

## Chapter 652

It took a moment for her words to sink in, for his brain to catch up with what had just happened. Pietro kept his expression as neutral as possible though he knew he wasn't fooling the redhead. He had vaulted over the bar and taken down the vampire as if he were a Youngling and not an elder. Technically, the other male should have kicked his ass however Pietro felt stronger than he'd ever felt before.

How was this possible? He should still be recovering from Europe but if it hadn't been for the scars he bore, he could almost believe Europe had never happened. Something had healed him faster than should have been possible and he was starting to have an inkling to what that might be. There was only one thing he'd done since he'd returned that could account for the faster healing. He had taken Cassia's blood as nourishment...

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The six vampires filed silently into the imposing redbrick mansion nestled behind a twelve-foot high wall in one of the exclusive residential areas at the edge of the city. The female who opened the door waited for the last one to pass and then closed it quietly behind them. Her eyes alighted on Michael and acknowledged him as the leader of the group.

"Organise your men and then meet me in the library. It's the mahogany door just there." She pointed to a door to the left of the ornate staircase in the main hallway, turning in that direction without waiting for a response.

Michael felt the urge to break her neck because of the way she ordered him about. Not that it would have killed her as she was a vampire like them, but it would have hurt and shown her who was boss. However, he wasn't allowed to do that despite how much he would have liked to. He had ordered him to obey the female, telling him that she was his eyes and ears on this continent.

With a flick of his hand, he motioned the others to head upstairs and find rooms to make themselves comfortable. He headed towards the back of the house to where the female waited. Opening the door, his gaze focused first on the female and then the room. It was a library like any other he had seen, full of towering bookcases filled with books, and the customary desk and seating areas. The female was sitting behind the desk, watching him with a neutral expression.

She looked young but something told him that appearance was deceptive. Everything about the woman was deceptive. There was no way in hell her hair was short and blonde. He could just make out where the wig began and he could see the barest hint of a ring around her irises that told him the pale blue of her eyes was a lie too. Whoever she was, she had gone out of her way to alter her appearance.

"What do I call you?"

"Candrea will suffice, and you are Michael," she answered coolly, motioning him to sit down. "How many of your team work for The Master?"

He hissed as he was lowering himself into his seat, fire in his eyes as he glared at her. "Do not mention Him out aloud!"

She was undaunted by his response, a half-smile gracing her beautiful face. "Yes, he did say you were a bit of zealot, but I hadn't expected you to be this far gone. There is nothing wrong with speaking of him. Naturally, he should only be mentioned to those who perform his tasks, and as we are both his willing disciples, I will continue to speak however I like in your presence. If you have an issue with that I suggest you raise it with him and he will educate you accordingly."

Michael gritted his teeth, forcing himself to remain in the chair facing her as the urge to take her head built at a steady rate. He wouldn't like it if he hurt the female. Michael kept that mantra running through his mind as he continued to glare at Candrea.

"What are your orders?"

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"Answer my question!" The words grated out, raw command in Candrea's tone as her hand slapped the desk hard.

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Michael jumped at the unexpected sound, his eyes narrowing in fury. What question did she want answered? He couldn't remember her asking one.

"How many in your team work for The Master?"

It was only as she repeated it that he realised he had spoken the words out aloud. "None. Only me."

His answer appeared to set her thinking for a moment because she didn't respond immediately. Finally, she nodded and leaned on the desk. "Any that are not killed during the assault on the pack will need to be taken care of then. Are you up to that task?"

Killing brought him the most happiness, not including speaking with his Master. Nothing transcended that. The smile he gave her was nothing short of chilling. "It will be my pleasure."

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"Good." Candrea rose, smoothing down her figure hugging skirt as she did. "I will leave this phase in your capable hands then. You will not contact me or attempt to discover who or where I am. If you have need of me for any reason leave the library curtains open at night with that table lamp on." She pointed to a small lamp near the window. "I will be informed and come as soon as I can."

Michael stayed rooted to his chair as she left, his homicidal impulses still driving him. He felt out of control and that wasn't a good thing with the task ahead of him. "Master..."

"You arrived safely, Michael?"

The instant his voice filled his mind, the vampire felt the first tendrils of peace begin to wash over him. His voice was so beautiful...it wrap around him, enveloped him, lifted him to a level of serenity so blissful he could live in the moment forever. "Yes, Master. I have met with the woman as you instructed. I am finding her...challenging. She speaks of you out aloud, Master!" He couldn't keep his loathing from his tone.

"You must do as she says, Michael. I have already instructed you on her importance to me. She is my voice there and you must heed her words."

The Master's voice was cold and hard, menace creeping into it as he spoke that sent a shiver of fear down the vampire's spine. "I obey, Master. Please don't be angry with me. Please!"

"As long as you heed my words there will be no need to incite my wrath. Carry out the task Louis has assigned to you, however, perform your main task too. Find the weakness I seek and return with that knowledge as soon as possible. Do not fail me, Michael."

The Master withdrew from his thoughts, but not before he sent a shaft of reassurance down their bond. It was enough to make Michael sit up straighter, his mind clearing a little of its zeal so he could perform the duties assigned to him.

Rising, he headed out of the library and upstairs to find a room where he could rest. Candrea was lucky she'd put the idea into his head to contact him, otherwise she may not have seen many more days. He must treat her as he would the Master...until such times he allowed him to kill her. Smiling, Michael lay on the bed fully clothed, closing his eyes to rest after their long journey.

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