

Eternally Damned

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Edward is THE ultimate vampire. The original. What happens when a visit to the Volturi causes him to pay the Cullens' a visit? Will he find them a threat to the world he's spent an eternity shaping or will he leave them be and let them live in peace?

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Edward

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Summary: Edward is *the* ultimate vampire. The original. The one from whom the vampire race was born. So powerful that even the Volturi fear his presence. For millenia he has been the true ruler of the vampire race, with the Volturi as the ones carrying out his wishes, no matter what they are. What happens when a visit to the Volturi alerts Edward to their concerns about the Cullens, and he decides to pay a visit to the quiet Olympic coven? Will Edward see them as a threat to the world he's spent millenia molding, or will he leave them and allow them to carry out their lives in peace?

It was pretty much a unanimous decision for me to post this, which I am absolutely thrilled about. I had no idea that people enjoyed my stories that much.

So here it is. I hope you enjoy it.

Edward

Eternity.

That is what I am bound to.

Nothing more. Nothing less.

Never changing. Everything the same.

Of course the world around me changes. But I never do.

Mortals dream of immortality, and how "cool" it would be never to age. To stay the same forever. Take it from someone who has been the same forever, it's not all its cracked up to be.

For nearly fifteen millenia I have wandered the vast expanse of this earth, never changing, watching everything everything around me change and alter with regards to the planets needs. Let me tell you something, the planet isn't as big as people like to believe it is.

Everything that has come and gone in this world I have seen.

I have been there for everything.

The emergence and fall of each of the great civilisations: Egypt, the Romans, the Greeks, the Incas, each and every Chinese Dynasty. You name it, I was there. Watching and in my own way manipulating everything that happened.

Ever since that fateful day.

My last day as a lowly human, I have been this. Frozen. Moving marble, as I have been called over the years. And I have cursed the day that it happened. If I had listened to my elders when they told me to stay back, I would have died all those millenia ago. A real mortal death, encased in slumber forever. Not this half-life. If I had listened I wouldn't have ended up slaughtering my whole village and then some.

After that I wasn't alone anymore.

I wasn't the only one of my kind.

Everyone that I'd bitten and drained changed. It was then that I discovered I was venomous, infecting every human that I had bitten. Each and every one of them had become as volatile and tempermental as I was. Even so, they looked to me as their leader. I was in charge. None of them challenged me. In their eyes, I had given them this life and so they were indebted to me.

None of them were around anymore. Over the centuries they had created more and destroyed each other in the process. Even though

it wasn't me directly destroying the lives of lowly humans, it was all because of me that they were being changed on a daily basis.

We didn't have a name back then. Not when language was so new. It had only just evolved from the primitive grunts and moans of the animals that we had descended from. They didn't have an appropriate name for us. All they knew was that we were something to be feared. Or more appropriately / was something to be feared. It appeared that no matter where I went, the settlers had heard of me. The blood-drinker that would not die. That could not be killed. Not that they hadn't tried. They sure as hell had. But nothing had worked. Spears, arrows, fire, nothing had worked.

That was one thing that I didn't share with my ... descendants, I guess you could call them. They were susceptible to fire. It had no effect on me. Various times in my long existence I had wished that it was. Life, or rather the un-life as it seemed appropriate had become so tedious and repetitive that I'd wished for an escape. I'd even gone looking for it on several occasions. And of course the settlers around were well aware of my existence. It seemed that no matter where one went, there was one name that resounded all around. A name that was said in fear and warning.

Edaar.

That of course was my original name. My name has changed many times over my long existence and there are none alive now, save for myself, that know of my original name.

Not even those that I had massed to take over the day to day ruling of my species. Of course, I was still in the ultimate control. No one dared to question my command. Those who did met a swift end.

In the end I had grown tired of travelling around the world, purely to keep my species under control. It was becoming extremely tedious work. So I had created three to watch over the race in my stead. The still answered to me, as all of my kind did, but essentially they would

do what they saw fit to keep my species under control. I had one rule that I wanted kept in place. And one rule only.

Total secrecy.

Not many knew this but it was because of me that they were forced to stay hidden in the shadows. I had seen with my own eyes what happens when we are out in the open, and have the humans know about us. It's not something that I wished to observe again. Most of those that had followed me into this eternal damnation believed that it was because of the brothers and their wishes that they had to keep the secret.

All knew of me of course.

They feared me.

They knew that if they did something that was even above the brothers heads, then I would be there. I would be there in an instant, teaching the offender that they *must* obey the rule. In the only way that they seem to understand.

Luckily for them, the brothers didn't seem to need me to intercede very often. Some of the time, when they did something that I didn't approve of, then I would take a trip to their home in Italy to pay them a visit, making sure that they realised who was in charge. Who their leader was. It was needed sometimes. They tended to sit too highly on their thrones and believe that they were invincible. Sometimes I felt the need to take a visit and remind them who the truly invincible one of the race was. The *only* invincible one.

After each and every visit they understood. But it helped to take a return visit once every decade or so. Just to keep track of what they were doing. Of course, I never announced my visits. That gave them time to prepare.

Just turning up was a better way of seeing how well they were really dealing with the ruling of my species.

Because after all it was *my* species.

I was the patriarch, as it were. All of these creatures were descended from me, in a way, therefore I was the undisputed leader. No one fought back, even though sometimes I wished that they would. It would make life so much more interesting. Having some that fought back, rather than just sitting there cowering in my prescence.

Over the years we had been called many things. The Cold Ones. Nosferatu. Names similar to those, but never sticking around for very long. I myself have even been granted the name Apotamkin for some reason, by the Native Americans. From what I've heard, I've been dubbed as a bogeyman type of character. Oh well, if it stops people from becoming intrigued enough to actually search me out then I don't really care. The most recent name, probably spanning back a couple of centuries, I don't know, to me time is insignificant, happens to be the favourite amongst humans.

Vampire.

Personally, I prefer it to the other names that we've been given. It has a certain ring to it.

Thankfully, humans no longer believe in my species as largely as they used to. Of course there are still a few that like to pretend that they know vampires or that they know a lot about us. But most of the time they are so far from the mark it actually becomes amusing.

All this leads to me, right here, right now.

At the moment, I am speeding through Austria on the way to Italy to check up on those dear brothers that I created all those years ago. Just to make sure that they are doing their jobs properly. This is just a routine trip that I make every decade or so, unannounced as always. Where's the fun in telling them when I'm going to turn up. I'm fifteen thousand years old for heaven's sake. I've got to get some amusement from somewhere.

I'm heading towards the city of Volterra, where the brothers have settled. The Volturi they call themselves. Of course now there are more than just three of them. They have a whole guard and wives that help them to do their, well technically, *my* bidding. I don't care how they do it, or how many they have helping them to do it. As long as they keep the vampire world hidden from the human world, that's all I care about.

I don't want another war to break out. I've already had enough of those. Humans trying to hunt down vampires to try to rid the world of them. The human mind amazes me. It doesn't matter how many of them I hear there are few that take me by surprise, but every so often, every couple of centuries or so, there is one that is more bold than others. One that intrigues me for a short period of time, until, like all the others it gets boring and I grow tired of it.

That's one thing I have yet to explain about myself. My gifts.

Yes, *gifts* .

There are a few of my kind that enter into vampirism bringing an extra gift with them. There have been mind-readers, psychics, nature wielders, empaths, trackers, you name it, there has been a vampire with it. There haven't been any that have been able to fly yet though. That would be amusing to see.

How do I know what gifts there have been?

One reason: I have them all.

Whenever a new vampire with a gift is created, the gift itself manifests itself in me. It doesn't matter when or where the vampire is created, how old the vampire is or whatever, the gift that they bring over into vampirism is one more that I possess. This means that I know exactly how many gifted vampires there are in the world. One of the prices, I have to pay, for creating an entire species I guess.

Not that I'm complaining mind you. It helps to instill fear into the species. If they all knew about my gifts then there was less of a chance that they would oppose me in any way. I also knew that a great many of these gifted vampires resided in Volterra. Not under their own free will mind you. This was something I continuously needed to bring up with the brothers. They had one vampire, I didn't know her name, nor did I feel the need to, however I knew that she had the ability to strengthen or sever a bond between individuals and groups. I needed to remind the brothers to remove this vampire from their guard or I would dispose of her. To me, free will was one of the only things that mattered.

I could see the wretched city now. The one where the three brothers, the three "leaders" of the Volturi resided, in the large castle. I snorted at the thought of how my species thought that they were the ones in charge. Not realising that the Volturi themselves took orders from someone more powerful than them. The whole place wreaked of death and despair. It looked more like a prison than somewhere that royalty should have lived, had we not given them reason to never return to Volterra.

The three brothers that sometimes I wished I hadn't created lived within these walls.

Aro, Marcus and Caius.

Aro got on my nerves. He thought that because he could read minds that he was of more use than anyone else. Newsflash, Aro! Not that important. Reading minds can be a very useful tool, but at times it can be more of a hinderance than a help. Of course it was a great help when it came to these visits.

Unlike Aro, I was not limited to touching someone to read their mind. I could hear whatever thought was passing through a mind, human or vampire, at a particular point in time. Aro was only able to obtain thoughts by touch. One reason I never shook his hand. Even though I could shield my mind, I didn't like the thought of touching him or any of the brothers.

Marcus didn't bother me so much. He was just a bit depressing and boring really. I wish that guy would get some personality. He really could use it. Yeah, I sympathise with the guy. He had lost his wife, but that happened lord knows how long ago. Well, actually I knew how long ago, but that's beside the point.

His gift was an interesting one, if I do say so myself. Being able to see the relationship between others was something that was highly invaluable. Especially in what he does. Politically, it has been found very useful. Not that I use it on a regular basis, but it has helped out in the past.

Caius on the other hand. I found that guy to be as irritating as hell. He was always for confrontation. I often wondered why I kept him around. Oh yeah, because I couldn't be arsed to get rid of him. It was more effort than it was worth.

Maybe it was because he didn't have any special abilities. Maybe he felt inadequate. Whatever it was it didn't really matter to me. All I cared about was that he stayed out of my way. If he didn't then he would be finding himself without a head very soon.

Driving through the city I parked my car and tossed the keys to a valet, who was admiring it. Sticking to the shadows I made my way into the castle, walking straight past the guards that just stared after me in awe.

Imbeciles , I thought irritated. They obviously knew who I was and that is why they made no attempt at stopping me. Silently, I wished that there would be some resistance. Maybe just a little bit. It would make coming here so much easier. I knew that they didn't know I was coming. There was no psychic here. As far as I was aware there was only one psychic in the world and she was in the States somewhere. No bother to me.

I walked straight through the tunnels that led to the Great Hall in this place. Why they chose to live in these dank and dark tunnels was

beyond me. It's not like anyone could see you when you were in the castle. So you can walk around, sparkles and all.

That was one thing I hated about what I was. The fact that because our skin was said to be like liquid marble, when the sunlight struck it, it appeared to turn into millions of tiny diamonds. That wasn't something that I had gotten out of unfortunately. And it sucked.

Unbelievable, I scolded myself. I really need to stop driving through large cities for a while. The language used there is seriously affecting my vocabulary.

I walked up to the doors of the Great Hall and walked straight in, to the surprise of a few members of the guard. New members obviously. They obviously hadn't been well educated in who I was, because they turned and crouched into an offensive pose when I entered the room.

"Enough!" Aro cried, launching himself out of his throne in an action that looked to fast for his frail looking frame. The others must have noted how full of fear his voice was so they immediately relaxed, keeping their eyes on me the whole time. "To what do we owe the pleasure, Edward!"

I heard a collective gasp from around the room as Aro announced my name. I heard a few disbelieving thoughts that didn't bother me. Then one outright dismissed it in his mind and I turned to face the offender.

"What was that?" I asked quietly, walking up to him slowly, menacingly.

"I didn't say anything." He was trying to keep control of his voice, to remain calm and in control, but unfortunately for him, it wasn't working.

"You didn't have to." I stopped in front of him, my face a blank canvas. After fifteen millenia, it kind of becomes second nature to

keep your face blank.

Before he had the chance to respond my hand was around his throat. He was a relative newborn, so he was still fairly strong. It didn't matter how old a vampire was when it came to me though. I would always be the strongest. I forced the young vampire down to his knees and slowly began tilting his head away from me. His body stayed frozen in its place, thanks to another little power of mine and I felt the skin underneath my grip begin to give way. There was a tearing sound and I saw a large gash appear in his throat. I wasn't going to rip his head off. Today at least. He just needed to know who was in charge.

I released his head and it snapped back into place, the flesh starting to mould back together as soon as it connected.

"You should learn to show your superiors some respect." I hissed at him, as he stared at me, fear written in his very posture. "And they don't get much more superior than me." I gave him one more look over before turning my back on him.

The rest of the vampires in the room cowered away from me, instinctively. They had either known me from a previous visit or they had been warned about me, and therefore stayed away out of respect.

