

Chapter 563

Freya sat at her kitchen table trying to ignore the noise that was grating on her nerves. It had been going on for the last hour and her irritation levels were spiking in response. Why had she agreed to this? When it had been presented to her, the idea had appeared logical but now she was reconsidering her decision. Seriously, how could anyone weep that long without reprieve? Why couldn't the woman in the guest bedroom just be quiet?

After leaving the Alphas, Dayton had hypothesised that there was a strong possibility that Reasa would be able to relate more to Freya than anyone else in the pack. After all, she had once been a strong female vampire. His logic was sound, so they'd agreed it would be wise for him to take Elina over to the Hanlon Pack to visit with his family while Freya settled Reasa into their home.

Freya had gone over to her brother's home to collect the woman, spending some time reassuring her nephew that she would care for her as if she were family. Technically, she was not; however, from the adoration in Liam's eyes it was clear that one day they would all have to accept the former vampire into their family unit. For that reason alone, Freya had concluded Rafe had made the correct decision in asking her and Dayton to look after the human.

Now she was regretting it, wishing she had put up more of an argument as she rose from her chair and glared at the closed door that separated the back of the house from the main living areas. Unlike all the other family dwellings in the compound, Freya had chosen a home on a single level. She preferred to mirror the hidden retreat high in the mountains that she had once shared with her brother Nors. The secluded hideaway was now her sanctuary, the place Dayton whisked her off too when pack life became too overwhelming. The house wasn't quite the same design as the retreat, but there were enough similarities to make her feel comfortable.

Crossing the great room that covered the entire front part of the house, she made her way to the closed door, grimacing as the noise became louder the moment she opened it. This had to stop soon or, regardless of her best intentions, she may be forced to break the oath she'd made to her nephew. She couldn't put up with the appalling wailing for another minute, much less the duration of Reasa's stay.

"Enough." The word growled from her lips before she'd fully swung the bedroom door wide. The figure on the bed stiffened instantly in surprise and Freya was glad she didn't turn her head to look at her. She was just as surprised at the amount of venom in her quiet word and wondered at what her expression may have revealed.

Hadn't she gotten past the darkness within? Surely after all this time with Dayton, she had changed enough that her vampiric nature wasn't as dominant as it had once been? Yet, the woman who'd just spoken was the one she remembered well, the pre-Dayton Freya who wouldn't think twice about meting out punishments to anyone who got in her way. Taking a deep breath, she entered the room and moved over to the bed, her movements careful.

Stopping beside the bed, Freya stared down at the woman curled on her side. Reasa's ebony hair partially hid her expression so she couldn't discern much from that; however the stillness of the other woman's body was a clear indication she was alert to the danger surrounding her. At least she was exhibiting some signs of intelligence.

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"How did you ever survive the European covens?" Again, Freya's tone was cold and threatening, and she had to fight with the rising disgust filling her soul. The emotion was largely directed at Reasa but some of it was self-reflective. She didn't want to disappoint her mate by regressing into old habits, but she found it difficult to quell her vampiric instincts. "Answer my question. How did you survive the European Covens?"

"I was stronger than most," Reasa finally responded, her voice low but the vampire had no issues hearing her. "I had my abilities to influence minds weaker than mine and the coven I eventually ended up in was one that suited my needs perfectly. Louis saw my strengths and raised me into a position of power."

Freya nodded her understanding even though the other woman wasn't looking directly at her. "Sounds logical. What is illogical is why you're lying there irritating the hell out of me with your incessant weeping. Would you have shown this level of weakness in your coven?"

Reasa moved, rolling over and sitting up in one fluid motion. There was an inherent grace to her movements and Freya could see that, had she retained her former speed, she would have been an impressive vampire. Not as impressive as she was, but clearly strong enough to hold her own against most lesser males.

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"I am not in a coven and I am no longer a vampire," the other woman hissed out, eyes flashing with fury. "How would you feel if someone came along and took away everything that made you who you are?"

Freya paused for a long moment, considering the question very carefully before speaking. She couldn't imagine what it would be like to lose her vampiric abilities, but she was truthful enough about who she was as a person, and knew that her nature would not allow her to just accept what had happened.

"I would be plotting how to punish them; how to take from them what they had taken from me." It was in her nature to be honest and therefore she didn't consider answering untruthfully. She would find a way to punish whoever had hurt her, even if it meant using someone else to do it. Her answer appeared to surprise Reasa, who sat up a little straighter and regarded her with a bit less suspicion.

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Reasa hadn't paid much interest to where she was being moved to earlier. The only thought in her mind at the time was she would be away from Liam and his mother. Now, she scrutinised the vampire before her, surprised to find that she could still estimate her age at a rough guess.

The woman was an Ancient, the first female Ancient she had ever come across before. Given that the lifespan of a European vampire was a lot shorter than a Northern American one, Reasa wasn't very surprised. The simple fact that the Covens erupted into violence on a regular basis denied them the longevity to reach the two thousand year mark.

She mulled over the female's name Freya. She felt her pulse quicken as it sparked memories of her youth. As a Youngling she'd heard that name before, mentioned in stories of a wild vampire who had visited Europe. They were tales of terror and pain, of a female vampire with such fearlessness she'd taken on stronger males and overcome them. The stories had ceased after a while and Reasa had assumed the vampire had finally met her match. Maybe she had been in error... "Have you ever been to Europe?"

There was a slight tilt of Freya's lips, her multi-coloured hair shimmering in the waning sunlight coming through the window. She inclined her head in admission, moving to the vanity table beneath the glass. Her movements were unhurried as she picked up the vanity chair, placing it beside the bed so she could sit down. Intent green eyes met Reasa's as the vampire's lips twitched once more.

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