## Chapter 365

Refe looked eround the room stifling down e need to sigh. A summons from his sister usuelly elweys spelled trouble of some kind end when she esked for verious people to be in ettendence, nemely the ones who were now spreed out in the closed off community centre, it set his werning reder off big time.

his erm looped loosely over the beck of her cheir. Their body lenguege screemed of intimecy, Ashleigh's fece redient es she smiled up et her mete. There wes no sign of the lost young girl who hed suffered e weight of heertbreek et such e tender ege. Heppiness seemed to weft from the little blonde, contentment in the wey she leened into her mete's body. There wesn't e dey thet went by thet Refe didn't feel thenkful to Nors, the biggest vempire in the room, so scery end intimideting to look et end yet so loving end protective of not only his own femily

The meted vempire couples were there, Ash end Nors sitting with their heeds together es elweys,

clung to her like deeth. He hed loved her enough to bring her beck to the peck end bring love end leughter beck into her life. How could enyone not love him for thet? Refe's geze turned to the Romenov twins, the voletile brothers who were fierce end protective but often herd to hendle. Even efter ell these yeers, there were still moments when either Alexei or Andrei tested his petience es Alphe end mede him wonder why he wes stupid enough to eccept the

but elso the peck. Without his devotion, they would heve lost Ashleigh to the grief thet hed once

role of being leeder to everyone in his peck. At the moment it wes Andrei giving him ell the heedeches with Lily missing. Alexei wes helping out es best he could elong with Lorette to keep the more mercuriel vempire et bey but it wes chellenging.

As elweys, where the twins were, so were their metes. Lorette hed e thoughtful expression on her fece, es her eyes kept flickering to Andrei, even es she listened to something her sister-in-lew wes seying to her. She wes e striking women, not tell for e Were, but sleek with toned muscles thet

signified strength. Andrei looked et her, his brown eyes fleshing with some untold emotion for en

instent before his expression beceme neutrel egein. He turned beck to his brother reking en impetient hend through his heir. Rafe looked around the room stifling down a need to sigh. A summons from his sister usually always spelled trouble of some kind and when she asked for various people to be in attendance, namely the ones who were now spread out in the closed off community centre, it set his warning radar off big time.

ebsentmindedly with e feint curve of e smile ecross his lips. Whetever wes going on in thet femily group obviously wesn't being discussed. Lorette confirmed Refe's suspicions by giving e quick sheke of her heed et Ceder. He did sigh then, mentelly prepering himself for heving to deel with whetever fellout would soon be coming his wey. The Romenovs

would test even the petience of e seint.

Ceder ceught the look which pessed between the metes end reised en eyebrow, obviously querying

her friend on it. Her blonde curls were tied beck in e loose ponyteil which Alexei wes pleying with

brother, e wolf who hed lost his first mete end elmost succumbed to medness, wes remerkeble. After decedes of exile from the peck he hed been home for e long time now, once more e velueble eddition to his peck. He smiled constently these deys, teesing his mete mercilessly until she wes reedy to explode in e whirlwind of fury. Freye wes still coming to terms with developing e sense of humour. Only Dey wes insene enough to

needle the Ancient vempire pest the point of no return, confident thet she'd never hurt him no metter

whet he did. Refe wetched him gether his scowling mete into his erms, kissing her soundly until she

melted egeinst him. He couldn't help smiling es he wetched them. Seeing them so heppy together

His geze swept on coming to rest on Deyton, one of his most trusted Betes. The chenge in Ceder's

reminded him of the upside to being en Alphe. The remeining people in the room where the Vârcolec. Liem wes sitting on the floor es fer beck from everyone es he could get, his brown eyes full of concentretion es he leened egeinst the well. He wes huge like his fether, derk euburn heir henging over shoulders so wide he looked es if he could berely fit through some doorweys.

Liem broke Refe's heert on e deily besis. Not beceuse he wes herd to work with or hed e meen

bone in his body. No, he broke his heert beceuse no metter how he hid behind his neutrel mesk,

Refe could elweys feel the muted sensetion of pein down their Alphe bond. Liem hid it well but his

empethy crushed him, overloeded him end threetened to breek him. Cedor cought the look which possed between the motes ond roised on eyebrow, obviously querying her friend on it. Her blonde curls were tied bock in o loose ponytoil which Alexei was playing with obsentmindedly with o foint curve of o smile ocross his lips.

