



Chapter 731

He remained still for a moment longer and then he leaned down to her height and pinned her with his fiery gaze. "Have a care how you speak to me, Dara Romanov. Kothari is not here right now, and I don't think you will like who is in residence if you test my patience." There was more than a hint of menace in his tone, but she held her ground, refusing to show any weakness.

"Oh, I know it's you who has dominance at the moment, Agony. I have Kothi's journal so I know all about you. If you think I am afraid of you because of what I have just seen you do, then you're sadly mistaken. You see, it doesn't matter who has dominance. It doesn't matter how badass you think you are, or how much destruction you can rain down on all of our heads. Nothing will ever change the fact that you, Agony, as well as Kothari, are not only pack, but are also Vârcolac. That makes me yours to protect and it makes you mine to protect. Therefore, you can threaten all you like, but I know you will never hurt me. You may not need physical protection from me, but you sure as hell need psychological protection, so that's what I am going to do for you, my friend, whether you like it or not. Now, stop pissing about with that vampire and fucking help me, idiot!"

Dara turned her back on him, frantically employing calming techniques in her mind to stop her legs from shaking and to help keep her breathing as even as possible. Truth be told, Agony scared her witless, but she couldn't show it, couldn't allow him to see that fear. She had to keep him engaged until he accepted her presence as a non-threat to his mission. It was difficult walking away without looking backwards, but she kept putting one foot in front of the other, motioning to Dante and Louis who had thankfully heeded her words and stayed where she left them.

"Dante, check on Mila. I will be over to donate a little blood to help with her healing if she requires it. Louis, can you start clearing up some of this mess before the human girl wakes up, the gore might be a bit hard for her to cope with even if she does run with a pack. Kothi, when you're ready, I could use your help with the she-wolf."

She watched the vampires move, Dante speeding to his friend, and cradling her gently in his arms. A half smile tilted her lips as she heard his opening words to the other woman.

"When you've healed, you and I are going to have a very long talk about the definition of NOT putting yourself in any danger, woman."

"Don't be mad at me, dear Dante. I saved the girl, didn't I? She is safe...isn't she? She wasn't hurt?" Mila tried to twist around to see where the girl was, but Dante held her too tightly, a finger trailing down one cheek.

"Her heartbeat is steady," he sighed with a resigned smile. "And yes, you did save her. Lie still and heal just now, Mila. I will check on the girl and give you an update in a moment."

Louis nodded to Dara, keeping half an eye on Agony on the other side of the clearing. "I'm going to call in some of my coven to help sanitise the area. Do you think he will have an issue with that?"

"Probably, but as long as they stay to the tasks you assign them and don't approach the tent or any of the females, everything should be fine. Just make sure they all fully understand that. He can't perceive them as a threat in any way or the killing will start again." Dara hoped what she was saying was true. She was going by gut instinct alone, but so far, everything appeared to be working out okay.

Dropping down beside the weeping she-wolf, Dara extricated her from her fallen mate as gently as she could. The female fought her, struggling to hold onto the dead male, but Dara persisted until she had the distraught woman in her arms. "He's gone, lovely. There is nothing you can do for him anymore," she whispered softly. "I'm so sorry for your loss, brave wolf, but we need you here with us. There are others you need to care for; little ones who need a strong, brave wolf such as yourself. Stay with us, lovely. Don't give into the grief and loss."

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Her words fell on deaf ears, the wolf too distraught, the first signs of madness beginning to appear in the depths of her eyes. She was going rogue, and Dara didn't have the experience or know how to prevent it. She wanted to weep at the loss and suffering done to this small pack. Her heart broke for the loss of life, and she also didn't want to be responsible for ending the she-wolf's life if they couldn't pull her back. She needed Kothi at her side, needed him to help her try to pull the she-wolf back from the brink of madness, but he remained where she left him, silently watching them move around the campground with an expressionless face.

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Agony couldn't work out whether he wanted to kick Dara's ass or kiss her. The way she spoke to him, as if he were some kind of errant child, irritated him greatly, and yet there was a familiarity about it too, a feeling of belonging that usually only Kothari experienced with her. For so long he had been hidden from the pack, a guilty secret that must remain untold, for fear that he, that they would be rejected and cast out.

Now, his pack mate had seen him, seen what he was capable of, and instead of rejecting him, she had castigated him as she usually would Kothari, treating him as no different to his other half. It was annoying, and yet it was comforting too, to know that there was one person who had looked upon his face, and still wanted to know him. Perhaps he was less of a monster than he thought? Looking around the blood-soaked clearing, he knew that was wishful thinking on his part.

"Are you just going to stand there?" Dara called, a hint of concern in her eyes as they met his. "I'm losing her, Kothi...or Agony, or whatever you want to call yourself. I need help here."

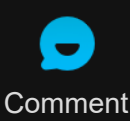
He continued to stare at the scene around him, and then he spun quickly and sliced the head off the wounded vampire behind him, pulling out the bones and dragging the carcass over to the pile one of the vampires was building with the other corpses. Dropping it on without a word, he met Louis' gaze, and the handful of other vampires that had appeared at his call. Judging them not a threat, he turned towards Dara, and the reason he was here in the first place.

"The wolf pup is safe?" He phrased it as a question, though he could sense the child still hidden inside the tent, her pulse erratic but her fear the normal fear of a child, with no scent of hurt or blood around her.

"It's best that she remains inside for now, away from all this death, but she is safe," Dara answered, relief dancing across her face as he knelt down beside her. "I can't reach her, Kothi. I'm not Cassia or Mallen, my healing skills are not up to their level. I wish Aaron were here. He would know what to do. He has the best success rate at keeping wolves from going rogue."WwW.novelwoRm.COм

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She was alluding to the pack's second in command, Rafe's head beta, a male respected as highly as their Alpha. Agony agreed with her sentiment, if Aaron were here then there was a chance the she-wolf could be saved, however he wasn't, and that meant there was no real hope for the woman.



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