

Chapter 662

A smile crossed his number two's face and it was all Mac could do not to burst out laughing. There was a saying that an expression said a thousand words, and there was no mistaking the expression on Karn's face. If Liam kicked up a fuss about this decision, he would be butting heads with one of the most intractable men Mac had ever come across.

"Liam will just need to do as he's told," Karn said, turning on his heel to head out of the study.*w@ww.novelWorm.c(o)m*

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Lily uncurl'd herself from the large armchair she was sitting in and crossed the room to slide into her mate's open arms. "I might like to be a fly on the wall for that conversation."

Mac chuckled and kissed the top of her head, inhaling in her wonderful scent. "You'll forgive me if I prefer that you stay away from that one. Anyway, I wanted your help with something else."

She glanced up at him, curiosity shining in the depth of her eyes. "Oh?"

Mackenzie's lips tightened in a disapproving line. "Kothari."

"Ohhhhh." Lily sighed and rested her head back against his chest. "What has he been up to now?"

"He's deliberately freaking out some of the Praetorians. He keeps telling them things they have done or said in the past. How the hell he knows these things is beyond me, but it's starting to make some of my people go out of their way to avoid him. He's deliberately taunting them, Lily, and if he doesn't stop it's going to cause problems."

"That doesn't sound like our Kothi," she laughed, but there was a weary sigh contained in the words. "Have you spoken to Kal about it? He can usually get through to Kothi when he's being particularly difficult."

Mac sighed too, brushing his cheek against her hair to soothe some of his growing irritation. "Kal's out with the wolves most of the time. He appears to be fixated on keeping the compound safe after Reasa's attack."

That made sense when it came to her brother. He always felt so responsible for everything, even when it was something outwith his control. Lily fought down another sigh and then a thought popped into her head that had her pulling out of his arms.

"I know what we can do to solve both Liam's and Kothi's problems. Come on." Grabbing his hand, she pulled her mate from the study, heading towards the kitchen where there was the sound of a disagreement taking place.

"Kothi, be quiet. This has nothing to do with you," she announced as they entered to see a red-faced Liam squaring up to Karn who appeared just as irritated. "Liam, calm down and sit down." It was so unlike her to be that bossy that both her fellow Vârcolac closed their mouths, and Liam actually sat down.

The room was full of Praetorians who had come to watch Karn lay down the law. It was always gratifying to see him lay into someone other than themselves. Reasa was standing quietly to one side, resting her back against one of the countertops.

Lily let her gaze travel over the vampires present and then she smiled. "Guys, just so you know, Kothari isn't able to read minds. He spotted the Praetorians protecting us long before I ever did. He has been shadowing you since he was a child, listening to everything you've ever said and done. None of the Vârcolac can read minds no matter what they try to have you believe. You will stop teasing them, Kothi, right now."

"Spoilsport," Kothi muttered under his breath as he saw his targets looking at him with less than pleased expressions. He had been enjoying playing with them, fascinated by the increasing level of panic that had been starting to escalate in some of the vampires' eyes. Now Lily had spoilt everything and he would have to find some other way to entertain himself.

"And as for you..." Lily flowed so quickly towards Liam that it took a moment for anyone to react. By the time they did, the large male was lying flat on his back, a dazed expression in his eyes. "You're so slow these days even a girl can put you on your ass. Mental muscle is great, Liam, but it's pointless if you forget to take care of your physical muscle."

"That was just what I was saying," Karn growled, coming to stand beside her. "This dream walking stuff is cannibalising your bodies, Liam. It appears to need a large amount of fuel and what you and Reasa are eating isn't enough for the amount of time you're in other peoples' heads."

Liam's stunned gaze swung towards his mate, shock rippling through him as he noticed for the first time just how exhausted she was. They had slept later than usual today. She should have looked more rested. "I didn't realise..."

"No, because you're too pig-headed trying to save the world to the detriment of yourself and Reasa," Lily berated, her hands on her hips. "If Mac and Karn say no more dream walking today you will damned well listen to them, Liam Eriksson, or I'm phoning your mother and you can explain to her why you're trying to kill yourself. Am I completely clear on both matters?"

Silence filled the kitchen as her gaze swept from Kothari to Liam and back again. Finally the dark-haired Vârcolac smiled one of his rare smiles, amusement lacing his tone when he nodded his head in her direction. "Yes, Mother."*@ww.w.novel(w)óTm.c@m*

"Yes, Lily," Liam said, his gaze still fixated on his mate, contrition in every word.

"That's settled then," she smiled, turning her exultant gaze up to her mate who was wearing a smile that contained all of the pride he felt for her.

"You're going to make a wonderful mom," he laughed, gathering her close for a hug.

"If our children turn out anywhere near as difficult as these two, you can sort them out," she teased back.

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"Okay, sparring time everyone," Karn announced heading to the backdoor. "We'll start with you two troublemakers. Front and centre!"

"Have you ever seen the Vârcolac spar?" Brandon asked, slipping into step with Reasa as she followed everyone outside.

She turned her head enough to look at the vampire, taking a careful catalogue of his features. He was handsome as vampires were wont to be, but she wasn't looking for that. Her keen gaze took in the continuing signs of recovery. In a few days' time no one would ever know that he had once been so lost, there had been little hope of him ever waking up.

Following on from her conversation with Karn, she could now detect the vampire's open offer of friendship. She hadn't noticed it before because she had put his attentive behaviour down to gratitude. Now it appeared Brandon genuinely liked her and wanted to spend time in her company. His relaxed demeanour and incorrigible personality was endearing, and she found herself more receptive to the idea of being friends with him that she would have expected.