

Chapter 227

For two thousand years she'd done this to her brother, broken Nors' heart over and over again with her actions. She would do so again but it would be the last time he would ever have to suffer the misery she put him through. If she could only tell him that she understood now, how sorry she was for every tear she had ever caused him to shed over her.

If he only could know that just once she had known the same anguish, the same unrelenting torture of knowing someone she loved was slowly killing themselves, slowly wilting under the pressure of emotions they had hidden from for so long.

Listening to Dayton cry, seeing the agony she had put on his face by making him face up to what he'd been hiding from for so long, was the cruellest punishment ever, one that would haunt her until her dying day. But she had to do this for him, had to drag him back to living no matter what it cost her personally. It would only hurt for a short period of time. She could endure it.

He had stopped weeping by the time she returned to the room, a cup of coffee in both hands. Her face was as serene as ever, her gaze sweeping over the destruction written across his face.

"She couldn't help it," she said quietly. "I'm sure Faith would have preferred to remain with you rather than leave the mortal world as early as she did."

He took a deep breath, kept his gaze averted from hers even as he reached for the proffered coffee. "I know," he answered hoarsely, amazed at the weight that felt lifted from his shoulders.

"Your heart hasn't been ready to face it, Dayton. That is why it has taken you so long to admit to your feelings. You can't heal until you admit to the hate, understand the foolishness of it and let Faith go. She is dust. You can deny it all you want but it doesn't make it any less true. Faith is dead and she is never coming back. Accept it."

Dayton turned his eyes to hers, was once more struck by the red ring of fire around her irises. He knew he had just humiliated himself in front of the one person who couldn't even begin to understand what a true emotion was. And yet she'd said all the right things, pushed through his very last barrier until he was raw with no place left to hide. If she was so unfeeling then how could she know what to do?*wWw.NoVeLWoRm.cóM*

He wanted to hate her for it, strove to find that bitter emotion he'd held so tightly to before, but he couldn't find it. It was as if his tears had washed away every bitter emotion he'd felt for the last fifty years. Instead of hate he actually found himself wanting to thank her. From the moment she'd entered his life she had pushed him relentlessly one way or another.

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Because of her he had returned to the pack, begun the slow reintegration with his family and his people. Because of her he was alive when he should now be dead. Because of her he didn't hate Faith any more for leaving him. He could accept that it was just a horrendous accident; that his beautiful mate had laughed and loved with such wild abandon, that she had given everything to him in the time that they'd had together.

Because of Freya Eriksson he could finally let his Faith go as his mate would have wanted him to. He could finally start to look towards the future and maybe hope to find someone new to share his life with. "Why?"

Something danced across her face, an emotion so fleeting that he didn't have time to catch what it was before her mask slipped into place.

"Call it my apology, for taking that which you did not give freely," she answered before rising to leave the retreat. "You should rest some more, Dayton. You can use Nors' room. It's the first on the left through the door." The vampire slipped out into the early morning sunshine leaving him alone with his shaken emotions still whirling wildly through his mind.

Dayton was confused by her response, still feeling raw as he made his way to the bedrooms, heading towards the room that belonged to her brother. The door directly ahead caught his attention and he wondered if it was Freya's.

Just what was her room like? Who was the real Freya Eriksson? A person's private space reflected their personality more truthfully than anything else did. He was walking towards the closed door before he realised what he was doing, his wolf vocal in a way it hadn't been in a very long time. Reaching out he turned the knob and let the door fall open.*w@W.(n)ovElw.rtm.©ðM*

Shock rippled through him causing every muscle to tense in his body. His mouth gaped open and he fought to breathe as he stared at row after row of his paintings all one on top of the other. There was barely an inch of wall space between them.

They were all pieces from his showing in Japan years ago. It had been his best exhibition, a large number of his paintings attracting buyers. From the looks of things Freya Eriksson had been the one who had purchased most of them. Seeing them all together in light of his recent emotional backlash, he could easily see the pain and suffering within each painting, the harshness of each brush stroke like a knife wound.

His heart turned over in his chest, his thoughts in turmoil. Why did she have all these painting? Why did she surround herself with such misery? Was Rayne correct all along? Was Freya Eriksson really wounded so badly? His artwork seemed to say yes and yet her calm demeanour said otherwise.

The ring of fire around her eyes concerned him too. He didn't know why he cared at all but he did. There was something so badly wrong here that his wolf was reacting to it, his protective instincts kicking in when they shouldn't. Not for a vampire.

He was backtracking to the living area, his body aching with the exertion he was putting it under. He needed to rest, needed to gather his strength; but he was suddenly and perplexingly desperate to see Freya, to talk to her, ask her some questions.*Www.n@Vekw@r(n).com*