Before any of them could process what had happened I was sitting in Aro's throne, legs hanging over the side casually. I knew that none of them would oppose me. None of them ever did.

"Do you wish to tell me of your recent failures, Aro, or do I have to pick your brain?" I gazed over at him lazily and he stood there rigid. There was obviously something going on that he didn't want me to know about.

I swung my legs over the throne, and placed my feet on the floor, still watching Aro for any untoward movement. I could tell that the other vampires around were not used to Aro behaving in such a way. I

didn't recognise any of the scents of these vampires, and from what I gathered from their minds they were all fairly new. It seemed that the Volturi were attempting to boost their brute force for some reason.

I let down the shield that I usually held in place and let myself invade Aro's thoughts. Normally, the thoughts of the three brothers were coherent and scheduled, running in perfect sequence when I came to visit as they all knew the drill. They knew what I wanted when I came to visit.

This time though, something was wrong. There must have been something really getting them all going because Aro's thoughts were in complete disarray. Never had they been like this before.

There was one thing that kept flashing through his mind though. The only continuous thing.

A name.

A familiar name.

Cullen .

Carlisle Cullen.

I remembered him from numerous visits to the castle. He had resided here for a number of decades. He was always easy to talk to, no matter what the subject. He had always intrigued me. He had never tasted human blood. Or at least when I had known him that was true. From the images flashing through Aro's mind at the moment that may not be the case anymore.

"Why does your mind keep coming back to Carlisle Cullen?" I challenged Aro and I watched as his features became drawn and cautious. "Aro, you for one know how I do not like my patience to be tried. Answer the question."

There were a couple of confused looks at my obvious disrespect towards Aro, but then again, I'm the one who made him. Hell, all of them, every vampire on the planet could be traced back to me, so I figure I can be a bit obnoxious when I feel like it.]

"We feel that his coven is growing abnormally large." Aro explained his voice shuddering with fear slightly. This was obviously something that the vampires who served under him were not used to, judging from the thoughts running through their heads. "We feel-"

"How many?" I cut him off holding up a hand.

"I'm sorry?"

"How. Many?" I hissed through gritted teeth. I was growing impatient. For a vampire that was a few thousand years old you would have thought that his thought processes would be a bit faster. I'll be the first to admit that I have a bit of an anger problem, but after fifteen thousand years of walking this planet, who wouldn't?

"Seven." He answered quickly, obviously not wanting to aggravate me any further.

I sat back in his throne and thought for a moment. No one spoke, or even moved. They all knew better.

Seven was abnormally large for a coven. The Volturi's main worry was that Carlisle was trying to amass a group large enough to take them on. I knew Carlisle well enough to know that that was not the case. Carlisle wouldn't try anything like that. He was too passive for anything like that. He believed in preserving life, not taking it. That's what intrigued me about him so much when he was here. He refused to take a human life. Only animals.

"What were you planning to do about it?" I asked casually, not breaking my train of thought.

"We were planning on wiping them out as soon as possible." He sounded confident that I would like this plan. Unfortunately for him, I did not. I may agree with disposing of vampires where needs be, such as the wars that were happening in the south of the continent now called America, but recklessly disposing of a coven for no reason was something I did not approve of.

"Have they done anything to warrant such an attack?" I asked coolly, my gaze meeting his, knowing what the answer was before I even asked the question.

"Not as of yet, but we believe that it is just a matter of time." He answered me, still acting confidently of his assumptions. I hated that about Aro. About all three of the brothers actually. They were too cocky and confident. As if I hadn't threatened them enough. They knew not to let their places of power get to their heads, because I could rip it away from them as quickly as I gave it to them.

"No." I stated simply. "You will not attack the coven. Instead, I, will be taking a trip there."

"My lord?" Aro sounded worried now. Why he sounded worried I had no idea. Technically speaking I was the only indestructible one of us on the planet. "You will be visiting Carlisle and his coven?"

"Yes, Aro I will." I let my impatience and intolerance of his idiocy become clear in the growl that erupted from my throat, causing some of the younger vampires to recoil in fear. It was clear who I was by now and none of them wanted to risk being torn limb from limb, as I had been prone to doing over my many years. "I haven't seen Carlisle in many years, and it would be interesting to catch up with my old friend."

I stood up, whilst picking through Aro's brain, discovering where Carlisle and his family were situated.

"No one is to approach Carlisle and his coven unless I give the say so." I growled walking past Aro and stopping just behind him. "Is that

clear?"

"Yes, my lord." He answered, not moving an inch. I knew he hated me. And I didn't care. He could hate me all he wanted. It didn't change my seat of power. He knew that there was no vampire alive, or dead, as it were that could have even a hope of lasting more than a second against me. Trust me, vampires have tried and failed to best me. None have survived.

I walked out of the Great Hall, knowing that I was being watched by all the disbelieving eyes of the vampires behind me. Many of them were still in shock over who it was that had just walked out of the room. Many of them were still in shock over how I had spoken to and treated Aro. To them, the brothers were the highest authority. Well, at least they *were* .

I walked out of the castle and over to where the valet had parked my car. I didn't need to keep to the shadows seeing as the sun had set by now, something I was glad for. Even after fifteen millenia, I still hated having to hide in the shadows.

Exiting the city as fast as possible I was glad to be out of that place as I made my way to the nearest airport, which appeared to be Venice. Being in Volterra made me feel older than I really was, and that was a hard feat to achieve. I had the cash to catch a direct plane to the States. I would use one of the jets that I owned but I didn't have one present in Italy at the moment and it would take too long for it to get here.

Yes, I'm impatient. It's a fault of mine.

It seemed as though I was taking a trip to Forks, Washington USA.

And from what I had gathered from Aro's mind, it wasn't the most interesting place on the planet. But then again, not a lot interested me anymore.

But I would find out what worried the Volturi about Carlisle's coven. Whether the fears were well grounded or whether they were completely irrational, which wouldn't surprise me when it came to the brothers. *Paranoid gits* ! I thought. The only one they had to worry about destroying them is me, and if they kept their fears to the rational level, that wouldn't happen any time soon.

Oh well. Back to the States I go.

Let's hope this time will be more productive than the last.

That's the first installment.

This is all I'm going to post for tonight, and I'm going to wait to see what the response is to it tomorrow.

If you guys like it enough then I'll post more.

If not, then I won't bother.

It's all up to you guys.

Will be updating *Alive Again* and *Protecting Him* tomorrow as well.

Please lemme know what you think.

xx

Bella

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

All I can say is WOW!!! I'd never thought that I would get that good a response to this story and all the reviews made me smile.

So here's the second chapter. I hope you like it :D

Bella

"Emmett, don't even think about it!" Alice's cry resounded through the house.

She had obviously seen Emmett doing something that was either dangerous, was going to damage the house in some way or a mixture of both. Which knowing Emmett wasn't at all surprising.

"Oh, come on Ali! It's perfectly harmless." He moaned walking back into the house, a defeated look on his face.

"No it's not and you know it." Alice commented calmly appearing in the living room her hands on her hips. "You would have gotten caught and you know it."

He huffed and stalked up the stairs to where Rosalie was currently residing, probably fixing already immaculate her hair or her make-up. I couldn't help but giggle at his attitude. He should know by now that Alice is going to put a halt to any plan he has that results in any untoward outcome.

That was one plus side of living with a psychic. You could always count on her putting a stop to Emmett's ridiculous plans. At least the ones that she doesn't agree with, anyway. If she does agree with them, then that's a whole other story. Most of the time we end up

getting involved and either ending up in jail or doing some form of community service.

"Would it really have ended that badly?" I asked Alice as she settled on the couch next to me.

"Yes, and he knows it would have done." She rolled her eyes and I giggled. "He's just trying to push the boundaries because he's bored."

"Am not!" Emmett called down the stairs and we both grinned, nodding at each other. He definitely was.

That's a bad side to living in a house full of vampires. No privacy. Living with six other vampires, all of whom had impeccable hearing didn't leave much to the imagination, especially when all of said vampires were all mated and couply.

They were constantly going on at me about not having a mate. Honestly, I didn't care. I've been by myself for a century now, and I think that if I was going to get lonely I would have done by now. I constantly told them that I didn't need a mate to be content, but none of them ever believed me.

Emmett even had the idea of me creating myself a mate, but everyone in the house had dismissed that idea before it had even left his mouth. Courtesy of Alice, we all knew what he was thinking before he had a chance to voice it.

I guess I should explain about my family. We're not really the average family.

For starters, we're all dead.

Well, for the most part anyway.

We're a family of vampires. Yup, you heard me right. Vampires.

We're not the average vampire family though. Actually, our family is rather large when compared to most vampire groupings. Normally, vampires are nomads, travelling on their own or in groups of no more than two or three. We on the other hand, live in a group of seven and tend to move from place to place, settling for a few years, staying as long as we can get away with before people start to ask questions.

We can generally get away with about four years, five at the most, but it all depends on the place we move to. Every time we move, five of us have to start over in high school again. Generally, we can get away with Alice and I being sophomores and our three siblings, Emmett, Jasper and Rosalie being juniors.

You're probably thinking how can a family of vampires live surrounded by humans without losing control?

Well, the answer to that is simple. We don't drink human blood. We drink animal blood. Throughout the vampire world, those who drink animal blood are known as vegetarians, and others tend to look down on us for denying ourselves our natural food source. We know that human blood is what the rest of the species drinks, but we don't want to be monsters. So we've learned to control our thirst, feeding off of animals and learning to fit in with human society.

Many others that we've come across think that the idea of intergrating with humans is ludicrous but we don't believe so. We believe that humans deserve the right to live as much as we do, so we don't feed from them. Out of the seven of us, there are only two of us that have fed off of humans for an extended period of time. Jasper and myself, but I won't get into that now.

"What was it this time?" I asked, curious, marking my page in my book and setting it down on the table.

"You don't want to know." Alice replied raising her eyebrows and shaking her head. I felt my lips forming into a small "oh" shape as I realised what it was that Emmett must have been planning. And let me tell you, it's not something I'm going to voice out loud.

"Whatever it was, he's pretty pissed that you stopped him." Jasper commented strolling down the stairs at a human pace. "He was really looking forward to it."

I felt a wave of calm wash over me and I looked at Jasper who was smirking at the two of us. We all heard Emmett growl from up the stairs. Apparently, he was quite happy with being pissed off and didn't want to calm down. Having an empath who can control emotions living in the house often quelled a lot of disputes before they could even begin.

I suppose you're wondering about the gifts that I keep mentioning. Well I'll explain. Alice is a psychic, which I'm sure you've gathered by now. She can see into the future, duh! But contrary to what most people think the future is not set in stone. The future as Alice sees it is subjective, at the mercy of people's decision. She sees the course people are on while they're on it. If they change their minds then the vision changes. It comes in very handy when looking for changes in the stock market or when the weather is about to change. Then again, living where we do, that doesn't happen very often.

Jasper is an empath. He has the power to feel and control the emotions of others around him. Something that comes in very handy when living with six other volatile and testy vampires. Arguments are epic when they happen, and physical fights can be legendary. I'm sure that people in one of our previous towns are still talking about the thunderstorm that happened on a clear day. In reality, it was Jasper and Emmett having a bit of a disagreement. Let's just say, we packed up and left that town pretty quickly. If Jasper hadn't been able to calm Emmett down in time, we would have had a town audience.

I, myself, am a mental shield. I can block any mental attacks on my own, or any mind I choose. Something that has proven to be very useful when we've had visits from our leaders the Volturi. Having a mind reading vampire with them, they thought that they would gain all of our secrets, but they thought wrong. When Aro and the guard had turned up, I had covered the whole of my family with my shield.

An easy feat, but it was also something that had gained Aro's interest and ever since he had been coveting me to join his guard. Not something I had been interested in.

Even now, fifty years later, he was still after me joining him in Volterra, Italy. Each time he asked or suggested it, I politely declined. I was glad that he didn't know about Alice and Jasper, or else he would have been here, bothering us more often.

"What was it that our dear brother was planning?" Jasper asked strolling up behind Alice and placing a kiss on the top of her head. She just shook her head again, obviously not willing to relive the vision again. "That bad, huh?" She nodded her head and he sat down on the sofa beside her. She quickly snuggled into his side and sighed. She was happy and content.

"Right," I said, standing up. "While you two are getting all lovey-dovey, I'm going to go hunt." I smiled and waved at the two of them as I walked out of the door at a human pace. Why I went at human pace I don't know. But as soon as I was out of the door, I let loose.

I was the fastest of my family, something that Emmett hated me for, which meant that I could get to our regular hunting grounds, feed and get back before the rest of them could.

