

Chapter 291

"It is time to reinvent The Praetorians," she announced. "Only this time their task will be to protect the children. Only the most trusted vampire will be inducted into their ranks. Their identities will remain a secret and they will be tested by the triumvirate before joining. Our magic will determine if they are worthy of the task asked of them. The pack will never see them, neither will the children. They deserve a chance to live normal lives full of love and happiness.

To ensure that, the Praetorians will never see the children either. They will be given their true scents as a way to protect them. Which is why you will need to instil in the children that they show their true scents should they ever be away from the protection of their pack and family and find themselves in need. It will be the only way The Praetorians will be able to defend them should the worst happen."

Rafe mulled over her words trying to work out whether it would better just to allow the children to know about their secret guardians. Annie made sense wanting them to have normal childhoods, to feel safe and secure but what if one of them didn't obey him and masked their scent when in danger?

Rhianna smiled. "You can always command them when they're old enough," she said and he shot her a startled look wondering if she'd just read his mind.

Her expression was so innocent that for a moment he thought she actually had and then he smiled too. No, she just knew him so well and how his mind worked when puzzling out something. "Will a brief burst of their true scent be enough for The Praetorians to track them, Annie? What happens when they mask their scent again? Will their guardians be able to follow the new scent?"

She nodded. "Until the children reach maturity and are deemed responsible enough to leave the pack on their own, their identities will be protected from everyone, including The Praetorians just in case one slips past us who means them harm. The Praetorians will be able to track by scent from a distance but be close enough that they can be there instantly should there be a need. There will always be a minimum of three of them to protect each child. We may slip up with one bad apple getting through but I doubt we will with three.

Rayne, as much as we all would prefer not to, can you enhance the children's teaching on shadowing? It is a good defence mechanism for them with only a few of us able to breach it. I will look into deciphering a way for their parents to also be able to see past it."

Rayne's growing respect and awe of the petite redhead blossomed. She didn't know her new sister very well but looking into her soul and sampling her emotions was enough to tell her that she could love the other woman as fiercely as her mate did. She had no idea why she'd ever worried about Gard's close relationship with his sister.*wŴw.nOV(•)Ł⊗©Rm.cOm*

"That makes sense, Annie, though if you can find a way to settle their parents' worries it would be best. Ashleigh and Nors almost died when Liam shadowed himself. They need to be certain they can protect their young."

"So will you and Caleb be running these Praetorians?" Rafe asked, coming to terms with what was needed to protect his pack and feeling stronger knowing this shadowy group would be in place even if they would never see any actual evidence of it.

His sister turned to look at her mate and shook her head as Caleb quirked an eyebrow at her in query. He had left this up to her, to decide what she needed to feel comfortable with the protection of her family.

"No, that task will be left up to someone else," she finally answered turning back to her brother. "I have faith that between us we can come up with someone who is strong and dedicated whose loyalty will be unquestioned when given the task to head The Praetorians. It will mean that your existing defences will need to be kept up for a few months or so. Naturally, we will assist with whatever you need, Rafe, until such times as we have sufficient Praetorians to protect the children."*wŴw.nOVŁwOrm.cOm*

Demetri stirred, rising silently in one graceful movement, his wife moving with him as if they were one being instead of two. "I know exactly who to ask," he said quietly, his expression serious. "I will need to go out of town for a couple of days to track him down though. Mara will need protection while I'm away."

His wife shot him an irritated glare and rolled her eyes. "Mara is perfectly capable of taking care of herself," she muttered under her breath.

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Demetri sighed dramatically, his lips twitching in a smile at her peeved tone. "Yes dear, but you know I'll only imagine someone is intending to harm you and then I'll get pissed. And we all know what happens when I get pissed, so don't argue with me about this woman. My peace of mind is preferable to the other option."*WwW.noveŁŴ(•)rm.c(•)mm*

She grinned up at him, pulling his head down for a kiss as his expression told her he wouldn't be swayed on the matter. Despite his autocratic ways she couldn't help the thrill that ran through her at his over protectiveness. Sometimes it was just perfect to be a woman so loved that her man turned feral at just the thought of any harm coming to her. She wouldn't let Demetri know that though otherwise she'd never get to do anything without him dogging her every footstep.

"Fine, I'll stay with Caleb and Annie while you're out of town and I will not go to the Council chambers without an escort from either Alexei or Andrei. Satisfied?"

His smug smile was enough to make her mutter a very unladylike curse deep within even as she burst out laughing and kissed him again.