

Chapter 605

Rhianna moved to kneel at Reasa's feet, deliberately placing herself below the other woman to promote a feeling that she had some control over the situation. "I didn't understand Anakatrine's actions that day; I just knew I had to trust in her. You want to know why? The answer is because we need you, Thereasa. Your people need you. There were plans set in motion over six thousand years ago that are about to reach fruition, and you are instrumental to that process. Will you trust in us, Reasa? Will you help your people?"

"What people?" Reasa whispered, her cheeks wet with fallen tears. "Do you want me to help the humans because that is what I am now? Why do you speak of this Anakatrine as if she is somehow a separate being? It was you in that room with me. It was you chanting those words and ripping out my soul. It was you who did this to me, Anakatrine." www.nóvé1w0RM.coM

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Despite the sharpness of her words, there was a chink in the strong defences that protected the former vampire. Rhianna reached for the opening, physically and psychically. Gripping Reasa's hands, she kept their gazes connected as she slipped a light touch into her mind; it was just enough to keep the barriers open so Reasa would hear the truth in her words.

It didn't cross Rhianna's mind to wonder how she knew to do what was needed. Anakatrine always provided the knowledge to achieve her goals. With a reassuring smile, she gently squeezed Reasa's hands, her expression earnest as she began to speak. "My name is Rhianna, though most people call me Annie. I am what you see before you, a Youngling vampire mated to an Ancient. However, deep within me resides the soul of one so ancient, her powers appear to be boundless. Within me, lives the soul of the last vampire queen, Anakatrine..."

"How long has Annie been in there now?"

Liam's question brought a deep sigh from both Caleb and Freya, though his cousin's lips quirked slightly as she played another card in their game and answered him. "Ten minutes longer than when you asked the last time, Liam. Now, will you please concentrate on this game? There is no challenge whatsoever in matching wits with you today!"

He had the grace to look sheepish as he concentrated on the cards in his hand before throwing them down. "You win again, Elle." Standing up, Liam rolled his shoulders to loosen some of the tension he was feeling and walked towards the back of the house.

"Let Annie do what she needs to. No harm will come to the girl."

Caleb's amused tone rankled and the Vârcolac had to work at keeping his expression neutral. He knew Reasa was fine because he could feel the emotions of everyone in the house. While it was a fascinating experience—being able to feel everything without his mind being overloaded—he still wanted to see his mate, just to be certain that what he was feeling was right.

He had turned his back on the door that closed off the bedrooms from the rest of the house, when it suddenly opened, and Rhianna appeared followed closely by Reasa. Liam's hungry eyes travelled his mate's face, and he noticed evidence of tears that had long dried. His gaze turned to the redhead, who gave him an encouraging smile.

"Everything is fine. Thereasa and I just had a little chat, and she is no worse the wear for it."

The former vampire regarded him with a neutral expression and then she nodded her agreement, though her eyes told him that she didn't see why she needed to appease him. It was enough to settle his anxiety though, and he was able to walk back to his seat at the dining table where Elina was gathering up cards.

"You haven't been formally introduced to my daughter yet, Reasa. This is Elina." Freya motioned in Elina's direction. "I don't believe you've had a formal introduction to Caleb either," she added, before raising an inquiring eyebrow at Rhianna.

"I've explained everything to Thereasa and she has agreed to hear us out regarding what is to come next."

Caleb made a choking sound and she shot him a pleading look. "Please, love. It's taken me a lot of talking to encourage her to have some willingness to see past her own agenda. I know this doesn't sit well with you, but please can you just go along with me for now?" Rhianna used their telepathic link to speak privately with her mate. Reasa's curiosity was motivating her at the moment and she knew one scathing sentence from Caleb could undo all the progress she'd made.

"Fine, whatever you need, Annie. I will do my best to help as much as I can. I've learned my lesson from the last time."

His reward was a beatific smile, the kind of smile that always melted the bones in his body and made him want to promise his Annie the moon. He lived to see that smile on her beautiful face, and it helped to ease down some of his antipathy for the former vampire.

He finally took notice of the other woman and saw the signs of strain she strove so hard to hide. As he surveyed her without the constraints of his more volatile emotions, he detected a core of strength beneath the fear she couldn't quite hide. He didn't know if he would have been as together as she was if he'd suffered the same kind of loss. Perhaps there was more to the woman than he had given credence to.

"Caleb, the book..."
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Rhianna was holding out her arms to him, and he picked up the book on dream walking and joined everyone at the table.

"Reasa, you've had extensive experience with your empathic abilities. This book contains the ancient lore I told you about," Rhianna began, setting the open book down on one end of the table. She motioned for Liam and Reasa to join her as she sat down.