

***Demon Day* by Penelope Fletcher**

Rae is falling into darkness. Grieving the death of her friend at the hand of dark magics, Rae is full of hate and vengeance. Tracking Devlin and his followers across demon territory, she is forced to turn to the local shifter pack for help. Tricked into rescuing the pack Alpha's daughters from the Temple, she learns there really is no place more dangerous than home. Breandan the fairy is done being patient. He wants Rae to stand by his side and refuses any claim they are not destined to be. Unsure, Rae denies him the right to have her, but will the urges of her nature and the strength of their bond allow her to walk away? Then there is Tomas, the alluring vampire who needs her help. But what exactly does he expect of her, and is the cost of helping him worth turning her back on life itself? Courted by the dark, and in love with the light, Rae must choose her path, or face the burden of Rupturing the world once more.

Breandan was alone. He stood at the base the stone steps with his hands fisted together, head back, eyes closed. He was magnificent. Lean body taught he burned with silver light. His black tattoos were outlined starkly against his pale skin, and the dark edges seemed to glow. His wings rested tightly against his back, and his tail weaved lazily through the air. He breathed deeply, this I could tell from the steady rise and fall of his chest though what he tasted in the air I could not say. The angered expression on his face was intense, and when his head snapped forward, he opened his eyes, and focused completely on our bond. His gaze became a weapon that flew through the air and speared Tomas, who stumbled half a step back.

Rain fell heavily and soaked our clothes. My hair plastered to my head in a matter of moments, and ran from my fingertips in small streams, droplets flicking wildly as I trembled.

Delirious with relief I lurched forward then paused, wincing, expecting someone to grab me. No one stopped me. I shot a wide-eyed look at Daphne. She tried to smile, but it tumbled from her face leaving behind a worried frown. Her eyes flicked to Tomas and squinted in pain. I too looked to my vampire and saw he watched Breandan with a look of resigned acceptance that he tried to hide with defiance. I took a more confident step, and when no one moved I rushed forward. As I passed Tomas, I ignored the frisson of longing that seemed to spark between us, and jumped down the steps of the house. The rainwater trickled ahead of me like a shallow river until I stilled on the last step, my heart thumping wildly.

Breandan's gaze was still fixed on Tomas, but I felt him greet me with joy. Through the bond, I felt how scared he had been for me, and how glad he was now that I was near. Turning my concentration from the demons at my back, I focused on him and him alone. I took a hold of my nature and reached out. His hand was already there, and our fingers laced together to clutch tightly. A pulse of light danced across our palms and lit the dark street briefly, but no more. It was nothing but a flash of harmless light. I breathed out. My eyes drifted closed and peace swept over me. His presence was a balm that revived and refreshed me. Sighing, I let my hand fall to my side and so did he.

Then his focus turned inward, and my perception of him completely winked out of existence.

I was so shocked by the unexpected disconnect I lost my sense of direction – since Breandan acted as my centre of being – and I stumbled off the last step. He sidestepped me and I had to use my tail to steady my faltering movement. Straightening, I looked between him and those who stood above us.

Somewhere in the haze of my consciousness, I glimpsed a forewarning. The death of one of my loves was upon me, and it was inescapable.

Lightning flashed above in a fork of bright light highlighting the vampires from behind so they seemed malevolent shadows gilded with a gloom darker than the night. Thunder boomed and the ground shook, yet the profound reverberation did not cover Gwendolyn's sudden and creepy giggles. "No, fairy. It will not happen," Tomas said appose to nothing. "This is my territory. On this ground I decide how this will be resolved."

"We have a score to settle," Breandan replied.

The vampire's shoulders lifted in what could be passed as a shrug. "Your ways mean nothing to me."

The rain fell so hard the water on the floor ran over the tops of my boots. My clothes were stuck to me, uncomfortable, and I pushed my hair back off my face, wiping it roughly as I did. The clouds flashed with a myriad of colors, and beneath my confusion, I felt a jolt of excitement at the weather. My nature buzzed, my skin goose pimples, and I shivered.

"I see," Breandan said after a pause, and a flash of irritation down the bond was abruptly erased by the nothing. "Then only one thing can be done."

My fairy turned to face me and bowed low at the hip, one hand pressed to his heart.

Snarling, Tomas moved forward. "No!" he growled.

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