I enjoyed hunting on my own. It allowed me to have free reign over what I hunted. I didn't have to compete for a meal. Either that or I enjoyed hunting with Emmett, especially in the early spring, when the bears were just waking up from hibernation. For some reason, Emmett enjoyed aggravating them. You would have thought that he would have learned his lesson, seeing as messing with a bear is how he came to be a vampire. But no. He loved to piss them off something rotten.

I stopped running as I caught the scent of something appetizing. Well, not appetizing, but it would do.

I listened closely and found that it was an elk.

I swallowed the venom that had begun pooling at the back of my throat and made my way silently and quickly to where it was waiting, completely unaware that it was being stalked. It was a large one, but it still wouldn't stand a chance against a killer like myself.

Because that's what I was. I was a killer. And not just a killer of animals. I had taken human lives as well. The thought wracked me with guilt every single day, and it wasn't like I had the luxury of sleep to break up that steady stream of guilt. All I had to divert my thoughts from becoming too depressed was Jasper's gift, which he automatically used when I started to feel this way. It affected him too, and that I didn't like.

Quickly draining the elk, I buried it underneath a tree, something we had all been taught to do, save an unwary hiker stumbling across one of our kills.

I found two more elk and quickly drained them before starting the return journey home, feeling sufficiently satisfied with my hunt.

I looked at my watch and found that it was 7:45AM. I hadn't even realised what the time was so I picked up my speed, hoping to get back home to change before we had to get to school. Alice had told us that it was going to be a gloomy day in Forks, just like any other so we had to go in.

I reached the house with plenty of time to spare, pushing even my limits, and I saw Alice smirking at me. She knew that I would be back in time to shower and change after my hunt. I threw her a look and ran up the stairs to change.

Reaching my bedroom I saw that Alice had already taken the liberty to pick out my outfit for me. Something she did every single morning. Don't get me wrong, I loved my sister, but sometimes her tendency to decide what I wear gets a little tiring, especially after a couple of decades.

At least today's outfit was somewhat suitable. I didn't really have a problem with it. I just wished that I would be allowed to pick out my own clothes every once in a while.

I jumped in the shower and let the hot water cascade down my body, the temperature not really making much of an impact. Hell, I could have the temperature turned up the full way and it wouldn't bother me. That, I guess was one of the perks of being living marble. Didn't have to worry about wrapping up warm. Of course, we did purely to keep up appearances.

I jumped out of the shower and quickly dried myself down. I dressed at vampire speed and looked at my reflection in the mirror. The outfit that Alice had picked out was daring and yet concealing at the same time. She had placed me in a blue v-neck jumper and dark washed out skinny jeans, which left pretty much nothing to the imagination. Pairing that with the black knee length boots that she had picked out I was ready to go.

I ran down the stairs, and thanked the heavens for my vampire grace as I knew that without it I would have met the ground in many face-plants already this morning.

"Ready to go?" I asked Alice and Jasper, who were of course ready to go. They were always ready before everyone else, which I guessed was due to Alice's little gift.

They nodded and we ran to the car, not worrying about Emmett and Rosalie because they would be driving to school on their own today. Whether or not they made it to school on time was another question altogether.

Making it to school within ten minutes or so, I saw that the parking lot was beginning to fill up. I had a feeling that something was going to happen today. Ask me what it was, I couldn't tell you, but there was just a nagging in my head, telling me that something big was happening today. It was uncanny, because it was normally Alice that had these feelings, not me.

I looked over at Alice as she got out of the car, but nothing seemed to be bothering her, and I was sure that if my feelings were correct then she would have said something to me. I decided against bringing it up, for fear of causing unneeded worry and concern within the family.

And on to another day of boredom and torture , I thought miserably as I locked my Volvo and walked towards the dismal building. This building was the instigator of many musings and daydreams that had included myself and taking an unprecedented visit to the Volturi. I would never follow through with them of course, but still, that's how being here every day made me feel.

After all, there's not really much you can teach a hundred and eight year old vampire, who has obtained two medical degrees and repeated high school more times than she would like to remember.

"Bella!" I audibly groaned and turned around to find myself face to face with Mike Newton. A blonde-haired, blue-eyed boy who had been hounding me ever since I started at the school.

"Yes, Mike." I replied, making sure that my distaste of this particular human came through in my voice. He didn't seem to notice, but then again he was so wrapped up in himself that I shouldn't have expected anything less.

"Um, I was just wondering if you were free tonight?" He asked shyly, rubbing the back of his neck with his hand.

"No, Mike, I'm not." I turned on my heel wanting to get away from him as quickly as possible. Most humans avoided us by instinct, wary of us but without really knowing why. All they knew was that something inside of them told them that we were dangerous. For some reason, it seemed that Mike had missed out on this particular internal mechanism.

"Maybe some other time then?" He called behind me, sounding hopeful. It didn't matter how many times I turned him down he didn't

seem to get the message.

I didn't answer him and walked into my first class. English. Great. We were covering *Wuthering Heights*. A book I have read countless times, and could remember by heart, vampire memory permitting. The teacher's analysis of the book was so incorrect that I wanted to snap at her to shut up and let *me* run the class instead. I guess it was better than my other imaginings of actually snapping her in half. Her incredibly nasal voice didn't help matter much.

I didn't get any kind of message from Alice about this, so she must have seen that I wouldn't go through with it. That pleased me, knowing that I had enough self control to resist doing that.

Classes dragged on in the same way as they normally did, and I couldn't wait for lunch when I could actually get some intelligent conversation from my siblings, although that probably wouldn't happen, as they were nearly always wrapped up in each other. Not that I cared, just being with them seemed to ease my discomfort and distaste of the day. Whether that was Jasper's doing I don't know, but still I was grateful to them.

Walking out of my class and towards the cafeteria, I was called to a stop by someone shouting my name. It was Tyler Crowley. *Great, another one.* I thought, feeling my anger rising.

"Hi, Bella." He said nervously, repeating the action that Mike had been doing this morning. Why guys did that I don't know. Maybe he was flattening the hairs that had stuck up on the back of his neck, telling him to run for his life when I was near. "I was wondering...um, did...did you have a date to Prom yet?" He looked at me hopefully.

"I'm sorry, Tyler. I'm not going." I told him shortly. He may have bugged me, but not as badly as Newton did. At least he didn't follow me around like a puppy dog. "You should ask Lauren. I know she wants to go with you." I did in fact know she wanted to go with him. Another perk of being a vampire. The super-hearing lets you know things that people would rather keep a secret. He smiled at me

sadly, and I walked towards the cafeteria, ignoring Mike's calls from behind me. Once I was sat down with my family, I knew that there was no way he would dare approach me.

Approaching one of us on our own was nerve-wracking enough for a human, their heartbeats gave that away, but approaching the whole family was a big no-no. It just wasn't done. Even Newton had more sense than that.

I grabbed a tray of prop-food and went to join my siblings.

"Whoa, chill on the agitation there, Bells." Jasper commented as I sat down, sending a wave of calm in my direction.

"Sorry, Jazz." I smiled at him apologetically and gratefully at the same time. I knew that he knew what I was aiming for. He was the empath after all.

"Newton?" Emmett asked, eyeing the annoying human who was sitting across the cafeteria staring at me, in an obvious way. I nodded and he sighed. "When's he going to get the hint?"

"Yup, he's almost as thick as you are Emmett." I quipped, grinning at him. "You've just had more practise than he has." The whole table laughed at Emmett's reaction and I knew that he didn't have a reponse to my statement. He never did.

"Oh, God." Alice murmured as she stiffened and her eyes glazed over. We all looked at her, knowing that she was having a vision. She blinked out of it, but was still stiff and tense as she dug through her purse, looking for her phone. Normally, she settled back down into lunch after a vision and told us about it, keeping up the pretense that there was nothing wrong.

"Alice?" Jasper sounded concerned, obviously feeling whatever emotion she had running through her at the moment. "Alice what's wrong?"

She looked up at the rest of us and shook her head. "We have to get home." She stood up, not bothering to pick up her tray of uneaten food and walked out of the cafeteria, holding her phone to her ear.

We all looked at each other for a split second before following her, all wondering what she could have seen to make her this agitated.

"Alice?" I called as we walked across the parking lot. "Alice, what's wrong? What did you see?"

She just shook her head again and got into my Volvo. I could see the confused expressions of my siblings as we all climbed into our respective cars.

"Carlisle?" Alice sounded worried and scared. Whatever it was that she saw, it was not a good vision. The only thing I could think of was not something that I wanted to think of. "We need to talk. Everyone. At home. Now." She listened for a moment before hanging up the phone as I sped out of the parking lot.

Jasper and I continuously asked Alice what was happening, what she had seen on the way home, but she just shook her head and said that it was something the whole family needed to hear at the same time. I was starting to get worried now. There was only one thing that could get Alice worked up, and even then I hadn't seen her this bad.

The Volturi.

She wouldn't answer any of the questions that Jasper and I asked her with regards to them. That only confirmed my ideas in my own mind.

When we reached home we saw that Carlisle's Mercedes was already in front of the house. How he had gotten here before us was a mystery as it normally took double the time to get to and from the hospital from our house than it did the school. Carlisle must have

really been pushing it. He was probably as worried about Alice's vision as we were.

Alice still refused to say anything about the vision until we were all gathered in the house. She said that it was something that concerned the entire family and that we should all hear about it at the same time.

"Alice." Carlisle approached her cautiously as she paced in front of us. "Calm down, what's wrong? What did you see?"

She stopped pacing and looked straight at him. "He's coming."

Those were the only words that she spoke, and they confused me. I looked at the rest of my family and I saw that they had the same expressions of confusion on their faces.

"Who's coming Alice?" Carlisle asked, still using the calm voice he had a moment ago. "I don't understand, who's coming?"

"Edward."

That's chapter two up. I hope that you enjoyed it.

And it, hopefully, answered the question that I have been asked over and over again: Is Bella a vampire? Answer: yes she is.

Please review and let me know what you think.

xx

He's Coming

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I had never thought that this story would be as popular as it is. It makes me smile every time I refresh my inbox and there's reviews for this story. Keep 'em coming. I do love them so :D

Bella

She stopped pacing and looked straight at him. "He's coming."

Those were the only words that she spoke, and they confused me. I looked at the rest of my family and I saw that they had the same expressions of confusion on their faces.

"Who's coming Alice?" Carlisle asked, still using the calm voice he had a moment ago. "I don't understand, who's coming?"

"Edward."

I stood there dumbly, feeling like an idiot for not knowing what was going on. I looked around at my family and saw that the only one, other than Alice who had any recognition of what was going on and who this "Edward" was was Carlisle. He seemed frozen in the posture he had taken when he had approached. His eyes had grown wide and his face was that of shock and fear.

This Edward must be someone you don't mess with if it's got Carlisle all worked up. He didn't even act like this when the Volturi showed up.

"When?" He asked Alice in a choked voice I had never heard him use before. Not even when we were being threatened by the Volturi. It scared me to hear him like that. "When will he be here?"

"I don't know." She shook her head, a look of despair and frustration on her face. "He keeps changing his mind. He keeps flicking through whether or not he should stop and take a detour. He keeps changing his mind about *where* he's going to stop, *if* he's going to stop and he's doing it so fast, I can't keep up."

"Hang on," Jasper spoke up and I looked at him. He too had the look of confusion on his face, but that quickly changed to an expression of frustration, anger and fear. If I didn't know any better then I would say that it wasn't possible to be feeling all of those things at once, but this being Jasper, it really was. "That means that he must know something about Alice's gift."

"He knows *everything* about Alice's gift." Carlisle's voice was still strained, and I wanted to know what was going on. From the looks of it, so did everyone else. Why was it that only Alice knew of this Edward? "He knows everything about *every* gift."

"But how is that possible?" Emmett asked. He was actually being serious for once, but given the circumstances, I couldn't expect anything else. "I mean, not even the Volturi know about Alice's gift. If they did then they'd be here in an instant, trying to take her from us. Wouldn't they?"

"Maybe that's why he's coming." Rosalie suggested, looking between Carlisle and Alice. "Maybe he's an agent for the Volturi and he's coming to take Alice to Volterra."

Carlisle shook his head. "No." He turned to look at us. "Edward isn't from the Volturi."

"How do you know that Carlisle?" I asked, him walking over to him. "Do you know him?"

"Yes." He nodded. "Most vampires do. Or at least know *of* him."

"What are you talking about?" Emmett was starting to get irritated now. This was something that we all wanted to hear about, and there

was no way Carlisle was getting out of explaining this to us. "If most vampires at least know *of* this guy then how come we don't? How come we've never heard of him before? Not even when we've had our run-ins with the Volturi."

"Because no vampire talks about Edward. Out of respect. Unless it's necessary and I didn't think that it was prudent that you know about him." Carlisle sat down on the sofa, even though he didn't need to, I could see that it was an inbuilt reaction. Something we had all learned from spending so much time around humans. "It seems that I was wrong." He mumbled to himself. He put his head in his hands. "God, why is he coming here? Now?" He mumbled, again to himself. He sounded frustrated. Fearful.

