

Chapter 220

Rayne sensed new scents the instant she re-entered the Alpha's house. They were coming from the third floor so she assumed the Hanlon Alphas had arrived to welcome the new babies. She was aware of the power players in this part of the world. She always made sure she knew just who everyone was if she was going to stick around any one place for a while.

The Hanlon and Armand-Hanlon packs was very closely interwoven. Her research had told her that Rafe was an adopted brother to Jared Hanlon and he had also practically raised Jared's mate Millie when they were still human, classing her as his sister. He did have a biological sister who he had raised from and young age and viewed more as his daughter than his sibling. Rhianna Armand was now a vampire and mated to the most power Ancient to walk the planet, Caleb Cullen. She was surprised the vampires hadn't appeared yet to greet the new additions to their family.

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Practically skipping into her room, Rayne headed for the shower and stripped quickly. She tried to push Gard out of her mind as she washed quickly, erasing his scent from her body as thoroughly as she could. That was one of the downsides to unmasking their scent. Others would be able to pick it up on their skin.

It struck her that she should probably mention to Rafe that Gard was always lurking around in the forest, watching the Pack. Now she was part of the wolves she felt a pressure on her to do so. But she held back, knowing that he wasn't a danger to anyone. He had, after all, almost killed her because he had considered her to be a threat to the pack, which clearly marked his intentions as non hostile to the wolves. Still, it was strange that he hid himself from them. She wondered why that was.

"So that's what you smell like," Dayton mused from his position on her bed when she walked back into the bedroom draped in a towel.

She smiled and continued drying her hair, her eyes intent on his face which was withdrawn, hiding all his emotions. "You like?" she laughed lightly.

He frowned and sat up running a hand through his unbound hair. "You feel at home here, Rayne." It wasn't a question more of a statement. "You wouldn't unmask your scent otherwise." He appeared unhappy about it.

Chewing her inner lip, she sat down on the bed beside him. "And you don't?"

Dayton took a long time to answer, thinking through her question carefully. "It's not that," he finally sighed. "Part of me feels a connection but it's incomplete somehow. Like I have something else I need to do before I can be truly at home here. I'm leaving, Rayne."

Sadness welled up inside her, partly hers and partly his emotions which were raging wildly deep inside him. He ached to belong to the pack and yet a cold thread of hatred ran through him growing stronger with each passing moment.

"Let it go, Day," she whispered. "You've let your emotions out and that's a good thing. But don't fixate on the negative ones. They'll destroy you just as much as withholding them was destroying you."

"I can't remember what Faith's lips felt like pressed against mine anymore." It was a tortured admission, pain in every word. "She took that from me, Rayne. She laughed and she took it for no other reason than she could." His eyes were flashing with pain laced with a dark hatred when he turned to look at her.*www.n0VE/woRM.c0m*

Rayne sucked in a deep breath, touching his face gently. "She hurts too. The first time I saw her in your gallery I thought my knees would buckle at the pain she carried deep inside. I was amazed at how serene her expression was considering all I could feel coming from her. She must be a very strong woman to have walked the planet for over two thousand years with all that anguish deep inside."

"You want me to feel sorry for her?" he hissed furiously, pulling away from her touch, disbelief in his eyes.

"I want you to look at her objectively, Day. Look at what she's become. Because that is what you will become if you allow your negative emotions to take over." Rayne knew her words were harsh but he needed to hear them. "If you can't find it in your heart to pity Freya then at least try and find some understanding. Maybe understanding Freya Eriksson is what you need to finally come home."

Dayton was off the bed in an instant, fury racing through his blood as he glared down at her. He couldn't believe she was sticking up for the vampire, asking the impossible from him. "If you love her so much then you go and pity and understand her," he ground out through clenched teeth. "Just don't ask me to do so. I thought you were supposed to be my friend, Rayne."

His rejection of her caused a deep pain to settle in her heart but she held her ground. "Friends tell each other the truth even when it hurts," she answered sadly. She didn't want to hurt him and she knew she was but she had to try and stop the growing hate which was ready to consume him and turn him colder and harder than he'd ever been before.

A cold, hard mask settled over Dayton's face, reminiscent to the one he was used to showing to the world but never to her. "Friends are loyal and stand by each other no matter what," he said quietly, turning and walking out the room without a backward glance.

Rayne stared after him trying to decide whether she should follow him or give him some time to calm down. The sound of voices made her decision as the visitors began descending the stairs from the third floor. She didn't want to meet them just yet. She knew Rafe would have told the other Alphas about her and she didn't want to see their speculative glances.

Sighing she lay back on the bed and hoped that Dayton could work through his hurt and anger quickly so she could try again to break through the new barriers he was starting to wall around his heart. If he allowed the hate to fester then there was no telling what would become of him or the woman he was so focused on hating.

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Dayton was furious with Rayne, so angry that he flew out of the compound and deep into the forest. He ran until a light sheen of sweat covered his body and then he slowed down, finally coming to a standstill in a small glade. He couldn't believe she was defending the vampire, taking her side over his.

Rayne's betrayal was like a knife to his heart. She was the one person he had come to rely on to always be there for him, to stand with him through everything. And now she sided with the woman who had taken his last precious memories from him with her cold callous act. The anger and pain he felt was threatening to overwhelm him completely.

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He couldn't stand it, shifting in a blink of an eye, letting go and allowing his wolf to come out. It wasn't even a conscious decision, it just happened. He could hide within the wolf, crouch down so low, cut himself off so completely that the animal became almost whole, just shy of being completely Rogue.

The large brown wolf howled into the forest and took off at full speed, running faster and faster away from the Pack, away from Rayne. In a matter of moments it was miles away. Sensing the end of the forest approaching it veered left, towards the more mountainous region it didn't normally traverse.

The need to run was a compulsion. The wolf couldn't have stopped even if it tried. And then a scent hit it and it was like having its heart ripped out. Cherry blossom, so sweet, so tantalising, so deadly.

The wolf howled loudly and the man crashed forward to take control. His wolf howled again, struggling to stay the dominant mind but he wouldn't allow it, snarling as the scent overwhelmed him and he changed direction heading straight for the woman who owned that scent. Blue eyes flashed with death, the need to rip and claw and destroy the only thing on his mind.

The fury within made him careless, less observant. The old pit trap was upon him before he could halt his forward movement. The wolf's howl turned to one of utter agony as Dayton tripped the trap and began falling downward into the twenty foot deep pit with large, razor sharp spikes embedded firmly in the ground.