

Chapter 189

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Her answer was so unexpected he burst out laughing. He hadn't laughed in such a long time, not since he had last been with Anakatrine millennia ago before everything had gone to hell and his world had turned black. When he stopped laughing he looked down at her and fought down a rising emotion deep within him at the thought of her having a date with another man.

"I suspect he might actually thank me for doing him a favour," he responded dryly before he released her and stood up. "He must be a very brave man to take on a hellcat like you."

He turned away from the strange woman who was engaging him on so many levels he'd never experienced before. She was still an enigma to him but he didn't judge her to be a threat to the Pack and most importantly, the children. "Curb your cat's curiosity, Kitty," he called over his shoulder. "The compound is off limits to you unless you're invited in."

Rayne watched the vampire leave, rising with a feline grace which was inbuilt. Her cat was purring happily inside her, letting her know that it liked the man who was disappearing into the trees. She wasn't quite sure what she thought of him herself. He was very arrogant but then he was a vampire. And he liked to play rough too.

But he did have a very quick wit and was sexy as sin itself. The vampire screamed danger in big neon red lights but instead of that frightening her off it only piqued her interest a little more. So, he thought he could just order her away from the compound? She didn't do orders very well, never had and wasn't about to start now.

Turning away, she shifted to her panther and streaked off through the trees. She was well aware that she had probably just dodged about twenty bullets and had managed to walk away in one piece. Going up against the red haired vampire probably wouldn't be a good move but then she didn't always do the most sensible things in life.

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Dayton was sitting in his office at the Gallery when the door opened. He heard it distinctly and knew it could only be one person because he'd locked it half an hour ago. Only Rayne had a key to let herself in. He pursed his lips and ran his hand through his long hair as he remembered they had a dinner date. It had been a long day, one that had tested him greatly and he would have preferred to be alone but knew she wouldn't allow it.

Aaron had sent an email which he'd expected as Loretta would have told them she'd seen him. His little brother hadn't made any accusations though. None of his family ever did. The email was friendly, expressed regret that they hadn't had the opportunity to talk with him when he was so close to the compound but that the family were happy to hear he was looking well.

The understanding his family gave him was worse than any accusations they could throw at him. It had become harder to stay detached as the years passed when they constantly gave him love and support which he didn't want. If they had been angry at him then it would be easier to hold himself aloof. Seeing Loretta today had shook him more than he cared to think about.

Rayne appeared in the doorway to the office and for a moment he could only stare at her in complete shock. Gone was her customary attire of black and in its place was a shimmering dress in teal green with thousands of diamante sparkles through it. It was long and formal, as was the artfully arranged hair piled on top of her head. Her long, slender neck was graced with a diamante collar and she had matching strappy sandals on her feet.

"You didn't say this was a dress up affair," he finally commented when he could finally speak. He had always been aware that she was stunningly beautiful but he'd never looked at her as a woman before. She was just Rayne to him. Now he perused her objectively and he could see the sensuality that cloaked her like a glove.

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She laughed softly and gave him a twirl. "You like?" she grinned mischievously. "I don't dress up enough. Today I had the urge. Don't worry, you don't have to. We're not doing anything fancy for dinner."

Rayne was feeling very buoyed from her meeting with the vampire. Her cat was closer to the surface, her playful spirit coming out and dictating her current behaviour. Cats were very mischievous and hers wasn't any different from the other wildcats. She gave Dayton a wide smile and cocked her head to the side. "Come."

Dayton watched her head away from the doorway and sighed softly. He'd only ever seen her in this mood a couple of times before and it had always turned out to be an interesting experience. When in a playful mood, anything could happen with Rayne. He wondered what had set her off this time. Rising he headed out of the office and stopped in surprise.

All the lights were out save for the wall lighting that framed his artwork. The effect was pretty spectacular as colours shimmered around the room. In the middle of the floor was a large picnic basket sitting on an enormous fluffy white rug. Rayne was kneeling on the rug and pulling various containers from the basket.

"I take it we're eating in?" he remarked dryly though his lips did curve slightly as he walked forward to join her. Dinner with Rayne was always an unknown. She had a thing for picnics when she was the one buying. Once, about a decade ago, she had taken him to a hastily constructed tree house in the middle of the forest and served him truffles, champagne and caviar from her picnic basket.

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