

Chapter 183

A slow smile curved over her lips even as she sighed wearily. "My children have a tendency to do things they know they shouldn't be doing. It's good to see you again, Dayton. We've missed you greatly."

He regarded her intently, his eyes devoid of all emotion. "They are curious and also very talented," he finally answered, ignoring the personal remark completely. "Your daughter asked me to teach her how to shift."

Loretta's eyebrows raised in surprise and she turned around to look at her errant children who were being remarkably silent in their uncle's arms considering the trouble they had just caused.

*w@w.n.eV.eLw.e.r.m.(c)om*

"She asked my wolf mentally," Dayton added causing her to gasp with shock, her head whipping around.

"Your wolf heard her?" she whispered.

He nodded. "And she heard me." He shifted to wolf form when he finished speaking. It had been an effort to talk to his former friend, not because he disliked her. He had only survived for as long as he had by keeping himself closed off from the past. Talking to Loretta had created the tiniest of cracks in his armour which he needed to repair. Too much had happened to assault his defences recently.

He didn't regret talking to her. She had needed to know about her daughter's abilities. He retained enough of his previous Beta instincts to feel a need to protect the vulnerable members of a pack. He had done what he had to. Now it was time to leave.

"Dayton, wait. Cedar and Aaron are here. They'd love to see you."

He hesitated again, hearing a low growl come from the blond vampire. He turned to meet cold, brown eyes that glinted with barely concealed fury. He could scent his sister on the vampire, knew that this man was her mate. He could also understand his fury. A long time ago he too had had the same instincts to protect his own mate from any harm, no matter what direction it came from.

He turned away again and streaked out of the clearing, disappearing into the trees. Dayton ran as hard and fast as he could before he was tempted to listen to Loretta, before he agreed to enter the Pack compound. Something deep within him told him he would never be the same again if he did.

He was miles away in barely a handful of minutes, a sweet scent rushing over him a moment before the sleek, black panther fell in beside him, matching his pace effortlessly. As always Rayne sensed when he was close to losing control. He hadn't seen her since she had turned up at the Gallery after Ashleigh's visit but somehow she had known that he was in need.*w@w.NoV.eLw.e.R.m.coM*

*www.Nö(v)eLworm.com*

They ran silently through the trees, Dayton working on his inner barriers methodically until he reached the spot where he had left his clothes. He shifted instantly, unashamed of his nakedness before Rayne. She watched him in panther form as he pulled on his jeans and boots before she too shifted.

He had known instantly the first time he had watched Rayne shift that she was more than what she appeared be. The simple fact that she was fully dressed after her shift was a strong indicator of that. Clothes disintegrated when a Were shifted, which was why they usually tried to undress first so they had something to change back into when they returned to human form.

Rayne's clothes didn't disintegrate, or if they did, she had some way of forming new ones when she returned to human form. He didn't know what she fully was because she only ever allowed him to scent what she wanted. He found that he didn't care either. She was no threat to him and he trusted her. She accepted him for who and what he was and he returned that trust.

Now he watched her give a long lazy stretch, her midnight black hair loose and flowing down her back. Today she was dressed in a tight red tank top which bared her midriff, a pair of black jeans and black spiked ankle boots which laced with hooks and eyes. The sun glinted off her navel piercing as she stretched. A black leather jacket graced her slender shoulders.

*(w)Ww.NoV.eLWOr(m).cO.M*

"Interesting Pack," she said softly, moving to sit on an upturned boulder as she watched him pull on his T-shirt. "Those vamps are pretty hot, all those rippling muscles and sexy growls." She reached into her jacket pocket and pulled out a hair tie. She quickly secured her hair back in a loose ponytail as she continued to watch him dress.

It was her way of letting him know that she had been around the whole time, using her hidden ability which she called shadowing. She was able to mask herself from everyone's line of sight, no matter what the species. Add to that her ability to mask her scent and she became truly invisible.

Dayton stiffened at her words, shooting her a dark look. "They're mated. One of them to my sister. I suggest you don't try and play with them."

His comment brought a short, husky laugh from her lips. "I wasn't planning to, Day. But there's no harm in window shopping. Is there? That female vamp from the other day was pretty stunning to look at."

He blinked slowly, an image of Freya's face coming to his mind unbidden. She had been flawlessly beautiful. Logically he could admit that even though she left him completely cold as a man.

All women had done so since Faith had died. He knew denying his sexual appetites was dangerous so he had come to his agreement with his wolf. The animal was allowed to rut on the night of the full moon. It could do it as often and with as many bitches as it wanted. The trade off was it became dormant the rest of the time. His human half was left alone in his solitude.

Before the vampire had lain hands on him, the only other woman to touch his human skin since Faith had died was the woman sitting before him now. Nothing was allowed to sully his memories of being with his mate. Freya Eriksson had done so and he hated her for it.

His lips twisted in a bitter smile. "Only a fool gets sucked into the shallowness of beauty."