

## Chapter 747

Caleb literally stopped breathing for a few seconds...the words from the Genesis Society coming to mind.

With the birth of the first female offspring of each century they imprinted a key. They would have the ability to walk in both worlds, both walker and life drinker. They would possess the powers of their ancestors and be able to carry the gene until a union of the two species would come and our resurgence would arrive. They called these children the Vârcolac.

"Annie, are you saying that we now have the ability to have children?" he stammered out, fear, confusion and a liberal amount of hope colouring his tone. He let out his breath as he waited for her answer.

She nodded, colour blushing her cheeks. "After reading the histories, I started to suspect it was possible but I wasn't sure so I didn't say anything right away. The more I listened to your conversation with Ana, the more time I had to think about, and the more it made sense. Caleb, the Vampire Queens are direct descendants from the Genesis beings. They are the original Vârcolac, the ones who were imprinted with the genetic key. This is why they were the only Vampires who could give birth. Anakatrine's mother gave birth to both Gard and Ana, and I have been gifted that genetic key. That's why I was crying earlier, not because I was afraid to be the Vampire Queen but because I finally believed the truth staring me in the face."

Wonder filled his soul, a joy so strong that Caleb was astonished to realise that becoming a father had been something he had secretly been yearning for since he'd first met his beautiful mate. Sure, he had always spent a lot of time with the pack young when they were babies, but he'd put his enjoyment of that down to his Annie's obvious joy and being with the children. Now he was finally understanding that he had taken as much joy in those moments as his mate. Now that joy was going to be available to them together, and he found himself overwhelmed by just what that meant, though caution filled his soul too.

"Annie, I can't tell you how astounding, how amazing this is," he whispered, tenderly stroking her face and uncaring of the tear that rolled down his cheek. "To bring new life into this world with you would be the most wonderful thing ever. The knowledge of all this though...I don't know if the vampire nation is ready for it. In addition, we have this threat hanging over everything. We probably should keep this to ourselves just now, and take the necessary precautions needed until things have been resolved."

She blushed a little brighter, her expression turning sheepish. "I think it might be a little late for that, my love. When I returned, we were pretty excited to be back together. I haven't had another monthly cycle since that first time yet, but I felt unsettled inside the other night and that was what drew me to Masking Lavender. I think that was Anakatrine's way of pointing me in the direction I needed to go."

Stunned silence greeted her words, and then Caleb expelled another loud breath. "You mean...you think you're already pregnant?"

Rhianna's smile grew wider, and she reached up and kissed his mouth softly. "I know it's only been a few weeks but I did a little inward search while you spoke with Ana. We have created a son, my beautiful vampire."

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"A son? How can you know so soon? When is the child due?" He was going to be a father...to a son...Caleb was stunned and elated, worried and fearful.Ⓦ(w).nσ(v)e(())Wôrm.côm

She laughed and kissed him again, his happiness infusing every cell in her body through their mate bond. "The Vampire Queen always gives birth to the next Guardian first. He must grow big and strong so that he can protect the next Queen while she awaits her King. From what I've read in Masking Lavender, it would appear the Queen has a more traditional gestation rate, so I would suspect our son will be born in a little over 8 months' time. We should be able to keep this secret for a while to come, Caleb, hopefully long enough to finish this hidden war and prepare the vampire nation for what is next to come."

They had time...time to come to terms with everything and to prepare for the future. Caleb gathered his astonishing mate into his arms and kissed her until she was breathless, breaking off to laugh with joy before kissing her soundly again.

"What is still to come, Annie?" he finally asked when he let her up for air.

"The reintegration of the Genesis Society, my love," she whispered, her eyes glowing with excitement. "We cannot change evolution as a whole, but we can set it back on the path it should have taken if we had not been betrayed and had to hide our true natures. The evolution of the Genesis Society was the rise of the Vârcolac. Anakatrine set us back on that path three thousand years ago. Now it's time to win the war against our enemy and to be what we always should have been."

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Joshua arrived as the others were packing up the camp. Agony was currently trying to track down the rendezvous point the younger members of the pack had disappeared to, and Louis had returned back to his coven. Dara wasn't sure whether Louis would come with them. There was a good chance that now he was back with his coven he would remain there, burying his head in the sand. Part of her couldn't blame him, there were many who would prefer to pretend that whoever was out there would leave them alone. However, her gut instincts told her that no one would escape the coming conflict unscathed. When it all came to a head, everyone would need to pick a side and hope their choice was right.

"You appear to be creating havoc, Dara Romanov." Joshua managed a brief smile, despite the fact he could see the gravity of what had occurred in the campground and could still detect the lingering scent of dead vampires.

She gave him an answering smile, strangely comforted to have someone Caleb trusted so much around them. "I am merely the cleaner, Joshua, and hopefully, the one who can help minimise any further disruption before we leave here."

"Where is the infamous Kothari?"

She nodded her head to the left though she didn't take her gaze from his. "He is due back shortly, and you will need to remain until he has had a chance to get a sense of you and reassure himself that Pippa will be safe with you. His vampiric side is in dominance and Agony has taken a special interest in the child."

"That should be interesting," he drawled, though from his expression it was evident that Joshua would have preferred not to hang around for any length of time. He didn't wait for a response, turning and heading over to Dante and Mila who were helping Natalia pack the last of Ava's possessions.

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Dante paused and glanced around at his approach, nodding his head in greeting. "Joshua. You haven't officially met Mila, yet," he said. "Mila, this is Joshua."

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Joshua knew enough about Dante's friend to be aware of her unconventional sight. He made sure he made enough of a subtle movement so she could see him. "It's a pleasure to finally meet you, Mila, though I confess I would have preferred to under less chaotic circumstances."

She smiled at his words and placed some clothes into the canvas pack she was holding. "I've been trying to convince Dante to introduce us for months but he was being his usual overprotective self. Thankfully we appear to have addressed that issue now, though for how long he'll be able to contain himself, I have no idea."

Her tone was affectionate as her friend snorted beside her, her unseeing gaze turning back to Joshua. "It would be best to familiarise you with Pippa and Ava before Agony returns. If he sees they are comfortable around you it will make him less volatile."

Joshua had experience of dealing with out of control vampires. It hadn't been that long ago he'd had to help one of the most dangerous vampires in existence save Pietro de la Rios' life - Demetri Bozic. He was fairly certain if he could survive the Ancient vampire then he could survive a meeting with Kothari, but it was prudent to have the meeting go as smoothly as possible. He crouched down beside Ava and the little she-wolf, talking in a hushed voice as he began to assist them with their packing. They were initially reticent with him but then they relaxed, Pippa asking questions about the aeroplane they would soon be travelling on.

They were almost packed up by the time the volatile Vârcolac returned to the campground alone. It was Joshua's first sight of the boy, and he couldn't hide the shiver that went down his spine as Kothari strode towards them. He literally oozed menace, though when he paused to glance at Dara some of the menace evaporated.

"You didn't find them?" There was no denying the surprise in Dara's voice.

"The she-wolf is impressive," her packmate replied, respect lacing his tone. "By the time I found their trail, she had backtracked so many times with many false starts it would have taken me a few hours to work out where she actually went. I decided we did not have that amount of time to waste, and as the vampires on this continent are inferior, the pack was safe from detection. Let their Alpha take care of her own pack. The she-wolf is more than capable of protecting them until the Alpha returns."