

Chapter 564

"I have been everywhere and nowhere, Thereasa. I have walked in the darkness and I have lived in the light. Sometimes I was visible for all to see and others I was but a ghost. Yes, for a time I travelled Europe, one of the many dark periods in my life. The violence of the area appealed to me. I was quite at home there."

Reasa was spellbound by her expression, catching her breath at the wistfulness in the vampire's tone. There was such longing there, as if Freya wished for a life she'd left behind. This female was the story of legends, told to younger females in the covens so they might know that they too could grow to greatness. Watching Freya and seeing the raw power in her gaze made Reasa's back stiffen further, more of her inner strength fighting to make its way forward.

Earlier she had thought that she would never trust a vampire again, but this woman called to a part of her soul she thought had been lost. "The Freya I heard tales of was one to be feared above all others. Why did you leave Europe? You could have ruled covens."

Soft laughter chimed on the air, a hint of derision within. "Why would I have wanted to do that? You Europeans have never had any concept of who you are or what you were capable of achieving. The covens were killing grounds and only fit for sport. Lead a bunch of animal fodder? I hardly think so."

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It was hard not to jump to her coven's defence, even if she was no longer a vampire. Reasa's eyes flashed with fury at the mockery in Freya's tone. "Animal fodder? Really? It must stick in your gut that we animals have the means to wipe out your exulted asses then."WwW.n@vELworm.com

The laughter grew louder as Freya shook her head, the trace of pity in her eyes only serving to infuriate Reasa further. "If I a ran a talon over your throat, girl, your foolish mouth would cease uttering words and I would finally have some much needed peace and quiet. If not for Liam, I would do so, and to hell with Annie's annoyance at me."

The stark truth of the vampire's words, in addition to the cold menace in her gaze, was enough to have Reasa hold her tongue and consider her options. She was mortal now and could die at anyone's whim. She supposed she could push Freya to the point of no return. That would end her suffering and hurt Liam, thereby hurting the witch who'd taken everything from her. It seemed such a good idea, and yet, part of her wanted to live, and it was beginning to grow stronger.

She met the vampire's gaze once more. "You claim kinship to Liam?" Freya's mentioning of the Vârcolac had incited her curiosity.

Freya rose from the chair, moving back towards the door as if she didn't trust herself. "He is my nephew, the child of my brother Nors. He is...special to me; therefore anyone who would harm him does so under the threat of death."W@w.(n)ovelWóRm.CôM

The answer stunned Reasa so much her mouth dropped open in surprise, and she had to clamp it shut quickly as the vampire turned around to regard her with another piercing look. "That makes no sense to me. Why have you allowed me in your home when I came here to kill him and others of his kind?" She watched the other woman's expression harden and cold darkness seep into her eyes in response to her question.

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"Yes, the logic escapes me also, especially as you were also intent on killing my daughter. I believe your talons were tipped in poison when you gouged into her wolf form while she was trying to protect her cousin."

Ice flowed through Reasa's veins as she stared in mute shock, remembering the female Vârcolac she had fought against. She could see the resemblance was there, looking at the vampire before her. Freya was the mother to a Vârcolac? How could this have come about? The woman had been a legend for centuries, cold and ruthless, with a body count so high most European vampires had stopped keeping track. How could she mate with a Were? How could she allow herself to be tainted that way? Why hadn't she killed Reasa on the spot when she'd harmed her offspring?

"Why am I still alive, Freya?"

"You breathe because my Alpha asks it of me. My mate and my daughter expect it of me. My nephew's heart demands it of me." Freya's dark gaze bore right through her for a long moment before she stood up and turned away. "You also live because Annie saw something worthy of redemption in you. She believes in you, so much so that she risked her heart, her mate, and her happiness when she made the choice to spare your life."

Heading towards the doorway, the vampire looked over her shoulder, her expression thoughtful. "Why she bothered is beyond me. You are clearly ungrateful for that sacrifice, choosing only to concentrate on what was stolen and blindly ignoring the gift that was given in return. Now, enough of this nonsense. Get up and come eat. You're lucky you're meeting the new Freya, girl. In any other situation, your death would have been long, slow, and as painful as I could have managed it. I suggest you make the most of this reprieve and celebrate the fact that you are alive."