

Chapter 326

He appeared to be slowly digesting the new information. "Fine. I'll talk to Annie. I don't know what part she's playing in all this but Caleb is pretty pissed about your disappearance. If she's helping you he will not be happy about it."

"I know, Kal. I didn't deliberately drag her into this, it just sort of happened. I was just as shocked to see her as she was to see me. I don't want to cause any issues between them."

She felt Kal sigh and then a mental shrug washed over her. "It's Annie's call," he admitted. "I'm going to go try and track her down now. Lila, you keep in touch with me, okay? No more suppressing your mental voice. That's been the worst part, not knowing if you were alive or dead."

She couldn't stop the gasp that escaped her. Annie had mentioned her father's concerns, but she'd never once suspected that her silence would have Kallum thinking something bad had happened to her. "Kal, I'm so sorry! I never dreamed you'd think something so awful. I just assumed you'd know that I was hiding from Mom and Dad's anger."

A muffled snort sounded in her head. "I did, Lila, at first, but then I never expected you would trust me so little you'd shut me out too. When I didn't hear from you I started to think the worst."

"Kal! It's not that I didn't trust you! I didn't want to put you in the position of having to lie to Mom and Dad. Forgive me, please. I never meant to hurt you like that." Pain rippled through her. It was harsh and crippling. She couldn't bear the thought of ever having Kal doubt her.

His warm laughter danced through their bond and she could picture his gorgeous face easily. His brown eyes would be dancing with laughter, his lips curling in a smile that stopped most of the hearts of the unattached females in the pack.

"When have I ever been able to stay mad at you, Lila? You wrap me around your little finger and you know it. Of course I forgive you. Just keep in touch and let me know if you need me to come get you. I'll deal with Mom and Dad, so don't worry about that. I hope Mac's worth it. I'm assuming his name is Mac, as that's the codeword you've given me for Annie."

Mac's face came to mind, the memory of his deep voice gently soothing her the night before. Lily could almost taste his essence in her mouth, could almost feel the pleasure exploding deep within her as she'd tasted him.

"Lily!" Kallum's shocked interjection startled her and made her realise she'd been projecting some pretty intimate emotions down their bond. "I get the message," he laughed softly. "He's definitely worth it. Now turn down the eroticism! That is just way too icky, sister mine!"

"Sorry, Kal," she blushed, keeping her head turned away from Karn so he couldn't see her reddened face. "I'll talk to you later."

She felt her brother recede from her mind after blowing her a quick kiss. Her lips quirked in a smile and she let out a quiet sigh. She always felt better after talking to Kal. He didn't piss about or point fingers in blame. If something happened that he didn't like, he dealt with it and moved on.

She may be the older of the two but Kal was the one who was the sturdy rock. He'd tempered a lot of her wildness in her younger years but he'd also known how to let out his own wild side when he felt they could get away with it.

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All the Vârcolac had close interpersonal connections with their siblings as well as with each other. They were different from the rest of the pack, a new species coming into life. It had been inevitable that they would group together and become somewhat separate from everyone else. It didn't mean they loved their pack any less or felt superior to them, it just meant they were more closely linked.

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It had given Lily an added layer of comfort as she'd grown up. They were a mini-pack within the greater pack. She'd felt safe within her group of peers and was more than willing to give up any position of being their leader despite being the eldest. Kal had taken that position as if it was his right. He was Alpha and no one challenged him about it.

The structure was simple. Kal was Alpha, Lily was his protector. Some things were hard to shake, and taking care of her baby brother was one of them. She had his back without ever being asked. She'd kicked a young male's ass many a time when they'd teased Kal as he grew up. He'd been shy and uncertain in his younger years. Once his Alpha tendencies had kicked in she hadn't been required to protect him any more, but until that time a few wolves had received the blunt edge of her fury.

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Dara and Cassia were their main soldiers. They had a lot of their father in them. Alexei had been a Council enforcer for the vampires before he'd met their mother. He was used to taking care of business as was Cedar in her role of Beta with the pack. Both their children had grown with that same fierce protectiveness. Their stunning looks and easy charm fooled most people. They were excellent at ferreting out information from their wolf counterparts.

Liam... God love him, Liam was their heart. Everyone adored the quiet, auburn-haired man, it was simply impossible not to love him. He'd grown huge like his father, was the spitting image of Nors, who had to be the biggest vampire Lily had ever seen.

Liam looked scary and intimidating but he had his mother's personality. He was so empathic that the feelings of others had become a burden to him. To solve that problem, he kept himself withdrawn from most of the pack. He lived almost completely within the boundaries of their mini-pack. They were able to shield their emotions so much better than others, that it was easier for Liam to relate to them.

His empathy and fierce love was probably what had kept most of them from rebelling against the constraints placed on them for so long. Being confined to the pack had been hard on all of them except Liam. He didn't want to leave and by default didn't want his support network to crumble either. He'd automatically soothed any discord and discontent they'd felt as they grew older.

They had always known what Liam had been doing, but no one had minded. Liam needed them and when one of their own had a need, the others were always there.

Where Liam went, Elina was never far behind. They were cousins but their bond appeared to be almost a sibling bond. Elina had set herself up as Liam's personal protector, just as Lily had done with Kallum.

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She had Freya's haunting beauty but Dayton's deep blue eyes. Her dark brown hair was streaked with reds and golds like her mother's but she also had an inch-wide streak of silver hair that framed her face.

Elina hadn't been born with the silver in her hair and no one had been able to explain why the moment she hit puberty she'd suddenly taken on Dayton's colouring. She'd suffered no personal loss like her father so there was no reason for the colour to bleach from her hair but it had.