

## **His Beta 57**

### Chapter 57

Xander

I lunged, grabbing a fistful of Braden's shirt and shoving him against the wall with one hand, while I

reached for his neck with

the other.

"What the hell did you do?!"

Gustav's words were ringing in my ears as I squeezed his throat.

If he is seen again, he will be killed on the spot.

What would Gustav do if he found out the vampire he'd come to warn me about was inside our fucking

house?

Shit.

Everything was already crumbling around me, and now Lanie was gone, too.

A sharp bolt of pain shot through my body.

"Tell me what you did!" I screamed at Braden.

“It wasn’t me,” he choked out. “It was Aldon.”

My grip loosened, and I could hear Zane’s voice break through my cloud of fury.

“Calm down and let him go. We need to know where Lanie is.”

I growled in response but released Braden from my grip.

“What does Aldon have to do with this?” I demanded.

once.

Braden rubbed absently at his neck, but I could tell I hadn’t actually hurt him.

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He was stronger than he looked, but not stronger than me, and certainly not strong enough to take on

three huge wolves at

Braden glanced around the room at all of us. He was probably thinking the same thing.

“Aldon found us in the woods and used sleeping powder to take us out,” he explained. “When I came

to, he and Lanie were

both gone.”

I knew I should be more concerned with Aldon, but I was stuck on the idea of Lanie and Braden alone

together. Again.

So that's where she'd gone when she'd run off after we slept together...

I thought she knew where we stood with her, that we just needed time to get Alice out of the way.

I thought she'd wanted the same thing we did.

Maybe we were wrong.

"What were you doing with Lanie in the woods?" I growled at Braden.

But my father stepped forward and spoke instead.

"The real question is, why the hell is Aldon conspiring with witches?"

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Zane and I exchanged confused gla

This was way too much to take in at once.

And why didn't my father seem the least bit surprised to see a vampire standing in our f ucking dining room?

I narrowed my eyes at my father. "What do witches have to do with this?"

Braden spoke this time.

“It’s the only way he could’ve gotten the powder. It’s witch magic.” He waved his hand in the air. “But none of that matters right now. We need to find Lanie before Aldon makes his next move.”

There was an unmistakable twinge of fear in Braden’s voice. He was genuinely concerned for Lanie.

But what right did he have to be? Who the f u ck was he to her?

Not her mate, that was for dam n sure.

“You really have no idea where they went?” I studied his face, looking for a hint of a lie, but I only saw concern and impatience.

“I tried to track her,” he explained, “but I only made it as far as the clearing by the lake before her scent went dead.”

“F u ck!” I ran my hands through my hair, grabbing fistfuls.

“I know you and Zane are mate bonded to her,” Braden said, his facet twisted up like the very idea of that was painful to him. “Couldn’t you mindspeak with her or feel her through the bond or something?”

My father shook his head.

“It doesn’t work that way. If she’s that far from here, you would never hear her.” His tone was enragingly

dismissive. “Especially since she hasn’t even been properly claimed. The bond you have is weak, it isn’t true.”

What the hell did he know about Lanie?

Had he snuck off at night with her, too?

“It’s very real,” I snarled.

I locked eyes with Zane and nodded.

We both closed our eyes, and I heard Zane’s voice echo in my head.

“Lanie, if you can hear us, tell us where you are.”

Silence.

I pleaded again. “Lanie, we know you’re out there. Just say something, anything.”

“Xander,” Zane answered instead. “I can’t sense her right now.”

I couldn’t, either. I smelled nothing, heard nothing, felt nothing.

“Well?” My father’s impatient voice broke through our thoughts, and my eyes flew open again.

“No,” I said through gritted teeth. “What if she’s...”

But Braden jumped in before I had to say it.

“She’s not dead. You would know if she was, and I’m pretty sure I would, too.”

What the f uck was that supposed to mean?

“If no one can track her, then what do we do now?” Zane asked. “Where would Aldon even take her?”

Another set of footsteps sounded in the hall, and we all turned as my mother swept into the room.

“I know where Lanie is.”