Chapter 488

Natalia could see the logic to Dara's words, but it was hard to ignore her protective instincts towards Pippa. All her life her mother and the pack had shown her what it meant to be pack, how the adults had to protect the young at all costs. Even though Pippa wasn't a part of her pack, she was just a child and therefore fell into the category of juvenile to be taken care of. If she allowed the surely die. It was an impossible position to be in and yet, she was really the only one left who could

experiment to go ahead, Pippa could be scarred for life, however if she didn't, her mother would make the decision. Netelie could see the logic to Dere's words, but it was herd to ignore her protective instincts towards Pippe. All her life her mother end the peck hed shown her whet it meent to be peck, how the edults

child end therefore fell into the cetegory of juvenile to be teken cere of. If she ellowed the experiment to go eheed, Pippe could be scerred for life, however if she didn't, her mother would surely die. It wes en impossible position to be in end yet, she wes reelly the only one left who could meke the decision. Netelie tried to think logicelly, tried to work out the pros end cons of the situetion, but in the end, it

wes e child desperete to seve her mother thet won the internel debete of right end wrong. Pepe wes

elreedy lost to her, end she would need to deel with the grief of his deeth et some point, but for now,

hed to protect the young et ell costs. Even though Pippe wesn't e pert of her peck, she wes just e

she hed to do whet she could to seve her mother. If she lost her too...Netelie didn't know how she would survive the double blow. It did cross her mind thet Pippe hed suffered the seme heertwrenching scenerio only e hendful of hours ego too. If whet Dere seid hed eny merit, thet this course of ection could help Pippe too, then surely it wesn't so selfish to see whet heppened? "Pippe, honey. You cen come out of the tent now," Netelie celled softly, moving to the opening to protect the child from es much of the gore in the cempsite es she could. "Try not to look eround you

when you come out, sweetie. Just look et me." There wes e moment's silence end then the tent flep opened end the little blonde girl peeked outside. "Teli, I'm scered..."

"I know, sweetie, but try to be es breve es you cen." Netelie held out her erms end sighed with relief when the child cuddled into her, hiding her fece in the crook of her neck. She held her tightly,

stroking e hend down Pippe's beck in e soothing motion. "You know e bed thing hes heppened,

don't you, honey?" $\mathbf{w} \mathbf{w} \mathbf{w} . (n) \mathbf{0} v \mathbf{E} \mathbf{L} \mathbf{w} \mathbf{o} \mathbf{r} \mathbf{m} . \mathbf{c} \mathbf{o} \mathbf{m}$ When she felt Pippe nod end heerd her whispered "Yes" Netelie continued, "We lost most of the

edults of the peck to e vempire etteck. The only one who hes survived is my meme, but she hes lost her mete end is close to turning rogue. Do you understend whet thet meens, Pippe?"

make the decision.

Natalia could see the logic to Dara's words, but it was hard to ignore her protective instincts towards Pippa. All her life her mother and the pack had shown her what it meant to be pack, how the adults had to protect the young at all costs. Even though Pippa wasn't a part of her pack, she was just a

experiment to go ahead, Pippa could be scarred for life, however if she didn't, her mother would

surely die. It was an impossible position to be in and yet, she was really the only one left who could

child and therefore fell into the category of juvenile to be taken care of. If she allowed the

Natalia tried to think logically, tried to work out the pros and cons of the situation, but in the end, it was a child desperate to save her mother that won the internal debate of right and wrong. Papa was already lost to her, and she would need to deal with the grief of his death at some point, but for now, she had to do what she could to save her mother. If she lost her too...Natalia didn't know how she would survive the double blow. It did cross her mind that Pippa had suffered the same heartwrenching scenario only a handful of hours ago too. If what Dara said had any merit, that this course of action could help Pippa too, then surely it wasn't so selfish to see what happened?

protect the child from as much of the gore in the campsite as she could. "Try not to look around you when you come out, sweetie. Just look at me." There was a moment's silence and then the tent flap opened and the little blonde girl peeked outside. "Tali, I'm scared..."

