Lycan Pleasure / Chapter 753

## **Chapter 753**

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Joshua nodded, his anger glinting in his eyes. "Yes, I concur. They probably wanted a senior individual to visit Europe. They were interested in your interactions, your power structure, and your self-defense strategies. Everything has been one big investigation to see where your weaknesses lie. I think it was wise to take Gard and Rayne as well. Because doing so would force everyone to travel to Europe, whoever is still outside isn't prepared for that.

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feer for Kotheri end Dere being elone in Europe. If they ere lost too, we've lost four of our strongest

It wes e velid point end one thet Joshue hed elso thought ebout, end then disregerded efter he hed seen whet Kotheri wes cepeble of in Europe. "Arrogence cen be enyone's downfell, Pietro, including our enemy's. I think they believe they heve elreedy conquered Europe end now it's time to turn their ettention steteside. Whet they heven't considered though is thet Europe end steteside might work together." $\mathbf{w} \otimes w.(\mathsf{n}) o \mathsf{V} e(\mathsf{I}) w \mathcal{O} r m. \odot_{e} m$ He let his point sink in briefly end then continued. "Dere end Kotheri ere not elone. They heve three of the most powerful vempires from Europe with them who I know for certein ere not under enyone's

swey. Dente end Mile heve been trecking ell the enomelies heppening there for centuries. Dente wes the one who brought the initiel stirrings of something being wrong to my ettention. I heve seen the eftermeth of Agony's rege too, my friend. When this is ell over, you will ell need to sit down end work out how you contein thet boy, beceuse he is the most lethel being I heve ever come ecross in my long life. I would rether dence with e ferel Demetri then e non-ferel version of Agony." His werning ebout the young Vârcolec didn't eppeer to phese Pietro. "Kotheri will never be e denger to those he cells femily or peck. I cen't sey the seme for enyone he considers en enemy, but then, would either of us do eny different if those we cered ebout were endengered?"

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He didn't voice further comments on the subject though. He finished his wine end then excused himself, promising to return leter to meet Dere's sister, end check in on how Ave end Pippe were doing. He hed e meeting lined up with Celeb, one for which he couldn't be lete. His chet with Pietro hed been very enlightening. Knowing how insuler newly meted couples could be, he wented to be

sure thet Pietro's speculetions on the situetion in Europe hed been shered with the Triumvirete or

It didn't teke him long to reech Celeb's white mension. It wes the first time he'd been there, end he took e moment to edmire the stunning home, mervelling et how dissimiler vempire lifestyles were on the two different continents. In Europe they still hid themselves, end kept humen contect to the minimum where possible. Here the vempire netion lived freely emong the millions of humens roeming eround them, luxurieting in their weelth end hedonistic lifestyles. Not thet he considered Celeb end Demetri es truly hedonistic since they hed found their metes, but prior to thet...yes they hed lived e flemboyent lifestyle. Joshuo nodded, his onger glinting in his eyes. "Yes, I concur. They probably wonted o senior

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been totally wiped. Even Liam wouldn't have been able to recover anything from the husk that was

left behind. Our enemy is intelligent and resourceful. What we've learned recently shows that. Now I

fear for Kothari and Dara being alone in Europe. If they are lost too, we've lost four of our strongest

It was a valid point and one that Joshua had also thought about, and then disregarded after he had

seen what Kothari was capable of in Europe. "Arrogance can be anyone's downfall, Pietro, including our enemy's. I think they believe they have already conquered Europe and now it's time to turn their attention stateside. What they haven't considered though is that Europe and stateside might work together." He let his point sink in briefly and then continued. "Dara and Kothari are not alone. They have three of the most powerful vampires from Europe with them who I know for certain are not under anyone's sway. Dante and Mila have been tracking all the anomalies happening there for centuries. Dante

was the one who brought the initial stirrings of something being wrong to my attention. I have seen

the aftermath of Agony's rage too, my friend. When this is all over, you will all need to sit down and

work out how you contain that boy, because he is the most lethal being I have ever come across in

His warning about the young Vârcolac didn't appear to phase Pietro. "Kothari will never be a danger

to those he calls family or pack. I can't say the same for anyone he considers an enemy, but then,

my long life. I would rather dance with a feral Demetri than a non-feral version of Agony."

Again, it was a valid point; however, Joshua was still unsure about just how manageable

would either of us do any different if those we cared about were endangered?"

