

Chapter 205

"Vampires!" Conri yelled over mind link to Delta team, Alpha Ulric, and Beta Walter.

"We're coming," everyone said over mind link.

Conri alerted the patrolmen but told them to stay at their posts and keep watch in case vampires attacked from other areas.

The Delta team guards closed in on Thea and the girls.

"No, guys," Thea said over mind link. "There's someone who needs help. I can feel it."

"Thea, we're almost to the border," Alaric said. "Your necklace is glowing. We should turn back. At least wait for backup."

"It's okay," Thea said. "There's no ill will." Thea crouched down, the girls slid off her back, and she shifted back to her human form. "I'm going," Thea said out loud.

Caleb growled.

"Come with me if you want," she said. "Girls, stay behind the wolves." She walked toward the pull. "I'm here!" Thea called out. "It's Thea. I'm coming!"

The whole pack felt something supernatural try to cross the border into their land, but the forcefield acted as a barrier. Thea felt the exact location it tried to cross over.

"So that's what it does," Thea said. She looked where she felt it and saw someone off in the distance. Her eyes trained in on him.





"It's Xavier," Thea whispered, shocked.

"I thought he was supposed to be dead," Conri said in mind link.

"They lied?" Alaric said in mind link.

"Garret didn't lie. He believed he was dead," Thea said, thinking. "That's why I didn't recognize the presence. My necklace is glowing because he's a vampire. He did die. You have to die to become a vampire. Goddess, can't you smell him? He smells like death."

"Then he's a newborn, and he's going to rip us to shreds," Kai said over mind link.

"No, he won't," Thea said. "He can't penetrate the forcefield."

Thea hurried and reached the border, wolves pacing around her. She looked into Xavier's eyes. The irises were red.

"Kill me," Xavier said. He fell to his knees. "Please." He was filthy, caked in dirt. He started whispering. It sounded like a mantra he'd been chanting for hours.

"Xavier," Thea said. "Did you know you would turn? Did you do this on purpose?" Thea said.

Xavier shook his head. "Sometimes, I'd take vampire blood in the city. It's a high. Like a drug. I forgot about it. I didn't think it would still be in my system. I didn't expect to have my canines ripped out. I didn't expect to die. I didn't plan anything. I don't want this. Please, kill me. I can't do it myself."

Thea felt into him. She had never sensed a vampire. He was different for sure. He didn't feel like a werewolf. A small amount of Life magic



permeated Xavier. She couldn't sense much else to him. No heartbeat, no pulse. She couldn't even sense brainwaves in him. It was like he was dead, but the Life magic was animating him.

Was that what vampires were? Dead things utterly sustained by Life magic? Did they feed on Life magic? Thea knew there was power in blood. The oath ceremony had shown her that. Vampires must absorb the Life from the blood when they feed.

She could tell Xavier needed more of the Life magic. He would need to feed to build it up.

She wondered if he could feed on Earth energy. The Earth was alive, after all. She could funnel it to him. Then she had the thought that maybe that's why vampires had stolen goddess-gifted wolves in the past. She shivered.

Thea felt into Xavier's thoughts and intentions. He didn't intend for this to happen. He wanted to die. He was terrified that he wouldn't be able to stop himself from feeding. The Need was so powerful. He couldn't handle killing another person.

"Why did you come to me?" Thea said.

"I couldn't risk walking through my pack lands," Xavier said, looking down. "There are too many people to feed from. I don't want to hurt anyone else. The people I hurt shouldn't have to see me again. I know I hurt you too, but you're the strongest wolf I know. Please. I need you to kill me. My father shouldn't have to kill his son twice."

"When did you turn?" Thea said after a moment.

"As far as I can tell, yesterday."



"Three days from when you died," Thea said. "It shouldn't have taken that long. You must have only had a trace of it in your system."

Xavier nodded.

"Why didn't you feed on any of the animals in the woods?" Thea said.

"I didn't want to add to my strength in case instinct makes me fight to survive. I just want you to kill me."



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