it there and set her off-kilter was the icing on the proverbial cake

She was glorious.

Full of attitude and defiance and curiosity.

And, damn, she was beautiful.

I’d never seen hair like hers. It was the color of cinnamon, full and thick and wild, and hung down to

her

waist. I wanted to wrap myself in it and nothing else as I pumped in and out of her, nipping at her neck.

Did she taste as good as she smelled?

Go d, I wanted to sink my fangs into her and get a little taste.

She still hadn't spoken, and her mouth was slightly agape, as if she wanted to say a million things but couldn't settle on just one.

"So, boy trouble it is, then." I smirked at her and winked.

And watched her just about blow a gasket.

Go d da mn, she was fiery.

"You don't know anything about me," she snarled.

"I know enough."

She opened her mouth to say something, then closed it again.

I'd tweaked her enough...for today.

I'd see her again. I'd make sure of it.

But I had to be careful. If she could smell something different about me, that meant others would as

well.

Apparently, we'd overestimated how much wolf shifters knew about other species.

How could they have erased so much information so quickly? It'd only been twenty-three years since

the

Great Wars.

"I've given you a lot to digest. What with finding out that my kind exists and all." I casually stuck my

hands in my pockets and pulled my shoulders back. "Why don't you take some time to think about all of

this

and meet me back here, say, tomorrow morning?"