

Chapter 637

Elina shook her head, for once her serene expression clouded by a deep frown. "I can only feel their emotions, Mac. Whatever they're experiencing has stunned them. Reasa is convinced there is nothing they can do. Despite the fact she has more experience than Liam, he isn't willing to concede that point yet. Liam is determined they can prevail, but I'm not sure how much of that is wishful thinking on his part."

The Vârcolac turned her gaze from the couple at the bed to the Praetorian leader. "Are you sure you can't clear out more people from the house? I'm unsure if I'll be able to contain Liam if this goes badly, Mac. Perhaps you should join Lily? We can't afford to lose you as Praetorian leader, let alone as Lily's mate."

A low growl from the male at her side had her head inclining in his direction.

"You should have more faith in your cousin... and yourself. Liam's shields are strong and the buffer you have in place buys us all a little time should something go wrong. Doubting Liam while you're in his mind isn't going to be of help," Karn remarked.

Mac considered their words when Elina didn't respond to his second in command, taking his time to digest the ramifications if things went wrong. Karn was right, they had an advanced warning system in place, and they could use the precious few seconds that Elina could grant them. For now, his place was here with his fallen, until such times it became too dangerous to remain. In addition, if Elina was right about Liam being unrealistic about their chances of success, someone had to be there to ensure neither he nor Reasa came to any harm. That was his job.

"I'm staying," he finally answered, his tone brooking no argument.

The Vârcolac opened her mouth as if to say more but a hand on her arm diverted her attention and her frosty glare turned on Karn. "Do not touch me."

"Don't get excited, Missy. It wasn't that kind of touch."[www.no©ElWoRM.Com](#)

Karn removed his hand, delighting in the irritated snort that escaped Elina's lips. He couldn't help baiting her at every possible turn, regardless of how dire the current situation was. There was something about the woman that brought out the devilment in him. It had been a long time since any woman had interested him on the level that Elina did. Mac's disapproving glare settled him down somewhat, and he settled back to let events unfold.

More steel mesh greeted Liam and Reasa as they moved forward into Brandon's mind. It bent and twisted, seeming to branch off into different paths. It was indeed a maze, one so twisted that they hit a dead end almost immediately and had to backtrack. Liam chose to go right, weaving through spaces so narrow he could feel steel barbs snagging at his arms. He ignored it, keeping his forward momentum until he hit another dead end.

"Back," he sighed, returning to the beginning and choosing the forward path this time. Liam refused to give up. The fact they were in a maze indicated some kind of order within Brandon's mind even if it was complicated. If the vampire's mind was truly destroyed then shouldn't there just be blackness or an absence of everything?[w-wW.©OV₢LwOrMl.Cômm](#)

They continued forward, eyes flicking over every conceivable surface they could see. Liam had no idea what they were looking for and he doubted Reasa did too. He only hoped that they would recognise it when they did see it. The maze hit a dead end going forward halting them in their tracks again. They had the option of turning left or right, and Liam pondered which route to take first. Settling on the left, he turned to start off in that direction but Reasa resisted his movement.

"Wait! Stop!" she cried out, pulling him back, her gaze fixed on something on the ground at her feet.

Liam frowned, puzzled by why she had stopped him. He couldn't see anything other than grey stone and more steel mesh, but she was bending down low, peering at something just out of his line of sight. His gut instinct was to keep moving forward, however he had to concede that Reasa had been doing this a lot longer than he had. It was pointless bringing her with him if he was going to disregard her expertise.

Shifting his position to get a better vantage point, he saw what appeared to be a small dull glass bead. He had no idea what it was or why his mate considered it significant. It was clear she did as her brow was furrowed in a deep frown as she stared at it.

"Liam... " When she looked up at him there was a flicker of something in her eyes he couldn't quite make out.

"What is it?" He held his breath as he waited for her answer, hoping against hope it would be something positive. It just had to be something positive to ease the growing hopeless he was feeling.

"I think this is part of Brandon's psyche. Reach out with your emotions, as you did at the pack. You have to concentrate hard but you should be able to sense it stronger than I can. There's barely a flicker nudging at my senses."[w\(w\)W.nₑ©è/WorⓂ.\(c\)Om](#)

It was difficult to bend down in the tight space beside her but Liam dropped to his knees uncaring that a steel barb scored down his back drawing blood. He reached out with his stronger senses, concentrating on the glass bead that looked so innocuous. At first he could detect nothing, and then, for the briefest of moments he sensed something, felt some kind of connection.

"I think you may be right," he whispered, the first tendrils of hope beginning to form within him. He called out to Brandon but there was no response, and yet, Reasa's hopeful expression helped to sooth his initial disappointment. If this was part of Brandon's psyche... if they could find more small pieces scattered throughout the maze...

"Can we fashion a receptacle? If there are more pieces splintered throughout the maze, we can gather them all together and maybe that will be enough for Brandon's mind to do the rest?"[\(w\)ww.noV©Lwₑ©Rm.CₑMl](#)

As soon as he'd asked the question, a clear glass urn appeared before them, and Reasa reverently placed the glass bead into it. It looked so lost and alone within the huge jar, and yet, a little of the dullness appeared to have receded. Liam wasn't sure if it truly had, or if it was just wishful thinking on his part.

"We could be here for days looking for other parts of his psyche," Reasa said quietly, as they took a moment to pause and consider their options. "Perhaps we should split up? We can place a marker on each passage we've tried so the other doesn't waste time repeating steps already taken. If we find more of these beads we can add them to the urn by a simple thought command. The book said we could do that as long as we can hold onto the image we're transporting an object to."