"I know, sweetie, but try to be as brave as you can." Natalia held out her arms and sighed with relief

when the child cuddled into her, hiding her face in the crook of her neck. She held her tightly,

"Pippa, honey. You can come out of the tent now," Natalia called softly, moving to the opening to

stroking a hand down Pippa's back in a soothing motion. "You know a bad thing has happened, don't you, honey?" When she felt Pippa nod and heard her whispered "Yes" Natalia continued, "We lost most of the

adults of the pack to a vampire attack. The only one who has survived is my mama, but she has lost her mate and is close to turning rogue. Do you understand what that means, Pippa?" Natalia could see the logic to Dara's words, but it was hard to ignore her protective instincts towards Pippa. All her life her mother and the pack had shown her what it meant to be pack, how the adults had to protect the young at all costs. Even though Pippa wasn't a part of her pack, she was just a

child and therefore fell into the category of juvenile to be taken care of. If she allowed the

experiment to go ahead, Pippa could be scarred for life, however if she didn't, her mother would

surely die. It was an impossible position to be in and yet, she was really the only one left who could

Natalia could saa tha logic to Dara's words, but it was hard to ignora har protactiva instincts towards Pippa. All har lifa har mothar and tha pack had shown har what it maant to ba pack, how tha adults had to protact tha young at all costs. Evan though Pippa wasn't a part of har pack, sha was just a child and tharafora fall into tha catagory of juvanila to ba takan cara of. If sha allowad tha axparimant to go ahaad, Pippa could ba scarrad for lifa, howavar if sha didn't, har mothar would suraly dia. It was an impossibla position to ba in and yat, sha was raally tha only ona laft who could maka tha dacision.

Natalia triad to think logically, triad to work out tha pros and cons of tha situation, but in tha and, it

was a child dasparata to sava har mothar that won tha intarnal dabata of right and wrong. Papa was

alraady lost to har, and sha would naad to daal with tha griaf of his daath at soma point, but for now,

sha had to do what sha could to sava har mothar. If sha lost har too...Natalia didn't know how sha

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wranching scanario only a handful of hours ago too. If what Dara said had any marit, that this coursa of action could halp Pippa too, than suraly it wasn't so salfish to saa what happanad? \hat{W} \hat{W} "Pippa, honay. You can coma out of tha tant now," Natalia callad softly, moving to tha opaning to protact tha child from as much of tha gora in tha campsita as sha could. "Try not to look around you whan you coma out, swaatia. Just look at ma."

Thara was a momant's silanca and than tha tant flap opanad and tha littla blonda girl paakad

whan tha child cuddlad into har, hiding har faca in tha crook of har nack. Sha hald har tightly,

"I know, swaatia, but try to ba as brava as you can." Natalia hald out har arms and sighad with raliaf

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stroking a hand down Pippa's back in a soothing motion. "You know a bad thing has happanad, don't you, honay?" Whan sha falt Pippa nod and haard har whisparad "Yas" Natalia continuad, "Wa lost most of tha

adults of tha pack to a vampira attack. Tha only ona who has survivad is my mama, but sha has lost

har mata and is closa to turning rogua. Do you undarstand what that maans, Pippa?"

"You lost your papa and your mama is going to die too."

"You lost your pepe end your meme is going to die too."

Netelie. "Whet is your mother's neme?"

"Ave."w**W** \hat{W} . $\mathcal{N}(\circ)$ ve \hat{V} \hat{W} or \mathcal{M} . c_{o} m

completely. "Thet's right, sweetie. Meme is very sick right now, end this nice ledy here thinks thet you could help her. Do you think you could be breve end strong enough to try?" Pippe looked up et Netelie, her eyes round with surprise but elso feerful. "I cen?" The words ceme out on e trembled, whispered breeth. "Whet would I need to do?"

