

His Beta 42

Chapter 42

now.

Lanie

“Just tell me, Braden,”

If it turned out he was as terrible as the shifters who enslaved female wolves before the Great

Before we got in too deep.

Int

t Wars, then at least I’d know

His green eyes darted around, looking anywhere but into my eyes.

“I fought alongside the she-wolves when the war started, most of my kind did, but in the end, we all had

to throw them under.

the bus to save our own people.”

My heart sank..

I’d come to Braden for help in escaping our horrible mating practices. But it turned out he was partially

responsible for

them...

He glanced back up, and his face was twisted with pain.

“The wolf shifters were too powerful. Some of them were dying, too, but not like the vampires. They

killed so many more of

His voice was strained, and I wondered how many people Braden had lost in the wars.

Had he lost his mother? His first love? A child?

“We can’t mate and reproduce like your kind can,” he said. “Rebuilding our population will take

centuries as it is. If the wars had continued, we would’ve been eradicated.”

According to legend, vampires couldn’t have children in the traditional sense. Vampires had to be

created. They were humans reborn after death.

I wondered vaguely how Braden’s people had come to exist in the first place.

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Did they kill humans for fun? Did they save them from dying?

The answer felt important, but it was a conversation for another day.

“I don’t understand,” I said, “If shifters were really that powerful, so powerful they could destroy entire populations of supernatural beings, then why isn’t that part of our history?”

It seemed like the type of story the Council would revel in.

The story of the fierce shifter wolves who defeated the evil vampires and witches and came out on top as the strongest

supernatural beings in our region.

They told us so many other lies...why not that one, too?

“Remember when I said both sides had to make concessions? Braden asked. “Even though our numbers were dwindling, we

were still killing shifters. And when things went from bad to worse the witches threatened to curse them with infertility.”

I gasped, and he nodded.

1/3

“We were at a stalemate. No side could win. And that’s when we came to the agreement.”

His gaze drifted to the sky

“In order to end the war, the wolves had to erase all evidence of their power so younger generations wouldn’t get any about uprisings again. The wolf shifters agreed to sequester their people, never to insert themselves in the businesses of vampires, witches, or humans again.”

So that’s why we had no idea vampires or witches actually existed.

Braden turned back to me, a sad look in his eyes.

“Unfortunately, that meant that the wolves” mating practices could resume as they wanted them to, unchecked.”

ideas

For years now, she-wolves were mated to two wolves and encouraged to produce pups, but the Elders had always made it sound like a privilege, they’d made it sound like they honored the women who

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helped grow the population of our pack.

But now they were pushing the boundaries again, slowly, starting with Xander and Zane. They were

bringing back the traditions that started the Great Wars in the first place. But with no outside help from

witches and vampires this time, they might actually get away with it

Or so they thought

I looked up at Braden, so sexy and sure, and wondered again if I could really trust him.

If I could, then he their

might just be my secret weapon, my key to stopping the Council from making all of us she-w

sex slaves again..

But if I got closer to Brad

to Braden, if I put even more trust in him...

Could I keep myself from falling for him?

Xander

“That’s easier said than done, Xander, Zane warned.

I growled.

Getting rid of Alice wasn’t going to be easy, I didn’t need to be reminded of that.

Her reputation was already scarred from being mated so late and from worming her way out of the

Council's intended. match. If we rejected her, too, I didn't know what would happen.

At best she'd be banished, forced to live as a rogue, but at worst, she'd be killed.

Before I could consider any other terrible possibilities, the breeze shifted, and an overwhelming scent

filled my nose.

Zane stopped, too, and turned his head in the direction of the smell.

Lanie.

It felt briefly like my brain was short-circuiting. With Hunter at the helm, my senses were heightened,

and her scent was

even more overwhelming.

Find her. Take her. We need her. Hunter urged me to follow the trail that would lead me to Lanie.

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“What is she doing out here?” Zane asked.

2/3

“I don't know, but we're about to find out.” And then Hunter was off, chasing the sweet smell carried on

the wind while Zane's

wolf padded close behind.

Soon, we'd reached the edge of a lake, and it took a moment to register the sight in front of me.

Lanie was there, but she wasn't alone.

A low growl ripped from my chest.

She was with another man...