

Chapter 506

Long talons lashed out, ending a millimetre from her face, halted by a smaller hand. The hand wasn't gripping the wrist tightly though. It was clear Dara had reacted instinctually to protect her, but despite the feral state Agony was in, he had reined in his movement, as if conscious somewhere that he could hurt her badly if he didn't.

"Mother," hissed out of his snarling lips. "Mother!"

It was the last thing Natalia had expected him to say, and it appeared it was to Dara too, though she recovered more quickly from her surprise.

"Agony, I know something has happened that is distressing you, but you need to stand down, before you end up derailing this fucking train." Dara snapped the words out, giving a gentle push against the wrist that rested in her hand. There was an audible sigh of relief as he didn't fight the movement, his shaded eyes turning to stare at her before he swung back towards Natalia.

"He can't help her," he spat out, fury lacing his tone. "You call for a boy who cowers in grief, when I am the only one who can save her." *ŴŵŴ.noV(e)lworM.có(m)*

Natalia fought not to shrink back against his rage, knowing from pack life that it would be viewed as a sign of weakness and none of them could afford to be perceived as weak when Agony was so close to losing control. He appeared to be ignoring Dara for the most part, concentrating on Natalia, so she tried to keep his attention while the others made sure everyone else was safe.

"Well at least he wouldn't out the entire paranormal world and potentially kill us all including every human on this train because he was having a temper tantrum." *ŴŴŵ.NoVεlw©(r)m.cómm*

She was ready to pass out from the nausea and fear that was threatening to overwhelm her, but she pushed on, knowing that there was only a small window open to get through to him. "You brought me here to warn you of impending danger, Agony. If you don't sit down and behave I am going to throw up all over your pretty black clothes, you're making me so ill."

For a moment, she thought she'd pushed him too far, and then he slowly sat down, some of the menace easing from his body language. It was only as he sat that the nausea began to die down, and Natalia relaxed a little, her gaze going to Dara's concerned face. "It's okay."

Dara didn't appear too sure, and say down beside Agony, her arm brushing against his in a gesture that was so clearly pack related. She was seeking to soothe him as she would a pack member, though Natalia doubted that Agony would succumb to pack when he was this wound up.

"What happened, Agony? Is Rayne okay? Were you able to contact your parents?" Dara asked, quietly, as the rest of their team slowly returned, each sitting down nearby but no one interjecting into the conversation.

He watched the others sit, his expression blank, and then he sucked in a deep breath, held it for a few seconds, and slowly exhaled. "She was there for a moment, but was very weak in mental contact. She called to Kothari...told him to run. Then she told me to run, as if I would even consider it."

A ghost of a smile flashed across Dara's lips at his derisive tone, as if she couldn't help being amused despite the tense situation, and then her expression turned thoughtful. "Don't you see that this is good news, Agony? We're clearly headed in the right direction, and there has been contact with Rayne even if it has been brief. Yes, there is strong danger ahead if she told you to run, but we've known that all along, and we can be prepared for it. This isn't a bad thing that has happened, but a good thing. We are getting closer with each passing moment."

Dara's words appeared to have the effect that she'd been working for, as Agony relaxed further, his brow furrowing in a thoughtful frown. "We need to plan for when we arrive at Braşov. I am sure I will be able to pick up my parents scent there when we arrive. It is getting harder to maintain control, Dara. The closer I get to them, the harder it will be to maintain any sliver of civility. I will destroy all who have laid hands on my parents. I suggest you work out what you need to do to keep collateral damage to a minimum."

Natalia had no doubt in her mind that what he meant as collateral damage was the people travelling with him. That should have terrified her, but for some strange reason she felt calm. Perhaps Agony was not as far gone as he believed he was. On the other hand, perhaps it just meant that no matter what happened in the future, there was no direct threat to her own life. That didn't mean that the others would come out of everything unscathed, and that was a worrying thought.

"There will be no collateral damage," Dara said firmly, a sternness crossing her pretty features that Natalia had never seen before. "We are all here for the same reason and you will not go AWOL again, Agony. You might not like being pack but you damned well are pack. We work together as a team and that's what makes us stronger. Yes, we will plan, but we will plan to make sure that we bring home Gard and Rayne together...all of us. So, you better get that into your thick skull or I will call Rafe right now and tell him to send over Demetri and Kal to deal with your sorry ass. Am I making myself clear?"

Natalia didn't know what to expect, but she certainly hadn't expected laughter. Agony actually threw his head back and barked out a loud laugh, startling everyone who had been imagining a more volatile response.

"You think I am afraid of Demetri? Yes, he is impressive, but I could kick his ass with one hand tied behind my back."

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"Maybe you think you could, Agony, but I am sure Kothari remembers the story of what Demetri and the Romanovs did to a coven that pissed Demetri off," Dara retorted. "I'd like to see you try to take on Kal, though. Now that would be an interesting match to watch."

In reply, Agony closed his eyes and rested his head against the seat, his body language making it clear that the conversation was over.

"I take it we have an agreement?" Dara pressed.

"Fine...draw up your little plan. I will point out the flaws when you've finished."

It was the best she was going to get, so she stood up and moved back to the other side of the carriage. Pulling out her phone, she dialled Rafe, and quickly filled him in with the latest developments and their estimated time of arrival at Braşov.

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Natalia's curiosity was piqued, and she tuned out the others, keeping her gaze on Agony. "Who is Kal?"

For a moment she thought he wouldn't answer her, but then he sat forward, leaning his arms on the table between them.

"There are 7 of us...those you call Vârcolac or hybrids. Lily and Kallum Romanov, Cassia and Dara Romanov, Liam Eriksson, Elina Alexander, and me... Agony."

His sudden chattiness was surprising however, she couldn't resist interjecting. "Don't you mean Kothari?"