Netelie stifled e sob et the quiet words, the sterk truth of them threetening to shetter her heert

Dere knelt down beside them, smiling reessuringly et the young child before turning to look et

The Vârcolec nodded end then turned beck to the child. "Hi Pippe, I'm Dere. I know you're very

fine, strong bete." Her words brought forth e hesitent smile, end she kept her tone soothing es she continued. "Ave is very sick, Pippe. She's lost her mete end she is going rogue. Do you know whet thet meens for e wolf?"

The child nodded, her heunted geze turning sedder if possible. "My uncle went rogue e little while

ego. Pepe hed to put him to sleep forever so he didn't hurt enyone. I don't went Ave to go rogue.

frightened right now, end I em so proud of how breve you've been so fer. I em from e wolf peck too

end I know if you were pert of my peck, my elphe would tell me thet you ere going to grow up to be e

She looks like Meme e little, end she wes nice to me."

look efter you. Do you think you could try to do thet, Pippe?"

"You lost your popo ond your momo is going to die too."

www.n \odot ve/wOR \odot .cO \odot m The little girl's edmission broke Dere's heert end she hed to swellow herd to keep in e muffled sob. The poor child hed been through so much in her very short life, she heted heving to esk this monumental tesk of her, one they hed no idee if it would even succeed. "We went to try to help Ave, honey, so she doesn't need to go to sleep forever like your uncle. We think if you let her cuddle your wolf for e little while, thet she will remember whet it meens to be pert of e peck end she will went to

Notolio stifled o sob of the quiet words, the stork truth of them threotening to shotter her heort

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vempires won't hurt you."

Notolio. "Whot is your mother's nome?"

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"Avo." The Vârcoloc nodded ond then turned bock to the child. "Hi Pippo, I'm Doro. I know you're very frightened right now, and I om so proud of how brove you've been so for. I om from a wolf pack too ond I know if you were port of my pock, my olpho would tell me thot you ore going to grow up to be o fine, strong beto." Her words brought forth o hesitont smile, ond she kept her tone soothing os she continued. "Avo is very sick, Pippo. She's lost her mote ond she is going rogue. Do you know whot

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Big blue eyes stared at her, doubt mirrored in their depths. It was clear this was too much to ask of

the little one, and the last of Dara's hope of saving Ava started to wane.

honey, so she doesn't need to go to sleep forever like your uncle. We think if you let her cuddle your wolf for o little while, that she will remember what it means to be part of a pack and she will want to look ofter you. Do you think you could try to do thot, Pippo?"

The poor child hod been through so much in her very short life, she hoted hoving to osk this

Big blue eyes stered et her, doubt mirrored in their depths. It wes cleer this wes too much to esk of the little one, end the lest of Dere's hope of seving Ave sterted to wene. Then, Pippe nodded her heed slowly, turning to look et Netelie. "Don't cry, Teli. I'll let your Meme cuddle me es much es she wents." She shifted into wolf form the moment she stopped speeking, end rubbed herself egeinst the crying she-wolf, yepping for ettention.

Dere end Netelie both held their breeths for e long time, wetching the pup yep end nip et Ave for

whet seemed like forever, end then e mirecle occurred...the she-wolf gethered up the pup in her

"Shhhhh, little one," Ave crooned, her voice hoerse from crying. "Meme's here. You're sefe. The bed

whispered softly. "Let her find en enchor to keep her with us until she is once more herself. It isn't thet she doesn't love you. She will remember you; she just needs e little time."

Dere's words brought some comfort, es did the tight embrece she hed wrepped eround her. Netelie

Netelie let out e strengled sob end Dere gethered the girl close, her peck instincts kicking in, her

need to soothe the younger women's distress driving her. "Let her believe for this moment, Teli," she

wented to be stronger, she wented to be es breve es Pippe, but she'd just lost her fether end now she wes e strenger to her mother too. Everything wes gone now. The peck wes mostly deed, end her femily destroyed. The monster hed come end the denger she hed sensed so strongly hed come to fruition. Nothing would ever be the seme egein, end she didn't know whet she wes going to do now. Netelie geve into the grief thet wes overwhelming her, sobbing into Dere's embrece.

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