

## Chapter 194

Her lips were so soft against his, gentle even as she teased and coaxed at him for a response he refused to give her. He wanted to weep as she did the one thing that was guaranteed to cause him the deepest agony. She took away the memory of what it felt like to have Faith's lips against his. She not only took it away but she replaced it with the memory of what her own lips felt like brushing against him. He couldn't stand it, couldn't bear the touch of her softness against him as his entire body suddenly started to register her as woman.

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"Don't." It was a whispered plea, wrenched out of the very heart of him against his will but it hung in the air between them as the vampire froze in place.

The word whispered through Freya's lust but it wasn't the word that halted her, it was the emotion within it. The lust receded slowly and she pulled back to look into a pair of blue eyes that was suddenly mirrors of untold anguish, waves of agony dancing across them. She looked into those eyes and something broke inside her. She had seen eyes with that expression before, so very long ago.

Slowly she released him and took a step back, all the while unable to look away from the pain in his expression. She had wanted to see some emotion in his eyes but now she'd achieved it she wanted it to go away. She wanted his cold, hard mask to come back because his gaze was dredging up memories she didn't want to have to explore again. She didn't want to remember looking at herself in the mirror on the day she had been turned to this life of a vampire. She didn't want to see her own agony reflected back at her the way he was now doing.

"Damn you to hell," she hissed, raw pain in her voice as she turned and vanished from the gallery, running so fast that she was miles away in a matter of seconds.

Dayton could only lean against the wall, trying to control the tremors that were wracking through his body hard. Freya had just broken him as no one else had been able to do and he was reeling from the emotions coursing through him. The agony of losing Faith was there; it always was, but now there was fresh pain, a new anguish that threatened to overwhelm him completely.

In his need to protect himself he had hurt everyone he loved. He could only imagine the pain he had put his family through and yet they had never condemned him for it. They had kept loving him, kept hoping for him to come home to them. And he had stayed away because he was too much of a coward to deal with life without Faith.

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His pain was tempered by his fury at the vampire. She had managed to break down his barriers and he hated her for it. She had made him feel again. She had touched him, sullied his memories of Faith and he knew he would hate her until his dying day for taking those precious memories from him.wWw.nô(υ)ELw@rmm.c©m

He was smart enough to know that she wasn't the only reason his barriers had crumbled. He knew Rayne had played a large part in it too, that Aaron's communications also played a role in it, that seeing the pack that morning had further weakened his shields.

But it had been the vampire's kiss that had forced him to beg and that he just couldn't tolerate. He was just a toy to her, a plaything for her to use and then discard when she became bored. Something he had said had gotten through to her. Her words sounded once more in his head and he heard the inflection of pain in them. The memory of her eyes came back to him and he focused on it; then he realised that her eyes had been a mirror of his own, full of anguish.

Dayton pushed away from the wall, his face hardening into a tight mask as he realised that something in Freya's past had hurt her as badly as Faith's death had hurt him. He was glad. He fervently hoped that her vampiric memory replayed that hurt daily and caused her pain beyond bearing.

It was a fitting punishment for what she had just done to him. He had never truly hated anyone in his life before but he did now. He hated a beautiful, feral vampire called Freya Eriksson and he wished her the damnation of hell for the rest of her long life.

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"I need you to come with me," Dayton announced, closing up the gallery and locking the door behind him.

Rayne blinked slowly, sensing that he was holding himself very tightly under control. He was so tense he was almost ready to snap, something she wasn't used to seeing in him. She wondered whether to ask and then opted not to. He would talk when he was ready.

Leaning against the side of his Jeep she watched him intently as he turned to face her. "Where are we going?"

Dayton stared at Rayne for a long moment as he worked through the chaotic thoughts in his head. He absentmindedly took in her appearance, some of the tension leaving his big body as his lips curled slightly. Her lithe form was encased in her customary black pants and boots with matching leather jacket but she'd brought a splash of colour with the jade green basque she was wearing. Her long black hair was loose today and shimmered down her back in silky waves.wWw.nôv©ℓwOrm.cOm

He was amazed to find that he was actually admiring her lush curves, was actually viewing her as the sensual woman she was. He knew whose fault that was and it only served to increase the cold rage which had been the dominant emotion he'd been feeling since Freya left the night before.

"There was a threat to your life last night," he finally answered, moving to unlock the Jeep so they could both climb in. He started the engine before he turned to look at her. Typically she was smiling softly. That was so like Rayne. He'd just told her there was a threat to her life and she found it amusing. She had no sense of self preservation sometimes. A pissed-off Ancient wasn't something to smile about; even he knew that.

He had spent most of the night lying awake, trying to decide what to do about Freya Eriksson. He knew she would be back. She was a cold-hearted bitch and she wouldn't give up her new toy until she was good and ready. That left him with few choices. He could go to Ashleigh and her mate; they could maybe talk to Freya, but there was a chance he would see her there and he wasn't ready for that.

He knew he needed some kind of protection from the Ancient. He was too isolated as he currently was, and Rayne's safety was in jeopardy too because she was isolated with him. His Beta instincts had finally kicked in and he'd realised that the only route to safety was to go pack again.