

His Beta 231

Chapter 231

Lanie

over

When Zane and Xander got back, I could tell that Zane felt...not better, since this whole thing was still mess, but he didn't feel as anxious. He and Xander came through the front door with their arms slung each other's shoulders, smelling like fresh air and sweat and pine needles.

I loved them both so much.

A twist of guilt tried to tighten inside me when I saw Mason watching the other men joking around at the

kitchen sink, and me watching them. It was going to take a while for all of us to settle in to something that worked. I gave him an extra kiss to make sure he knew how much I loved him, too.

"Love you, too," he murmured into my ear and squeezed my hips.

"I'm starving." Xander declared, yanking open the fridge. "Looks like we're out of steak. I'm going to grill some chicken."

Just like that, he was grilling while the other two "helped" with their advice and they all drank beer.

Gabriela had appeared briefly just to say she hadn't been able to figure out a solution yet. Since the

babies were all still peaceful in their bassinets, she left me to finish up the rest of the meal prep.

"Lanie.

At the sound of Zane's voice, I turned. At the look on his face, I went to him at once. He kissed me

softly, tipping my face to his.

"I know you hate this," he said.

Iran my

hands up his chest to his shoulders. "I hate the idea of you having to be with her like that. But I don't

hate the fact you were willing to do whatever it took to protect us."

He nodded and pulled me into a hug. We danced in the quiet kitchen for a few seconds, spinning

slowly in

a circle while the sound of jeering shouts rose from the yard. He chuckled gently into my ear and ran

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his hand. up and down my back.

“What are they doing out there?”

“Comparing dick sizes,” Zane said with a snort. When I pulled away, startled, he shook his head.

“Figuratively. They each have specific ideas about what temp to put the grill at, and how often to flip the

chicken. Stuff like that.”

“Ah. Manly man stuff.” I put on a fake-impressed face, and we both laughed.

“Anything from Gabriela?” Zane kissed my forehead and went to the fridge to pull out a beer.

I went back to prepping the salad, my knife slicing sharply through the tomatoes I was putting in the

bowl. “Nothing.”

“She’ll figure something out. She always does.” He leaned against the counter to watch me with a glow
in 1/2

My eyebrows went up. “In the kitchen, huh? And look. I’m not even wearing shoes. What do you know.”

He laughed ruefully and shook his head. “You’re good at making a home, Lanie. If we were back at the

mansion, there’d be staff to take care of this stuff. You’d be busy with Luna duties, sure, but you

wouldn’t have to be chopping lettuce.”

“Or cleaning toilets,” I said. Living with three men in a cottage with only one bathroom was proving to be more of a challenge than I really wanted to face.

“What I mean is, we’d all be living together, but it would be very different. It almost makes me wish we could just stay here forever. You, me, Xander, the babies. Mason too, I guess. Our family, here together.” He tipped his bottle to his lips and drank.

I watched his throat work as I added some sliced cucumbers to the bowl and dried my hands on a to

“You don’t want Xander to be Alpha of the pack?”

“Of course I do. Even if I didn’t, it’s what he is. But this is nice.”

“For now,” I said softly.

Our eyes met.

No matter how much I tried to pretend I could handle the idea of him having sex with someone else, I

really couldn’t. It made my canines drop and my claws lengthen, and Zane saw it even though I quickly

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held myself back. He crossed the kitchen to me and took me in his arms

He didn't apologize, but I felt his sorrow. Not at what he'd agreed to do, but at how it hurt me and all of us. I was being selfish with my pain. Yeah, I hated the thought of him being with someone else physically, but he was the one who'd have to do it.

He

was the one who'd be creating a child he'd never get to raise, one that could be in danger from its own

mother from the first moment of its conception.

I couldn't let that happen to an innocent child, but especially, I could not stand to let the man I loved go through all of that.

"Lanie? Love?"

The glow emitting from all around me had grown so bright it reflected in Zane's eyes. I stood up straight.

"You all finish your dinner and take care of the babies, okay? I need some time to myself."

I had an idea of how I could solve this dilemma...but needed some time. The problem was, I wasn't sure

I'd have enough.