

His Beta 369

Chapter 369

Xander

Nobody would ever accuse me of being computer savvy, but I was doing okay. I had a few different spreadsheets up on the laptop in front of me, and the notepad on the table was full of my scribbled notes. This meeting was lasting forever, and we weren't even really close to being finished.

I had to admit, though, it felt good to be doing something. So far, we'd spent the morning going over the different security protocols already in place in the enclave. Most of them were fine, and a few were even impressive. But there were still fragilities in the system that could be exploited. Mason had pointed out a few I hadn't even noticed, and I also had to admit I was impressed.

Malachi and the other enclave members on the leadership council seemed to be, too. They also seemed to be regarding me and my brother as a team. I wasn't sure how to feel about that. It made sense, sure, but it wasn't like we'd grown up together. Had never led a pack together.

"Now, about the testing for Lanie," Mason was saying when I snapped back to attention. He addressed Malachi and also Charlotte. "I'd like to insist that there be some better protocols or checks and

balances put in place for that. I know it has to happen, but...

He looked at me.

“We don’t like our mate being set up to do things we can’t be sure she understands how to control,” I

finished for him in a firm tone.

I wasn’t going to let anyone here talk us out of this. We’d discussed it before coming to the meeting,

and both of us had agreed. Lanie was not going to be used by anyone. Not for any reason.

Malachi steepled his fingers under his chin and studied us for a minute or so without speakin finally did,

he sounded kind of amused, which, no lie, kind of pis sed me off. “When will the pair of y accept that

your mate is, and always will be, much stronger than the two of you combined?”

“It’s not about how strong she is,” Mason cut in before I could snap back. “It’s not about her skill.

about her being able to use that strength and skill competently, something that’s impossible to do with

training and practice.”

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“Yet you’re trying to hamstring me about the testing.” Malachi said.

I shook my head and made sure to address each member at the table as calmly as I could. I

remembered once seeing my father shouting during a pack meeting. Totally losing his sh it. I'd vowed back then that I'd be careful how I approached people, and I wasn't proud to realize I hadn't been doing a great job of it. I was going to try extra hard today.

"We understand that you know all this stuff, Malachi, but we don't. And Lanie doesn't. And, honestly, man, you've said yourself that there are things you haven't seen before. It's not out of line to work within a set of parameters," I told him.

"Ones you've set, along with your brother," Malachi said. 1/2

Mason nodded. "You've trusted us enough to take our counsel about your security measures. Why wouldn't you trust that we can come up with safety procedures that will allow you to do what you have to for Lanie's growth, but also protect her? And anyone else she's working with."

Malachi rolled his eyes but then nodded. "Very well. No more testing of her abilities until you've managed to come up with something. But you must get her permission as well, do you understand? I realize wolves are rather more..." He paused. "Patriarchal, shall we say. In terms of how you deal with

your mates. But although we welcome your kind here in the enclave, we do not hold by outdated gender standards.”

I barely kept myself from rolling my eyes right back at him. “This isn’t about gender. As our Luna, Lanie is given the utmost respect. We just want her to be safe. I would think you’d want that, too.”

“I do.” Malachi sighed. “The hours have passed, and fear it’s time to do more than feed our minds with ideas. My stomach is empty, and I’m sure all of yours must be as well. I move we adjourn for meals and reconvene this meeting tomorrow. Mason and Xander, I expect you to have come up with something to start with by then. The longer we wait to help your Luna reach her full potential, the more potentially damaging it might be for her.”

This was the first I’d heard of that. “Huh?”

Lanie’s grandfather raised an eyebrow. “To put it more simply for the two of you. The longer Lanie goes without being able to harness the full array of her powers, the more likely it is that it will begin to affect her body. And worse..her mind.”