

Chapter 498

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Rhianna sat beside him though she didn't mirror her mate by closing her eyes. She experienced less discomfort ceding control to the Vampire Queen. Caleb by his very nature hated to be out of control, so he always found it more difficult to allow Callain dominance.

To Rafe, it was always mildly disconcerting to see the Vampire Queen and her King. When Anakatrine was in residence, it felt as if he had lost his sister completely. He knew that wasn't the case and, that for Gard, he must feel the same with Anakatrine being subjugated most of the time. The two alternate brothers' complicated relationship with the little redhead was enough to confuse most people, let alone themselves.

The slight shifting of Rhianna's posture was enough to tell him Anakatrine was present. The change in Caleb looked markedly more pronounced, but that was likely down to Callain's frustrations at being absent for such long stretches of time. Now the Vampire King turned to his Queen, long fingers gently caressing her cheek. Though their appearance was different visually in this incarnation, somehow it appeared that they could recognise each other's souls.

"This is indeed troubling, my love," Callain said, leaning forward to brush his lips against Anakatrine's. "I did not think to look within. My arrogance clearly knows no bounds."

A soft peal of laughter escaped the Vampire Queen, amusement shining within her lavender gaze. "If arrogance was a deadly sin, then every alpha male or female on the planet would be guilty, dear heart. We should not berate ourselves for what we may have missed. Instead, we should rectify our oversight and close the door on our internal interloper."

"Our?" Callain's eyebrow rose in surprise.

Anakatrine nodded, the amusement dying from her eyes. "Annie is less perturbed by my presence so once alerted to the possibility I began my search. I have found the point of entry within her mind though it would appear that there hasn't been any recent incursions. I believe that to be because she doesn't keep me as securely locked down as Caleb does you. My lurking presence may have been sufficient to ward off any attempts to gain access of late."

"Damn Caleb," Callain growled. "I warned him there would be consequences in keeping me subjugated."

Anakatrine touched his cheek with a gentle hand, soothing some of his frustration. "None of us knew that there would be a danger, Callain. If you want to blame someone then you should blame me for not seeing this possibility. I have foreseen so much of what was to come, but this danger completely eluded me."

His expression changed at her words and he nodded his acceptance. "You always were the very best of us, my Queen. I often wonder what I would have been if not for you tempering my arrogance. I have checked within Caleb's mind and there is evidence that it has been tampered with. The last incursion was around the time Caleb and Annie were at odds with each other. I am reasonably certain that it was just before you stripped Thereasa of her immortality, so I think that knowledge is safe for now. It appears that whoever has been visiting has kept their attempts to as minimal as possible and has only pushed on Caleb's overprotectiveness and his belief that he doesn't deserve the happiness he currently enjoys. That is probably why I didn't notice it."

Rafe growled his concern again, drawing their eyes to him. He hadn't meant to but the safety of his pack was at stake and it was hard not to react to that. "I suppose we should be thankful that it isn't worse," he finally conceded. "Can you fix it before there is another attempt at accessing either of your minds?" If they couldn't, then he had no idea what they were going to do. They needed Caleb and Annie to keep them together.

"Be at ease, brother," Anakatrine smiled reassuringly. "We were only at risk because we were not aware of the threat. Both Callain and I are more than capable of closing down any trap doors within our minds. Now that we are alert to these intrusions, we will be on guard going forward to ensure that should a further attempt be made, we will have sufficient traps in place that will hopefully turn the tables on our enemy."

Callain nodded his agreement. "For now, we will safeguard each other and with your permission, check to ensure you haven't been compromised either. Then we will need to see everyone else in small groups, but they cannot be told why. Anakatrine and I can then scan each person without alerting our enemy that we're aware of his presence. I am of the opinion that whoever it is would have gone for the most prominent power players here as not all information is disseminated lower down among the packs or within the vampire hierarchy. There is no harm in checking pack members and the rest of the Ancients to be sure they haven't been infiltrated."

"What about the Vampire Council. Will you test them too?" Rafe asked. He wasn't comfortable about the secret scanning of some of his pack, and it was well known that vampires couldn't usually enter a Were's mind, but he wasn't one to bet on that stopping the Vampire Queen and King. There was no harm in checking just to be sure, and many of his pack now had some vampire D.N.A. within them.

"No, we cannot alert the Council to our presence and we keep most of what is happening away from them as it is. I believe our enemy classes us the most clear and present danger because we are aligned. Even if they had tried to get to the Council, they would have learned early on that they know nothing about what we do here in the pack and among our allies," Anakatrine answered, her tone confident. www.novellworm.com

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It settled Rafe's concerns and he said no more, sitting back in his chair as the royal couple faced each other.

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"I will do you first as there is less chance of alerting anyone that we have discovered them," Callain said.

"Oh no, dear heart, we will eradicate the threat from your mind first," his Queen answered with a soft smile. "Caleb's mind is the most danger to our endeavours at the moment and therefore it makes sense to shore up that weakness immediately. I can hold off any attempt to sway Annie's mind while I work on yours." She didn't give him any time to object, she slipped past his inner defences and went straight to the area he had found the incursion.