

Chapter 621

Looking at the other woman, Pietro could see she was younger than he'd first thought and a bit on the nervous side. He felt old instincts starting to well up inside and was surprised to note that the protectiveness he'd previously felt mainly towards the Vârcolac was being extended to the girl he'd just scared the life out of. Perhaps it was because Cassia appeared to be taking the youngster under her wing. If she was important to the Vârcolac then maybe he should take more of an interest in her.

He found himself smiling and knew it must be tugging at the scar on his face. Trish looked at him hesitantly but he didn't see any sign of repulsion in her expression. He dialled back his previous bad mood a bit more. "My apologies, Trish, I didn't mean to frighten you."

His gaze turned back to Cassia. "You have a reason for being here?" He couldn't think what they possibly wanted. The Vârcolac was hardly going to bring along a teenager if she wanted to spent intimate time with him. He had to admit that his interest was piqued.

"We need an escort into the city. Everyone else is busy so I thought you might like to accompany us."
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It took every ounce of his self-control not to let his mouth gape open in stunned surprise. She wanted him to leave the pack? His instinctive reaction was to refuse on the spot, an icy shiver running down his spine at the thought of leaving the sanctity of the pack. He was aware that was due to his feelings of failure for what had happened in Europe. He knew he had to begin the healing process and he was trying to do that with Cassia. If she was asking for this then she must feel that he was ready.

He liked Cassia. He liked her very much, almost to the point of craving her company and it wasn't just about the sex. She was intelligent, and so interesting that simply being in her company was a soothing balm. If he refused, she wouldn't like it, and he didn't want to see disappointment in her eyes because he appeared weak. Swallowing, his brows drew down in a small scowl as he felt the acrid taste of fear in his mouth. He wasn't sure if he was afraid she would be disappointed in him or afraid of leaving the confines of the pack.

"You know you don't need me to accompany you. You're more than capable of taking care of yourself and your little pup, Cassia."

"Oh I know that," she grinned at him. "Unfortunately, Rafe doesn't appear to have fully rescinded the escort rules for us Vârcolac, though he has relaxed them considerably. Aaron is happy for us to go into town as long as we have an escort of some kind. I would prefer if it were you. We do need the supplies but we're also to keep our eyes and ears open too. There are some strange wolves around, possibly from Europe. With you having been over there for so long, you may be the best person to be looking. There's a possibility you may recognise some faces if you've come across them before."

She was so plausible that he had to smile. How could he argue with her logic when it was so sound? She had wrapped him up neatly and tied the bow. He was unable to refuse now because his protective instincts were rearing up loud and clear. Strange wolves in the area meant potential risks for both the packs and also for his own kind.

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"How's the experiments coming along?" Of course, they had to factor in that the poison was still a huge risk to all vampires out there.

Cassia's expression turned hopeful. "They're ongoing and will take a few hours to complete. This is the perfect time for a little side trip because watching experiments is a very frustrating activity."

Making up his mind, Pietro let out a long sigh. There really was no way out of it and if he was honest about it, he did want to test himself away from the pack. It would give him an indication on where he was at in the healing process. In addition...he wanted to spend time with Cassia, even if it meant they had an escort in the young wolf with them. "Fine, let me grab a jacket."

The sunny smile he received was worth any trepidation he was feeling. As he grabbed his leather jacket and returned outside, he couldn't help analyse his reactions to the exquisite golden-haired woman waiting for him. Everything about her called to him. When they were apart, she was all he could think about. Cassia appeared to feel the same because she was always seeking him out.

Demetri's words came back to him and he felt a shiver of shock run through his body. Was Cassia his mate? Could that be possible or were they just two friends enjoying a mutual pleasure that was quite literally breath taking? Deciding it wasn't something he wanted to examine too closely right now, Pietro climbed into the front passenger seat of the Jeep as Trish scurried into the back and Cassia started the engine. No, he'd think about it at another time.

Cassia tried to keep the wide grin from her face as they drove off pack lands and headed towards the city. She had expected Pietro to put up a fight about leaving the pack but he'd agreed with practically no real persuasion needed. That pleased her wolf immensely, and the female part of her. He was willing to try...that was all they could ask for at this point in his healing process. The fact he wasn't decked out in his stupid hat was a good sign as well. True, he was still using his hair to try to hide the worst of his scars but it was a start.

It didn't take them long to arrive into the city. Cassia parked the Jeep in a long stay car park close to area where they would be picking up their supplies. She decided to try to make a day of it, or at least a few hours, it would depend on how her companions coped being away from the pack. Trish was probably more skittish than Pietro was so there was a good chance they would have to return early.
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It appeared Pietro was aware of that too because his wary demeanour was loosening up a bit and he was engaging the younger wolf in conversation. Cassia used a hand to hide the smile that was lighting up her face as she kept to the background and just listened.

"So, are female wolves like all other females when it comes to shopping?" he asked Trish with a wry smile gracing his handsome face. "How many shops am I about to get dragged into?"

The younger wolf appeared startled for a moment and then she gave him a hesitant smile as he moved to place himself to her side, closest to the road, with Cassia on her other side. It appeared instinctive that he did that, automatically placing the girl between them so it would ease some of her anxiety levels.

"We have a list." Trish pulled out the list from the back pocket of her jeans and shyly handed it to him.

Pietro accepted it and began reading, his eyes glazing slightly the more he read. He reached across and handed the piece of paper to Cassia. "Maybe you should have this, it's way over my head. I don't understand any of the items on it."

Trish giggled at the bemusement in his tone. "We could go shopping for clothes instead," she laughed, her expression turning surprised as she realised she'd just teased a vampire.

"Clothes I understand," he smiled back at her, keeping his tone light and friendly. "However, I also know just how long women spend clothes shopping so maybe we should stick to the list for now?"

Cassia laughed too, rolling her eyes. "Let's stick to what we're here for and if we have time we can do some personal shopping later." She perused the list and then pointed down the block. "We can get quite a few things down here."