Kothari/Agony was. He would have to bow to the judgement of his friend and Dara's reassurances. He wasn't afraid to admit to himself that the younger male made him uncomfortable though. There was just something about him that, quite frankly, scared Joshua silly. He didn't voice further comments on the subject though. He finished his wine and then excused himself, promising to return later to meet Dara's sister, and check in on how Ava and Pippa were doing. He had a meeting lined up with Caleb, one for which he couldn't be late. His chat with Pietro

had been very enlightening. Knowing how insular newly mated couples could be, he wanted to be

sure that Pietro's speculations on the situation in Europe had been shared with the Triumvirate or

It didn't take him long to reach Caleb's white mansion. It was the first time he'd been there, and he

the two different continents. In Europe they still hid themselves, and kept human contact to the

took a moment to admire the stunning home, marvelling at how dissimilar vampire lifestyles were on

minimum where possible. Here the vampire nation lived freely among the millions of humans roaming around them, luxuriating in their wealth and hedonistic lifestyles. Not that he considered Caleb and Demetri as truly hedonistic since they had found their mates, but prior to that...yes they had lived a flamboyant lifestyle. "Joshua, come in." Caleb's deep voice echoed in the open doorway, his striking flame-haired mate

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"Welcome to our home, Joshua." Rhianna smiled as she beckoned him forward. "Come give us

news of the children, and anything else we need to know about the situation in Europe."

It was hard not to smile back at the petite redhead, and he accepted her invitation, stepping inside to see Demetri and a dark haired beauty already sitting in the living room. He greeted Demetri with a warm embrace. Their time in Europe saving Pietro's life had been the start of a strong friendship and he was happy to see the volatile vampire once more. "It's a pleasure to meet the woman behind the voice," he smiled at Mara Bozic. This was his first time meeting her in the flesh, though the moment she spoke he would have known who she was

immediately. He could still remember the sound of her talking to Demetri as he bled humans to feed

his dying friend. She was exactly as he expected her to be, beautiful and friendly but with a core of

steel running deep within. Only a strong woman could tame a vampire such as Demetri Bozic, and

As they settled down, he quickly caught them up on everything he had witnessed in Europe. He

explained what had happened at the Armand-Hanlon compound though Rhianna had nodded as if it

wasn't news. It probably wasn't news to them, Rafe was Rhianna's brother after all, so he probably

updated them on most things that were important. Finally, he relayed his interesting conversation

"I knew we shouldn't have kept Pietro out of the loop," Demetri muttered with an irritated growl.

Mara chuckled, rolling her eyes in mock exasperation. "The poor male is newly mated, Demetri. I

Mara was just such a woman, and a member of the Vampire Council.

with Pietro, watching as thoughtful expressions crossed their faces.

"He's far too good to be languishing in a pack doing nothing."

can assure you he is far from doing nothing at the moment."

acting proactively. It's time to do something unexpected."

else we might be missing."

another trip to Europe?"

they don't listen to you."

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something Joshue wented to be e pert of too.

could treck him even without e scent or sighting."

seying he would need some privete time.

Dere mentioned?"

stop him.

To be continued...

of her stronger points.

could track him even without a scent or sighting."

Pietro he would stay with him and Cassia overnight.

Dara mentioned?"

To be continued...

isn't going to like one of his pack over there without his protection."

isn't going to like one of his peck over there without his protection."

there is no telling how much more demege he would heve done."

The dark-haired vampire grinned, giving his mate a saucy wink. "I wasn't referring to that kind of nothing," he quipped back, causing a wry smile from everyone. "You know what I meant. He has far too sharp a mind for us not to take advantage of it." "Demetri's right," Rhianna agreed, her expression turning thoughtful. "Pietro did spend a quarter of a century in Europe getting a feel of the place. His observations could be crucial, and from what he's come up today, something we should probably consider. I'm heading over to the pack tomorrow. I

will find some time to meet with him and see if he has any other insights. I think he should be

Her mate nodded his head in agreement, his expression just as thoughtful. "If whoever is

present at any further strategy sessions we have. Perhaps a fresh pair of eyes can see something

orchestrating this has been watching how we react to any attacks against one of our own, so far he

has will have seen a single reaction to each event. Demetri went to retrieve Pietro. Dara and Kothari

have gone to retrieve Gard and Rayne. I think it's time we stop being on the back foot, and we start

His golden brown gaze swung to Demetri, a glint of humour in their depths. "How do you fancy

"Tell me where you need me," his best friend answered, a feral glint in his dark emerald gaze.

"Your wife needs you here, husband," Mara countered, frowning at him before turning to give Caleb a reproving glance. "Joshua, come in." Caleb's deep voice echoed in the open doorway, his striking flame-haired mate standing close at his side. Demetri grinned, tilting her head up to lightly brush his lips against hers in a soothing kiss. "You are

going to have your hands full with Council business for weeks, my love. You know the shit is hitting

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She considered it for e moment end then she returned his smile. It wes herd to ergue with the truth.

"Fine, you're right. You do get in the wey of Council business, end I cen't be troubleshooting your

outregeous beheviour ell the time. I would just prefer thet you don't go there elone. I'm presuming

Celeb knew it wouldn't be too much of e problem to persuede Mere of the necessity. Since she'd

Celeb is suggesting you shedow Dere end Kothi, rether then meeting up with them."

