

Chapter 568

Liam's hair was a tangled, dripping mess, looking almost black as opposed to the rich deep auburn it normally was. His jeans and T-shirt were drenched and weighed him down as he waded out of the lake. She knew she probably didn't look much better and tried to wring some of the excess water out of her hair as she laughed at him. "You look like a drowned rat."

"So do you," he chuckled, pouncing on her and taking her down to the grass where they rolled a couple of times before coming to lie on their backs in the waning sunlight, laughing. "That's the most beautiful sound I've heard in a very long time, Elle."

She turned her head to look at him, puzzlement in her eyes. "What is?"

"Your laughter." Liam turned on his side, leaning up on an elbow to smile down at her. "There's no harm in letting go and having a little fun every now and then, Elle. You deserve it and it's your right. You don't have to look after me anymore."

A frown marred her face and her gaze slid from his to look up at the darkening sky. "I do enjoy life, Liam. I may not be as spontaneous or demonstrative as most people, but I am not unhappy with my life. We are all different, cousin."

"But I know there is so much more within you, Elle. It was there once, a long time ago. It hasn't disappeared, it's merely been suppressed."

Rising, Elina reached deep within herself and called on her abilities to quickly dry her clothes and hair. In less than five seconds, there was no indication she'd just been playing in the lake, her expression once more calm and collected. She turned to face her cousin, warmth flickering across her features. "You have the gentlest of hearts, Liam, and you have much to endure while you try to claim your mate. Apply your gifts where they are needed, cousin. I am fine as I am."

She turned and headed back to the compound, leaving Liam feeling frustrated. For just a second there he'd had her laughing, hoping to have started her off on her own journey of discovery. An image of Kam came to his mind as he rose and dried off too. Maybe it wasn't his job to awaken Elina's emotions; maybe that role belonged to another? He'd love to be a fly on the wall as THAT situation unfolded. Smiling again, Liam turned and followed his cousin. *W(w).novelworm.com*

Dayton smiled as his eyes lovingly traced his mate's features. He could detect a slight hint of strain in the set of her lips, but overall she appeared to be handling Reasa's presence in their home quite well. As always, she was the most beautiful woman in the world to him, and his pulse sped up as he strode across the room to pluck her from her chair and kiss her hard. *WwW.f0r@W0rM.C0m*

He ignored Reasa's presence, instead luxuriating in the exotic taste of his woman, delighting in how she instantly moulded her body against his and didn't hesitate to kiss him back with as much fervour. "Hmmm, I missed you this afternoon. Ma wants to know when her daughter-in-law is going to grace them with her presence. She said to remind you it's been three months since your last visit." There was no rebuke in his tone, just a light teasing. Despite her protestations, he knew Freya enjoyed her visits to the Alexander household.

Sighing, she pulled her head back and gave him a pointed look. "I have Ancient duties to perform as well as pack duties. I am expected to perform familial duties too? I visit as often as I can." Her lips quirked in a small smile. "Anyway, your parents prefer to see Elina, rather than me. Where is our daughter? Did you leave her there?"

Dayton dropped another quick kiss on her mouth and reluctantly released her before his body reacted as it predictably did. One kiss from his woman was all it took to have him wanting to ravish every delicious inch of her body. "We found Liam lurking outside so Elina's gone for a walk with him." His gaze slid to the other woman in the room and he watched her stiffen at her mate's name. It made him sad to see her instinctive reaction. Liam was certainly going to have a hard time wooing the attractive creature sitting at his table.

"He was told to stay away," Freya growled, a frown marring her brow. "What is it with you males that you're incapable of listening to the simplest of wisdom? He was really spying on us? I am going to have some serious words with that young man."

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Her irritation immediately had Dayton reaching for her again and brushing her lips gently with his. "Yes, it's amazing how the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, honey. I know someone else who was incapable of resisting the urge to spy on her mate when she met him."

His teasing struck home and she had the good grace to look slightly sheepish, but being Freya she wasn't about to back down easily. "I did not know you were my mate," she countered in a prim tone. "You were merely someone who was irritating me and required to be put in your place."

"I had to seek protection in the pack, woman. You were a nightmare," he continued to tease, laughing as her expression turned outraged. "You know it's the truth, Freya Eriksson, so don't try to deny it."

Her mutinous expression softened and she laughed with him. "Very well, I may have been a nightmare, but I turned into the best daydream you've ever had."

Her answer had him laughing, as did the smugness of her tone. "That you did, my love, and we can't forget that you're also my biggest fant..."

"Dayton! We have a guest."

He chuckled louder at her outrage and gave a gentle squeeze so she knew he was just teasing her. He liked seeing his mate off balance and it would do Reasa no harm to see the open, affectionate love there was in a mixed mating. Maybe it would help her to come around to a healthier way of thinking. "Okay, I'll behave. Just cut Liam a little slack, Freya. He's doing the best he can under the circumstances."

Turning from his mate, he smiled at the former vampire. It wasn't hard to see what enthralled his nephew so much. She had her own brand of exotic beauty; her skin having a glorious dark sheen to it, which made him think of warm caramel. Her green eyes were a surprise, given her colouring, but they suited the woman frowning back at him. "Welcome to our home, Reasa."

She inclined her head, rising from the table and walking a wide circle around them. "I will return to my room now, Freya. I will try not to intrude on your personal space." *W4W.n0vèl@0rM.c0m*