"Carlisle, who is this guy?" Emmett asked as we all sat on the sofas around Carlisle, waiting for answers.

"This guy" as you put it Emmett," Carlisle looked at him, sounding a little pissed off at Emmett's nonchalant attitude towards the situation. Something that we rarely heard in Carlisle's tone. He was normally so patient. So the arrival of this "Edward" must really be putting him on edge. "Is the father of us all."

"What do you mean, dear?" Esme sat down on the arm of the sofa next to Carlisle and put her hand on his shoulder, attempting to comfort him. It didn't seem to be doing any good.

"He's *the* original vampire." Everyone in the room gasped slightly at this revelation. We had never thought that there was only *one* original vampire. Actually, being honest, I don't think any of us has ever questioned where our species came from. I know I hadn't. It was just our lot in life and we'd accepted it.

"So this "Edward" is the one we all came from?" Rosalie asked nervously. She was clearly as taken aback as I was.

"Yes," Carlisle nodded slightly, appearing shaken up. "Nobody knows *how* or *why* he became what he is, or what his real name is even.

But they do know this. He is invincible. He is unstoppable. And he is the true master of the vampire race."

"I thought the Volturi were in charge of our race." Esme sounded as confused as the rest of us looked.

"I've heard of this guy," Jasper mumbled. "Apparently, the Volturi is nothing more than his puppet organisation."

"Exactly." Carlisle agreed. "He rules over the Volturi. He *created* the Volturi." He looked at us all. "Yes, he is the vampire that created Aro, Marcus and Caius. From the way I hear it, before he turned the three of them, it was up to him to keep all of the world's vampires under control. Being the original vampire after all, it was his job. But, after a few millenia, that can tend to get a bit tedious as you'd imagine, so from what I hear, he turned Aro, Marcus and Caius, so they could do the job for him.

"Anyway, he is the most powerful vampire in the world. Most expect that because he's so old, his strength would wane, but in reality, it appears to increase with every passing decade. He is completely unstoppable."

I shook my head. "That's not possible though." I argued. "I mean, there has to be a way to stop this guy. No one is completely unstoppable."

"He is." Carlisle looked at me, his eyes hard. "Many generations of people have tried, and yet they have failed. Almost every weapon ever known to man has been used against him, to no avail. He shares all of our strengths, just magnified indefinitely. And yet he does not share our only weakness."

"Wait, you said 'after a few millenia'." Emmett pointed out. "Just how old is this guy?"

"Nobody really knows." Carlisle shook his head. "Some say he is around ten thousand, others say closer to twenty. Nobody really

knows how old he is. But what we do know is that he predates the written word, and even language itself."

"Wow." Emmett breathed, sitting back on the chair he was in. "He's old."

"Yes, he is." Carlisle nodded. "He's the oldest of our kind. He's been there all the way through history, moving behind the scenes, influencing events and occurrences all throughout history." He sighed putting his head back into his hands.

"Carlisle," I said, softly. "You said something about nobody knowing his 'real name'. Are you saying that Edward isn't his real name?"

"Not his original name, no." He sighed. "Nobody knows what his original name is. Only he does. Not even Aro, who you know is a mind reader, has been able to figure it out. It's hidden too deep within his mind for anyone to discover." He lost himself in thought for a moment before sighing in exasperation. "I just can't fathom why he's coming here. I doubt he's coming all the way here just to catch up."

"What do you mean?" I asked, suddenly wondering if Carlisle had met him before now. "Have you met him before?"

"Yes I have." He looked around at us again. "When I was living in Volterra he made several appearances. He tends to drop in on them every decade or so, making sure that they're still governing according to his rules and laws. It's he who put in place the absolute secrecy rule. No one knows why, but it's the one rule that he ensures is maintained throughout the globe. It still doesn't explain why he's coming here though."

"Maybe he has found out about Alice's power." Jasper offered, placing an arm around Alice's shoulder protectively. "Maybe he wants her to go to Volterra to maintain the Volturi's strength."

Carlisle shook his head. "He knew about Alice's power as soon as it manifested when she became a vampire."

"How is that possible?" Esme breathed, sounding worried.

"You see, when a new vampire with any kind of power is created, that power manifests itself within Edward." He looked around at us. I could tell that the others were as confused as I was. "Each new power that arises, Edward immediately has. For example, when Alice was created, he gained the power of visions, when Jasper and Bella were created he would have gained the power of empathy, manipulating emotions and shielding."

"So you're saying that this "Edward" has every power that a vampire has or had ever had?" I asked, what Carlisle was explaining to us finally dawning on me. Carlisle nodded solemnly. "But how?"

"I don't know. No one really knows that much about Edward." He explained. "He as a vampire is an enigma. And nobody really has the courage to ask. He's not known for being the most patient or tolerant of vampires." He sighed. "You've all heard of the legend of Apotamkin?"

We all nodded. We had all heard that legend. Apotamkin was the legend of a blood-drinker, deriving from Native America. We all knew that the legend was of a vampire, and that all the stories surrounding it were probably true. The human race didn't know that though, and in their minds he had become more of a bogey-man figure. The legend still struck fear into the hearts of the people that believed the legends though. Such as the Quilete tribe a few miles down the road.

"Well," Carlisle took in a deep breath. "He's where the legend started." I blinked at him a few times. "He *is* Apotamkin."

That meant he was at least a few thousand years old. No one really knew how old the legends of Apotamkin were, when they'd originated, but everyone knew that they outdated Egypt, the Romans and such.

"So he's coming here." Jasper hugged Alice closer to him. "And we have no idea why or when. All we know is that he's coming here and that he's the original vampire, he's invincible, and he's easy to piss off." He sighed. "This doesn't sound like it'll end well."

"No, it doesn't." Carlisle sighed again. I could tell that he was becoming more and more stressed out as time went by, with this Edward moving closer and closer to us with each passing second. "Have you any solid time frame Alice?"

She shook her head. "No. He's still changing his mind. And he's doing it so frequently, I can't get a read on where he is. I don't even know if he's in the country, it's that bad. I mean, he could be half way around the world and I wouldn't know." I could hear how frustrated Alice sounded. She hated it when she couldn't see properly. The only time that she'd had this problem before was when it involved the Quilete tribe down at La Push. She'd never had a vampire that was able to confuse her this much.

"It'll be okay, Alice." I walked up to her and gave her a hug.

"He's probably seen that Alice will see him." Carlisle said standing up. "That's how he knows to confuse her. He knows how her visions work, because his will work in the same way."

"So we have no way of outsmarting him?" Jasper asked. I could tell that he was running through all the battle sequences that he knew in his head.

"No, there isn't and we're not even going to try." Carlisle warned, looking at all of us, warning us. "We are not going to challenge him, we are not going to fight back at all. Hopefully, that way, he won't see any need to harm any of us in any way. Emmett, you know I'm talking about you when I say no fighting. He is unstoppable and if you challenge him in any way he will not hesitate in killing you. I've seen him do it. He holds no qualms about killing. Even if it is a one of his species."

" *His* species?!" Rosalie spat.

"Yes, Rosalie." Carlisle confirmed, turning to face her. " *His* species. If it weren't for him, then none of us would exist. He is the patriarch of our kind." He pointed a finger at all of us now. "Do not under *any* circumstances, aggravate him, or you will not see out the end of his visit."

"That bad huh?" I was getting worried now. I didn't want to lose any of my family. I just hoped that everyone would listen to Carlisle's warning. Knowing Emmett and Rosalie they probably wouldn't, so we would have to make sure that they didn't do anything to aggravate him too much. At all really.

Suddenly, Alice gasped and went rigid. I saw her eyes glaze over and her expression became horrified.

"Ten minutes." She moaned, snapping out of her vision. "He's going to be here in ten minutes." She sounded so defeated. I knew the fact that he had been able to confuse her so greatly had gotten her down. But from what Carlisle had told us, he had plenty of practise at confusing those he wanted.

"Lapse in concentration, do you think?" Jasper sounded hopeful, possibly wondering if this Edward was as powerful as Carlisle made out he was.

Carlisle shook his head solemnly. "No." He said, his tone flat. "He *let* her see that. That's another thing that Edward is a master at. He's a master at instilling fear into those he wishes to confront. It an inbuilt trait of his. You'll see what I mean when he arrives." He sounded defeated as he sat back down on the sofa.

"Why is everyone acting like this guy coming here is the end for all of us?" I asked, becoming annoyed at my family's defeatist attitude.

"Because it very well could be." Carlisle fired back at me. "You know how strong we are compared to humans." I nodded, not breaking

eye contact with him. "Well, that's like comparing us with Edward. Only in this scenario, *we're* the humans." I took in a breath. There was no way that someone was *that* powerful. "Some say that he's even stronger than that. I don't really know. All I know is that this family will *not* be testing that theory. Understood?" We all nodded and fell into silence.

I had never seen Carlisle like this before. It was as though he had completely given up. And all because of the visit of one vampire. Who cares if he's the reason we're all here. No one is that powerful. He may be twenty thousand years old or so, but hell, if I'm going to respect him, then he better give me a damn good reason for it.

"He's here!" Alice said sounding afraid. We all listened and we could all hear the roar of an engine coming up the driveway. There was no going back now. He would be able to hear and smell us all in the house.

We were trapped.

We all looked out of the giant glass window to see that a car had stopped in front of the house. An Aston Martin Vanquish. Black. Classy car. But then again, when you've been around for several millenia why go for anything second rate.

But I couldn't see him anywhere in the car. He wasn't in it. Where the hell was he? Carlisle had said that he was a master at freaking people out. I wasn't doubting him now. I should have known not to doubt Carlisle on any information he had on this guy. I mean, the rest of us, other than Jasper, hadn't even heard of him until today.

Then suddenly he was there.

Standing in front of us, leaning against the wall as though this was a common occurrence for him. But who knows it could have been.

He looked young. No older than seventeen, but my recently acquired knowledge of him told me that he was wisened beyond what he

appeared. Even if I hadn't known that he was as old as he was I would have guessed that he was older than Carlisle. There was nothing about him that gave away that he was only seventeen, despite his appearance.

He had strong features. Perfectly sculpted cheekbones and a strong jaw. His nose was in perfect proportion to his face and was perfectly straight. His hair was an odd shade of reddish brown. A colour that I supposed could only be described as bronze.

But it was his eyes that held my attention. They were old and wise. The deep red of his eyes indicating that he fed off of human blood. They showed the window into his ancient soul. They were full of knowledge and history. And they also held danger. He was dangerous. Now that I had seen him in the flesh, I could see what Carlisle meant about being wary of him.

Everything about him screamed power.

He was powerful.

It seemed to be radiating off him in waves.

We all stood up, on guard now that he was actually here. I don't think that any of us had really believed what Carlisle was saying. Up till now that is. He was actually quite terrifying to look at. I could see why people feared him as much as they did. Why legends had been created about him.

He was casting his gaze over each of us slowly, taking each of us in. His gaze lingered on me a fraction longer than the others and for some reason he smirked.

Everything in my head was longing to confront him about that, but I also knew that if I did, there was no way that I would see the night. I didn't doubt that he could kill me. I didn't doubt that he *would* kill me. I didn't doubt anything that Carlisle had told us about him now.

I wanted to look at the rest of my family. See how they were dealing with his sudden arrival, but I didn't want to tear my gaze away from him. He was too dangerous to let out of my vision. He was too powerful to look away from.

He looked away from me and focused his gaze on Carlisle, the corner of his mouth rising slightly in a smile.

"Carlisle, old friend." His voice was musical, even to a vampire's ears. It was as though I was hearing someone speak for the very first time. I had never imagined, even after being turned, that there could be a sound as melodic. It was like liquid velvet. Pure and beautiful.

"Edward." Carlisle sounded guarded, which seemed to amuse him even more. "What can we do for you?"

"I see that the basis of Aro's fears was well grounded." He sounded bored, as if this visit was taking time out of his precious schedule.

"What fears were those, pray tell?" Carlisle was being more formal with this guy than I had ever heard him before. And being with him for a hundred years, I had heard him in plenty of formal situations. I glanced over at him and saw that he was completely rigid, his arm protectively around Esme's shoulders, his eyes never leaving the terrifying vampire in front of us.

Alright, I admit it. I was scared.

"About the size of your coven, Carlisle." His gaze flicked over us once more, again settling on me for longer than the others. It was as though he was trying to work me out. Probably trying to work his way through my shield. I managed to suppress a smirk as I knew that that would help him on his way to becoming pissed off. Something that none of us wanted. "It *has* gotten rather large, don't you think?"

"Well, I, um," Carlisle didn't seem to be able to form coherent sentences around this guy. Was it because he was afraid? I had

never known Carlisle to be afraid of anyone. But then again, after hearing Carlisle's stories about this guy, I wasn't surprised.

