

His Beta 241

Chapter 241

Lanie

We both knew the noise had been made by a deer before it stepped out of the shadows. Our wolves were riled up from the running and the sex. Lily whined, wanting to hunt, but I hushed her.

“Another time,” I promised her.

My wolf wasn’t happy. My needs had been met, but my wolf’s hungers were still fresh. She wanted to run some more. To hunt. To bay at the moon. To be free.

Lily retreated, but with a huff that told me she was going to hold me to that promise.

“I look forward to it,” I assured her.

The timid doe looked at us for a few startled seconds before bounding away into the brush.

Xander unzipped the duffel bag and pulled out our clothes. “We’re meeting this guy about half a mile

from

here?”

I put on my socks and underwear, then my jeans as I answered. “Yes. No exchange of money, that’s

already been taken care of with the electronic deposits.”

“Are they going to leave the wolvesbane in a bag, or what?” He buckled his belt and bent to push his

feet

into his big boots.

I knew he wasn’t going to be happy about this next part. “No. The dropoff has to occur hand to hand. I

guess there are instructions. Even people who use the dark web are allowed to be responsible about

handing

over toxic substances.”

My joke fell flat.

“Lanie...” Xander growled. “How do you know we can trust this as shale?”

“We don’t. But we have to follow whatever procedures they want us to, or we don’t get the goods.” I

finished dressing and picked up the duffel bag to sling over my shoulder.

Picking our way through the trees in our human forms was definitely not as easy as it had been when

our wolves were in control. I took Xander’s hand, though, which was nice. If the temperature hadn’t

dropped so that I shivered, and my eyes weren’t so heavy from sudden exhaustion, it would’ve been a

romantic stroll.

“We’ll have this again,” he said aloud, having “heard” my thoughts through the link. “Our lives won’t always be in such an uproar.”

“I feel like my life has been in an uproar since the moment they gave me to you and Zane as your mate,” I told him honestly.

Xander growled under his breath and squeezed my fingers. “You sure as hell rocked our world.”

“I wouldn’t have it any other way, though. Our family, our pack...even you and Mason both being Alphas.”

edge was up ahead, in sight. “Your mother was right. The three of you were meant to be my mates. I

feel it. Without you all, I might’ve been able to dip my finger in the surface of my Luna abilities, but I’d never have been able to reach them all. So...thank you.”

He shot me a curious glance I could see in the shaft of dim moonlight coming through the trees. “What are you thanking me for?”

“For being able to accept that things were not going the way you’d always thought they would. For

opening yourself to other possibilities." I stopped a few yards away from the forest edge. The meeting place was just beyond, but I needed him to hear this. "I know you and Zane loved Alice, and you wanted her to be your mate. I know she betrayed you, but even before that, we were connected. If you'd continued to deny that, or if you'd flat-out refused to let yourself be with me at the beginning...we wouldn't be here now."

"No. I don't believe that." He shook his head and turned me to face him. He put his hands on my hips. "I believe we'd have found our way to each other, no matter what else happened. We are destined mates, Lanie.

I frowned. "So...we had no choice?"

"Not a single one," Xander said, and kissed me.

This time, the crackle of branches slapping a moving body was definitely not a deer. He broke the kiss, his nostrils flaring and eyes glowing. The sound had come from just beyond the edge of the trees.

"It's our contact," he said.

"I guess we'd better go get what we came for," I agreed, but I let him go first.

No choice.

He'd said it like that was meant to comfort me, but it had done exactly the opposite. Now, all I could

think about was his words when we were making love. "You were meant to be mine from that moment

an eternity ago when the Moon Goddess created our souls."

If we had no choice but to end up together, then how could we be sure any of our feelings for each

other

were real?

What if we were all just pawns in an eternal game we could never possibly win?