

## Chapter 229

"No!" she moaned ripping her fangs from him, catching him as he fell backwards, his face completely ashen. She could hear his heart beating but it was weak, his pulse barely flickering in the side of his neck. Tearing into her wrist she pressed it urgently against his lips, fear rushing through her as she forced her blood into his mouth.

She had taken too much from him and he was already dangerously weak from his injuries. Her heart thudded painfully as he moaned and swallowed, taking more of her blood inside him. His colour improved, enough for the danger to have passed. For the second time in days, Freya picked Dayton up and carried him into her home.

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When consciousness returned Dayton found himself lying in a large bed, Freya lying width wise down at the bottom, watching him intently. The first thing he noticed was the red was no longer ringing her irises; the second was the concern on her face mixed with a healthy dose of irritation.

"I thought you were cured of your death wish," she said dryly moving to sit up before she crawled to the top and lay beside him. She rested her head on her bent arm, her green eyes never wavering from his.

"You bit me," he answered slowly turning onto his side to face her. "I'm still alive so I guess that answers how you healed me before." He knew how Weres could become immune to a vampire's venom. She had to have mixed her blood with his to heal him. He was surprised his disgust at the thought didn't surface as it had done earlier.

"I should have killed you," she mused with a frown on her face. "The belief has always been that time is required for your other injuries to heal before it would be safe to bite you. Though I suppose we don't really know of the exact timing required for it to be truly safe. Both Loretta and Ashleigh had more than one potential fatal injury to them. You had only the one. Maybe that's why you're still breathing."

Dayton found himself fascinated with the open expression on her face. There was no sign of the cold, closed off woman he was used to seeing. Oddly enough she looked younger which was ridiculous considering she was over two thousand years old.

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"Why would you do such a thing?" she finally asked; her eyes full of curiosity and confusion.

There was something quite endearing about the expression on her face, something so soft and approachable about her, that he found himself reaching out and once more catching a lock of her multi coloured hair. "You do keep telling me I'm a stupid wolf," he remarked lightly, his lips twitching slightly as hers did. "Why did I pass out if it wasn't the venom?"

Another frown crossed her exquisite face, fear clouding her suddenly expressive eyes. "I'm Ancient. We can survive for months without feeding. It had been too long since I'd last fed. I took too much blood and you were already dangerously low from your own injuries. You'll find your strength will take a while to return."

He let out a slow breath. "That explains why I feel so tired. Was it enough for you?"

Freya sat up swinging her legs from the bed. "For now," she answered quietly. "Rest, I'll bring you something to eat and drink. It will help you regain your strength quicker."

She was almost at the door when he stopped her, his gaze intent on her back. "Did I risk my life needlessly, Freya?"

She turned to meet his gaze, feeling so vulnerable with all her barriers down. Only Nors and Ashleigh had ever fought for her before. The wolf before her had not only fought for her he'd been willing to sacrifice himself even if he hadn't realised the foolishness of his actions. There was warmth in his eyes that had never been there before. She could still feel the brand of his lips against hers.

"I will fight," she whispered seeing a strange emotion ripple across his beautiful face. For a moment she thought it was pride but she shook the thought away. Why would Dayton Alexander feel pride in her? Only hours before he had buried a knife in her neck. It would be foolish of her to read anything into his expression just because his caring instincts as a Were Beta were once more coming to the fore.

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Dayton lay back against the bed feeling so exhausted that he had to close his eyes. His body felt as if he'd gone ten rounds with every Beta in his Pack, his emotional state was less easy to analyse. He had just run a gauntlet of emotions so intense it was a wonder he'd survived them.

Letting Faith go had been pure agony and yet it had also been a blessed relief too, a fact he still felt a bit of guilt over though he knew it was time. Finally releasing the last of his emotions, acknowledging that she was his past had freed something deep within him, something his wolf had been trying to tell him for years but he'd ruthlessly suppressed the animal.

His wolf's recent activity had oddly been a comfort to him, as if it was lending him the strength to meet his emotional crisis. He'd forgotten what it was like to embrace the animal, to join with it and be one instead of segregating their time into separate entities. He felt tears prick his closed eyelids. He had missed his wolf and was only now just realising how much.

Swallowing against the lump in his throat he forced himself to think about Freya and his reaction to her. The violence of his emotions towards her had been unconscionable. He was not the man who had come looking for her, full of hate and red hot fury. He had never been that man and he couldn't understand why he had felt such a need to protect himself from her.

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His need to make amends was what called to him now. She had saved him both physically and emotionally and he needed her forgiveness though he was too much of an emotional wreck at the moment to simply ask for it. All he could do was try to help her as she had helped him. If he could teach her to forgive herself, to take a chance at living a better life, to fight for herself, then he would stay by her side until she believed in herself. Maybe then he could ask her to forgive him too.

His wolf liked the sound of that, rumbling contentedly deep within him. His animal's agreement soothed him, told him he was on the right path. The sound of the bedroom opening a moment later had him wearily opening his eyes to look up into the exquisite face of the most beautiful woman he could ever remember seeing.

"A light soup you can drink," Freya said softly, cupping the back of his head and pressing the warm liquid to his lips. He drank slowly his eyes intent on the softness of her lips, the warmth of her eyes as she patiently fed him the liquid food. She replaced it with some cold water, smiling when he shot her a questioning look.

"No drugs this time," she smiled. "You don't need them."

She was right because no sooner had she rested his head back against the pillow than his eyes were closing and he was slipping into a deep dreamless sleep.

Freya watched him sleep, a deep aching tenderness filling her soul as she reached out and traced his jaw lightly. He was so beautiful, so proud and strong. He probably viewed his breakdown as a weakness but she viewed it as a strength. He could only heal by confronting his emotions. He had done so and now he was mending at an almost phenomenal rate. She was certain that the worst was over for him.