"Come now, Carlisle." He sounded even more bored than before, if that was at all possible. "If I'd wanted to kill you all, I would have done so by now. You know that and I know it." He smirked at us all. "Aro believes that you are building an army to try to overthrow the Volturi. But then again, both you and I know that Aro is an insufferable idiot." I had to agree with him there, and he looked in my direction, the corner of his mouth raising in a small smile again. Could he know what I was thinking? That's impossible. My shield should block him, no matter how powerful he is. "It's not impossible." He looked to face me again. "Not when you also have the power to negate a shield."

I stiffened. He could hear my thoughts. I had never had that before. This means that my shield is completely useless against him. He nodded, not breaking eye contact with me. Something held my gaze. I don't know what it was, but there was something about him, telling me not to look away from him. As if it was disrespectful.

No way! I thought angrily. *If this guy wants my respect then he's going to have to earn it.* He let out a laugh. *Shit! I forgot! No shield! Fuck!*

"Carlisle, I would have thought that you would discourage the use of such colourful language. Even in the mind." He stood up straight and walked over to me slowly. I could feel the fear rising in my chest. The closer this guy got, the scarier he became. I could feel the power radiating off him with every step he took. He was arrogant, but hell, he had reason to be. This guy created an entire race. If that doesn't give someone's ego a boost, then what the hell does? He stopped in front of me, and I caught his scent properly for the first time.

It was so entrancing. Like the sun setting over the backs of the trees after a long, hot summer's day. There were so many different aspects to his scent that there was no way to really describe it. I knew that it was designed to pull you in, as all of our scents were, but something

about his. It seemed to have exponentially more power than the rest of ours. Being the original, must mean that everything about him is enhanced. More powerful.

"Don't worry." He pushed my hair over my shoulder. The motion wasn't supposed to be gentle or sweet, it was meant as a warning. In making this movement, he had exposed my throat. With any normal vampire, this movement wouldn't be threatening at all. But when he did it, it instilled a terror in me like one I had never known. "You'll learn." His voice came out as a dangerous whisper and it made me shudder, which in turn made him smile.

Even his smile was entrancing.

If any of us had thought that our powers of enticement were good, none of us had anything on this guy. But then again, we had all got it from somewhere.

He placed a hand on my throat, sliding his thumb under my chin and twisting my head slightly. His skin was cold, even to me. I still didn't break eye contact with him. Something inside of me told me that there would be hell to pay if I did, and I didn't want to risk any hurt coming to my family.

The moment his skin came into contact with mine, I felt a sharp shock, as though something was jolting me with electricity running through my veins, originating at his fingertips. If he felt it then he made no movement to give himself away.

He had me helpless, and he knew it. I had never been overpowered like this before. Never had someone get the best of me without using any effort.

And yet here I was.

Being held completely helpless by this one vampire, who wasn't even trying. He could kill me in an instant and none of us could do anything about it.

I was fucked.

Bella doesn't seem to have made that good an impression on Edward, does she?

What is he going to do to her?

You'll have to wait til the next chapter to find out.

Please review and lemme know what you think.

xx

It's Her!

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Edward

If I was being honest, I was slightly amused by the reactions that I was seeing from Carlisle's coven.

They were actually quite entertaining.

To a certain degree, at least.

It was amusing playing with their little psychic. All of them other than Carlisle obviously had thought that they would be able to keep track of me through her visions. That much was clear in the expressions I saw in the visions I received about the coven.

They didn't look too dangerous. There was one large one that I would have to put in his place but other than that they all seemed to understand that I was the one in charge.

From the what I could see through the visions I was receiving, they operated in a family dynamic. Carlisle appeared to act as father figure. This didn't surprise me. He had told me when in Volterra that his dreams as a human had been to marry and father children. Most of my species didn't remember their human memories, but Carlisle it seemed had clung to these memories. I didn't know why it interested me, but it had. Maybe it was because Carlisle was the only vampire around that wasn't hellbent on power.

The rest of them appeared to be the doting family. His mate obviously playing the mother and the others were children. It all seemed very ... quaint and unnecessary to me. Why would you need to play families? What was the point?

But then Carlisle had always had a different mind to other vampires. It wasn't filled with the thought of killing as most vampires were. His was filled with thoughts of preserving life, for some odd reason. Not that it really mattered to me. Let him do as he pleases. Not my problem. Or at least this is what I was on the way to find out. I knew that it wouldn't be a problem for the Volturi or myself, Carlisle's coven being so large. But it didn't hurt to take a look. Hell, I had nothing else to do. Nothing that couldn't wait anyway.

I didn't want them to know when I was going to be arriving, so I knew from the experience I had with the gift of visions that I had to keep my mind in a constant state of disarray. It wasn't that hard to do. I had spent many years making snap decisions.

Of course I had seen that the psychic vampire would see me coming.

That's how I knew to keep changing my mind.

I was continuously watching the family as I made my way from Italy to Washington. They didn't know when I would be arriving. I had managed to keep the little vampire from knowing that I was on my way until I was about an hour away from their little hometown of Forks. Another little gift of mine.

When I was about an hour way, driving from Seattle to the town, aptly named after a piece of cutlery, I allowed her to see that I had made the decision to come to Forks.

I had also seen her freaking out about it.

She didn't know explicitly who I was. All she knew was my name and that I was powerful. She hadn't been given any other information than that through the vision.

Naughty naughty Carlisle. I had thought to myself as I made my way down the freeway that led from Seattle to Forks. *He should have explained to his little coven a little more about me. I thought I knew*

him better than that. Obviously, he hadn't been as smart as I'd given him credit for.

I knew that he would spend the time waiting for me to arrive by explaining to his young and naïve coven who I was. I as I was flicking from one decision to the next I kept scanning for the immediate future, concentrating on the members of Carlisle's coven and their reactions to the information they were being given. It was relatively easy to do.

I had seen that they would be wary of me when I arrived. The blonde male would be protective over the little psychic one and the big vampire would be protective over the blonde female. Carlisle would be protective over his mate of course.

But then there was one who stood out.

I couldn't get a grasp on her face and that annoyed me. I had never had anyone evade me before. In a vision, through the mind, ever.

This was not something that happened.

Well, it had happened once, but that offender was long gone. I wouldn't have to worry about her now.

Even so, this blurred vision was aggravating me. And I would have to figure out why I was being evaded when I arrived.

I sped up, wanting to find out the reasons behind this girls evasiveness in my visions was. It was really beginning to piss me off.

When I was about ten minutes away from their house, I stopped flicking my mind from one decision to another, letting the little psychic vampire see me properly for the first time, letting her see how close I was too them. I knew that this would cause them to panic.

I could hear their mental voices now. I was getting close. In their minds they were all coming up with ways to get around me, to evade my presence. This was one of the reasons that I had kept how close I was from them in my own mind, not letting them know how close I was until it was too late.

Carlisle knew how powerful I was, he knew how treacherous it would be for them to disappear suddenly, when I knew exactly what they were planning and would probably beat them to the punch anyway. He knew that there would be no going back if they did that.

He knew of my temper. And he also knew what I had done when people had gotten on the wrong side of it before. Let me tell you, it is not something that you want to see firsthand.

I could hear the scattered thoughts of six minds as I pulled up the driveway and disappeared out of the car so fast that they would have no idea what had hit them. I could hear the confusion running through them as their enhanced eyes peered through the windscreen to discover that I was not their. Of course I was faster than they could see. Everything about me was enhanced, even so much so that they could not compete on any level. I smirked to myself listening to their thoughts.

I knew that Carlisle had told them about my ability to unnerve even the most ancient of vampires. My tricks with the Volturi were proof of that. So playing with these children vampires was nothing. It was hardly even entertaining.

Appearing in front of them, their faces were just as I had seen in a vision that I had received not moments before. The looks of shock and fear on their faces were nothing new.

They immediately stood, their instincts telling them to fear me. I could tell that this reaction confused them, as they were used to being the ones that were feared, not the other way around. They listened to their instincts, regardless of their confusion. *Good little*

vampires . I thought upon seeing their eyes widen in fear, not really believing that I was really in front of them.

I could see them all looking me over, probably judging whether or not I was as big of a threat to their existence as I was. Oh I was. I was the biggest threat to the way they lived.

Let's put it this way: my word was law.

If I told them that they had to disband forever, then it would be done.

I wasn't going to give that order. Not yet anyway.

I looked them over, one by one. Of course they were all as I had seen them whilst scanning their futures on my journey across the world.

They were all watching me, their gazes fueled by fear and agitation. They were all wary of me and I commended them with that decision. They were right to be wary of me. They'd be fools not to be.

All of their thoughts were chaotic.

And again I could only hear six sets of thoughts. There was one missing. One of them was a shield. And I had an idea of which one it was. The one that I couldn't see in my visions. The one that had had the blurred face, that I was unable to focus on. The one that had aggravated me through my whole journey here.

I scanned the group and saw only the vampires that I had seen in my visions, before I reached the last of the group.

As I gazed at her, a spark of remembrance blazed in my mind.

Of course , I thought to myself. How did I not recognise that scent? The scent that had drawn me in from many miles away. She was even more beautiful than I remembered her, all of her human traits brought into her vampiric life. Enhanced by the beauty that my species possessed. I had believed her to be long dead. Had I known

she had turned, I would have tracked her down long before now. But as it turned out, I was out of the country before that day way out. How interesting, well, that may be pushing it, this twist of fate was turning out to be.

Her deep mahogany hair, pale skin, now paler than it had been in her human life. The skin that would no longer flush when she was embarrassed or aggravated. That had been almost unbearable to withstand, that steady pooling of blood in her cheeks. It had been her eventual undoing.

The only thing that was incredibly different about her was her eyes. They were no longer that deep mesmerising brown that they had been in her human life, but instead they were a deep gold. Evidence of her lifestyle as a "vegetarian" vampire. Personally, that was something I had never had time for. I had fed on animals when the need was there and humans were scarce, but I would never choose it as a lifestyle. Humans were just too enticing and delectable to pass up. Besides, that was one of the reasons I was created. Humans had needed to be controlled. The reason behind my creation.

It made sense to me that she was a shield now in her vampiric life.

Hers had been the only thoughts throughout my own existence that had been a mystery.

This aspect to her had aggravated me and yet entranced me at the same time. That last point was the only reason I had not destroyed her when I first encountered her. It was the only thing that had kept her alive. For that short amount of time that I was able to reign in my control at least.

Isabella.

Of course she had been human then, so her thoughts were guarded from me. But no longer.

I drew my gaze away from her, coming to the conclusion that I would deal with her when the time arose. I guided my gaze to Carlisle, who's thoughts were frantic but more controlled than the rest of his coven.

He alone knew what I was capable of, so he above the others had a right to fear me. He vividly remembered what had happened to vampires that had pushed my limits and he was now fearful for the lives of his coven. His *family* as he called them in his mind. I nearly laughed out loud at that sentiment. But the sense of remembrance of our meetings in Volterra was still evident in his mind. He knew that if his *family* remained controlled in my presence then I would have no reason to obliterate them. As he knew I would have no qualms about doing, should the opportunity or need arise.

"Carlisle, old friend." I called looking at him, and I could see him relax slightly, though he was still guarded and wary, shielding his mate slightly from me. As if that would stop me. He knew it wouldn't, but it was an in built reaction that my kind held. Protect your mate above all else.

"Edward." I could hear the nervousness in his voice. He was testing the waters, making sure that I wouldn't attack without provocation. "What can we do for you?"

"I see that the basis of Aro's fears was well grounded." I was being vague. I could hear the frantic thoughts of his family, the images of their past run-ins with the Volturi running through their minds. Apart from that one that was shielded from me. I would have to access the negation power I possessed to read her thoughts. Not at the moment though. That would be saved for later. When I felt the need.

"What fears were those, pray tell?" Carlisle was a formal vampire. I knew this much from previous encounters, but he had never been this guarded before. I knew that it was because he feared for his coven. That was obvious. He was trying to ensure their safety by being as polite and formal as he could. As if that would help them, should I find the need to destroy them.

"About the size of your coven, Carlisle." I looked over them all once again. Their eyes were still glued to me. As they should be. Their instincts were telling them to run, to get as far away from me as they possibly could. To either run or to attack. It was the classic "fight or flight" predicament. I was a threat and they knew it. But their minds were wrestling with their instincts, forcing them to stay still. Not move an inch. And none of them did. None of them moved at all.

I allowed my gaze to linger once again on Isabella. She held no recognition in her expression. She didn't remember me. But then again, why should she? She was only human when we first met. And human memories wane with time when one becomes a vampire, as imperfect as they are. The vampire mind didn't hold a place for the dulled imperfect memories acquired in human life. I was the only one in existence that remembered their human life explicitly. Not even I knew why that was. It was even a mystery to me. Not that I had put much thought into it. Life was so inexplicably boring when I was human. Though when I had been living it, it had seemed full and exciting, but looking back it was incredibly inadequate. Bland to say the least. I didn't put much thought into it.

