

CHAPTER 159

159 Lisa: Enthralled (III) My thigh burns. It's an odd ache between desire and pain. I itch, rub, and scratch, but those two perfect, circular punctures remain in the skin, though no blood seeps out. It took so long for the desire he'd forced into me to dissipate, leaving my body feeling more like me again. The power he has to overcome my natural revulsion is terrifying, and I spend way too much time dreaming up horrible scenarios in which I'm used as a s@x slave to a vampire. Though, he didn't seem to have much interest in the actual s@x aspect, outside of... how did he say it? Oh, yeah. Flavoring. The word makes me shudder. He's going to drain me of every drop of blood one day. And no matter how long I sit here, I have no ideas on how to fight. back. What would Ava do in this situation? I can't believe she would sit here and let it happen to her. She'd fight back somehow, right? But... Ava isn't exactly human, either. Maybe once, but not anymore. 150 Lisa: Enthralled (HT) Shivering in the cold, I roll carefully to my other side, using my clothing scraps as a barrier between my skin and stone. I can't wear them. May as well lay on them. My body aches in ways I never thought possible. The frigid temperature of the floor seeps through my bones, an insidious chill that refuses to abate no matter how tightly I curl in on myself. Manacles chafe against my wrists and ankles. I tug at them with at weak yank every so often, knowing it's futile but unable to resist. The metal is unyielding, the chains too strong for my human strength to break. But I can't give up. I won't. I have to hold on to hope, to the belief that I'll make it out of here. somehow. But how? I close my eyes, trying to summon every scrap of knowledge I have. about vampires. It's not much, just bits and pieces gleaned from movies and books.... And none of them really agree with each other. So, that's not super helpful. None of them mentioned how they're cold, either. So very, very cold. I remember the way his touch had been like ice, his fingers trailing over my skin like the eares of winter itself. But after he drank from me, after he'd taken what he wanted... he was warm. Almost human. 150 Lst En Is that what they do? Steal the warmth from their victims, leaving them shivering and weak in the aftermath? It makes a twisted sort of sense, a parasitic existence that feeds off the life force of others. But if that's true, then maybe there's a way to use it against him. If I can make myself too cold to be appealing, too frigid to provide the warmth he craves... No. That's stupid. I'll die from that temperature. I'm not entirely certain I won't die from it right now. I take a deep breath, ignoring the way my lungs protest the damp, musty air. Slowly, painfully, I force myself to sit up, the chains clanking with every movement. My muscles scream in protest, but I grit my teeth and push through the pain.. It shouldn't hurt this much. Is it the cold? Is it from something he did when he fed off me? Or is it just pain from laying on the stone floor for—how long has it been? A day? Two? I can't do much, not with my limbs bound as they are. But I can move. My body stretches, twists, and turns with some protest, my muscles tight. Eventually, things get a little easier.www.NoVELworm.com

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I can't do anything I'm used to, adapting everything to my shortened range of motion, focusing on stretching and using my body weight to create resistance. 159 Lisa Enthralled (III) Stay strong. Stay focused. I can't fight back if I just give up and laze around on the stone floor. The steady rhythm of my movements echoes through the dank cell. Breathe in, breathe out. Each exhale is a little deeper, a little. louder as my heart rate picks up. I can feel the warmth spreading through my limbs as I stretch and contort within the confines of these chains. Progress. That's what I cling to in this dismal place. Any small victory over my circumstances fuels my determination to keep fighting, to never surrender. A sharp scr@pe of stone against stone shatters the trance, every muscle in my body tensing. The hairs on the back of my neck. prickle as dread washes over me in icy waves. He's coming back. I curl inward, huddling in the farthest corner as the echoing footsteps grow louder. My mind races, desperately grasping for anything I can use as a weapon, a means of defense this time. I will not be a helpless victim again. The stale air shifts, carrying a new scent that makes my nose wrinkle. An acrid tang underlies the ever-present must, sharp and chemical. I watch in trepidation as the stone wall groans and slides open, scraping against the floor. It's not the vampire. Thank God. 30-18 159 Lisa Enthralled (III) She's tiny, barely cresting five feet, her delicate features at odds. with the dreary confines of this place. Short, feathery brown hair frames a face that would be pretty were it not for the sickly, translucent pallor of her skin. Her eyes are an unnatural green that glows in the dim light. My gaze drifts lower, and I can't stifle the blush that creeps up my neck. She's clad in little more than scraps of lace that cling to her slender frame, leaving very little to the imagination. Metal cuffs cup her wrists and ankles, but there's no chain holding her down. Angry red marks mar the exposed skin of her shoulders and thighs, full teeth marks. Bites, but not the vampire kind. Others are vivid. punctures. Just like the wound on my thigh. She moves with a strange, jerky grace, her bare feet making no sound as she crosses the floor. A tray laden with food is clutched in her trembling hands, which she sets down before me with exaggerated care. A bowl of soup. A plate of broccoli. Strawberries. A steak that's already cut into bite-sized pieces. Rare, of course. All things I can eat with my fingers. A cup of water. Nothing fancy there. Once her task is done, she scurries away, pressing herself into the farthest corner from me. Her haunting green eyes are wide, watching my every move with an intensity that raises the fine hairs on my arms. "Hi?" My voice is little more than a raspy whisper, my throat sore and ravaged from screaming. 12.12 my how you why we w You a long women sowat www wind and the the de Var per day add her aywind you will, we w 1ertion is water than ***** steps hey, hey eyes flying dekorut The word waste from where I would by now How could you thank wh 1k taken dark by her under 1 de mayor chained up like me, that ma Tam not chained the en, hey see ring in patch. Trembling bands cuted at her wrists curreby the won its "The Very my A sick texting courts in the stomach as her words in The way she sprake this that the west worded to,

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