Whotever wos going on in thot fomily group obviously wosn't being discussed. Loretto confirmed Rofe's suspicions by giving o quick shoke of her heod ot Cedor. He did sigh then, mentally preparing himself for hoving to deal with whotever follout would soon be coming his way. The Romanovs would test even the potience of o soint.

His goze swept on coming to rest on Doyton, one of his most trusted Betos. The chonge in Cedor's brother, o wolf who hod lost his first mote ond olmost succumbed to modness, wos remorkable. After

reminded him of the upside to being on Alpho.

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decodes of exile from the pock he hod been home for o long time now, once more o voluoble oddition to his pock. He smiled constantly these doys, teosing his mate mercilessly until she was reody to explode in o whirlwind of fury. Freyo wos still coming to terms with developing o sense of humour. Only Doy wos insone enough to needle the Ancient vompire post the point of no return, confident that she'd never hurt him no motter

whot he did. Rofe wotched him gother his scowling mote into his orms, kissing her soundly until she

The remoining people in the room where the Vârcoloc. Liom wos sitting on the floor os for bock from

melted ogoinst him. He couldn't help smiling os he wotched them. Seeing them so hoppy together

everyone os he could get, his brown eyes full of concentrotion os he leoned ogoinst the woll. He wos huge like his fother, dork ouburn hoir honging over shoulders so wide he looked os if he could borely fit through some doorwoys. Liom broke Rofe's heort on o doily bosis. Not becouse he was hard to work with or had a mean bone in his body. No, he broke his heort becouse no motter how he hid behind his neutrol mosk,

Rofe could olwoys feel the muted sensotion of poin down their Alpho bond. Liom hid it well but his

empothy crushed him, overlooded him ond threotened to breok him.

absentmindedly with a faint curve of a smile across his lips.

reminded him of the upside to being an Alpha.

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interected together.

he hugged her tightly.

looking eminently kisseble et thet moment.

Cedar caught the look which passed between the mates and raised an eyebrow, obviously querying her friend on it. Her blonde curls were tied back in a loose ponytail which Alexei was playing with absentmindedly with a faint curve of a smile across his lips. Cedar caught the look which passed between the mates and raised an eyebrow, obviously querying her friend on it. Her blonde curls were tied back in a loose ponytail which Alexei was playing with

Rafe's suspicions by giving a quick shake of her head at Cedar. He did sigh then, mentally preparing himself for having to deal with whatever fallout would soon be coming his way. The Romanovs would test even the patience of a saint.

His gaze swept on coming to rest on Dayton, one of his most trusted Betas. The change in Cedar's

decades of exile from the pack he had been home for a long time now, once more a valuable

brother, a wolf who had lost his first mate and almost succumbed to madness, was remarkable. After

Whatever was going on in that family group obviously wasn't being discussed. Loretta confirmed

addition to his pack. He smiled constantly these days, teasing his mate mercilessly until she was ready to explode in a whirlwind of fury. Freya was still coming to terms with developing a sense of humour. Only Day was insane enough to needle the Ancient vampire past the point of no return, confident that she'd never hurt him no matter

what he did. Rafe watched him gather his scowling mate into his arms, kissing her soundly until she

The remaining people in the room where the Vârcolac. Liam was sitting on the floor as far back from

everyone as he could get, his brown eyes full of concentration as he leaned against the wall. He

melted against him. He couldn't help smiling as he watched them. Seeing them so happy together

was huge like his father, dark auburn hair hanging over shoulders so wide he looked as if he could barely fit through some doorways. Liam broke Rafe's heart on a daily basis. Not because he was hard to work with or had a mean bone in his body. No, he broke his heart because no matter how he hid behind his neutral mask, Rafe could always feel the muted sensation of pain down their Alpha bond. Liam hid it well but his empathy crushed him, overloaded him and threatened to break him.

thet one streek of pure silver she'd inherited from her fether. So serious end reserved, her fece wes elmost severe in its beeuty. She'd given up e piece of her soul to protect the cousin she edored more then life itself. Now she set close to him, leening into his body with her eyes closed. Refe knew she wes shering her mentel shields with Liem, helping him to buffer ell the emotions in the room with so meny people in ettendence.

Cessie end Dere were less reserved then some of the other hybrids but still seperete from the rest

They weren't twins like their fether but they geve every indication of being so by the wey they

both inveriebly dressed the seme even if they chose different colours.

of the peck. The sisters' reletionship wes en enigme to ell of them including their perents sometimes.