I could see in her eyes that she thought she had figured out what I was doing. Probably thinking that I was trying to work my way through her shield. Little did she know that I could negate the shield in a split second should I desire to. I would do soon. The temptation was great. I had been unable to access those guarded thoughts when she was human, and now, as she was a vampire, I could access them whenever I pleased.

"It *has* gotten rather large, don't you think?" I turned to face Carlisle. I saw that even though his face was blank there was fear written in his eyes and running through his mind.

"Well, I, um." This was a side to Carlisle that I hadn't seen before. He was normally so calm, able to give an answer to any question posed. Not this stuttering mess that I saw before me. *Oh, God. He's come to reduce our numbers. The Volturi has told him of the size of my*

family. Made him aware of the threat we believe we pose. Not my children.

I rolled my eyes at the monologue running through his mind, becoming bored. "Come now, Carlisle. If I'd wanted to kill you all, I would have done so by now." Well, maybe not, but still you get the idea. "You know that and I know it." I smirked. He *did* know. He had witnessed me destroying vampires without using any effort whatsoever. He knew I could and *would* do it. "Aro believes that you are building an army to try to overthrow the Volturi. But then again, both you and I know that Aro is an insufferable idiot." That he was and I saw a flicker of humour run through Carlisle's eyes, his mind confirming that he agreed with me.

I decided at that moment to access the negation power I possessed. I could hear the rest of the coven agreeing with me in their minds. They had all had their fair share of run-ins with Aro and the brothers. They all agreed with me in that respect.

I found that Isabella agreed with me as well. That thought made me smile slightly and I could hear the confusion in her mind. She was confused about my reaction. She knew that it was somehow related to her inner thoughts. To my amusement, she reasoned that I couldn't hear her thoughts as her shield should protect her. *No matter how powerful he is.*

I turned to face her, staring her straight in the eye, locking her gaze. "It's not impossible." I saw the flicker of shock that ran through her eyes. "Not when you also have the power to negate a shield."

I saw her visibly stiffen at the mention of that particular power. Her thoughts were in a frenzy now. She had never been in this position before. Where her mind was laid out for anyone to see. I saw flickers of Jane and Alec run through her mind. The demon twins from the Volturi. More than once I had been tempted to rip the two of them limb from limb, but I had reasoned they were useful for keeping the rest of the race in line. The threat of either one of them was enough

to ensure that. It appeared that their gifts didn't work on Isabella. Seeing as they both originated and concentrated in the mind.

I could see that she was wrestling with herself, fighting the urge to break my gaze. Half of her was telling her that it was disrespectful and dangerous to look away from me. And she would be right in that respect. No vampire ever dared to break my gaze.

But the other half of her mind, the defiant half was fighting that decision.

No way! I heard her mind arguing with her instincts, as the others were doing at this point in time. *If this guy wants my respect then he's going to have to earn it.* I couldn't hold back the laugh at this girls' audacity. She was tenacious, I'll give her that much. She seemed to realise her mistake as she scolded herself in her mind. *Shit! I forgot! No shield! Fuck!*

I stood up and turned my body to face her. "Carlisle, I would have thought that you would discourage the use of such colourful language. Even in the mind."

I made my way over to her slowly and I could hear the frantic thoughts of the others around her. They wanted to jump in the way. Shield her from me, but they also knew that I would tear them apart if they did. They were all at war with themselves. Torn between protecting their "sister" and protecting themselves.

They feared me. As they should do. Which also meant they stayed put. Not wanting to risk disappointing or hurting Carlisle in any way. They all looked to him as a father figure, and I could see why. He had their respect without commanding it. Something I had experience with. With the exception of a few he had created the whole coven.

As I approached her, the strength of her scent increased. But it was not as enticing as it had been when I had first encountered her. Our

previous meeting had seen to that. But it was alluring all the same. Strawberries and freesia.

She was drawn in. Just as she had been in human life and I could hear her inner thoughts trying to figure out why that was. She settled on the theory that because I was the original vampire, my scent was more alluring than theirs was. That was part of the reason.

Everything about me was enhanced. I outshone my "descendents" as you may call them in every way. I was stronger, faster and more alluring than any other vampire in the world. The other reason I was so enticing to her, well, let's say she'll figure it out in due time.

"Don't worry." I breathed as I approached her, brushing her thick mahogany hair over her shoulder. Still soft. Just as I'd imagined it would be. She was even more fearful now, because she realised the predicament she was in. She was exposed to me. She feared that even though she didn't realise why.

Of course, Carlisle hadn't mentioned that the venom I possessed was toxic even to a vampire. But instead of it changing them as it would a human, or enhancing their powers as you may think it would, it incapacitated and destroyed them. If I felt the need to bite you, there was no escape.

"You'll learn." She shuddered at those words and that in turn made me smile. Very few things in this world made me smile anymore. Call me dismal and broody, but when you've seen everything more than once, you find very few things that are entertaining as life draws on. But seeing her squirm. I don't know why, but it was amusing.

I reached up and placed a hand on her throat, ensuring she knew of the danger she was potentially in.

Please Edward, Carlisle pleaded in his thoughts. *She doesn't know.*

I smirked. So she didn't know the truth. Tut tut Carlisle. I wouldn't have thought he would keep something like that from her. It was clear he treated his "children" with respect and gave them all the

information they required. But keeping something like this from one of them. That was something that I hadn't expected from Carlisle.

I rested my thumb underneath her chin and tilted her head to the side, remembering the last encounter I had had with Isabella. Seeing her throat on the edge of my gaze, I could remember perfectly the sight of her blood rushing through her veins, her pulsepoint throbbing with each thud of her heart. It was that which had undone me.

She didn't break eye contact with me, and I had to commend her for that. It took a lot of nerve for anyone, human or vampire to maintain eye contact with my, especially for such a long period of time. None before had been able to go longer than a minute or two before crumbling completely. Other's just avoided looking into my eyes for as long as possible. Afraid of what they would find there.

She knew the danger that she was in. She knew that this could be it for her.

It wouldn't be, but I didn't want to enlighten her or her family to that fact at this moment in time. For the first time in a long time, I was actually amused. Not much had gathered that from me in the last few millenia. Not even aggravating the three brothers had been able to amuse me. Not in a long time.

Of course their theories and methods were ridiculous, but other than that, they were all incredibly boring. All those years of being stuck in that infernal castle had stripped them of whatever personality they had to begin with.

Maybe I should just burn it down and start again.

That idea held promise.

But it was Isabella's next thought that amused me the most, because it was true.

I'm fucked .

Yes, my dear. You are.

Bella and Edward don't seem to be getting along very well do they?

Or are they?

You've found out that the two of them have a history, but only he remembers it. Will Bella remember??

You'll have to read on to find out if she will, and the circumstances under which they met.

Please review and let me know what you think.

xx

Talking

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Edward

The amount of fear I could feel emanating off of the family around me was overpowering. There was so much of it.

It made the atmosphere thick.

And I revelled in it.

Fear was what the world showed me. Whether it was conscious or not. It made no difference to me whatsoever.

Fear is what made the hunt, the chase, everything worthwhile. When it was so thick in the air that you could almost taste it, then you know that you've won.

And I had most definitely won this round.

Standing there, holding Isabella's life in my hands, literally, I could feel their fear growing. I could feel hers as well. If she was still human then her heart would have been pounding so hard as if it were about to beat right out of her chest.

Just as it had done all those years ago.

I remembered that meeting as though it had happened yesterday.

I had repressed it into my memories and they had all come resurfacing as I held Isabella in my grasp, as weak as she had been back then.

~Flashback~

Chicago 1918

I had been making my way through the city, not heading in any direction in particular, ignoring the pasty faces and inane babble of the inner and spoken monologues of the pitiful humans surrounding me. The way their incessant droning carried on, it was a wonder that they hadn't wiped themselves out due to irritation by this point in history.

At least vampires had numerous interesting thoughts that ran through their minds. Not the inane drivel of the simplistic human brain.

That's when I caught it.

The most tantalising scent I had ever smelt.

And in my long existence, I had smelt many a delectable human.

This one was different though. It was something I couldn't ignore, though I might try. I had spent millenia honing my control, reigning in my instincts, and now, I was abandoning them all to investigate this one all encompassing scent.

From what I gathered it was a few hours old, but with my heightened senses, more powerful than that of even the greatest tracker, I could pick it up as though the human had just walked by. It wasn't hard to follow. With the scent just becoming stronger and stronger as I approached my destination.

I knew that I was nearing my destination when the venom started pooling in the back of my throat at an alarming rate. I had never had this reaction to a human before, and it was not something I was used to. Obviously I had the steady stream of venom that pooled in my mouth whilst anticipating a kill, but this went beyond anything I'd experienced before.

It was intriguing. At almost fifteen thousand years old you would have thought that I'd experienced everything, but it appears not.

The offending scent was coming from a nearby park, and I followed it to a small area by the lake.

I gazed around, assessing everything with each and every sense, making sure that there was no one else in the immediate area, should I lose control. Something which over the years, had been an occurrence for me. I had patience and temper issues. Deal with it.

It was then that I laid my eyes upon her, sitting in the sun and I knew that she was the source of this delicious aroma. Strawberries and freesias. That's what it was. I made my way towards her, listening for the telltale signs that would indicate if she knew I was there. Her heartbeat and breathing was regular, so there were no signs there. But the strangest and most aggravating thing of all:

I couldn't read her thoughts.

That had never happened to me before.

Even as I moved closer to her, not a whisper.

This, I grew aggravated at. There was no one in the world that was shielded from me. There never had been before. Not that I had come across. I knew that there were vampiric shields out there, because of the increase in power I gained.

I was standing not too far away from her, safely in the shadows, lest I should sparkle in front of her and cause a scene, pulling the park full of unwary humans into an early death. That was when she looked up at me.

She was attractive.

For a human.

Long mahogany hair, pale alabaster skin and huge brown eyes. I could see her being on the list of many a suitor. Not for long, I'd thought to myself, knowing that there would be a time, in the near future that I would feed upon this girl. Possibly not right now, as I was intrigued about the silence in her mind.

"Hello," She called, smiling, completely unaware of the danger that she was in. Not knowing that she was standing in the presence of the creature civilisations feared and created legends about. Not realising that she was in the presence of the oldest and most powerful creature in the world.

I almost smiled at her ignorance.

Almost.

"I'm Isabella, but everyone calls me Bella." She smiled at me again. "What's your name?"

~End Flashback~

I could tell through her innermost thoughts that she hadn't been afraid like this since our last meeting all those years ago. The only difference between these two meetings is that this time, she knew why she was afraid. All she had left of our previous meeting was the extreme, overwhelming sense of fear. Her human memories were in there somewhere, but at the moment they were useless to her, as she had to focus on the fact that I could potentially rip her head off at any given moment.

And she didn't like it.

Not one bit.

I wouldn't make her suffer for too long.

There's only so much suffering one can find amusing. Even for someone as sadistic as I was – I'll admit that, it's true – and at a a

time like this.

I smirked at her again, not breaking eye contact as I did so and I saw the fear flicker through her eyes and her mind again. She was not as guarded in her thoughts as others I had encountered had been. But that was purely because she was used to being a shield. To having her mind guarded from others. But that wasn't enough to keep her mind from me. She was still wrestling with the idea of someone knowing what was going on inside of her mind.

I smirked again and slowly removed my hand. She knew that I wasn't finished with her. There was no way I was finished with her yet. It had been too long since I'd seen her. And there were many things we needed to settle.

I turned to Carlisle, my gaze running over each of them. They were watching me, their faces masks of fear. I smirked again, knowing that the blonde male could also feel the intoxicating fear that surrounded us. It was he that I had received the power of empathy from over two hundred years ago after all.

"Carlisle," I turned to face him slowly. "A word." I looked over the others in the room. "In private." Carlisle looked at the family and nodded. They all looked to him and back to me again. I let a low growl ripple through me. "Now!"

Carlisle looked panicked and he knew that my temper was being tried. He looked at the others, panicked and they all looked at each other and left quickly. I heard them thinking about going hunting and it seemed to be a mass decision.

Animals ? I scoffed. Only Carlisle would have the persuasion techniques to convince a whole coven to live off of animal blood. *How can anyone stand it?*

I had had to feed off of animals before. In an existence as long as mine, encounters like that were inevitable. But I would never choose

it as a lifestyle choice. Only Carlisle would be the only one that would choose this.

"What can I do for you, Edward?" He asked me slowly. He was still wary, knowing that my temper was on a very short leash at the moment.

"You didn't tell her." It was a statement, not a question. I knew for a fact that he hadn't told Bella her origins.

"No." He didn't deny it, knowing that I would be able to see straight through him and that the retribution would be all the worse if he did.

"Why not?" I kept my voice calm and cool. I kept my eye contact with Carlisle.

