

Chapter 220

The triplets took Thea to their newly ready cottage.

"This is perfect," Thea said, smiling. "It's like our cabin in the woods. Our getaway spot. Even though it's within walking distance of our home, it feels like a vacation. Like it's just ours."

"We still want to take you on proper dates and vacations out of town," Alaric said. "But we have this for when we need a break."

"I love it," Thea said.

"Shall we christen it?" Conri said. He came up behind her, slid his hands around her waist, and brushed his lips across his mark.

"Mmm. Definitely," Thea said.

A while later, they lay in the new bed, resting.

"Can you believe we only have one week left of school?" Thea said. "Is it weird that I'm relieved? I just want to be able to do pack stuff twenty-four-seven. School takes up so much time."

"I've been sick of school since you stopped going," Conri said.

Kai and Alaric nodded in agreement.

"We have so much to do here," Thea said. "Speaking of things that we can't put off any longer. We need to clean up Xavier. He's disgusting. It's unfair to the guards that work down there, and he needs to be presentable whenever the Knights decide to visit. Will you help me bathe him and get him into new clothes? I assume you don't want me touching his naked body."



Conri groaned. "Ugh. You know exactly what to say to get us to do your bidding," Conri said.



"I'd like to get him talking too," Thea said.

"One step at a time," Alaric said. "Do we have industrial strength cleaner? Maybe we could put him in a bath of lye."

"I wonder what that would do to a vampire," Kai said.

On the way to the dungeon, they mind linked one of the pack house workers to bring clean clothes and the strongest soaps they had.

"Xavier, we're coming in. We're going to get you cleaned up," Thea said when they were in front of his cell. "Since you won't do it yourself," she thought. The triplets rolled their eyes and nodded in agreement.

Xavier didn't respond. Kai opened the cell, and the triplets entered. They stripped Xavier and put his soiled clothes in a trash bag.

"You don't want to keep these, do you?" Alaric said.

"No," Thea said. She took the bag, tied it, and took it to the garbage. She returned to the triplets scrubbing Xavier with soap under the running water. He lay on the shower floor, still unresponsive.

"How has he been able to stand the stench?" Conri said.

"He doesn't breathe anymore," Thea said. "I don't think he can smell."

"Lucky him," Kai said.

"We're going to need to put him in a different cell after this so this one can be cleaned," Alaric said.

"I'll get one ready," Thea said. She left.

Eventually, the water flowing down the drain turned clear. The triplets did one more round of soap and scrubbing, turned the water off, and dried Xavier with a towel.



"Bring him in here," Thea said from another cell. "Let's dress him in here so he doesn't get these clothes dirty."

They brought him into the new cell. Thea handed them the clothes, and the triplets dressed him.

"Sit him up," Thea said. They did. Thea sat next to Xavier on the cot and started funneling Earth energy into him like she'd been doing every day when she visited. She could tell it was sustaining him, but she didn't know how well without something to compare. She was pretty sure he needed real blood. "Sit on his other side. Let's try to get him to respond to something."

Alaric sat next to Xavier on the cot. Kai sat next to Thea. Conri sat on the floor in front of Thea and rested his head on her lap, rubbing her leg with his hand.

"Let's include him in some conversation," Thea said. "I've been reading to him each day. Just school stuff, studying for finals. He's been unresponsive. Maybe being clean and having physical contact will make a difference."

"What do you want to talk about?" Kai said. He held her hand.

"Have you guys thought about what you want to name our pups?" Thea said.

Conri smiled, set his chin on her knee, and looked up at her.

"If it's a girl, Princess," Conri said.

"You're ridiculous," Thea said, shaking her head. "You're going to turn her into a monster, and no man will ever live up to the expectations you set for her."

"I'm okay with that," Conri said.

Thea sighed.

"We could name her after our mothers," Alaric said.

"Or give her your maiden name, Lyall," Kai said.

"I like these ideas," Thea said.

They talked for a while until they came to a natural pause.

"How is it possible that Xavier hasn't fed?" Conri said.

"I've been funneling energy into him each day," Thea said. "He doesn't want to eat, but I don't want him to go feral and lose control. Did you know vampires are sustained entirely by magic? Specifically Life magic. I think they extract it from the blood they feed on."

"So you can keep him fed with your gift?" Kai said.

"I think he still needs blood at some point," Thea said. "But it keeps his Need at a dull roar."

"You can feel what he's feeling?" Kai said.

Thea nodded. "I think we might need to send Xavier to a vampire coven. They should be able to help him better than we can."

"No," Xavier said, his voice rough from disuse.

"What?" Thea said, surprised that he spoke. She thought he may have been too far gone, unreachable. She turned to him. He didn't move. He didn't even look at her.

"No," he said.