

Chapter 603

Michael swallowed hard in fear and also to test that his throat had healed enough to work. His voice shook as he began to talk. "Thereasa telephoned yesterday. She said she was being held captive in one of the wolf packs that are aligned with the vampires over there. She demanded to be rescued, said she had something to tell you that was a threat to all the covens. The call was interrupted. I heard her scream before the line went dead."

Dante remained quiet, as he mentally added the extra information to what he'd already gleaned. The covens had suddenly decided to work together to determine the threat level from across the pond? Never, in all of European history, had the covens ever worked together for anything. Louis meant it when he said there was no we in Vampire. The fact that the coven leader had unwittingly offered the information—without appearing to understand the implications of it—definitely set off warning bells.

Thereasa had always been passionate, from what he remembered of her. One of the reasons he had liked her so much had been her unwavering loyalty to not only her coven, but also her leader. Now she was recklessly endangering her family? That was what the coven signified to her: the family that she had lost all those centuries ago, something she would have gladly sacrificed herself for. Had she discovered something so frightening that it was enough to cause her to abandon everything she held dear?

The more he heard, the more unanswered questions there were, and the more his unease grew. Something was very wrong and it appeared he was the only one who could see it. Perhaps he should go and visit the Ancients? Maybe they would have the answers he was seeking and he was wasting his time in Europe? It was definitely something he would consider; but for the moment, the threat level still felt too close to home.

"Are you intending to rescue the girl?"

Louis growled loudly and stood up, his chair crashing to the floor. "Betrayal does not warrant a rescue, but she can't be left there. She knows too much about my coven, she knows all our safe houses and where I would most likely settle if they were compromised."

Hazel eyes turned to Michael and bored into him mercilessly. "You deserve no reward for having failed me, vampire; however, I believe your hatred for Thereasa is second only to mine. Assemble a team. When you have, Dante will approve your selection and you will find Thereasa and kill her. Do not return until you have her head to show me."

Michael stood up straighter, his eyes glowing with an emotion that was hard to define. His lips curled into the semblance of a smile as he nodded his head in agreement. "As you command." Without another word, he turned and hurried from the office.

"Is that wise, Louis? You've just said he failed you before and this mess is largely his doing. Can you trust him to do as you want?" Dante was curious to why his friend had chosen the younger male. He had been expecting to be sent himself.

"All the more reason to send him," the Frenchman answered, the first hint of a smile crossing his face. "He knows death awaits him if he fails me again, and I am fairly certain Reasa will die at his hands if he's able to reach her. And if he does fail...well the Ancients will take care of him and I won't have to deal with him any further."

"Won't that leave Thereasa alive if he fails? Won't your coven still be at risk?"

Louis turned to walk out of the office, and Dante followed him into the main gym area, which was beginning to fill up with coven members arriving to train.

"If she intended to betray the coven, we would all be dead already, Dante. Whatever her reasons were for doing what she did, there is one thing I am willing to bet my life on and that's Reasa would never betray this coven."

"Then why kill her? You told Michael she had to die to keep the coven safe."

The expression on the Frenchman's face was chilling as he turned to look back at the one male he would have called friend, if he could ever trust anyone that much. "Because she betrayed me, and the penalty for that will always be death."

Rhianna smiled at Freya as the vampire held the door open to admit them. Rafe had opted to trust the conference with Reasa and Liam to his sister and her mate. He'd made it clear that there wasn't much he could contribute, and it would give him the time to arrange a security escort for their trip to the Praetorian Compound. When they'd left his study, he was already in the process of summoning Lily back to speak to her.

Freya wore a slightly disgruntled expression as she let them in, and it was plain to see the extra visitors to her home were starting to wear a little on the normally reclusive vampire. "I have already apologised to Rafe for my actions," she said coolly.

"You shouldn't be so hard on yourself," Rhianna sighed, as she placed a comforting hand on the other woman's arm to lend support to her words. "It was an accident, Freya, and that is not the reason we are here."

"It isn't?" Freya couldn't hide the surprise in her voice. She had been expecting a lecture when she'd seen Caleb and Rhianna on her doorstep.

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"If we were called on to lecture you every time you broke the law we may as well move in with you," Caleb remarked dryly, earning him a glare from his mate. "What? Do I lie?"

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"Ignore him, Freya. He's in a surly mood because he woke up alone again. His displeasure is with me, not you."wWŴ.noveLweRM.côm

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In response, Caleb wrapped an arm around the redhead, dropping a kiss on the top of her head, before nodding in Freya's direction. "Far be it for me to be surly because my mate prefers to spend her time reading old books as opposed to sleeping with me."