

His Beta 322

Chapter 322

Lanie

I burst into hard laughter that raked at my throat.

“No! You’re kidding, right?”

Malachi frowned. This is far from a humorous matter, Lanie.

“If I don’t laugh, I’m going to scream, I said. “I mean, seriously. Brainwashing? What the actual fuck?”

Braden snorted a soft chuckle, which earned him a stern look from Malachi. It didn’t seem to sober him much. His amused gaze met mine, but he pressed his lips together to hold back his laughter.

“They can’t really have everyone believing they’ve all been brainwashed,” Zane said, sounding incredulous.

“Why would everyone in every pack fall for that?”

“Your High Council can be very persuasive, and they’re very, very good liars. After all, they managed to hide the truth from all of you for decades. What makes you think they’d have any trouble convincing you all that the opposite is true, especially if they’ve crafted some elaborate story?” Malachi sneered a

little when he spoke. "I mean, it's well-known that you all follow your pack leaders with an almost slavish devotion."

Xander rumbled with a hard growl that would've sent anyone other than an Ancient vampire running.

"And, you vamps apparently don't know how to be courteous to guests under your roof."

"It is the duality of your natures," Malachi said without batting an eye. "It lends itself to duplicity."

That means—

"I know what it means, Xander interrupted. "Fuck's sakes. No matter what you obviously seem to think, we aren't a pack of idiots."

Braden leveled a silent look at my grandfather that went on way too long before Malachi broke it. I

didn't think vampires had mind links the way wolf-kind did, but something was definitely passing between them.

Something unspoken but definitely understood.

My skin pricked with awareness. Braden...and my grandfather? I wanted to leap up from the table and confront them both, but I held myself together. This wasn't the time or the place.

"If I might be permitted to continue?" Braden's voice oozed with politeness he addressed toward

Malachi.

Malachi's the one I take orders from.

That's what he'd told me back when I was the one who was just learning that vampires were real. It

looked like he was taking more than orders from my grandfather now. My skin didn't just prickle. It

crawled as I remembered Braden's mouth on mine

And now he was with my grandpa? Yeah, Malachi looked young, but..

"The High Council's official stance is that vampires working together enhance-

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"Like we're a monolith," Malachi spat out. "Like we aren't individuals capable of our own choices!"

Braden gave another heavy sigh and continued.

"According to the Council, vampires have been able to infiltrate every wolf pack, mating with wolves to

create hybrids who could subjugate wolves via mind control."

"We can compel, yes, but something like this on a diabolical, wide scale...." Malachi hissed, showing

his fangs.

*Clearly, you're affronted," Mason said coldly. "But could you let Braden f ucking finish?"

Malachi sat back.

"Hybrids carrying vampire blood are loyal to vampires, according to the High Council, Braden said.

"That makes no sense whatsoever," Zane replied.

Mason shook his head. "Why would hybrids be loyal to any one bloodline over the other? Especially if they were raised without knowing they were hybrids?"

"Why would anyone with wolf blood be loyal to vampires, hybrid or not?" Xander snarled.

"Obviously, because we are superior," Malachi shot back at him.

I stood up and slammed my palms onto the table, making them all look at me. "Shut up, all of you. In case you hadn't noticed, I'm the one they called out.

I'm the one they accused. So stop with all the d ick swinging and let Braden finish!"

My shout came out along with a burst of Luna power

I could see my own glow and feeling throbbing and pulsing in the air all around me. It even seemed to affect Malachi and Braden. Both twitched backward.

Breathing hard, I composed myself and retook my seat.

Braden waited a few seconds before giving me a nod that was as good as applause.

“However they spun it, people are all-in about it,” he said. “Fear mongering works. The packs are

scared and restless. It was no secret Orion was killed and you four went missing. Without any solid

proof to the

contrary, they’ve managed to convince everyone that Lanie was able to get Xander, Zane, and Mason

under her

complete mind control. Orion figured out what was going on and bravely confronted her, and she had

her

mates kill him.”

Tuck Mason said. “They’re painting Orion as a martyr”

“And there is no better way to get people to rally together than behind martyr,” Charlotte said. “They’ve

essentially made all four of you into targets. You won’t be able to go anywhere without someone trying

to haul

you back to the High Council

Braden gave up head a gran shake 'Or worse take you out themselves"