

Chapter 647

Gard shot Rayne a questioning look as he sighted a banner emblazoned with Sarayne. A tall athletic male held it up, his shoulder length blond hair partially obscured by a black fedora hat. His mate met his gaze and shrugged, a frown creasing her forehead. "I've never seen him before."

Gard's protective instincts automatically kicked in, as no one out of their inner circle knew Rayne's birth name. "Stay here." He strode towards the other male without waiting to see if his mate would obey. He knew she wouldn't so he was determined to get to the male before she did. He could scent the vampire as he neared; the blond was a healthy age for one of the European covens.

The other male smiled a lopsided grin as the Ancient approached him. His demeanour appeared relaxed though Gard could detect the subtle alertness in his stance. The vampire was no fool; he was prepared for trouble though he was probably reasonably certain there wouldn't be any. They were in the middle of an airport surrounded by thousands of humans.

"You don't look much like a Sarayne," he grinned. "Before you're tempted to forget where we are, Caleb gave me the name. He said if that didn't settle you down then to tell you Callain and Anakatrine would be most displeased if you felt inclined to detach my head." He spoke low enough that only Gard and Rayne, who had caught up with her mate, could hear.

"I'm Sarayne, though most people just call me Rayne. And you are?"

"Joshua. I am at your service and kind of relieved to see you didn't bring Demetri with you...not that this impressive gentleman isn't enough to send a shiver down most vampires' spines."

His acknowledgement of Gard's dominance level was enough to soothe some of the Ancient's suspicion. His mentioning of Callain and Anakatrine did the rest of the trick. Gard relaxed, running quickly through his mind what Caleb had told him of his friend. Though not commonly known in Europe, Joshua was in fact a coven leader and one of Caleb's oldest friends. The Ancient trusted him implicitly and had urged Gard to do the same. Joshua had also helped save Pietro's life so that was another mark in his favour. The crowning point was Demetri had vouched for the vampire...that was nothing short of a miracle.

"Can you take us to where Pietro was found?" he asked with little preamble. The sooner they found out what they could, the sooner they could get home to their son.

Rayne rolled her eyes though there was a smile on her face. "This is Gard, my mate. You'll have to excuse his manners, travelling makes him a tad surly."wWw.NoVelW(orm.co@

"Spoken by the woman who slept the entire flight," Gard chuckled, dropping a quick kiss on the top of her head. "You do know you won't sleep tonight with the time difference."

"Then I guess you'll just have to entertain me then," she retorted, turning her gaze back to their escort. "Would it be better if we found accommodation first, Joshua?"

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"I figured you would want to be under the radar as much as possible so I've cleared out one of my safe houses for your use. Whoever you're looking for appears to be employing some younglings as lookouts. We spotted three newly created vampires hanging around the terminals here. I sent some of my people off to lead them a merry dance. I presume there will be more hanging around the main hotel district and various bed and breakfast establishments."

"We came in on a private jet. If someone is keeping watch, it won't be hard for them to get the flight list," Gard growled, unsettled by the news.

Joshua nodded his agreement. "This is why we need to hustle and get you stashed into the safe house before that happens. By the time they access the flight list you'll be ghosts and it will make it harder for them to pick up your trail." He turned and headed out of the airport, crossing a road to lead them into the parking garage. When he stopped at a beat-up van with peeling paintwork and plenty of rust on display, Gard quirked an eyebrow at him in question.

"If you think vamps on your side of the pond are arrogant, you haven't seen anything yet," Joshua chuckled. "It is beyond their comprehension that Ancients would lower themselves to travel in a rust bucket like this. Believe me; any other potential eyes we haven't spotted won't look twice at this vehicle."

"And if they do?" Gard was already stowing their cases in the back and ushering his mate into the back seat.

"There's a McLaren engine under the bonnet, though I suppose you call it a hood." Joshua walked to the driver's side, pointing to the left hand side of the vehicle. It had been awhile since Gard had been in Europe so he'd automatically presumed the front passenger seat was on the right.

"If we end up in a road race, we'll most likely come out the winner," Joshua continued as they put on their seatbelts. "If we are rolled, the inside has been retrofitted with a steel roll cage, to minimise any injuries. I fully expect you two are more than capable of healing faster than I am and will be able to neutralise anyone stupid enough to mess with you."wWw.move(1)worM.com

It satisfied Gard who relaxed in his seat, turning his head to look back at Rayne. "I guess we're all set then. Let's get to the safe house and then to the location Pietro was found."

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"We sanitised the area, Gard. I don't know what you expect to find there." Joshua was concentrating on the road as he pulled out the parking garage, his eyes darting in all directions.

"We'll know it when we find it," the Ancient answered, satisfied that their escort was up to the task. "Keep him on of trouble, Rayne. I'm going to take a nap."

When Gard opened his eyes again, they were pulling up to the charred remains of a stone cottage. He'd been aware when they'd arrived at a similar styled cottage earlier, but had remained in the van while Joshua and Rayne transported their belongings inside. His mate was more than capable of checking the place over without his interference. While he did chafe at allowing her out of his sight, he knew he'd get no end of grief if he tried wrapping his panther up in cotton wool. Now they were at the location of Pietro's imprisonment and his eyes were lazily tracking their surroundings.

"Do you want to check the right hand side and I'll do the left?" he asked his mate, opening the door to get out of the vehicle.