

## Chapter 499

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"Wow, this is such a beautiful light touch," she breathed out quietly, unable to hide her awe at the delicate tendrils she found within Caleb's mind. "No wonder we never noticed this. Whoever performed the entry is very powerful and in a way I have never witnessed before, even when I was alive."

As she spoke, she carefully weaved tendrils of light around the small dark tendrils she found seated beside the core of Caleb's emotions. Her mental machinations were so fast the darkness was completely obscured in less than five seconds. It took another second to provide a burst of mental energy so powerful, the darkness was completely obliterated by the light. Where it had once been there was now a translucent barrier, one that quickly grew to gently enclose all other possible avenues that their enemy could try to breach again.

"There, that will keep out any other unwanted guests," she smiled, stroking Callain's cheek once more and giving him a brief kiss. "My turn now."

Callain had followed her movements within his mind, smiling proudly at her skilled technique as well as the obvious pleasure she felt at having protected her mate. He entered her mind and employed the same technique, mirroring her actions to the letter and not leaving until he had fully satisfied himself that she was completely free from their enemy.

As he sat back, Anakatrine turned to Rafe. "That's done. Our minds are safe. May I check your mind now, brother of my heart? I give you my word that I will cause you no harm."

Rafe didn't need to be reassured, he knew that neither his sister nor the Vampire Queen would ever do anything to hurt him, and yet he wasn't keen to have someone trying to wander inside his mind, though he knew it was necessary. "What do I need to do?"

"Just relax and try not to fight me when you feel my presence. This won't take long." Anakatrine rose to stand beside him, gently touching his shoulder to ease his discomfort.

Travelling inside a Were mind was not that different to a vampiric one, but only the oldest of their kind could do that and both Anakatrine and Callain knew why that was. Rhianna was coming to know why too, though she hadn't vocalised any of her suspicions as yet. Perhaps now was the time for her to do so. There was much this generation needed to know and Rhianna shouldn't be the only one to shoulder the burden of the knowledge. This was not the same era that Anakatrine had lived in; she should remember that and continue to allow Rhianna and Caleb to follow the paths that destiny had set in place for them.

In no time, the Vampire Queen had slipped back out of Rafe's mind and given his shoulder another reassuring squeeze. "Your mind is clear, brother. No one has trespassed within it and to me that indicates that the Weres here are all safe, though I will ask Jared's permission to walk within his mind as well to be sure of that." His sigh of relief was enough to indicate how worried he had been about it.

"Can you start scheduling impromptu meetings for any pack member that has vampiric qualities? Both Caleb and Annie now know how to do this as they have been observing, so there will be no need for either myself or Callain to be present to safeguard anyone else."

"I'll get on that right now," Rafe agreed. "The sooner this is checked the better."wwW.NoVelWOrM.COm

"Good," Rhianna said, the royal couple relinquishing dominance now their task was complete. She moved back over to the sofa to sit beside her mate. "When everyone has been checked, we need to talk, Caleb. It's important."

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"What is it that you want to talk about, Annie?"wwW.NoVelWOrM.COm

Caleb glanced over his shoulder as he poured a mocha for his mate, his expression curious. It had been hard holding back his questions as they had quickly scanned the high ranking members of the Armand-Hanlon pack for any signs of mental intrusion in Rafe's study. Thankfully, everyone they had checked had come back negative for any tampering so it had been a relatively speedy process, and they had been able to return home after only a couple of hours.

He had waited for Rhianna to say something further after her cryptic comment at Rafe's, but she had been especially silent on the journey home, and remained quiet while she sat at their dining table in the kitchen, watching him prepare their coffees. It was clear she wasn't going to voluntarily share the information without a nudge, so he decided to give her that little push needed. Now, he waited for her to speak, walking over to sit down across from her and placing the coffees on the table.

"Annie?"

Rhianna sighed deeply and bought herself another moment by sipping at her coffee. She knew there was no avoiding the conversation they needed to have, but in truth, she was still reeling from the information she'd discovered in the second book Anakatrine had selected for them to read. Caleb had to know about it, and possibly some of the others too. She just wasn't sure how many people needed to know the highly confidential information relating not only to the vampire nation but also the shapeshifters too.

"You didn't read the other book, Masking Lavender," she finally said, lowering her mug and meeting his gaze. "I'd completely forgotten about it too what with everything that had happened with Reasa and the Praetorians, and then the attack on the pack. I couldn't sleep the other night. I was feeling a little unwell. So, I picked up the book and started to read it."

She paused and took another sip of coffee, aware that her mate was starting to show visible signs of concern. She had to pull herself together and just tell him. They would deal with whatever was to come together as they always did. Still, she was annoyed with Anakatrine for not being more direct with the information. The vampire Queen could have prepared them better for what was to come.

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"Caleb, I couldn't believe what I'd read at first, though I'd had an inkling that something was wrong when we were apart after Anakatrine stripped Reasa of her immortality. I should have said something about that earlier, but I thought it was just a weird anomaly and didn't think it would come to anything."

"You were ill and you didn't tell me?"

Her mate's gaze was full of concern as well as disbelief, and it brought a half smile to her lips. It was typical that he would zero in on her health concerns, and be surprised that she could be ill, as vampires didn't suffer illness. "I was...unsettled...is a better word for it, love, though I was aware that even that was something unusual for our kind. I think to explain this; I need to go back to the book and the information contained within it. I need to give you an outline of the hidden history in Masking Lavender for you to understand the rest."

Caleb's eyebrow rose and he settled back with an expectant expression. It was clear that he was more relaxed and she'd managed to reassure him a bit that she wasn't sick. "What hidden history? You mean there is more contained within the book than what we already know of the Royal court and its demise?"

"Let me get the book so I can find the relevant section. I don't want to inadvertently miss anything out."

"In that case, we're as well as going up to the bedroom. If this is going to take a while we may as well be comfortable." Caleb rose and helped her up from her seat, holding her hand as they walked upstairs.

As Caleb rearranged the pillows on the bed so they could rest comfortably against the headboard, Rhianna grabbed the large tome from the bedside table and snuggled up beside him when he was settled in position. "Here's the section that I have to confess astounded me when I read it. I'm going to translate directly so it may come out sounding a little stilted."