"I, uh, I-"

"Come now Carlisle." I sighed, exasperated. "Don't turn into a blithering idiot! Tell me why you haven't told Isabella the truth?"

"I didn't think that it was prudent for her to know." His voice was steadier now. I guess that it was because his family was no longer here. He didn't have to worry about anyone else getting hurt. Immediately anyway.

"You didn't think that it was "prudent" for her to know where she came from?" I raised my eyebrows at him. "You didn't think it was "prudent" for her to know who changed her?"

"I didn't think she would understand." He stated. He was getting nervous again, and I smirked at the way he was sifting through his thoughts to try and come up with an answer to all of my questions.

"How would she not understand knowing about where she came from? Don't you think that its wrong of you to deceive her for well over a century?" I rolled my eyes at him. "She's going to find out. I've seen it before. A vamire, comes across one who's changing and

decides to take them under their wing. The vampire always finds out." He knew that I was telling the truth. I *had* seen it before. And lets just say, it didn't really end well for either vampire.

"Well, I don't know." He stood up tall now, as if challenging me without really challenging me. I could see the defensive side of him coming through. He had loyalty. Not many creatures, vampire, human or any other, had any respect for loyalty anymore. "I don't think I have to worry about Bella too much."

I let out a laugh. "Oh, Carlisle." I shook my head at him. "You really think that when she finds out, and you know she will, that she's the type of vampire to just ... let it go?" I sighed, smirking at him. He knew that I was right. I never was. He knew that Bella wouldn't let being lied to for a century. "Tell her."

"W-w-what?" He was stunned. He wasn't expecting me to do that. I could tell that he didn't from the way his thoughts just stopped. His mind drew a blank. There was nothing running through his mind at all.

"I. Said. Tell. Her." I growled and his face contorted into a mask of fear. He was not about to test my patience.

He nodded, bowing his head solemnly. "I know that it was wrong of me to deceive her. I just...didn't really know how to tell her. She woke up from the change and believed that I was the one who had saved her. I didn't have the heart to tell her that it wasn't me. I didn't know how to tell her that she was turned by the father of our race. The most powerful of us all." I knew he wasn't trying to flatter me. He knew that there was no point. I didn't respond well to flattery. It was the weaks way of trying to spare themselves. It was something that got vampires killed. "You."

"It makes no difference *who* changed her." I told him sharply. "All that matters is that you didn't. And she needs to know."

"You're right." He sighed. "I will tell her."

"Now." I told him sternly. "Call her. Now. While the others are hunting."

He nodded and walked over to the phone. He didn't like what I had told him to do. But in his mind he knew I was right. I may be a fifteen thousand year old monster, but I knew the difference between right and wrong. I knew that denying someone the knowledge of where they came from was wrong. I knew what it felt like.

I didn't know where I came from.

I didn't know why I became what I became.

After fifteen thousand years I had given up all hope of finding out.

But if I could stop anyone else from being denied the knowledge that I had then I would.

I heard him on the phone to Isabella. He sounded grave and I knew he was dreading the task at hand. His mind had the same morbid tone to it that his voice did and he was sending out waves of remorse and regret. I knew that he didn't want to tell Isabella where she came from, who she was truly created by. But he had to realise he had no choice.

She would find out eventually.

He put down the phone and turned to face me again. "She's coming back now." He ran his hand through his hair. "The others will be staying out to hunt for a while longer."

"Good." I told him flatly.

We studied each other for a moment while we waited for Isabella to return, the positions of power clearly stated between us. I didn't like overpowering over Carlisle. But in this case I felt it was necessary.

"Carlisle?" Isabella's voice rang out through the house.

"In here, Bella." Carlisle said softly. "In the living room."

She appeared in an instant, looking worried, stopping dead in her tracks when she saw me standing there in front of Carlisle. She looked between Carlisle and I her gaze lingering on me a fraction of a second longer than it did on Carlisle.

"What's going on?" She whispered, her freshly golden eyes staring at me, her eyes full of confusion and hatred. I guess I had to expect that. It was what I was used to after all.

"Bella....." Carlisle choked out. He looked at her, his voice was strained and his eyes were full of pain and sorrow and regret was pouring out of him as though someone had left a faucet on full blast.

"Carlisle has something to tell you, Isabella." There was no emotion in my voice. I could hear the flatness of my tone. It seemed to unnerve the both of them. They knew that I didn't put any emotion into anything I did. Emotions were useless in life, or the unlife as we lived it. It slowed you down. Made things messy. I didn't put much stock into them.

"What is it, Carlisle?" She didn't remove her gaze from me as she asked this question. She narrowed her eyes at me as I stared blankly back. "What's wrong?"

"There's something you need to know, Bella." Carlisle ran his hands through his hair and sighed, sadly.

I tensed my jaw and sighed, exasperated. I was getting aggravated now. Carlisle was just drawing out the inevitable and he knew it. He looked at me, worry in his eyes and I raised my eyebrows at him, silently telling him to get on with it.

He nodded and turned to face Isabella. "Bella. I'm afraid I haven't been completely honest with you." He shook his head and Isabella was starting to become concerned now. I could feel it rolling off her in waves.

"What do you mean, Carlisle?" She tore her gaze from me and looked at Carlisle.

"There's something that I have been refraining to tell you." He took a deep breath. "I haven't been completely honest with you about your origins."

"Carlisle, you're scaring me now." She was staring at him now. She couldn't tear her eyes away. I could see in her mind that she was trying to work it out, but she was coming up short. "Tell me what's going on."

"Bella." He breathed in no more than a whisper. "You were not turned by me." The last part of that sentence came out as a whisper but the three of us heard it as clear as day.

Her face turned into a mask of shock and anger. "What are you talking about, Carlisle?"

"I'm sorry, Bella." He shook his head. If he could cry at this moment in time then I was sure that he would be.

"If not you....." Her voice sounded as pained as Carlisle's did. "Then who?" Carlisle's gaze flickered towards me and she looked at me, her eyes widened in surprise. "You?" Her voice was strained and coarse. "You made me?" I looked her in the eyes and nodded once, my face void of any kind of emotion. You may think it harsh, but it was necessary. "Why.....why didn't you tell me?" She was staring at me now and her emotions were getting the better of her. "I don't want to seem rude but....." Even though she was emotional she still had her manners. Good thing for her to remember. I may have made her but that didn't shield her from what I was capable of. "But ... if you made me, why did you leave me? Is that just, what you do?"

"Honestly, Isabella-"

"Bella." She cut me off and I raised my eyebrows at her. "Sorry." She mumbled softly, looking at the ground, seeming ashamed of her outburst. "It's just I prefer Bella. I didn't mean to ... I didn't mean to cut you off like that. It's just"

"Make sure it doesn't happen again." I remarked coldly and I saw her flinch at the iciness to my tone. "In answer to your question, I didn't tell you because I wasn't in the country by the time you had turned. I thought I'd killed you."

"Oh," Her voice was nothing more than a whisper.

"Bella, I-" Carlisle started to move towards her.

"Don't!" She held up a hand and stepped away from him, indicating that he should stop where he was. "I need to be alone right now." And with that she was gone, leaving Carlisle standing there like a broken man.

"Maybe I should-" Carlisle had begun pacing back and forth, never looking at me, although I could hear the anger directed towards me in his mind.

"Carlisle." I growled, my patience was wearing thin. "You forget, I can hear your mind." He looked at me, apologetically, before burying his face in his hands again. "And don't go after her."

He looked at me and I knew that if he could shed tears, he would be right now. "But I she"

"Needs to be alone." I said bitterly. I looked in the direction that Isabella had run off in.

Before Carlisle could even comprehend what had happened, I was out of the house and hot on Isabella's scent. I could find her wherever she went. Her scent still captivated me in the way it had a hundred years ago. I had repressed this in the back of my mind, not really wanting to pay attention to the memory.

I had lived through so much in my life, repressing the memories that didn't matter to me, or that I had no pleasure in reliving. This was one of those that I didn't want to revisit again. I had no idea why this girl had affected me so much, but she had. In all my long years, no one had affected me the way this girl had.

I was going to find out though.

I followed her scent to a grouping of large boulders and stones. She was sitting on top of the largest boulder and I could hear her thoughts running a mile a minute, trying to sort out what she had just discovered in her mind.

"Running away isn't the answer." I spoke calmly and she turned around too fast for any mortal eyes to see. "You're still afraid of me." I smirked at her, seeing the familiar flash of fear run through her eyes. "So you should be."

"Would you still hurt me?" She whispered, looking down at the ground.

"Don't think that because I made you, you get any special treatment." I growled, narrowing my eyes at her. I walked over to one of the boulders nearest to me and leaned against it, resting my hands behind me and leaning back onto them, tilting my head up to the sky.

Her eyes darted back up to look at me frantically. She shook her head, her expression fearful. "I-I didn't. I-I wasn't."

"Good." The word came out as barely more than another growl. I didn't want her getting any ideas. She was worth no more to me than any others.

"Can I ask you a question?" She asked timidly. It seems that she'd been advised on my temper. Carlisle warned them all no doubt. It didn't matter to me whether they knew about my impatience and temper. It wouldn't help them any. "If it's okay that is."

"What?"

"Why did you turn me?" She whispered, looking up at me, knowing full well that I could hear her. "Why not just leave me to die."

"Like I said, I thought I did." I replied flatly. "It had been so long since I had drained a human completely and utterly." I heard her scoff in her mind. "That's enough of that." I warned her and she mumbled an apology. "I guess I'd forgotten how potent my venom is." I let out a laugh. "Irony, right? The most powerful vampire in the world and I forget."

"How old are you?" She still didn't trust herself to speak in a higher volume than a whisper.

"Well," I smirked at her again. "Let's just say, I predate history."

"So you've got to be getting on a bit then." I didn't laugh at her humour. She didn't either when she saw my expression.

"You have no idea." I whispered and she caught the seriousness in my tone.

"I'm sorry if I offended you." She looked back at the ground dismissively.

"So you should be." I looked her up and down. "You can look at me you know. You're not going to spontaneously combust. Although, that would be kind of cool."

"Who for? You or the combusting vampire?"

"Me." I grinned at her, knowing that there was an evil tint to it. Not that I cared. "Of course. Gotta get some fun from somewhere, don't I?"

"I don't want to risk sounding rude or anything, but has anyone told you you're might be a bit sadistic?" She looked up at me, a tiny smile playing on her lips.

I looked at her and smirked. "Frequently."

"I guess it's something that you're used to then." She didn't seem to be able to look at me for too long. I could hear in her mind that it was because she thought that there would be some kind of retribution if she did. Either for her or her coven.

That wasn't something I was decided on yet.

I didn't want to destroy Carlisle's coven. He was one of the only halfway decent vampires I had met in my long eternity.

But I would have to if I needed to.

And I knew that was something she understood as well as the rest of her coven.

Just because she now knew the truth about her origins didn't mean that she or anyone else in her family would be safe.

If and when I made the decision, no one would be spared.

Lemme know what you think :D

Please review

xx

Recognition

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Bella

There was something about him.

Something familiar.

Even as he stood there, his hand clasped around my throat I felt as though I had known him from a previous encounter. One just as dangerous and deadly as this one.

But where from?

And when?

There was no way that I would forget him. How he looked, the essence of power that emanated off of him. I couldn't forget him. There was no way. And there was no way that anyone would be able to mistake him for anyone else.

That feat would be impossible.

I didn't know what it was about him. I was terrified yes, but there was something compelling about him. Something that I couldn't tear my eyes away from, other than the fear of being destroyed with a flick of his fingers.

He was gorgeous. There was no denying that.

I could see that he could and probably had had every woman that he ever wanted. I mean after a couple of millenia, you're bound to pile up a few exes.

I didn't look away from him. You didn't have to have Jasper's power to know that everyone was absolutely terrified. I could feel it in the air. And I could tell he could too. There was something in his eyes that told me he knew we were all scared. And I could also tell he was enjoying it.

He was *enjoying* the fear we were all feeling.

There was something seriously wrong with this guy.

I could see something flicking in his eyes. Something that looked like.....recognition?

Did he know me?

There was no way. He couldn't know me. I hadn't ever met him before. Maybe I had in my human life. But there was no way. He would have killed me if I'd met him in my human life.

Call me crazy but he doesn't seem like the kind of vampire that would hang around and chat with a human.

More of the "let's rip your throat out and then we'll say hi" type to me.

I was being irrational.

I hadn't met him before. The fear I was feeling was probably influencing me into thinking that I had met him before.

There was something about him.

It struck a chord within me. But I didn't really see how.

No, I thought, hoping that he had given up on reading my thoughts. *You haven't met him. You would remember him.*

He smirked at me, an evil glint in his eye and he removed his hand from my throat. I had to struggle to repress a sigh, but I managed to nonetheless. I could only imagine what would happen if I hadn't been

able to. The retribution would have been swift if I hadn't. I had learned from Carlisle's information that he wasn't the most patient or controlled of vampires. But then again, seeing the things that he must have seen had to do that to a guy.

