

## His Beta 256

### Chapter 256

Xander

Seeing my baby girl walking into the kitchen on steady legs was definitely something I was going to have to get used to. Lanie got her settled at the table on one of the booster seats we'd ordered, expecting the pups to need them in the next couple of weeks.

"Sit up straight, little love," Lanie told her. "Mommy's going to get your snack ready."

"Abba, juice, pweese?" Stella gave Mason a look I could already tell was designed to wrap all of us around her little finger.

It was working.

My mother entered the kitchen with Isaac holding one hand and Alaina gripping the other. They'd both hit their growth spurt, too, but although they were toddling, neither one of them was as steady as Stella.

They babbled to each other softly, not real words,

Isaac held up his arms. "Dada."

I picked him up and put him on my hip. "Hey, there, little man. Do you want a snack, too?"

The little boy put his finger in his mouth and nodded My mother was already putting Alaina in a booster seat as Lanie cut up apples onto plates and adding a dollop of peanut butter. Zane opened the cupboard to grab out some sippy cups with lids Lanie had also had delivered, and Mason pulled out the jug of apple juice.

We all moved, coordinated as a dance, and I looked over to see my mother shaking her amused expression.

I settled our son into his seat as my mate put the plate in front of him. My mother saw me She let out a soft chuckle.

“It takes five adults to take care of three children,” she said with another chuckle. “And now the mobile... Well, if your children are anything like you were as a boy, Xander, we’d all better step up our workouts so we can keep up with them.”

Stella kicked her little legs against the rungs of the chair. “Daddy, what car...cardy.”

“It means exercise.” I bent to kiss the top of her head.

Lanie put the plate in front of Stella. “What do you say?”

“Please” Stella said confidently

an

Lanie looked startled, but her voice was calm. "You say please when you want something, but when you get something, my little love, you say "thank you"

"Tank you," Stella said. Then, after a second, softly as though she was speaking more to herself, she repeated it. "Thank you."

1/2

only is she speaking in sentences, which is way beyond what she ought to be doing, she's also progressing in her language skills."

.

Alaina pounded the table, and my mother hurried to get the little girl her own plate of apples and peanut

butter. Alaina didn't say anything, but her pout turned into a smile when my mother gave her the snack.

The differences between Stella and the twins were so obvious now. Isaac dragged his apple slice

through the peanut butter and managed to get it into his mouth, but the peanut butter fell off and he

used a finger to try to scoop it up. Alaina didn't even try to get the apple into the peanut butter, just

used her finger right off the

bat

Stella, on the other hand, daintily took an apple slice and dipped it into the peanut butter. She used her

finger to press the gooey brown treat onto the apple slice and lifted the entire thing to her lips, then took

a

small, careful bite.

The difference in her coordination was vast.

“You were an early walker and talker,” my mother said in a rough voice. She gave me a look that seemed. oddly hopeful.

Like the rest of us, she seemed amazed by her granddaughter’s growth. And like us, she was obviously hoping that it didn’t mean something was wrong with our little girl. The catch in her voice, though, led me to believe my mother was doing her best to sound braver than she felt.

I met Lanie’s gaze over the top of our little girl’s head. My Luna’s eyes flared bright with her wolf for a few seconds. Waves of nervousness rolled off her, a rush of sensation that faded in a second. She was

doing that on purpose, and it was taking a lot of effort. I could feel her using self-will to shield her anxiety.

.

We all were frozen, watching our children at the table. No idea of what to do, or how to handle any of this. Just then, Isaac dumped his cup and the lid came off. Apple juice spread across the table as he started to cry. Alaina joined him. Stella pouted and looked upset.

“Oh, no, what a mess. Let’s get this cleaned up. Don’t cry, sweetheart. Mommy will get you more.

Lanie sounded glad for the distraction, and we all started working to clean it all up.

But what were we going to do about this much bigger mess, the one we didn’t know how to take care of?