

Chapter 516

Agony didn't like the quiet desperation he could see and scent around Natalia. He had felt each moment of her distress and pain as she'd related her story, and her pain had set off a spark of rage deep within. He was furious with the girl Carly for binding Natalia to a promise that had ultimately culminated in her blaming herself for something that wasn't her fault. He was furious with himself for not realising she was close, for allowing her to see him at his lowest point as he fought his inner demons. @W(w).noVεlwσ(†)(m).cQm

The human girl beside him was compassionate, sensitive to the darker aspects of the world. His instincts screamed at him to protect her, to try to shelter her, even though he knew she was stronger than she appeared. Natalia had stood up to him on the train when everyone else had been afraid. Just the thought of her flashing eyes and stern words were enough to tempt a smile to his face. Yet, the instinct to protect her was becoming stronger the more time they were together, and it irritated him even as it drove him.

She shouldn't have had to see him excising his demons. She shouldn't have had to relive the experience of her time in school. By allowing her to witness his cutting, he had caused her to remember a childhood memory that was best forgotten. She deserved to have what answers he could give her.

Taking a deep breath Agony worked on lowering his inner barriers. For the first time ever, he tried to let someone in. "I have always been conflicted," he finally said, his words coming out on a quiet rush of air. "I have always kept myself apart from everyone, not because I didn't care, but because I was afraid of what I may do. I came into this world on a rush of pain and death, and I have lived each day that very same way."

He dropped his gaze to the ground, taking a deep breath. "It wasn't Kothari who was born that day, Natalia. Agony drew the first breath of air. I was born feral, and starving for blood. I was so insane with the need to live and feed that I had no conscious thought about anyone around me." www.noVεQwOQm.CoMl

He stopped, fighting a deep shudder as he struggled with being vulnerable. It had come to matter what she thought of him. It mattered how she would view him when she learned the truth. Would she understand or would she just see the monster. Taking another deep breath, he pushed on, words spilling out of his mouth before he did what he usually did and closed himself off from all around him. wŴW.no(v)Eℓwô(†)m.co*m*

"I literally clawed my way out of my mother, Tali." A shudder did escape him. "I have an eidetic memory and I relive that day repeatedly. I can hear her screams and my father's anguished shouting. I can smell the blood, feel my claws, and fangs ripping flesh. I wanted more...more blood, more pain. I never wanted it to stop. Then, there was a voice inside my head, a soothing whisper full of an emotion I couldn't identify until I was older."

Agony dropped his head into his hands, the scents, the sounds, all overwhelming him until he thought he would scream out loud. "It was my mother's love. She was forgiving me even as I was trying to kill her. It was a deep, aching, beautiful well of love that told me everything was okay, and it didn't matter how much pain I caused her. That she would give up her life for me in a heartbeat."

He looked up again, sightless eyes staring at the horizon. "Then there were others there. I learned later that it was Annie and Caleb, though they had ceded control to the Vampire Queen and her King. Together all four of the most ancient beings on the planet fought with my feral side, slowly subduing me until Kothari came to life and peace settled over the day. I was buried so deep within our mind that there was no hope of me ever coming out again unless Kothari ceded control. My parents took me away for some weeks to be sure that their magic had worked to contain me. When they deemed it to be a success they returned to the pack and Kothari began his life as one of the Vârcolac. Whenever I came too close to the surface, Kothari would meditate using Thai Chi. If that didn't work he would use his mind to cut and release the building pressure. Today I was trying his system. The closer I come to finding my parents the more feral I feel."

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There, it was now out in the open, he had finally spoken the damning words that had haunted him for all of his life. If she had sense, she would start running and never look back. Part of him wished that she would. The other part of him longed for her acceptance. He knew that part was Kothari lurking within. Who would get their way this time? He turned his gaze on her to see her expression.

He'd expected loathing or compassion but what he saw was unease and confusion. He wondered what she was thinking and if she was ever going to speak. Finally, she took a deep breath, perfect lips opening to exhale quietly.

"Why do you always differentiate between Kothari and Agony?" she finally asked, her head tilting to the side. "You act as if you're separate beings but you're both the same. One child was born that day, Agony, not two. I can't even begin to understand how traumatic it was for everyone involved, but the fact of the matter is that only one child came out of your mother's womb."

Disappointment welled up sharply, an emotion he hadn't much experience of. He was glad he hadn't because he hated the way it seeped into every inch of his being like an insidious cancer. Why he'd thought she'd understand was beyond him. Growling he jumped up, the disappointment welling higher. As if she could sense his emotions, she jumped up too, a hand reaching out to him

"No, stop Agony, and think this through logically." Natalia yelled as he went to take off.

His flight instincts were high, but there was something about the urgency in her voice that halted him, though he kept his back to her.

"Don't you see what you've done?" she asked, compassion ringing in her voice.

Usually it was only his mother who spoke to him in that tone. That was enough to keep him standing there to hear her out.

"You've been so wrapped up in blaming yourself for what happened that day that you've created a good guy and a bad guy as a way to deal with it. You've made Kothari the good son and Agony the bad one. That's how you've coped with the trauma of what happened to your mother and the guilt that you feel."

If he tried to detach himself from the situation, he could admit that there was a certain logic to what she was saying. He didn't want to listen to it though, even as he forced himself to remain rooted to the spot. Agony could feel her approaching, the compassion, and understanding in her voice holding him as if in a spell. He was afraid to breathe, afraid of being so vulnerable, and then a small hand gently touched the base of his back. Every nerve in his body ignited, and he froze under her touch, waiting to see what would happen next.

"Your birth wasn't your fault, Agony," Natalia whispered, the heat of her hand moving rhythmically against him. "You were just a baby with no real knowledge of what was happening. Probably your parents didn't even realise that you were starving as you grew. I am presuming none of the other Vârcolac had that issue?"

"They didn't," he confirmed, the heat of her hand sending comfort through his body. "I learned later that Liam once heard my mental cries when I was inside my mother. He was always overly empathic, even as a young child. He told them that I loved my mother and didn't want to hurt her. No one understood what it meant or how important it would turn out to be."