

Chapter 721

"He's been here," Dara said quietly, heading out of the trees to where Joshua waited beside his beat-up van.

He ran a hand through his dark blond hair, placing his hat back on his head after he scented the air for the hundredth time. It wasn't that he doubted her, but... "I can't scent anything."

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She gave him a small smile, and he was once again transfixed by the way her face lit up with even more beauty from that one small gesture.

"He was masking his scent. I would be astonished if you could. Where did Gard and Rayne go after they visited here?"

"They tracked Michael from here. We parted company." Joshua tried to keep his tone as neutral as possible, but he saw another twitch of her lips and knew she was aware that he was couching his words.

"You know where they went, though, don't you?"

It was pointless lying to her; he'd already seen what she was capable of. Nodding slowly, he opened the door for her to climb in. "They went to Louis' coven. That was the last anyone saw of them here, and from what I've been led to understand, they didn't advertise where they intended to go after there."

Dara hesitated as she climbed in, turned to look him in the eyes to read the truth of his words. "They did leave the coven alive?"

Joshua couldn't hide the genuine shock that rippled across his face. "Of course! While Louis isn't aligned with any of the stateside vampires per se, he does count Freya Eriksson as someone he trusts and respects. He would never do anything to bring her knocking on his door."

Dara saw only truth in his face, nodding as she closed the door and waited for him to climb in beside her. "You appear to know a lot of what goes on in Louis' coven, Joshua, especially considering you're not part of that coven. Let me guess...Dante?"

He shouldn't have laughed at her accuracy but he found himself doing so. "Has anyone ever told you that you're utterly terrifying, Dara Romanov?" His comment appeared to please her, or so he judged by the large smile that crossed her exquisite features. Ww.NoVeL@orm.com

"You're the first," she admitted. "They usually reserve comments like that for my father and uncle."

Starting the engine, Joshua headed away from the old cottage. "I can't take you all the way to Louis, but I can get you to within a few miles. I have to protect my own coven, Dara. I hope you can understand that."

"It is better that way, Joshua. I don't know how Kothi will react to a strange vampire, so it will be best if I am alone when I track him down. Your help has been immeasurable. I will be sure to relay that to Caleb when I return home."

There was no doubt in her voice that she would return home, and he hoped that would be the case. In the short time he had known Dara Romanov, Joshua had come to like her a lot, and he would hate for anything bad to happen to her on European soil. Perhaps it was time that he and his coven came out of the background. Perhaps he would have a conversation with them once he'd dropped the Vârcolac off at her destination.

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Rage...fury...the vampire rose from the forest floor, his eyes whirling crimson red as he kicked the wolf corpses in his wrath. His brother was dead, his blood now drying on the parched ground beneath his body. How the Youngling vampire had managed to best them was still a mystery, but it didn't halt the hatred that bloomed deep within the vampire's soul.

He had allowed the stinking pup to eat at his throat, the filthy animal gnawing and ripping at his flesh in an agony that was endless! All through the ordeal he had been fully alert, aware of every excruciating moment, filing away every word the Youngling spoke to the pup.

Agony he had called himself, and agony he had meted out in the shape of a filthy animal, his eyes hidden behind dark glasses, enjoying the soundless screams of the vampire being eaten alive.

The Youngling had formed a bond with the mangy animal. He had succoured it, had taken it with him to a safe haven of other wolves. While the Youngling would most likely be miles away by now, he could get his vengeance on the wolf pup. He could instil his own agony in the heart of the Youngling by ripping the heart out of his pet and all those protecting it.

He would make the Youngling rue the day he had entered his territory. Blood would flow; only this time it would be wolves' blood, and he would take his time with the little blonde wolf...he would make her scream endlessly for the Youngling who would never come to save her.

Staggering into the trees, the last of his wounds finally healing, the vampire took off towards his coven to gather his men. He could scent the wolf pack; scent the child who had gnawed at his throat. "I'm coming for you, you little bitch," he rasped out. "I'm going to swim in your fucking blood before this day is over!"

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