

Chapter 188

Rayne bit the inside of her lip and considered her answer as her cat purred louder at the sound of his voice. Her animal was clearly intrigued by the vampire which was surprising as her cat didn't usually pay much attention to men around her. But something about the vampire had its attention.

Maybe it was his question? He was obviously knowledgeable about wildcats. He knew the black panther was not in fact a panther but a member of either the leopard or jaguar family. That would stroke her cat's ego, that this male was asking an intelligent question about its origins. She considered her options and then went for the truth as she knew it. $w\mathbb{W}_w.\mathbb{m}\acute{o}(\nu)e\ell w(o)\mathcal{R}m.(c)\oplus\mathbb{M}$

"Leopard," she answered quietly. The truth was she didn't really know which cat family she belonged to. Her research pointed more towards the leopard family so that was the one she assumed she belonged to. But she could be wrong, she could be a jaguar. Never having been in a pride let alone raised by one, it was all guesswork on her part.

His lavender eyes narrowed slightly, almost as if he detected the slight uncertainty in her voice. She waited for his next question but he continued watching her silently as if trying to come to some decision.

"You dropped me." She said it just to break the silence and see what his reaction would be. She injected a little bit of accusation in her tone though she wasn't angry about it. They'd been fighting and he had used a successful tactic against her.

She thought she saw a slight narrowing of his unusual eyes but then his luscious lips curled into a slow, easy smile and she had to fight to breathe normally as she watched his face transform into something so divine it was almost angelic in appearance.

$\mathbb{W}\otimes w.n\acute{o}v^{(e)}1\mathbb{W}or^{(n)}.\mathbb{C}\mathbb{O}m$

"You bit me and clawed my arms to ribbons," he countered, his eyes boring into her as if he was trying to read her mind. If that was one of his skills then he'd be in for some major disappointment. Her mind was impenetrable.

"You broke my ribs!" She pushed herself up onto her elbows, the movement bringing her face a handful of inches from his as he didn't back away. "And you're still stroking my hair," she added with a faint smile curving her lips. $\mathbb{W}\mathbb{W}\mathbb{W}^{(n)}o\odot e\ell w o\mathcal{R}m.\odot\delta m$

Gard's fingers stilled in the silky tresses in his hand. He had been so intent on her eyes from the moment she'd opened them that he hadn't even noticed that he'd been stroking her hair continuously. He blinked slowly and then forced himself to move away from her.

It was an effort to do so. For some strange reason he liked being close to her, liked the way she matched wits with him and didn't appear the least afraid of him. It was foolish of her not to be but he admired the steel within her.

She was beautiful with a lush, womanly softness about her, but she was also a very deadly predator. The combination of softness and hardness appealed to him on a very base level and he was reacting to her as a man would to a woman. It was an interesting turn of events.

He watched as she sat up and put a little more distance between them though she didn't attempt to run for which he was glad. He was disinclined to hurt her any further which would most probably happen if she took off without him satisfying himself she wasn't a threat.

He sifted through his emotions, trying to make up his mind what to do with the cat. He was astounded to find that he actually liked her despite her rather suspicious actions back in the compound. $w\mathbb{W}\mathbb{W}w.\odot e v\acute{e}l\mathbb{W}_e\mathbb{I}^{(m)}.\mathbb{c}\delta\mathcal{M}$

"Why were you climbing towards the child's window?" He had hoped to catch her off guard, glean some information from her expression if she chose not to answer him. Instead her expression remained calm, the faint smile still tugging at lips that kept drawing his gaze like a magnet.

"How old are you?" She countered softly, moving a little closer to him, her movements very feline with a hint of sensuality. "You have to be very old to see through my abilities. No one else has ever been able to breach them before." Her head tilted to the side as she waited expectantly.

Gard almost laughed in delight, a little shiver running down his spine as he watched the amazingly exotic creature before him. She was very good at deflecting his question but he had no intention of letting her leave until he knew the answer to it. Her survival depended on it, surely she was intelligent enough to know that?

"Much older than you, cat," he answered very quietly a second before he moved so fast she didn't even see him coming.

She was flat on her back with his large body straddling hers before she could blink. He had her hands secured above her head in one of his, his gaze narrowed on her face. "And way too old to fall for the old seductress routine," he added as his expression hardened. "Answer my question."

Rayne fought to drag air through her lungs as the heat of the vampire practically overwhelmed her. Lord, did he move fast! His tone was cold and hard, mirroring the expression on his face. It was obvious that playtime was over. The problem was she couldn't answer his question because she had no idea why the scent of the children had called to her but she had the distinct feeling that he wouldn't believe her if she told him that.

He leaned down slowly and inhaled against the skin of her neck and it was hard not to shiver a little as his breath whispered over her skin. "Answer the question, Kitty. You have five seconds to do so. If you refuse I'm going to indulge in your very intoxicating blood until my venom races through your system and stops your heart."

He meant it. Rayne had no doubt that the vampire would bite her if she didn't say something, anything. And then he would know what she didn't want anyone finding out. Heart thumping wildly she tried to twist from his grasp but he was too strong for her.

"I don't know why," she ground out, meeting his cold gaze unflinchingly. "Something about their scent appealed to my cat. It was curious. They're different from normal Weres." It was the truth but she didn't know if it was enough for him.

"And what was your cat going to do?" he demanded, his tone still cold and very deadly.

"Nothing!" she bit back, anger in her eyes as she realised the stupid male actually thought she had intended to do harm. "Children are to be protected. Weres don't harm cubs or kittens, ever! I know that's a concept vampires can't understand but it's ingrained in all Weres."

Gard believed her. Her fury was honest and quite simply breathtaking. If her hands were free he had no doubt that he would be having to fight her off as she went for his throat. She was squirming beneath him and he found himself enjoying the sensation of her softness pressing against his hardness. His body was starting to react to her womanly curves.

He found he couldn't help playing with her a little longer. "Give me one good reason why I shouldn't kill you?"

Her eyes narrowed slightly, the fury dying out of them as she searched his face carefully. "Well, I do have a dinner date tonight," she finally said. "He might be a little upset if I stand him up."