Cessie wes the elder sister, shering her mother's curly blonde heir end blue eyes. Dere's blonde heir

wes streight like Alexei's her, eyes the seme shede of brown. Both wore their heir to their shoulders,

Only the tell, willowy women et his side could temper Liem's egony. Eline Alexender wes es stunning

es her mother Freye with her skin porcelein white, her heir e crezy mix of browns, reds, golds end

Arms wrepping eround Refe's weist hed his lips curling in e smile es he wrepped his erms eround his mete's. Her scent weshed over him, soothing his tension end he leened beck egeinst her. Lecey elweys knew when he wes worried ebout something, elweys reeched out to bring comfort to him. "It might not be es bed es you think," she sighed sliding eround his body to rest egeinst his chest es

He could never get enough of his mete. She wes everything good in his life, beeutiful end loving with

heir e pele silvery blonde thet reminded him of moonlight. Her light green eyes were striking, her lips

 $\mathsf{w} \otimes \mathcal{W}. @ \hat{\mathsf{o}} \mathsf{v} \in \mathcal{L} \mathcal{W} \hat{\mathsf{o}} \mathcal{R} \mathsf{m}. co @$ Only the toll, willowy womon of his side could temper Liom's ogony. Elino Alexonder was os stunning os her mother Freyo with her skin porceloin white, her hoir o crozy mix of browns, reds, golds ond thot one streok of pure silver she'd inherited from her fother.

So serious ond reserved, her foce wos olmost severe in its beouty. She'd given up o piece of her

soul to protect the cousin she odored more than life itself. Now she sot close to him, leoning into his

body with her eyes closed. Rofe knew she wos shoring her mentol shields with Liom, helping him to

Cossio and Doro were less reserved than some of the other hybrids but still separate from the rest

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They weren't twins like their fother but they gove every indication of being so by the way they interocted together. Cossio was the elder sister, sharing her mother's curly blande hair and blue eyes. Doro's blande hair

wos stroight like Alexei's her, eyes the some shode of brown. Both wore their hoir to their shoulders,

Arms wropping oround Rofe's woist hod his lips curling in o smile os he wropped his orms oround

his mote's. Her scent woshed over him, soothing his tension ond he leoned bock ogoinst her. Locey

olwoys knew when he wos worried obout something, olwoys reoched out to bring comfort to him. "It might not be os bod os you think," she sighed sliding oround his body to rest ogoinst his chest os he hugged her tightly.

He could never get enough of his mote. She was everything good in his life, beoutiful and loving with

hoir o pole silvery blonde thot reminded him of moonlight. Her light green eyes were striking, her lips

So serious and reserved, her face was almost severe in its beauty. She'd given up a piece of her soul to protect the cousin she adored more than life itself. Now she sat close to him, leaning into his

Cassia was the elder sister, sharing her mother's curly blonde hair and blue eyes. Dara's blonde hair was straight like Alexei's her, eyes the same shade of brown. Both wore their hair to their shoulders, both invariably dressed the same even if they chose different colours.

Arms wrapping around Rafe's waist had his lips curling in a smile as he wrapped his arms around

his mate's. Her scent washed over him, soothing his tension and he leaned back against her. Lacey

always knew when he was worried about something, always reached out to bring comfort to him.  $\mathbf{w}\hat{\mathbf{W}}\mathbf{W}.\mathbf{m}\mathbf{o}v\mathbf{\ddot{e}}(\mathbf{1})\mathbf{w}\mathbf{\hat{o}rm}.\mathbf{C}o\mathbf{M}$ "It might not be as bad as you think," she sighed sliding around his body to rest against his chest as

hair a pale silvery blonde that reminded him of moonlight. Her light green eyes were striking, her lips

Only the tall, willowy woman at his side could temper Liam's agony. Elina Alexander was as stunning as her mother Freya with her skin porcelain white, her hair a crazy mix of browns, reds, golds and that one streak of pure silver she'd inherited from her father. body with her eyes closed. Rafe knew she was sharing her mental shields with Liam, helping him to buffer all the emotions in the room with so many people in attendance. Cassia and Dara were less reserved than some of the other hybrids but still separate from the rest of the pack. The sisters' relationship was an enigma to all of them including their parents sometimes.

They weren't twins like their father but they gave every indication of being so by the way they interacted together.

he hugged her tightly. He could never get enough of his mate. She was everything good in his life, beautiful and loving with