

Chapter 239

She could sense his distrust and it hurt like nothing had ever been able to do before. Even the pain of being alone for countless millennia paled into insignificance compared to what Gard was able to inflict on her with just one hint of uncertainty. She knew it was her own fault, she had created this gulf between them but it still hurt that he could doubt her so easily.

Her cat let out a pained mewl and curled up in a ball. She couldn't read minds but she knew the man above her. He was thinking things through at the moment but he would act soon. If he really viewed her as a threat...killed by her own mate? That would be a tragedy to end all because the guilt would kill him too. Could she talk him down?

"Don't do this." It was a whispered plea from the depths of her soul. She saw hesitation cross his face and for a brief moment she had hope that she had reached him. Then his expression once more turned irresolute and she knew she would have to act fast before he did something he may never be able to forgive himself for.

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She shifted in a heartbeat, shadowing herself as she flew from the bed. She knew he could track her in human form but could he still 'see' her if she was in panther form? It was the silent urging of her cat to shift, almost as if her panther knew something she didn't.

Gard's roar of rage answered her question as he flew from the bed to crouch on the floor his eyes spanning the room and passing over her numerous times. He couldn't see her but he would be able to hear her when she moved though. She spun, trying to keep her flight path unpredictable as she sailed out of the cave and into the forest.

"Rayne!" Gard had shifted into full vampire mode. He streaked out of the cave, his jeans hastily pulled on but undone. It had taken him less than five seconds to get outside and start hunting her. He couldn't believe she'd eluded him, run from him. What infuriated him more was the expression he'd seen on her face before she'd shifted.wŴ(w).nôvê1wôRm.Co(m)

She had honestly believed that he would hurt her. He might be mad at her, concerned about just who she was and if she was a danger to the pack, but despite that, despite everything, he would never ever hurt her. He couldn't. It would be like ripping his own heart out.

"Rayne!"

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It was those precious few seconds Gard had taken to pull on his jeans that had enabled her to pick out a large oak tree to scamper up and hunker down in. She perched in her hidden spot and held her breath while he scouted the area in a blur, cursing under his breath as he did so. He even came close a few times but never managed to stumble upon her hideaway.

Eventually he disappeared back into the cave, fury wafting off him in waves, distrust coming a close second to the turbulent emotions deep within him. Rayne held her position, fighting down the waves of pain crashing through her. She didn't move until Gard once more came back out, fully dressed, furious and heading towards the compound with a determined expression on his hard face.

Her cat roared in a combination of fury and distress. She was furious at their mate for distrusting them even as she was pained too. Rayne wasn't even aware that she was crying until a tear landed on her paw. Staring down at it she considered her options.

She couldn't go into town in panther form and she couldn't go back to the compound because Gard was headed there. She didn't trust him not to have left some kind of magic ward in place to alert him that she had returned to the cave for her clothes. She was thankful he had slipped up and let her in on his magic secret though he would probably be pissed at himself now for doing so.

With no other options left to her she decided to try something she'd never done before. She could shift fully clothed and still have them when she shifted back, but could she create clothes when naked?

She shifted, closing her eyes and trying to imagine what she'd been wearing earlier. Nothing happened except sweat began to bead her brow at the intense concentration she was exerting. She wiped her wet cheeks and took a deep breath. Then she tried again. She gasped in shock when she found herself fully clothed.

Another ability she had no idea she could do, just like all the others. Gard's question came back to mind and she felt her eyes moisten again as she carefully climbed out of the tree and shadowed herself. She couldn't answer his damned question because she didn't know the truth of the answer.

There were hints that she could be a Vampire/Were hybrid but no real facts to support it. The pack was dubious about it even though they didn't have any other suggestions to offer. The stupid vampire was angry with her, distrusting her because she couldn't tell him what he wanted to know. If only he knew that she'd spent three thousand years trying to find the very answers he wanted.

Her pain started to turn to anger. So far today the two men she cared most about had questioned her loyalty to them, looked at her with anger in their eyes. She'd opened her heart to both of them and they were breaking it in their own separate ways. This was what she had been searching for all her life? Somewhere to belong, to place down roots and care about others? At the moment it felt like shit, a colossally stupid thing to do.

Wrapped in angry misery, Rayne headed out of the forest, away from the place that both fascinated her and made her want to sink to her knees in anguish. She needed time to regroup, work out her next move. Maybe it was time to move on again? Maybe this wasn't the place for her after all?

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