

Chapter 270

His heart pounded so loudly it was all he could hear and then muted sounds echoed on the air in front of him and his vampire was suddenly spinning back towards him, lifted bodily from the ground.

"Freya!" Her name sounded as if it came from a distance even though it had ushered from his lips. He watched her body jerk wildly as she flew through the air, her top suddenly wet and a much deeper shade of red than before. A ragged hole appeared in her shoulder blade and then blood began to ooze from the site.

"NO!" His scream was gut wrenching, memories of his last run with Faith vivid in his mind, the resounding crack of her neck breaking that signalled his heart dying along with her. Not again! He couldn't live through that a second time. He'd only just found Freya and someone was trying to take her away from him.

His brain was finally connecting what was happening and his next scream was one of combined fury and anguish. Freya's body was being thrown wildly from the impact of bullets smashing into it. Someone was firing some kind of semi-automatic weapon, trying to kill his mate and he was helpless to do anything about it.

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Freya hit the rock where they had been not so long ago, landing hard enough for bones to break. Her momentum and the violence of the impact kept her body moving and she tumbled sickeningly over the stone to fall behind it. Dark red blood covered the rock. Freya's blood. Dayton tried to scream again but he'd finally hit the tree line, pain engulfing his body entirely as he connected with first the trees and then the hard packed ground.

His head was the last part of him to hit the dirt and it hit with a resounding whack. Instantly he was disorientated, nauseous, and he could feel blackness starting to descend. Sick, terrifying fear clawed at him as he fought against the blackness, tried to get to his mate. He couldn't pass out! Freya was hurt and he had to get to her. He tried to move but his body wouldn't obey his commands. The darkness won and he sank into oblivion.

Freya knew she couldn't stay where she was. They would have tracked her the entire way and would triangulate on her position in an instant. There were three of them that she knew about and God knew how many others. Ignoring the searing pain in her body, she was up and into the trees in the blink of an eye. Another gunshot hit close to her head but thankfully missed her as she gained relative safety within the tree line.

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"Nors!" She had no idea if her brother was at the compound or had left for work. She was still moving, still ignoring her torn chest which was already starting to heal from the multiple gunshot wounds she'd taken. She had to get to Dayton, had to protect him.

"Freya!" She almost wept with relief as Nors' alert mental voice answered her while she wove through the trees in the direction she'd thrown her wolf. Her brother knew instantly that something was wrong and didn't stop to ask what, he merely waited for her to tell him as quickly and succinctly as possible.

"West of the compound, approximately a mile away. Vampires. Three with guns. I've taken wounds but Dayton's safe from the bullets at the moment. We need help."

"We're on our way."

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His mental touch was gone and she couldn't help the shiver of relief that went through her just knowing he was coming. Nors always came when he was needed and God help whoever was responsible for this when he got there. He didn't tolerate anyone hurting what was his to protect and his sister was most definitely his in his mind.

The feral part of her nature wanted to hunt the vampires responsible for this and tear them apart. One thing that seriously pissed her off was being used as target practice. That someone was foolish enough to attack an Ancient vampire of her standing was a personal affront and one she wasn't willing to let go. But her heart was in control at the moment and all she could think about was her wolf and how she had to find him.

She was furious with herself. She couldn't believe she'd let herself become so distracted that she hadn't even scented the danger approaching. It was a fucking youngling mistake! And her mate had paid the price for it. She would never forgive herself for it and she would never make that mistake again.

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She was furious with the vampires out there too but they would pay for their actions. Once Nors and the pack arrived, once Dayton was protected, she was going to rip those vampires apart with her bare hands and feast on their blood. The world would know that no one fucked with Freya Eriksson and those she loved.

She tried to keep an eye on the forest as she moved. The vampires would be changing their position to hide themselves and she needed to know where they were so she could better protect her wolf. She found him a moment later, unconscious with one leg bent at an impossible angle.

Guilt engulfed her as well as another cold, hard bubble of rage. There would be death for this atrocity; slow lingering death. She sank down beside Dayton and very carefully rearranged his broken leg as best she could. Then she ripped her wrist and pressed it to his mouth, forcing her blood down his throat. She held his mouth closed to stop it leaking out and also to stop him making any noise when he regained consciousness.

She had charged the vampires in the hope she would have distracted them from the direction Dayton had disappeared into. She didn't know if it had worked but she had to believe that it had because she couldn't tolerate them knowing where he was. He was hers to protect.

Dayton became aware that he couldn't breathe and started to struggle against the hard hands holding him down. A barely audible hiss sounded in his ear and he froze instantly.

"Stop fighting, it's me. Three vampires with guns and very acute hearing. Do not speak above this level."

Relief washed through him and his eyes opened to see Freya's blood-streaked face beside him. Tears filled them and he could only stare at her mutely, his mind registering that she was alive, that she hadn't left him as Faith had.

She was a mess but she'd never looked more beautiful to him. Her expression was hard, fury blazing in her eyes as well as concern. He knew that concern was for him so he did as she ordered and stayed still, feeling the pain in his body beginning to ebb slowly and realising she must have fed him some of her blood.

"Nors has been alerted. The pack comes. As long as the vampires make no move on our position I'll stay with you but I may need to distract them again."