

## **His Beta 252**

### Chapter 252

Zane

My body ached from the hours I'd spent with the ax. We had enough firewood to heat the entire house

for a dozen winters by the time Xander came out and told me that we were giving our wolves a run.

Now my muscles ached with a different kind of soreness.

Xander stretched, naked, next to the small stream. He bent to cup the water and drink deeply. I

admired the strong lines of his back and shoulders. When he turned around to see me staring, he shot

me a wide, arrogant grin.

"Like what you see?"

"Always," I admitted. "Just thinking how much you've changed over the years.

His smile faded and softened. His eyes lit with a glow from his wolf that mine immediately answered.

"We

both have."

"Did you ever wonder what it would've been like if you'd had a different Beta?" I joined him by the side

of the stream and bent to scoop up my own drink

The water, ice-cold and delicious, dripped down my chin and chest. I splashed some on my face and then over each shoulder to stream down my bare back. The water wasn't deep enough to swim in, or I felt like I'd have plunged in as deep as I could. Let it close over my head to shut out the world for a few minutes. Just float for a little while.

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Xander sat and put his feet in the water. He tugged my wrist until I sat next to him. All at once I was wondering if the urge to dive in had been my own, or if it had come to me through the mind link, with me feeling Xander's feelings more strongly than my own.

"There could be no better Beta for me than you." He nudged my shoulder with his.

We sat for a few minutes, shoulder to shoulder, our feet in the water. It ran over our calves. I curled my toes into the cold and looked over to see my Alpha doing the same.

"know that. I was born to be your Beta. But what if someone else had been?"

Xander twisted to look at me with a frown. "What's going on with you, dude? The Moon Goddess gave you to me the same way she gave Lanie to us. What's the point in worrying about things that didn't

happen?”

“Yeah, you’re right. I just....” I kicked at the water a bit and pulled my feet up to the edge of the stream.

“You have a brother now. You have another Alpha. What do you even need a Beta for?”

For a moment, Xander didn’t answer. Then he mirrored my position, grasping one of his wrists while his arms linked around his knees. He stared out over the stream to the trees beyond. A deer had come out of the woods and stood staring at us, her ears twitching. When heither of us moved, she bent to crop at the grass.

“An Alpha needs a Beta. Yeah, Mason’s part of our lives now, and there doesn’t seem to be much we can do about that. But he could never replace you, Zane. You are my Beta. You are my best friend. And I love you,”

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I knew he was telling me the truth because, just like it had been since we were pups, I could feel it. I

rubbed at my eyes, pressing the heels of my hands into them. “Since that night, I’ve just felt..off.”

He didn't have to ask me what night I meant. "I know I just don't know what to do for you."

"I don't know what you can do for me, either," I admitted. "I feel like I betrayed you. All of you."

"Sneaking around on us, that would be a betrayal. We don't love what you had to do...I fucking hate the thought of you being with her but you did not betray us. You got that?" Xander's voice rumbled, and his wolf snarled.

"I keep telling myself that, but I can't stop myself from feeling it, I retorted, my voice too harsh. I got up.

"S hit. Sorry, man. I'm not trying to be an as s hole to you."

Xander got to his feet. He grabbed my shoulders and forced me to look at him. He was my Alpha, there was no way I was going to disobey him...but I definitely didn't want to look him in the eyes. He shook me a little bit until I did.

"There's something I've been wanting to ask you," he said finally. "Something I think, if you agree, will prove to you that there's no betrayal. That nobody could take your place, that having another Alpha doesn't mean your place has been made any less."

I moved closer to him so his grip didn't need to be so tight, like he was trying to keep me from running.

away. No matter how I felt, I knew I was never going to run from Xander.

His eyes flared. "I want you to be known as Zane Constantine."

"Huh? What?" Stunned, I had no idea how to answer that.

"Instead of Allister, I want you to take the Constantine name." He grinned at me. "Will it make the Elders heads spin around? Fuck yeah. But will it show everyone that we are a family? All of us, me, you, Lanie, the pups, Mason? Also, fuck yeah."

A heavy weight felt like it lifted off me. We laughed together, our voices full of joy.

"Okay," I said. "Fuck yeah. I'll take your name."