

Chapter 459

"Alexei Romanov! Kothari is part of our pack. He's family already. Don't you dare speak ill of our daughter's mate!" Cedar's disapproval flashed from her eyes even as she nibbled worriedly at her bottom lip.

"The boy is dangerous," Pietro commented from his position at the door. "I have spoken with him and have seen his struggle. Alexei is right to be concerned, especially after what has happened."*wW@.n(ø)Vêlworm.çOm*

"Is it even possible for Kothi to go rogue when he has found his mate?" Lacey asked, confusion and concern warring for dominance on her face.

"He's not," Dara muttered, frowning as everyone ignored her and started to have a debate on whether or not there was some hope that Kothari hadn't gone rogue because of this new development.

"He's not," she said a bit louder, rolling her eyes as no one paid a blind bit of notice to her.

"Kothari is NOT my mate!" she yelled, startling the rest of the room into total silence as they all turned to look at her once more.

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"But you said..." her mother stammered, looking even more confused than she had been before.

"That Kothi believed he was my mate. Just because he believes it doesn't make it the truth. I am one hundred percent certain that he isn't my mate, Mom. I love him, of course I do, but not in that way. My wolf is completely ambivalent towards him. She is not the least bit interested in him."

"Couldn't it be similar to how my wolf was undecided at first with Pietro?" Cassia asked, though it was evident that although she asked the question, she automatically believed her sister.

Dara shook her head. She'd been thinking about it ever since she had read the journal. She had tested her wolf, paid minute attention to its reactions over Kothari's disappearance, and the possibility of him being rogue. The animal was unperturbed by the events and it wouldn't have been if he was their mate. "I'm certain of it, though from the evidence in the journal, I think he truly does believe I'm his mate, and that can only work to our advantage."*www.nøvéllwo@m.com*

"Explain." Rafe's brown eyes were piercing as he spoke that one word, his gaze firmly fixed on Dara's face.

Swallowing hard, she took a deep breath to prepare for the automatic outcry she expected from her next words. "If Kothi has gone rogue, or whatever version of rogue we Vârcolac can go, then it stands to reason that he is as dangerous as both Pietro and Dad have already intimated. Sending someone after him will not be without risk. However, I believe that I would stand the best chance of not only finding him, but also bringing him safely home."*wwW.nøvËllwó(r)m.©(ø)mm*

"Not a chance in hell!" her father roared, fury blazing from his eyes. "Don't you even consider this, Rafe," he continued, pointing a long talon at the other man. "I mean it. Alpha or not, I will not agree to my daughter chasing after a dangerous man, let alone heading off alone to Europe. We all know that's where Kothari has gone. He's searching for his parents and anyone who gets in his way will be in serious jeopardy."

"Stand down, Alexei," Rafe countered, his tone calm and even, though his body language was rigid as he stood up slowly. "I appreciate you're concerned for your daughter, but I have to think of the entire pack here. What Dara says has some merit and even though I am reticent about agreeing to anything right now, I can't discount what she has brought to the table."

"If you do this I will leave this pack and never come back," the Ancient vampire spat out, no sign of his fury abating. "Andrei? You don't have anything to say about this lunacy?" His gaze swung to his twin brother, who was oddly silent given the fact this impacted on his family too.

Andrei's expression was neutral, his gaze moving from his brother to Cedar, and then latterly to Dara, who held his eyes with a strength that brought a half smile to his lips. "You are very brave, niece of mine," he sighed, his smile widening at her surprised expression.

His gaze returning to his brother, Andrei shrugged his shoulders and let out a rueful sigh. "Alexei, I have very recently been educated in just what my children are capable of and just how much they do not need my protection. Am I happy that a niece of mine wants to travel to Europe to try to save one of our most vulnerable pack members? Of course I'm not, but do I think she is strong and capable enough to perform such a task? Yes, I am certain that she is because she is her father's daughter, every bit as much as she is her mother's. Dara is a Romanov to the very core, and if you take the tiniest of steps back and truly look at your daughter, you will see just how strong and resourceful she is, my brother."