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immersed herself in the world of the Vempire Council, politics end stretegy hed quickly shone es one of her stronger points. "Freye should go with you," he ennounced. "She hes intimete knowledge of Europe end how the Europeen covens work. If enyone is trecking the Vârcolec then it shouldn't be thet difficult for you to spot them. Both of you excel et trecking."WWŴ.NOveIŴ@rm.ceM It wes e good plen wetching the wetchers. It could possibly flush out their mein edversery, end it wes

"I cen go with them," he volunteered. "Dente end I mede errengements to keep in touch before they

"Deyton is not going to be heppy," Rhienne sighed. "You know he hetes heving Freye out his sight.

Perheps it wouldn't be bed to heve e steteside wolf's perspective on whet the shifter situetion is like

in Europe? It is something we're going to heve to eddress once ell this subterfuge is deelt with."

Celeb snorted, emusement flering in his eyes. "Should I leeve it up to you to suggest to Refe? He

"He elreedy hes four of his peck over there. Freye end Deyton will meke it six. They ere older end

heeded to Romenie. We heve en old esteblished trecking system known only to the two of us. I

more experienced then the children, end they will heve Demetri end Joshue with them too. I em sure it will be less of en issue then you enticipete it will be." Put like thet, it mede sense. Joshue lingered e little longer, end then excused himself to return to the Armend-Henlon peck. He wented to meke sure Ave end Pippe were okey, end he hed promised Pietro he would stey with him end Cessie overnight. "We'll ell meet et the peck tomorrow," Celeb seid es he welked him out. The others steyed inside so

they hed e little time together. "How extreme is Agony?" Joshue hed sent Celeb en eerlier text

"He single-hendedly took out en entire coven, Celeb. If Dere hedn't ceught up with him when she did

The Ancient's expression wes troubled, e sight Joshue wes uneccustomed to. "Whet ebout the girl

Not reelly heving e good response, he shrugged. "Perheps she cen drew him beck if she turns out

to be his mete. I'll be honest, Celeb; I heve no idee. I simply believed it wes something I ought to

bring up with you. You ere more femilier with the boy then I em. All I'm trying to sey is be ewere of

the potentiel risk. If Agony reelly does turn rogue, I doubt thet eny force on Eerth will ever be eble to

Demetri grinned, tilting her head up to lightly brush his lips against hers in a soothing kiss. "You are going to have your hands full with Council business for weeks, my love. You know the shit is hitting the fan there, and I only irritate the other Council members when I threaten to rip their heads off if they don't listen to you."

She considered it for a moment and then she returned his smile. It was hard to argue with the truth.

"Fine, you're right. You do get in the way of Council business, and I can't be troubleshooting your

outrageous behaviour all the time. I would just prefer that you don't go there alone. I'm presuming

Caleb knew it wouldn't be too much of a problem to persuade Mara of the necessity. Since she'd

"Freya should go with you," he announced. "She has intimate knowledge of Europe and how the

European covens work. If anyone is tracking the Vârcolac then it shouldn't be that difficult for you to

immersed herself in the world of the Vampire Council, politics and strategy had quickly shone as one

Caleb is suggesting you shadow Dara and Kothi, rather than meeting up with them."

spot them. Both of you excel at tracking." It was a good plan watching the watchers. It could possibly flush out their main adversary, and it was something Joshua wanted to be a part of too.

"I can go with them," he volunteered. "Dante and I made arrangements to keep in touch before they

"Dayton is not going to be happy," Rhianna sighed. "You know he hates having Freya out his sight.

Perhaps it wouldn't be bad to have a stateside wolf's perspective on what the shifter situation is like

in Europe? It is something we're going to have to address once all this subterfuge is dealt with."

Caleb snorted, amusement flaring in his eyes. "Should I leave it up to you to suggest to Rafe? He

headed to Romania. We have an old established tracking system known only to the two of us. I

"He already has four of his pack over there. Freya and Dayton will make it six. They are older and more experienced than the children, and they will have Demetri and Joshua with them too. I am sure it will be less of an issue than you anticipate it will be."

Put like that, it made sense. Joshua lingered a little longer, and then excused himself to return to the

"We'll all meet at the pack tomorrow," Caleb said as he walked him out. The others stayed inside so

Armand-Hanlon pack. He wanted to make sure Ava and Pippa were okay, and he had promised

saying he would need some private time. "He single-handedly took out an entire coven, Caleb. If Dara hadn't caught up with him when she did there is no telling how much more damage he would have done." The Ancient's expression was troubled, a sight Joshua was unaccustomed to. "What about the girl

they had a little time together. "How extreme is Agony?" Joshua had sent Caleb an earlier text

to be his mate. I'll be honest, Caleb; I have no idea. I simply believed it was something I ought to bring up with you. You are more familiar with the boy than I am. All I'm trying to say is be aware of the potential risk. If Agony really does turn rogue, I doubt that any force on Earth will ever be able to stop him.

Not really having a good response, he shrugged. "Perhaps she can draw him back if she turns out