

Chapter 448

Reasa shook her head, torn between wanting to stop the impending disaster and not wanting to go inside the mind of the man holding her trapped to his body. She couldn't do it. She couldn't go into the mind of an abomination.

"Do it," Anakatrine ordered. "Do it now before it's too late. He won't let me in and from the expression on everyone else's faces he won't let them in either. You're the only one who can save these lives, Thereasa. You have to show him how to shield and do it now!"

"Have you lost your fucking mind?!" Caleb roared, trying to intervene. He couldn't believe she was being so reckless when it came to Liam, despite the cost to the others around them. She couldn't seriously be allowing the would-be assassin to join with the Vârcolac's mind.

He was suddenly spinning away, pushed by an invisible force. Caleb staggered backwards with a flick of her hand, shock crossing his face as he realised what she was doing. Anakatrine hadn't touched him physically but that didn't stop her power reaching out and forcing him away from the kneeling duo.**W@w.N0velW0rm.c0M**

"Annie, no!" Rafe cried, trying to move forward but finding his way blocked by an unseen barrier. Static electricity filled the air, crackling dangerously around the three in the centre of the room. Lavender eyes glowed with menace, daring anyone to get in her way.

"Take out the weaker minded ones. Help those who have fallen," the vampire queen said quietly, her voice a cold whiplash across the room. "Let no one approach us or you will feel my wrath. Do not test me. Do not presume on the relationship you hold with Rhianna Armand. I will do what is required to end this and no one, and I mean no one, will get in my way." Long talons pointed to Reasa, a spark of electricity jumping from the end to strike the vampire in the temple and cause her to cry out.

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"Do not defy me, vampire. You came into our territory with murder in your heart. You hurt Liam and Elina and now it is time to begin making amends for those actions. Show him how to shield before we lose him. Begin your penance, Thereasa."

The pain in her head was astounding. Reasa cried out in agony, tears coursing down her cheeks as she knelt locked within the embrace of Liam, their foreheads pressed hard together. She had to do it. It was the only way to stop the agony inflicted by the other woman. She didn't know how she knew this but she did.

"Let me in, Liam. Relax just a fraction; don't let down your full guard. I'm like you, I know how to slip into the smallest of cracks in a mental guard. That's all I need." The words came out on a sob, more pain lancing through her temple. "Please, please let me in."

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From a distance, Liam heard the pleas from his mate's lips. The sound of her tears filled his heart with more sorrow, a waft of pure grief flooding the room on the next wave of uncontrolled emotions he projected. He could hear Elina begin to weep, Cassia, Dara, even Lacey weeping in the background. He had to let Thereasa in without causing any more harm.

With a strangled sob, he pressed his forehead harder against hers, releasing the smallest fraction of what remained of his self-control over his mind. Immediately a soft brush of cool air assailed his mind. For a second, he was stunned by the sensation and then he reached for more, joining with his mate in the most intimate way he could imagine.

It was so beautiful, so right, the feel of his mate flowing within his mind, her cool breath soothing the raging mass of emotions within. Her touch was so light and delicate, hesitant at first and then bolder as she breezed through bringing peace wherever she touched.

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"This is how you shield, hybrid," she whispered in his head. "Your analogy of bricks is too literal, too unyielding. Yes, it will work for a while, but eventually the bricks will shatter from the strain as they did today. A shield must be strong but have some yield in it so it can flex and move as needed and not become too brittle. Follow what I do."

Liam was entranced by her words, his heart beating erratically as she danced within his mind. He watched her work, enthralled, as she appeared to pluck a strand of what looked like clouds and began to deftly weave the strands together until they formed fine barriers. He tested the strength on one, amazed that it moved to his touch but didn't break. As he stopped applying mental pressure against the barrier, it slipped back into shape, an impenetrable defence.

"It's so beautiful, Thereasa," he answered, awe in his voice as he tried to catch a strand of cloud to mimic her actions.

"No, don't snatch at it like that. You have to be more delicate." Her admonishment made him smile and he laughed aloud. He heeded her words though and his next attempt had him securing a strand though he struggled with weaving two together.

Let me do it for now," she told him, a hint of softening in her mental voice though it was still clear that she was uncomfortable being in his mind. He let her do as she wanted, watching each movement avidly so he could practice himself later. Why had he never thought of doing something like this? It appeared such a simple thing. It could have saved him years of grief.

It was over before he wanted it to be. Liam tried to keep her with him but the more he tried to hold onto her, the faster she withdrew. For the moment, his mental shields were the strongest they had ever been. He was still unable to do the weave himself, but the effects of Thereasa's help should last far longer than his own attempts at constructing safe barriers.

Reasa sagged from the effort of concentrating for so long within the hybrid's mind. Her own defences were weakened by the task but still holding. Slowly opening her eyes, she looked at the man she had just saved and in doing so most likely have saved most of the remaining people in the room. She had come here with the intent to kill him and ended up saving his life. The irony was not lost on her.