

Chapter 693

"Thank you for not giving up on me, Liam. For believing in me when I doubted myself. Fate blessed me when it chose you for my mate. I will do my utmost to be everything you ever dreamed of."

"Silly," he chuckled, kissing the side of her neck as he gathered her close. "You already are and always were, Thereasa. With you I am complete and I can't wait to spend the rest of my existence with you. Thank you for trying to kill me."

"Liam!" She groaned as he brought that up, shame running through her at the mere mention of it. She tried to hide her face but he wouldn't allow her to, tilted her chin up so their eyes could meet.

"Do not hide from the past, love. It is what brought you into my life and what helped us learn that the Vârcolac were immune to the toxin. In a roundabout way, it was also what pointed towards the antidote for Amort too. It happened and it's unescapable, but we can look to the good that came of it and not to the misguided thoughts that created the situation."*www.novelform.com*

"You have a novel way of looking at things, my mate," she sighed, a half-smile curving her lips. "I will try to see things from your perspective. I guess old habits die hard sometimes."

He rolled over on top of her once more, his body hardening as he rubbed against her. "I could always think of novel ways to re-educate you when you have a lapse..." He gave her his best leer and she burst out laughing.

"I'd hold that thought if I were you. If my newly reacquired senses are correct, I think we may have some early morning visitors."

"What the hell? Who would be calling at this time of the morning? It's barely dawn..." Liam's grumble came to a halt as he scented their visitors, his gaze swinging away from the bedroom door and back to his mate. "Are you okay with this?"

Reasa sat up reaching for a dressing gown and sliding it on. "I think I need this, Liam. We need to know if this is going to work."

The soft tap on the door interrupted them, and Liam shrugged into a pair of silk PJ bottoms as it swung open.

"Hope you two are decent," Cassia called out a bare second before her head peeked around the door. She was smiling and looked slightly tousled, but her body language was completely relaxed. "Sorry for the early hour but Pietro was being a complete pain. He insisted we come over to see how Reasa was."

*www.NovEworm.čc(m)*

It was all the woman in question could do not to gasp in astonishment as the door opened wider and the other couple entered. Pietro's mismatched gaze went immediately to hers, and she wondered what he was thinking behind the carefully neutral expression on his face.

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"Liam...would you and Cassia mind?"

Her mate shot her a perturbed glance, but she smiled at him to reassure him. With a pointed look at Pietro who smiled innocently, Liam allowed himself to be escorted from the room by Cassia.*www(w).nOvrêlw@mm.coM*

"He won't harm her..." she heard the blonde Vârcolac say as the door closed behind them and she was left alone with Pietro, who remained where he had stopped in the room.

"Are you well?" he asked, when the silence lengthened.

Reasa nodded, unsure what to say to the vampire who had almost died twice because of her actions. In her mind she could still hear his voice in the forest, but she didn't dare hope that he had come to repeat those words.

"You were human. You knew that shot would have been fatal. Why did you do it, Thereasa?" There was honest confusion in his voice, a need for understanding in his eyes.

"I couldn't allow you to die because of my actions," she answered, fighting to keep her voice from shaking from the wealth of emotions that were suddenly building up within her. "I erred in Europe and you suffered something so horrific that no one should ever have had to suffer. Whether or not it was I who administered the Amort was a moot point. I was in charge of that mission and you almost lost your life because of my mistake. I could not allow that to happen a second time."

His eyes pinned her so she couldn't look away, his expression one she couldn't quite make out. "You weren't running to Michael for rescue last night, were you? You were trying to save the lives of your people even though your own immortality had been stripped from you." He paused, taking a few steps closer to the bed. "You knew Michael was here to kill you, didn't you?"

"What is one life when a thousand could possibly be saved?" she asked, her hand touching the cover, inviting him closer. "Would you not have done the same thing, Pietro de la Rios?"

Yes, he would have, if that had been the only option open to him. Staring down at Reasa, he could see that she had honestly believed that had been her only choice, and he felt a kinship with her that he'd never felt before. She was what he knew, a fierce vampire willing to lay down her life for her people. Yes, she had made mistakes and he had paid for some of them, but deep in her heart, she was of his heart and mind. She would die for those under her protection, or those she classed as being hers to protect.

He took the two final steps to the bed, sitting down on the edge, as he kept their gazes locked. "I hated you so much," he ground out, his voice rough with emotion. "You knew that and yet you still threw yourself in front of a bullet meant for me. Do you have any idea how raw it scrapes the inside of your soul to know the person you have hated most in this world would die for you?"

"I will answer that should Michael ever choose to die for me," she replied, a poignant smile on her face because she knew that day would never come. Michael's soul was lost forever and she would rip his head off before she ever allowed him to try to redeem himself in her eyes. She wondered if that was how the vampire watching her felt...if he wished she hadn't acted as she had.

"My soul has been crying out since that day we met in Europe, Thereasa," Pietro whispered. "It has shrieked and raged. It has demanded vengeance and retribution. That agony almost lost me Cassia, and despite mating with her, it still cried out. I didn't think it would ever stop, not as long as you walked this planet. But...last night as I held you, as your blood coated my hands and I listened to your heart slow and felt your breath stutter against my neck...my soul shrieked once more and it had everything to do with you. It cried out No. It wept for the fragile human woman who would give her life for me knowing I hated her. You have no debt left to repay me, Reasa. I forgive you."

The entire time he spoke her tears fell and she didn't try to hide them. Though he cried his own tears and his voice was raw with his emotions, there was such peace on his face. "I'm sorry, Pietro, so very sorry for the hurt I have brought to you." She reached out tentatively, touching the scar on his cheek when he didn't pull away.

He gave a shaky laugh, clearly trying to lighten the moment. "Cassia is very partial to my scars," he admitted with a small smile. "And they freak the vamps out at the Dive which is also a lot of fun."