

Chapter 643

They sat together in silence, each locked in their own private thoughts. Cassia knew that whatever happened Dara would be fine. Yes, it would be a change for her but her sister was just as strong as she was. Hell, she managed to keep Kothi in line when most others failed. It took a very strong woman to do that so she knew with certainty that Dara could cope with anything life threw at her. Dara just needed to believe that in her own heart.

Reasa woke slowly, feeling the warmth of Liam's body heat beside her long before she opened her eyes. It was hard to miss as she found herself wrapped protectively in his arms with one hard thigh flung over her hip, and her head resting on his wide chest. She should have been outraged at him taking liberties, but it felt so good that she just lay there savouring the sensations his touch inspired.

She felt safe for the first time since her circumstances had changed. It was hard admitting it but she couldn't deny it. Everything that Liam did revolved around keeping her safe. Every decision he made was done so with careful consideration on how it would affect her. The Vârcolac was claiming her as his mate and he made no bones about it. As far as he was concerned, it was inevitable and she would just have to get used to that fact.

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Liam frightened her as nothing or no one had for a long time. He frightened her because his strong determination was winning. Whereas before she had been strong in her convictions that she would never mate with him, since their kiss that conviction was wavering. It felt good sleeping with him like this. It felt right and that was terrifying. There was trouble coming their way in the shape of Louis and Pietro. All directed at her and something Liam would do his utmost to counter. The fallout from that was unimaginable.

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How could she allow this to happen? She had set her feet on a path that ultimately led to destruction and now it wasn't just her life that was at stake but possible hundreds of others, including Liam. Her decision at the time had made sense to her. Now, in the face of knowing a few of the Vârcolac and the pack, it suddenly felt so wrong. Why had she chosen to do this? It was only when Liam spoke that she realised she'd uttered the last words aloud.

"Tell me."

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Reasa swallowed hard, denial rocking through her. She had never told anyone of her past, never allowed anyone to have that hold over her. Yet, Liam had allowed her into his memories, into the most shameful parts of his past. He had given her his total trust and she didn't deserve that.

"Tell me, Reasa," he whispered against her temple, his hand stroking down her back slowly. "Who hurt you so badly. Who shaped your views to such extremes?"

Swallowing again, she felt hot tears begin to flow at the gentleness of Liam's tone. There was no condemnation there, only a need to understand. He had never condemned her, this beautiful, strong man, even when she had deserved it.

"My father," she finally answered, the words catching on a breathless sob. As soon as she said them, an image of the man whose seed helped create her entered her mind and she shuddered at the thought, trying hard to push it away. Her body stiffened in Liam's embrace though he kept running a soothing hand down her back.

"Show me, Reasa. Let me in."

She couldn't have kept him out if she'd wanted to. Saying the words breached her strongest barriers, crumbled the wall that she'd placed to bury those memories she never wanted to revisit. She could feel Liam's gentle strength at her side; feel his arms keeping her safe. Surrendering to the inevitable, she allowed the walls to crumble completely...

She was young, carefree, a pretty girl living in a secluded wooden cabin in the woods. It was a difficult time with wars and disease prevalent, but her family had found a refuge from it all and she could laugh and dance beneath the canopied trees with no fear.

Their family was wrong in the eyes of society. Her father was from the African continent, her mother a pale white farmer's daughter. They had fallen in love, a love so deep they couldn't be apart. They were soul mates so they ran away together, to share their love and make their beloved daughter Thereasa. They lived off the land and life was good, until the day he came.

Thereasa couldn't remember his face, the man who had found her washing by the lake. She remembered he was very beautiful and had a magical voice. She remembered his bite and her terror. She remembered waking to find herself many miles away from her home. For the first year of her new life she remembered the blood and the screams, the human lives ended so she could thrive.

She missed mama and papa so much that she had to return. She found them where she left them, their sadness obvious in their eyes. Thereasa couldn't bear to be apart from her parents so she did the only thing she could think of...she made them in her own image...she turned them to the life of the vampire.

It should have been perfect. They were together again as a family. However, it wasn't to be as Thereasa's knowledge of the supernatural was lacking. She didn't know that just because people were human soul mates that didn't mean they would be the same in their new life. She didn't know...she didn't know...

"Thereasa, where is your mother?" Her father's angry tone frightened her.

"She said she was going for a walk, Papa." Her father was always angry now. He had been that way ever since he had become a vampire.

"Find her!"

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Thereasa was too afraid to say no. Her father was much stronger than she was despite the fact she had lived this life longer. He wasn't afraid to use that strength either, lashing out at herself or her mother when his ire rose too sharply. Gone was the quiet, protective man he had once been. In its place was now an abusive tyrant who frightened them.