

## Chapter 645

Liam's heart broke for her as she sobbed uncontrollably in his arms. He had known that there had to be some severe catalyst to inspire Reasa's level of hatred in the Vârcolac, but he had no idea it could be anything as tragic as what he'd just witnessed. She felt responsible for her mother's death. She had taken her father's life to avenge her mother's murder. The worst thing was she knew deep within her soul that if she had never turned them to the life of a vampire that they would most likely have lived out their lives together in happiness.

No wonder she hated the mixed matings and the Vârcolac. They were evidence that what her mother had shared even briefly with her wolf was real and couldn't have been fought. They lent truth to her mother's words and that would only increase Reasa's feelings of guilt that her reaction had brought her father down on the lovers. Thereasa hated and blamed the wolves, because it was the only way she could live with her overwhelming guilt without going insane.

"You were only young girl, Reasa," he whispered against her temple, holding her as tightly as he could without hurting her. "You didn't ask to become a vampire and it is understandable that you would feel alone and afraid, and want your parents with you."

He kissed her temple as she sobbed without speaking. "What happened is tragic and I can't tell you to forget it as it will always be a part of you, but you have to forgive yourself, Thereasa. You didn't intend for any of that to happen. You had no control over the events that unfolded. You were just a young girl who was happy with her parents and didn't want to lose that love and security."

"I killed my papa," she wept clinging onto Liam tightly. "He was a good man before...before I made him a vampire. If I hadn't done that..."

"Forgive yourself. Remember who your father was before he changed. What would he wish for you, Thereasa? What would your mother wish for you?" ©©w.novelwOrM.c.M

A loud hiccup escaped her as she took a shuddering breath. "They only ever wanted me to be happy and safe," she answered, her voice sounding like that of the young carefree girl she had once been.

"Then be happy, my heart. Be safe here with me. You cannot change the past but you can change your future. You just need to start by letting go of what was and concentrate on what can be. The Vârcolac are not abominations, Reasa. The mixed matings are not abominations. You have nothing to hate us for."

Reasa suddenly felt claustrophobic. She was being overwhelmed by emotions she'd kept buried so long and her flight instincts were kicking in. Struggling in Liam's embrace, she wriggled until he let her go. Leaping from the bed, she headed towards the door, stopping before she reached it. Where could she go? There was nowhere to run to, no way of escaping the memories crashing over her.

"Thereasa, it's okay, you're safe here."

Ignoring him, she grabbed her bag from where it rested against the wall, one of the vampires must have placed it there yesterday when they were working within Brandon's mind. "I need to shower," she mumbled, refusing to look at him. She didn't want to see the same pity she heard in his voice reflected in his eyes. She didn't deserve it and she didn't want it. WWW.N@vêLwoŔM.C@M

Liam sighed deeply as she closed the bathroom door with what could only be termed as finality. His mate was shutting him out after having let him into her darkest secrets. He understood that she was overwhelmed but that didn't stop him wishing she would see that she had nothing to fear from him. He wanted to help, he needed to help. Why couldn't she see that?

Sighing again, he got up and grabbed his pack, heading out of the room in search of another available bathroom. He knew when he returned he would find Reasa's barriers back up but that was okay. He would just break them down again and keep breaking them down until she realised that no matter what her past was, he wasn't going anywhere.

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Brandon yawned, uttering a groan as every muscle in his body protested the long stretch he was giving it. What the hell was wrong with him? He felt as if he'd been in bed for a week. He'd also been having some pretty weird dreams too. Lily had been talking at him for what felt like hours. He couldn't make out what she was saying but he could hear her voice as if from a far off distance.

Liam had been in them, too, and the assassin who had infiltrated the Praetorian Compound. They had kept calling him, playing what felt like a game of hide and seek with him. Every time he'd thought he'd tracked them down they vanished and he had to start again. It truly had been the weirdest of dreams and one he was glad to be waking up from.

"Brandon? Open your eyes, Bran...please!"

"Lily?" He struggled to open his eyes, groaning again as they felt as if they had been stuck together with glue.

"I'm here! I'm right here, Brandon."

Why did Lily sound like she was crying? His determination to find out was the deciding factor in forcing his eyes open. Squinting against the morning sunlight coming from the nearby window, he looked up to see his friend hovering over him, tears flowing freely down her face.

"Oh Brandon, you're back! I knew they could do it! I just knew it!"

"Back?" he croaked out, realising his mouth was dry and he was famished. His hunger was so strong it made his stomach cramp. "I haven't been anywhere." His confusion continued as his stomach churned again. "I'm starving. Does anyone have a cute human nearby?"

Lily started to laugh as a Were tried to make her move aside.

"Lily, let us check him out. Maybe you could find him something to eat so he doesn't try to bite us?" the female Were said, and his friend gasped and disappeared from view.

Brandon wouldn't have minded biting the woman now looming over him. She was very attractive and the need for blood wasn't the only hunger that was surfacing. Not that he would. He was aware his bite would kill the Were if he did.

"How are you feeling?" she was asking him as she shone an annoying light in his eyes before running professional feeling hands over his body.

"Hungry, horny and confused," he answered truthfully, delighting in the slight rounding of the Were's eyes at his bluntness. The doctor, because that's what she appeared to be, didn't respond to his words, she merely continued her examination.

"How do your limbs feel...sluggish, hard?"

"I can tell you what is hard..."

"Brandon, stop playing with the doctor," Lily admonished, appearing back at the bed with a bottle in one hand and the heavenly aroma of chilled blood wafting from the filled glass in her other hand.

His attention was immediately diverted, a sharp pain gnawing at his gut. Grabbing the glass, he slugged the contents quickly, reaching for the bottle to replenish it. He drained the bottle before the nagging pains decreased enough for him to focus once more on his surroundings.

"What's going on, Lily? Why am I in what appears to be a hospital room?" His gaze shifted to the other beds, his brow drawing down as he saw his fellow Praetorians lying there. "What's wrong with them?"

Lily sat down on the chair beside the bed, moving a book from there to the bedside table. Brandon glanced at it briefly, reading the title. "Moby Dick? " Lily hated that book though it was one of his favourites. They'd had countless debates over whether Captain Ahab was brave or a self-absorbed monomaniac. Lily voted for the latter every time.

"I was reading it to you," she answered, a mock-grimace on her face. "Thankfully you woke up so I won't have to torture myself any further."

"Woke up?"

Lily turned to the doctor who gave her a reassuring smile. "He appears to be none the worse for his ordeal. I'll leave you two to catch up."

As she walked away, his friend turned back to him. "What's the last thing you remember, Bran?"

He frowned at the question but cast his mind back to before the strange dreams. Everything felt a bit blurry though his cognitive skills were sharpening as the blood he'd consumed surged through his body. "Everyone was in the living room. The assassin was being brought to justice and there was some kind of strange magic going on. Things were pretty fraught and I wasn't sure what side of the line we were on. I can remember Liam shouting, screaming at Annie for some reason. Then there was this blinding pain in my head and it felt as if Liam was physically inside me, screaming in anguish. I don't remember what happened after that."

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