

Chapter 186

The furious male vampire watched the cat fall, lavender eyes intent as the woman screamed loudly as she crashed towards the ground. He knew she couldn't rotate her body to use her feline reflexes to try and cushion her fall. He'd heard her ribs snapping as he'd fought to get her to release him. Every painful snap resounded in his head and he hissed loudly in fury.

He had hurt her! It had been instinctual, his need to protect himself from her unexpected attack sparking instantly and he'd reacted without considering just how fragile the panther in his arms was. He had lost his reason for a brief moment and he was furious with himself for it. He was better than that, had more self control. He should have handled the situation differently.

Now he watched the woman fall and he had to force himself to wait. It went against every male instinct within him. He was a protector, he was The Guardian but he knew if he went to her too soon and she struggled again, then he may cause her more damage and he didn't want to do that. He tracked her intently until he saw her eyes roll back in her head, then he swooped down and caught her a scant foot from the forest floor.

Cradling her unconscious body in his arms he took his first proper look at her and found himself sucking in a deep breath. She was exquisite. It was the only way to describe the vision he held in his arms. Long inky black hair flowed across his arm and pooled towards the forest floor. It had been bound when he first noticed her though he hadn't been paying her appearance too much attention at the time, too concerned that she creeping towards Lily's room. Now he stared at the luxurious, thick locks and he didn't think he'd ever seen a more glorious sight.

His gaze slid from her hair to her beautiful face and he traced each feature slowly. Her eyes were closed but he knew they were remarkable. His keen vampiric sight had picked up the deep green colour, a thin layer of silver ringing her iris. They were the most unusual eyes he had seen before, they hinted of mystery and of a million untold stories.

High, delicate bones graced her flawless cheeks and her luscious, full lips were parted slightly making him suddenly want to lean forward to find out what they tasted of. The unexpected impulse made him blink in surprise and then he mentally cursed himself for allowing his lust to rise even slightly.

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He lowered the woman very gently to the moss covered ground, checking her heartbeat as he laid her down. It was strong. She wasn't in any life threatening danger. He heaved a sigh of relief that he hadn't hurt her too badly. He could heal the damage he'd done easily enough before she woke.

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The bite mark and gouges on his arms were already healed, the pain inflicted a distant memory as he stared down at her trying not to register her womanly shape though it was a hard task as her chest moved up and down in a skin tight red tank top that didn't cover her midriff.*wŴW.n.vêłw0†@.com*

The sun glinted off the jewel in her navel, and the sun kissed skin of her bare stomach which was as flawless as her face. He felt his body start to stir again and his cursed loudly and looked away. It was intolerable for him to react this way.

As he stared into the quiet forest a sudden thought occurred to him and his gaze swung back to her, this time devoid of any desire but as intent as before. She should be naked. She had shifted to animal form and then back to human but she was fully dressed. He had walked the planet for over six thousand years and never once had he come across a Were who could retain their clothing during a shift.

He was immediately alert, stiffening as he leaned down and inhaled deeply of the woman's scent. Every time he thought he had caught it, the scent shifted to something else. His spine stiffened further. The skill she was displaying even while unconscious was a very old skill indeed, one that only three other people living could do and that was because they were the oldest vampires to walk the planet.

His disquiet grew as he tried to fathom out just what this woman was. She exhibited a skill of vampire origin and yet she was clearly a Were. He had seen her shift into cat form, there was no disputing that fact. So how could she mask her scent? His frown deepening, he knelt down beside her and lightly traced her left side, feeling along the rib cage for the damage he'd caused. He found none.

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Gard hissed loudly at the discovery. It was impossible that her Were healing abilities would have worked so quickly on her injuries. He had been prepared to feed her some of his Ancient blood to heal her before she woke but it was obviously not going to be required.

Something nagged in the back of his mind but whatever it was he couldn't quite grasp it. The woman before him was a complete enigma. He couldn't pin down just what she was and that frustrated him no end. The unknown was always a threat, and sometimes threats had to be neutralised. Permanently.

He eyed her objectively trying to work out her threat level. At the moment she appeared harmless but he'd felt just how dangerous she could be when riled. He sensed she wasn't about to come around any time soon so he sat back against a tree beside her and contemplated the forest before him as he mulled over what had happened.

Anakatrine...Annie, he amended, had asked him to give her time before he revealed himself to her family and friends. That had been five years ago, barely a fraction of time for him though it had chafed to wait when he wanted nothing more than to be by her side. He had been alone for three thousand years and he didn't want to remain so. Finding his sister again had been everything, what he had been searching for endlessly.

He had tried to stay away completely but found he couldn't do so, coming back frequently to watch over her even though he knew she had Caleb now to do that. Still, he tracked his sister, followed her as she visited the Were compound, watched her interact with her Were brother.