

Immortals

Chapter 19

Aro was worried. He sat on his throne deep within the palace that they had been living in for nearly the last twenty-five centuries. Normally, the Volturi weren't a group to be trifled with, but according to Jane and Felix, the Cullens may have passed them by. Shocked by their words, he refused to take them at face value. Instead, he used his powers. Their mouths could lie. Their minds could not. As he touched them, he saw everything that occurred.

Through Felix, he saw the horrors that befell their brethren. Through Jane, he saw even more. He first saw her grief at losing her twin. Bubbling below the surface, however, was a raging river of jealousy. She did not want to be replaced within the ranks of the Volturi Guard. She felt as though she should be given a place by Aro's side. Jane felt that she had proven her worth a thousand times over, and she was greatly insulted that Aro would want even more ... as though she weren't good enough. Mixed with her grief and jealousy was a tinge of satisfaction. Now that Alec was gone, she was the most useful weapon in their arsenal. Jane attempted to hide that thought, but Aro discovered it easily enough. Her emotions held weight though.

For a while, he had heard rumors of his old friend, Carlisle Cullen, inviting vampires into his coven. This intrigued Aro, and he naturally wanted to learn more. Carlisle had always had a personable disposition, so it was natural that he would draw others to his presence. Piecing information together from a thousand different sources, Aro began to paint a picture of what was going on in his old friend's life. He discovered that multiple members of his Coven had powers. What kind of powers they had? That answer was still a bit foggy. The way the Cullens lived usually kept them away from other wandering vampires. It appeared that Carlisle still carried the ridiculous notion that human life should be cherished. As such, his group did their best to blend into human society. That was one place most vampires didn't want to be. Because of this, second-hand knowledge about the members of his Coven was hard to come by. Aro did his best, sending investigators to places where Carlisle had been known to live recently. He even had a few humans that had spent a lot of time with the Cullens brought to Volterra where they could be interrogated using his powers. Of course, they turned into a quick snack soon after. All traces of his meddling had to be erased after all.

It wasn't until a disturbance in Carlisle's part of the world came to light that Aro finally got the information that he so sorely desired. A fiery redhead named Victoria had begun creating an army of newborns. The whole thing was a clear violation of their laws, and as such, he sent a few members of his guard down to investigate. Speaking with her over the phone, she was forced to confess everything or die right there on the spot. The Cullens, Edward's human, their powers ... She confessed everything. All she wanted in return was the opportunity to avenge her fallen mate. With a large smile on his wicked face, Aro agreed and gave her a time limit. He did, however, give his Guard strict instructions that none of the defeated Cullens were to be burned. As long as they weren't set aflame, they could be made whole again. They were to watch as the fight broke out and step in right after, killing any surviving newborns and Victoria as

well. Though it didn't seem like it, Aro still considered Carlisle to be one of his greatest friends, and he would be very displeased if something were to happen to him. The main reason why he didn't want them burnt was to bring in several members of their group. The jewel of the coven was Alice Cullen with her ability to see the future. Edward was also desired for his ability to read someone's mind from a distance, and Jasper less so. All the others were worthless to him. It was his hope that certain events would eventually bring more power to the Volturi. There were still those out there, waiting and plotting his end, making him endlessly paranoid. Sadly, it wasn't to be.

Aro shivered at what he saw in their memories. The massless black creature, tearing their bodies as easily as they tore humans. Their horrified screams as their twisted corpses were dragged into the earth. What was it? The Cullens lived there with no issues, so why would it suddenly attack his Guardsmen? The only logical explanation was that it had something to do with the Cullens. Did they bring in another member without him knowing? He was certain that it wasn't from their friends in Alaska. Victoria had gotten her information about the Cullens from the other surviving member of her former Coven. He was living with the Denali Coven and would have told her if they possessed a vampire of such terrifying power. Whatever it was, and wherever it came from, it was a threat to him. Alec was dead and destroyed. That alone was a severe blow to their security. Likewise, Demetri was also destroyed, and he was the best tracker in the world, though his skills could be replaced.

The real slap in the face was that not a single member of the Cullen clan had been injured. Had they grown in power so much right under his nose without him being any wiser? Aro needed to find out what the hell was going on in Forks, Washington. If this mystery being was indeed a vampire, Aro absolutely had to have him in his ranks. His mouth practically watered at the thought. The problem was that Jane and Felix both refused to go anywhere near the snowy forests of Forks again, and seeing that they were reluctant, it made everyone else in his Guard reluctant as well. He needed to figure this out.

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"OH!" Alice groaned, rubbing her temples. "Harry ... you bastard!"

Her head was throbbing from watching what the Volturi's response would be. Aro alone changed his plans at least a hundred times a minute as he went over the many possibilities. Jane was a complete mess. There was even a possibility that she would leave the Volturi altogether. Whatever Harry had done to them, it scared her senseless. All of it was too much for her brain to handle.

"You called?" Harry popped up out of nowhere.

