

Chapter 717

Dara made a choked sound, confusion crossing her face at the fear she saw on Joshua's. How could they know about Kothari? It didn't make sense. "The what? I don't understand what you mean. You've seen him? When? What direction did he go in?" If they'd seen him then she had to get moving, had to start tracking...

Joshua shook his head, his hand clenching in a fist to stop from reaching for his phone to call Dante. He needed more information and Dara had that knowledge. The question was, how much should he reveal to her? He knew she could probably dig deeper into his mind and find the information, but she'd appeared satisfied with finding Dante that she hadn't gone any deeper. There was still the possibility he could keep Mila's identity a secret, but did he really need to? Dante would feel betrayed if revealed her existence to anyone. He would never trust him again...

"Just tell me what you feel comfortable with, Joshua."

Dara's quiet words made him feel ashamed that she had trusted him and he wasn't returning that trust. "It's not that I don't want to tell you, Dara, it's just...it's not my story to tell."

"I understand. Believe me, I was in two minds about telling you about Kothari, so I do understand. However, I do need to know what you mean by Justice Seeker. It's important to my mission."

Joshua rose and crossed to the window, staring out into the distance. Finally he turned, his gaze intent as he stared at the remarkable young woman watching him just as intently. "Let me make a call."

When she nodded, he left the apartment, putting as much distance as he could between them to ensure that his call would not be overheard. Tapping out a brief message, he waited for a response and then hit the speed dial button.

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"He's here..."

"You're sure?" Dante Castillo didn't mess around with pleasantries, his deep voice clipped and to the point.

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Joshua didn't take offence at his tone. His friend had difficulty getting privacy to talk so sometimes they had to get to the point as quickly as possible. "Yes. He's one of the Vârcolac, Dante. Dara called him Kothari, which makes him the son of Gard and Rayne. From the sound of things, he's gone rogue and he's on a mission to find his parents."

There was a long silence as the other vampire digested the information. "This Dara, she's Vârcolac too?"

Joshua nodded even though his friend couldn't see the gesture. "She's one of Alexei Romanov's daughters. She's here to try to bring Kothari home, but she's concerned and trying hard to hide it. Dara's afraid and that scares the crap out of me, because I've already seen how powerful her mental skills are. If she doesn't believe she can get through to him...Mila's vision is going to come true."

"No." Dante bit the word out before Joshua could broach the subject he was heading in, a low growl echoing down the line.

"You cannot tell her about Mila, Joshua. Find some other way to assist her, but you do not endanger Mila under any circumstances."

"Dante..."

"I said NO!"

"If Kothari is tracking his parents' steps then he's coming for Louis and by default you. That means Mila is already in danger! Don't you think it would be wiser to have someone Kothari trusts on our side? You were the one who said Mila was really shook up by the vision she had, that we need to find some way to temper the Justice Seeker."

Silence greeted Joshua's words again and, for a moment, he thought his friend was going to terminate the call, and then he heard a long, weary sigh. "I will protect her, Joshua. You do what you need to on your end and leave Mila to me. I mean it. Do not mention her to this Dara, or you and I will have a serious problem, my friend. I hope I am perfectly clear on this."

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Joshua sighed too, frustration riding him hard. He could understand his friend's need to protect the woman he loved, but he wasn't seeing the bigger picture. If he thought he could take on one of the Vârcolac, he was going to be in for a very rude shock. One that could cost him his life and possibly Mila's too.

"I think this is the wrong move, Dante, but I will abide by your decision. If you see this Kothari...do not antagonise him, and do not underestimate him. He may be but a boy to us but he is lethal from what Dara's told me. Do not allow overconfidence to cost you your life."

"Understood. Now I have to go and speak to Mila. Keep me updated on anything else you find out."

The call ended, and Joshua raked a hand through his dark blond hair. He'd hoped for another outcome but he'd have to work with what he could say as opposed to what he wanted to say. Heading back inside, he found Dara staring out the window, mirroring the position he had stood in not too long before. @ww.ñø(ν)elw.rM.cøm

"I can't tell you everything, Dara, I'm sorry. What I can tell you is that there is one among us who has foreseen the coming of one called The Justice Seeker. They have prophesied that the world will swim in blood unless one can be found who will temper his fury."

Dara watched him silently for a long moment, processing what he'd said. Annie was a seer, or rather, Anakatrine was. She'd never heard of another but then, they didn't know half of what went on in Europe. They already had plenty of indication that the European vampires had enhanced mental skills their counterparts stateside didn't pay any attention to. To find out there was a powerful seer in Europe wasn't really all that surprising.

"This seer - they are of no threat to this mission or anyone Caleb holds dear?" she finally asked, watching his expression closely. She was fairly certain of the answer but needed to ask it anyway.

"None, whatsoever."

"Okay, then for now, I don't need to know anything further about the seer's identity, Joshua. I do need to know about the vision though as it could be important. And I need to know if anyone was able to track Kothi when he landed, before he shadowed his existence. We can probably do that on the road to where you took Gard and Rayne when they arrived."

Joshua frowned, surprised she didn't want to try to track her friend from the airport. Kothari hadn't come looking for him, therefore the likelihood the other male would have found the burnt out cottage on his own appeared remote, so surely trying to trace him from the airport would have made sense? He didn't argue with her though, simply held the apartment door open and locked up behind them.

"There was no sign of Simon Ducat once he landed. It's as if he vanished into thin air."

Dara sighed quietly, not the least surprised by the news. "He did. He would have shadowed himself as soon as he was able to without anyone seeing him. He would have scented his parents there too and followed that scent. I could detect a lingering aftereffect of their passage through the airport, and Kothi's senses where they are concerned is much more attuned than mine."

She climbed back into the beat-up van, waiting for him to start the engine and head in the direction he'd taken the missing couple. "Just because you didn't see him, Joshua, that doesn't mean that Kothari did not find you and follow you to see what you knew and determine if you were a threat."