

Chapter 228

He threw open the door and found her sitting on the steps of the porch. He stopped in surprise, blinking slowly. He had expected her to be miles away and yet she hadn't left the area.

"You should be resting," she said quietly not turning to look at him. "You need to leave tomorrow. Do I have to drug you again?"

He growled loudly before moving to sit carefully on the step beside her. "I thought you'd realise by now that I don't like being made to do things against my will."

"Sometimes a man needs a little push in the right direction. He can be pigheaded and stubborn and not always know what is best for him." Her head tilted to the side and he was once more staring at her eyes and their abnormal glow of red which appeared stronger in the morning sunlight.

"What does it mean; your eyes?"

Long dark lashes swept down hiding her gaze before they fluttered open again and she met his. "Nothing important. Nothing that need concern you."

Her evasiveness caused more unease to settle deep within him. "That's not an acceptable answer, Freya. Not one I'm willing to accept. You've just ripped me to shreds emotionally. I deserve the truth after what you've put me through."*wWw.NovēLW©©m.cm*

Pain flickered in her eyes, the first honest emotion he'd witnessed since he'd woken up in her retreat. "Everyone has their demons, Dayton. You don't have a monopoly on pain and suffering. Everyone selfishly believes that their pain is stronger, that it hurts deeper than anyone else's. The truth; it's all relative. Each person's pain is as strong or as weak as they allow it to be."

There was such hopelessness in her voice that he reached out and caught a lock of thick brown hair, watching the sun glint off the blonde and red streaks hidden within it. It was instinctive to reach out to someone in pain. "Tell me your pain, Freya. I told you mine. Let me hear what demons haunt you."

It was so tempting, so overwhelming to feel him sit so close to her, to have him touch her voluntarily. Freya wanted to reach out to him, to succumb to his words, to the hypnotic sway in his voice that promised her he would listen to every word she said. No one had ever really listened to her. Nors had tried but their timing had always been wrong.*w(w)w.NevêL@eRm.cOm*

"I'm afraid that if you're still here tomorrow I will kill you," she answered honestly, her gaze never wavering from his.

Her answer surprised him but it didn't frighten him. "Why would you do that?"

"Because I wouldn't be able to stop myself," she whispered, a catch in her voice as her guards tumbled down around her. "The hunger is crippling. It's tearing me up inside until all I can think about is feeding."

The red fire around her eyes, it all suddenly fell into place. Rayne had mentioned once that when a vampire went hungry for too long their eyes began to glow red. It was a highly dangerous situation because their humanity was lost and they devolved, effectively turning Rogue. The only solution was for their peers to put them down as Weres put down a rabid wolf or cat.

Ashleigh's words came back to him too, her certainty that Freya would never return, that Nors believed his sister had left to find some way to die. His conversation with Freya when he'd asked if she was leaving and her cryptic response. It all fell into place and his wolf howled a mournful sound so loud it was all he could hear for a long moment.

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"What have you done?" he whispered, horrified as her eyes glowed a little redder.

"I'm tired, Dayton. So very tired of it all," she answered quietly a tear rolling down one perfect cheekbone. "Tired of the memories, of the endless faces of lives I've ruined, lives I've taken. My very first act as a vampire was to slaughter an entire family. I would have killed them to the very last member if Nors hadn't spirited the children away. There was still more than enough for me to drink from, to bathe in their blood and feel their pulses beat their last. It was horrifying but it was glorious too. Heaven and Hell all rolled into one."

More tears fell, silent and yet screaming of an agony that ripped her soul apart. "I'm a monster and you should get as far away from me as possible, Dayton."

He was horrified at her words, imagining the destruction she had caused and yet he could see her pain, see the self hatred deep within her and knew that if she could go back she would do things differently. But she couldn't go back and she couldn't go on, not until she let go of the past the way she had forced him to let go of his.

"Let it go, Freya," he said firmly tightening his grip in her hair and pulling her face close to his. "The past can't be changed, you've shown me that. But we can learn from it and move forward. You just need to try."*wWNovêLW©©M.co(m)*

"I can't," she whispered tremulously. "Not anymore. It's too late for me, Dayton, but it isn't too late for you. Leave while you can. I'll call The Council before I degenerate too far. They'll send a clean up crew and take care of me. You should be as far away as possible before that happens."

His wolf howled furiously, something broke deep within him and he was amazed that there was anything left inside him still to break. He had thought he wanted this woman dead and yet he couldn't walk away from her, couldn't leave her to self destruct the way she was intending.

Fight! The word resounded through his head and he heard it in a feminine voice, a tortured voice that had urged him to fight when he lay in a drugged sleep. He'd heard it in Freya's voice.

"Fight, damn you!" he growled harshly a second before he ground his lips hard against hers in a kiss so ruthless it brought cuts to both their lips. "Fight, Freya," he whispered against her mouth. "Don't give in."

For some reason it was suddenly crucial that he save her as he hadn't been able to save Faith. His wolf demanded it. The man he was demanded it. Somehow he had to reach into the soul of this broken woman and will her to fight.

Her sobs wrenched through the morning air, long, wracking sounds that made his wolf howl continuously and his own eyes fill with tears. He kissed her through her sobs, brushed his lips against her wet cheeks over and over again seeking to give her comfort, trying to imbue some of his strength to her. Letting her know, through a wolf's touch that someone cared enough to fight for her.

With a tortured groan he ripped himself away from her and forced his aching body into the house, grabbing the first sharp knife he could find. He didn't hesitate, didn't stop to think about what he was doing. He drew the blade across the side of his neck quickly and forced her mouth to him. "Feed, damn you! Fight!"

Dayton's blood filled her mouth, her stomach cramping in agony as the scent of him overcame her. Freya swallowed hard, savouring his precious life's blood and began to pull deeply, ravenously. It had been months since she had fed.

For years she had hurt herself, holding off feeding for as long as possible, until the agony was so crippling it was an unendurable torture, a fitting punishment for what she was. Years of planning, waiting for the right moment, the time when she would know it would be right to die. As she had known when she had stared into a pair of anguish filled blue eyes that had seen deep inside her and branded her the monster she truly was.

Long torturous months of slowly starving to death engulfed her. It had been excruciating, terrifying, and yet she had persisted, intent on finally having an end to her suffering.

Now she gluttoned herself unable to stop the pull against his neck. When his wound closed she sank her fangs deep into his tender flesh, feeling him stiffen at her bite and then moan softly as she continued to feed. It was only when he fell limply against her that reason took over and her heart stopped for an instant.