"I didn't call you over here. I just called you a bastard," she groaned again, covering her eyes.

“And what did I do to deserve your ire?” Harry smiled as he flicked one of the hair spikes that were made from her pixie-cut hairdo.

“You’ve got the Volturi scurrying around like a bunch of worked-up fire ants!” she glared. “Trying to watch their decisions is like trying to stare at a strobe light. It’s killing my brain,” she said, rubbing her forehead. Harry rolled his eyes.

“So stop watching,” he told her. Alice sighed.

“Harry ... I have to keep my family safe. Watching for danger is my contribution to the family,” Alice said.

“Relax,” Harry patted her shoulder. “You’re not the only one watching them. I’m keeping a very, very close eye on them. Especially since they know about your family cohorting with a human.”

“Bella?” Alice asked, shocked. Harry nodded.

“Yep. Laurent joined the Denali Coven. Irina told him all about your family, and he told Victoria everything when she came calling. Victoria told Aro and here we are,” Harry quickly explained.

“So she’s in danger?” Alice deduced, standing up.

“Not really. As I said, I’ve been keeping an eye on the Volturi. Besides, Bella won’t be a human for much longer. Once summer ends ...” Harry left it at that. Bella was spending the summer here in Forks to enjoy her last few weeks with her father. She was also planning on visiting her mother again soon. When summer ended, she and Edward would be going off to “college”, and she would never be seen again. Harry gave it half a year before she was asking if he could somehow allow her to see her family again safely. Such was his life these days.

“I don’t know ... I don’t like not being able to see what’s going to happen,” she said reluctantly. Outside, she could hear Jasper and Emmett roughhousing in the yard.

“It’ll be fine,” Harry promised. “C’mon. Let’s go have some fun,” he told her, taking her hand.

“But Jasper will ...”

Alice immediately closed her mouth in shock as an exact duplicate of herself detached from her normal body. It was only because she was used to Harry’s craziness that she didn’t squeal in fright. “What the hell is that?” Both Alices asked at exactly the same time, turning to one another and pointing. Harry chuckled. The copy smiled at him and sat back down on the couch. Before the real Alice could say otherwise, she disappeared along with Harry.

She stopped herself from stumbling as they reappeared on the beach near his beach house. Esme was back again, tending to Bree, and Alice was scheduled to visit later in the day. It seemed Harry had sped up the plans.

“You can just make a copy of me?!” she squealed, looking at him. Harry just smiled back.

“Of course! Jasper will never know. My copies are just that good,” Harry bragged. “Right now, a copy of me is spending quality time with the Denali sisters back home in Forks. If I couldn’t make copies of myself, I probably wouldn’t be able to get anything done.” The Denali girls were just that insatiable when it came to having sex with him. “I figured we can go for a swim.”

Alice loved the beach, but sadly, she didn’t often get to go due to her aversion to sunlight. Since Harry came into their lives, obviously, things had changed. Unfortunately, she hadn’t been able to visit the beach as much as Bella or Rose. That was going to change now, she thought to herself.

“Fine. Change my clothes into a bikini,” she ordered. “Not too revealing!” she quickly added, knowing Harry’s propensity for perversion. “I am a married woman after all,” Alice teased and looked down as she felt her clothing shift. As suspected, her bikini was quite tiny, but it was more than she expected from a pervert like him. Looking up at him, she could see his eyes sparkling in the sunlight. With her binocular vision, she could see all the little speckles in his vivid, green irises. They looked like pieces of crushed gems floating in a sea of green. They were very lovely. Her eyes traveled down.

She had forgotten how good-looking he was. His body was perfect ... Beyond perfect, in fact. In her opinion, he had the best body she had ever seen. Standing there without a shirt, Alice got to take in his physical perfection up close and personal. She could see the pinkness just below his skin, his warm blood flowing through his veins. Her own eyes were growing dark. It had been a while since she had last hunted. Harry’s scent was amazing. She had no idea how she hadn’t reacted to it before. Though she didn’t need to breathe, her chest rose and fell faster and faster as she inhaled his manly scent. The smell of his blood was making the venom pool in her mouth.

“A little hungry?” he asked in a teasing manner. Alice swallowed hard and nodded, afraid to say anything out loud. Harry suddenly stepped forward and placed his hands on her sides. Her head tilted back. He was so tall, and she was so short, she thought as he lifted her body as though it weighed nothing. She continued to ascend until she was at eye level with him. “Go ahead,” he told her. “Take a bite. I won’t bite back,” he smirked.

Alice tried to fight the urge, but it was too strong. From so close, the scent was overpowering, and she could feel his wonderful heat radiating from her muscular body. She leaned in and gently caressed the side of his neck with her soft lips. There was so much venom in her mouth that she nearly choked on it. Her throat felt as though it were on fire. She needed his blood to quench the agony of the burn. Her body trembled as she opened her mouth wide. Her perfect

teeth grazed his skin, but not enough to break it. Finally, when she could last no longer, she bit down and her world exploded.