

Chapter 305

Mac took the news the way he did everything, in stride. He knew it had to be true because it was Demetri who was regaling him with the knowledge. His faith in his friend was absolute. It was the only thing he could be totally sure of in his life. "Do they wish to reinstate this ancient royal hierarchy?" he asked curiously. *www.noVe1w©©mm.Č0Mf*

Demetri laughed. "Quite the opposite, my friend. They wish to live their lives on the sidelines, enjoying the peace they craved so badly long ago. But to do that they must nudge our people in the right direction. The first steps have been taken and change is coming, but they need good people to help create the world they envision."

"Fuck me!" Pietro exclaimed loudly jumping up from his perch, his hazel eyes going wide with shock. "It's Caleb and Annie, isn't it?"

Demetri's complete loyalty to the other Ancient and his mate was renowned. There was no one else in their world the Ancient respected more, no one else he would follow. Putting two and two together had turned out to be easier than he'd anticipated.

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Demetri's slow nod confirmed the identity of the royal couple. "The Guardian survived the cull at the time, as did the first hybrid child," he told them gravely. "They are now mated and live within the Armand-Hanlon pack, which brings us to the reason why I've sought you out, Mac."

Mackenzie waited silently, digesting the news and mulling things over slowly as he waited to hear what else was to come. He would have to be very careful with how he proceeded. He had no doubt Demetri would try to take his head if he made the wrong move. Pietro was an Elder too, a couple of hundred years younger than himself but he no doubt had strong skills to be travelling with his friend.

"There was an incursion recently against the Armand-Hanlon pack," Demetri continued. "The consensus is it was instigated in Europe and has something to do with the recent births of a number of hybrid children. This is unacceptable. No harm can be allowed to come to the children; they are our future, our most precious treasure. Pietro has been tasked to try and infiltrate this shadowy body who would try to hurt them. You, Mac, are being asked to protect them as they grow."

It was the last thing Mac had expected and his surprise clearly showed on his face before he could mask his expression. "You want me to be a babysitter?"

Demetri laughed at his dry tone. "Not as such. They have an entire pack and half the stateside vampires to babysit them on a daily basis. No, the triumvirate wish you to head an elite team of guardians they intend to resurrect from the past."

He rose and paced across the clearing, tensing slightly as he scented the night air before he relaxed and returned to his seat. "The Praetorians were once the queen's elite guard. She disbanded them when she raised the first vampire council. If she hadn't maybe she would have survived what was to come, but the decision was made at the time and it proved fatal.

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They were unknown to anyone who wasn't in their ranks with the exception of the triumvirate. The same restrictions would be in place this time around. The pack would know about you but not who you are. The children would be unaware of your presence."

Mac shot a pointed look in Pietro's direction. "Is he supposed to be my first recruit?"

Pietro looked stunned at the prospect, glancing from Demetri to Mac and back again. No one had said anything to him about being part of some secret organisation when he'd been asked to take on his current mission.

"Pietro will be loosely aligned with The Praetorians though not a full member. His own task is vital, so we need him in place as soon as possible. He will report to you anything he discovers and you will then update the triumvirate. It's an added cloak of secrecy to protect them and the children should Pietro be discovered."

The clearing fell silent as both vampires mulled over Demetri's words. Pietro had no issue with anything he'd heard. Caleb had come to him, placed his trust in him, and pissed off Andrei big time when he'd stolen him from tending bar. His amusement alone had been enough to make him want this mission. He so enjoyed seeing Andrei having to back down when he didn't want to. It was one of his favourite pastimes.

And he adored the wolves. He knew his views on Weres went against the grain for most of his kind but he couldn't help it. When Loretta had come into Andrei's life, it had set the Ancient's head spinning. She had saved Andrei's life as surely as if she'd taken a sword aimed at his head. For that she would always have Pietro's allegiance as would any child of hers.

Loretta had taught him that wolves had a fierce nature, steadfast loyalty(.) and were sassy as hell. He loved all those character traits, hell he might even end up with a wolf bitch as his mate too one of these days. Stranger things had happened. *wwww.noVeLŴorm.com*