

Chapter 446

The object of his fury shifted uncomfortably to his right. Pale blue eyes searched the room until he found what he was looking for. Elina Alexander was watching him, her face expressionless, her gaze intent. She regarded Karn for a long moment before she shifted her gaze to Caleb. "Liam wouldn't allow it."

Karn had been turning to address the Ancient but his head swung back around and he pinned Elina with surprised look. She was effectively defending him. Her eyes flicked to his briefly once more but they were cold and flat giving nothing away.

The Ancient appeared oblivious to the glances passing between them, his expression hard. "Since when do Liam's wishes overrule the law?"

"Since he claims the woman as his mate." Kallum stepped forward, moving past his Alphas. "If you harm her, you harm Liam. We cannot allow that to happen, Caleb. Mates are sacrosanct."

"You cannot allow that to happen." The Ancient repeated the words slowly, his voice dropping and becoming colder with each word. "Do you think you and your fellow Vârcolac are above the law, Kallum? Do you think you have the knowledge and wisdom to lead our people when you've barely been on the planet a quarter of a century?"

Kallum held his ground, enduring Caleb's wrath. There was so much at stake. His own thoughts and feelings were conflicted about the fate of the would-be assassin but he knew that he had to protect Liam and this was the only way they could, by standing firm with him and hoping the consequences wouldn't tear them all apart. He had to try to find a way to get the vampires to see reason.
www.móðrēlWolm.com

"You know I don't, Caleb. I know you view this as a challenge to your authority but it isn't meant that way and deep down you know that. You're allowing rage to cloud your judgement. You don't want to harm Liam any more than anyone else here. Taking the woman's life will kill him. Would you stand idly by and let someone take Annie's life? Would any mated couple?"

Liam is not mated to that woman!" Caleb roared, his voice so loud some of the Praetorians took a step back. His eyes blazed furiously and he took a step forward.

Rafe moved instantly, placing himself in front of Kallum. "Calm down, Caleb." His stance was protective, his wolf close to the surface in preparation of the vampire going feral. There was a subtle sound of movement around the room as the tension reached critical mass, everyone positioning themselves for potential hostilities.
www.Wolm.com

"You too, Rafe? What about you, Gard? Anyone else in this room who thinks they're above the law?" Caleb's eyes stopped on Rhianna, his fury almost a living thing. He pointed one long talon at her, appearing unaware that he was halfway to crossing over. "You said she would cause no harm! You were wrong, Rhianna." He gestured around the room. "Look at the harm she's causing! I should never have listened to you!"

His condemnation hurt but Rhianna couldn't deny his words because she agreed with the harm Thereasa was causing. However, Caleb was blind to the fact that there were two people causing the current disaster waiting to happen. His own arrogance was fuelling the division and helping to pit pack against vampire, families against each other. It had to end.

Demetri started to try to intervene, concern on his face at his friend's loss of control. He stepped forward, reaching out to place a restraining hand on Caleb's arm but Rhianna halted the entire room with a raised hand.

"Enough, Callain." The words were said so quietly but all eyes turned to the petite redhead. Her lavender eyes were blazing with light, an aura of power wafting from her body. The physical shape belonged to Rhianna, however there was no disputing who was now in control of her body.

www.novelwolves.com

Everyone took a step back with the exception of Gard and Caleb. Rafe stared at his sister, concerned that he couldn't see his Annie in her eyes. It wasn't often Anakatrine revealed herself, but when she did, it always unsettled him even after all this time. Only the knowledge that Annie would return soothed the Alpha as he pulled Lacey close and gave the vampire queen her space.

"Really? You're going to go there?" Caleb's coldness appeared to increase, his eyes hardening as he glared at his mate.

"You give me no option, Callain." The vampire queen crossed the room to stand before him, no hint of softness on her face. "When you stop listening with your heart and only hear your rage, that is time to overrule you, my mate. I take no pleasure in it but I will do what is right."

"My name is Caleb and my mate isn't here at the moment." He was so furious that she'd pulled this stunt. He was hard pressed not to throttle the woman before him and couldn't remember a time when he'd been so livid with her. She was betraying him, siding with the others and effectively telling their people that she didn't value his decisions.

"Semantics and you know it," Anakatrine sighed, a frown marring her brow. "You never used to be this intractable. You were alone for too long this time. This has to end and end now. I will not have vampire pitted against pack, family against family. I have worked too long and too hard to let everything fall apart now. We have, Callain. Did we die for nothing all those centuries ago? Are you willing to sacrifice everything because of your wounded pride?"

He continued to glare at her, his expression resolute. His silence told her that he would not be dissuaded, that he felt his was the correct stance and she was in the wrong. His refusal to be one with Callain; his complete lack of faith in her hurt the vampire queen as much as it hurt Annie. It appeared both Callain and Caleb could be stubborn beyond bearing.

"Annie is going to need you very soon, Caleb. What transpires this day will wound her soul as much as you feel yours is being wounded. I suggest you think about that. There are many people who will be hurt this day, your mate as much, if not more than most."

The dire warning in the vampire queen's voice had Caleb pausing. The part of him that was Callain knew just what she could be capable of for the greater good. She would make the hard choices and live with the consequences. His Annie was much more compassionate, much easier hurt. "What are you going to do, Anakatrine?" The first hint of softness entered his tone as he stared down at her.

"What is necessary to protect everyone, and end this madness now." She turned from him and looked to the open doorway. "Bring the woman here, Liam."

www.Novelwolves.com

Liam heard the vampire queen's words and considered the wisdom of defying her. His need to protect his mate was strong but the power in her order was something that had to be obeyed. Opening the door to the basement, he headed down the steps and to the room that held the woman. The steel door was so thick it would even hold a Vârcolac. Mac never did anything by halves and he'd planned well when he'd had the house built.

Opening the door, Liam held his breath as his gaze fell on the woman who set every nerve ending alive in his body. She was the most exotic creature in the world with her dark skin and jet-black hair to her shoulders. She looked up as the door opened, green eyes meeting his, hatred blazing from their depths. He was tempted to unlock the strict hold he had on his mind but refrained. While he wanted to reach out and savour the striking beauty's mind, he knew the weight of the emotions above would crush him.