After letting go of me, he swept his gaze over the rest of my family. He stopped when he reached Carlisle and I saw the anger flicker through those blood red eyes of his. I knew that he had fed recently, and the fact that he fed off of human blood unnerved me. We had never had a vampire that fed off of humans in the house before. Yes, we had had visits from the Volturi, but we had always met them away from the house. The only other vampires that had been in the house were our "vegetarian" cousins from Alaska.

We didn't know what he would do.

"Carlisle." He growled, turning his whole body to face Carlisle, who wore a masked expression but I could see the fear and panic growing in his eyes. "A word." I looked over the rest of us. "In private." The look in his eyes as he gazed at Carlisle was not one that I wanted directed at me any time soon. He nodded at all of us, but none of us moved. I, for one, didn't want to leave Carlisle alone with this guy. I was a little scared when he let a growl rumble through the house. It was unlike any growl I had ever heard before. It was more feral than anything I had ever heard. "Now!"

I looked at Carlisle and saw that his previously blank expression had turned to one of panic and fear. Obviously, his warnings about Edward's temper were not just stories and were well grounded fears. I had never seen Carlisle this afraid before.

We all came to the same conclusion about what we needed to do and we made ourselves scarce. Whatever it was that Edward wanted with Carlisle, it was not something that we wanted to be present for.

We all ran out of the front door as fast as we could, hating to leave Carlisle behind, but knowing that we had no choice.

I only hoped that he wouldn't do anything to jeopardise our life here. I liked it here, and I didn't want to move. But with his power and position, we would have to do anything that Edward told us to do.

Edward , I ran over his name in my mind while I ran as fast as I could to our regular hunting ground. I needed to feed and now. The run in with Edward had left me feeling drained and I needed sustenance.

Edward .

There was something about him. I couldn't brush it off.

Edward was such an old name, but it suited him. *It's not his real name* , I thought to myself as I smelt a deer not too far away. I turned in the direction that I had caught the scent and stopped as it came into my view. It was a large stag, but I knew that it wouldn't sate my thirst for long. It would do for now. I didn't want to leave Carlisle with Edward on his own for too long. Despite the nagging feeling I had that I knew him from somewhere before in my mind.

As I buried the deer, so that no unfortunate hikers would come across it, I couldn't help wondering what Edward's real name was. It couldn't be too far from the name he was using now, could it? Carlisle had told us that no one knew his real name, that he had never told anyone. And there was no way that anyone would be brave enough to ask him directly. Maybe, I could try. But then again, I would most probably get my throat ripped out.

And that was not something I was looking to do.

I found myself wondering *why* he was here. He didn't seem like the kind of vampire that would drop in for a social call.

A vibration in my pocket pulled me out of my musings about Edward and alerted me to the fact that my phone was ringing. I took it out and looked at the Caller ID. Seeing it was Carlisle calling I answered it. "Carlisle?"

"Bella, I need you to come back to the house." He sounded strained and worried. I knew that Edward had done or said something to upset Carlisle in some way. And I didn't like it. "Now."

"Okay," I replied, not sounding too sure myself. "I'll get the others and-"

"No." He said sharply into the phone. "The others need to stay out hunting. It's just you that needs to come home."

"Carlisle, what's going on?" I turned back in the direction of the house and began to run as fast as I could back, not wanting to wait for Edward to hurt Carlisle in any way.

"I'll explain everything when you get back." His voice sounded even more strained than before, sounding as though, if he could, he would be crying right now. What the hell had Edward done or said to him?

"Okay." I was getting closer to the house. "I'm coming back now."

We hung up and I sped up even faster. I wanted to get back to the house as fast as I could. I didn't want Carlisle to have to put up with that monster for any longer than he had to. Because that's what Edward was.

A monster.

He might be the father of us all, but that didn't change that fact.

He was the reason we were all like this. Whatever it was that he had done when he was human, to curse him into this fate, it did not give him any reason to damn us all into this cursed existence. This tormented eternity.

And he had control of all of us.

Our entire species.

We were all his and there was nothing any of us could do about it. We were all at his mercy. If any of us tried to confront him about anything, he would destroy us faster than a human's heart could beat.

I didn't know how I felt about his link to my existence. Yes, it was removed by several thousand years, but if it wasn't for him, I would be rotting in the ground after what had happened to me. Of course, it would help if I could actually *remember* what had happened to me. That would be a good start.

I entered the house and immediately called out for Carlisle.

"In here, Bella." I heard Carlisle call. He sounded full of regret and sorrow. "In the living room."

I ran into the living room and looked at the scene before me. It was unusual to say the least. Carlisle was standing there, running his hands through his hair, his face a mixutre of sorrow, regret and something else I couldn't get a handle on. Was it guilt?

I looked over to Edward and saw that there was no emotion there at all. His face was completely blank. A complete void. How could someone stand there, watching someone like Carlisle agonize over whatever it was that was going through his mind.

"What's going on?" I asked. I didn't trust my voice to speak in more than a whisper, looking at Edward. I didn't know what to make of the situation. I hated him for making Carlisle feel the way he was at the moment. It wasn't fair. Carlisle hadn't ever done anything wrong. He was the kindest, most caring man I had ever come across.

"Bella....." His voice sounded even more strained than it had now that I was here with him. Looking at me I saw pain and conflict residing there. Again, I didn't need to have Jasper's power to know how he was feeling. There was something eating him up inside.

"Carlisle has something to tell you, Isabella." Edward stated from where he was standing across the room. His voice, as well as his expression was void of emotion.

How does he know my name? I thought panicked. I could understand how he would know my name as "Bella" because there was a chance Carlisle had mentioned me, especially seeing as it was just me that he had called to come home. But how could he know the name "Isabella"? I never introduced myself as that anymore. I hadn't since I was human.

And come to think of it, I hadn't even introduced myself to him.

"What is it, Carlisle?" I didn't dare look away from Edward. I didn't know what he would do and I didn't want to chance being taken by surprise. "What's wrong?"

"There's something you need to know, Bella." I didn't take my eyes off of Edward as I heard Carlisle sigh.

Edward was getting irritated now and I didn't want anything to happen. I knew that I wouldn't be able to stop him if he saw it fit to kill the both of us right now. He sighed, showing us both that his anger was bubbling to the surface and I saw Carlisle looking at him out of the corner of my eye.

"Bella, I'm afraid I haven't been completely honest with you." I could see him shaking his head out of the corner of my eye.

I couldn't help it. I had to turn away from Edward, even though all of my instincts told me not to. I *had* to face Carlisle. I had to know what he meant. "What do you mean, Carlisle?" A pretty obvious question there, but hey, it had to be asked.

"There's something I've been refraining to tell you. I haven't been completely honest with you about your origins."

What the hell is he talking about? What does he mean he hasn't been honest about my origins? "Carlisle, you're scaring me now." I couldn't tear my eyes away from him now. *What the hell is going on? What can he be talking about?* "Tell me what's going on."

"Bella." His voice was no higher than a whisper, but I heard it as clear as day. "You were not turned by me."

What is he talking about? Of course I was turned by him. He was there when I awoke from the change. He had to be the one that changed me. He had to be! I was beginning to get angry now. How could he be lying to me about something like this. He was lying? Right? "What are you talking about. Carlisle?"

"I'm sorry, Bella." I could hear in his tone and see in his expression that if he could cry, there would be tears streaming down his face right now.

"If not you..." I wasn't sure if I wanted to answer this question, but I knew that I had to. "Then who?"

What happened next surprised and scared me more than I would have liked and I didn't really want to believe it had happened.

But it had.

Carlisle had looked at Edward immediately after I had asked my question and I knew I had my answer.

"You?" I couldn't make my voice work properly. For the first time in one hundred years, I couldn't form anything more than a word at a time. Sentences were beyond me. "You.....made.....me?" He looked at me and nodded once. I could tell that this was all the answer that I was going to get, and I don't know how that made me feel. It made me feel strange. Kind of abandoned. "Why didn't you tell me?" I couldn't tear my gaze away from him now, even though it hurt to look to look at him. "I don't want to seem rude but....." I may be emotional, but I'm not stupid. I knew that my

emotional state meant squat to him. "But ... if you made me, why did you leave me? Is that just, what you do?"

I wasn't sure if I wanted to know the answers to these questions. But I knew that I had to know. I couldn't really carry on my existence not knowing why I had been made, why I had been left. And why Carlisle had lied to me.

Also, I was having a little bit of a hard time coming to terms with the fact that the most powerful vampire in the world made me.

Me.

Little old Bella Cullen.

I had been made by the original vampire.

This was too much to handle.

"Honestly, Isabella-"

"Bella." *SHIT!! Did I just cut him off. Shit! I'm in trouble now!* He raised his eyebrows at me and I knew that he wasn't going to tolerate anything much longer. "Sorry. It's just..... I prefer Bella. I didn't mean to ... I didn't mean to cut you off like that. It's just"
Just stop talking Bella! Stop talking now!

"Make sure it doesn't happen again." His tone was icy and I couldn't help the flinch that ran through my body. I noted that it didn't escape his notice either. "In answer to your question, I didn't tell you because I wasn't in the country by the time you had turned. I thought I'd killed you."

He didn't even know that he'd turned me? I didn't really know how to comprehend that notion. *He thought that he'd killed me?* "Oh." That was all I could say. Trying to get your head around the fact that the person you thought had changed you, hadn't and to find out you

were changed by the oldest and most powerful vampire in the world, now *that* was something that didn't happen everyday.

"Bella, I-" He started to make his way towards me but I don't think I could stand to be near him at this particular moment in time.

"Don't!" I held up my hand and he stopped instantly. "I need to be alone right now."

I couldn't stay in the house with either of them. They both knew more about me than I did. They both knew where I came from. They had both known that I was not created by Carlisle. The only difference was that Carlisle had known for ninety years or so that he hadn't created me when Edward had only realised when he'd seen me today.

I ran out of the house and as far as I could before I came to the conclusion that I had travelled about half way to Canada. It still didn't seem to be far enough to me.

I couldn't hate him though. Even though he had lied to me.

But can you really hate Edward, too? I thought to myself. I couldn't really hate him. He was the one who changed me, but he didn't have a clue that I still even existed anymore.

I couldn't really hate him for what he didn't know.

Even though he seemed cruel and heartless I couldn't blame him for this.

Edward made me! That thought kept running through my head as I sat on a boulder. Everything that I had thought over the last hundred years or so, was that all a lie? I didn't want to believe that, but Carlisle had kept this big secret from me for a hundred years. Who else knew what he had kept from me.

"Running away isn't the answer." A calm, velvet voice said behind me. I turned to face where the voice had come from. It was Edward. He was standing there, calm as anything. Could nothing phase this guy? "You're still afraid of me." He smirked at me. *Hell, yes!! Of course I am! You're the most powerful creature on the face of the planet. And to make that even better, you've got a wicked temper! I'm more than scared. I'm freaked!* "So you should be."

I decided to test the waters a little. "Would you still hurt me?" I didn't raise my voice to more than a whisper. I knew he could hear me, so I didn't need to use any more volume than that.

"Don't think that because I made you, you get any special treatment." He growled at me, his eyes narrowing at me. I shouldn't have expected anything else. I didn't really expect anything else. He was cold and heartless. And apparently, even those created directly from his venom, no one else in between, made any difference.

"I-I didn't. I-I wasn't." I didn't want to give him any reason to rip my head off. Well, any more than he would under normal circumstances anyway. I looked up at him and I saw him leaning back on one of the boulders. He was watching me. Assessing me. Or at least that's what it felt like.

"Good." He was pissed. I could tell that. The way he growled his answers at me was evidence enough of that.

I decided to see how far I could take it. Without getting myself killed that is. "Can I ask you a question?" I didn't raise the volume in my voice much higher. I didn't want him to think that I was being disrespectful towards him. He might be cold and cruel but he was still the original vampire. The first of us all. He *did* deserve some degree of respect, I guess. "If it's okay, that is."

"What?" His voice was sharp, and cold. He was not pleased, but I wanted to see if I could get some answers. *Hoping* I could get some answers anyway.

"Why did you turn me?" I lowered my voice back down to a whisper again. I didn't want to give him reason to lash out. "Why not just leave me to die?"

"Like I said, I thought I did." There was no emotion in his voice. Like he didn't feel anything at all. "It had been so long since I had drained a human completely and utterly." *Really?* I thought sarcastically. "That's enough of that."

I'd forgotten that he could read my mind. "Sorry." I mumbled.

"I guess I'd forgotten how potent my venom is." He barked out a laugh. I wasn't ashamed to say, I didn't get the joke. "Irony, right? The most powerful vampire in the world and I forget."

There was something I wanted to know and I didn't think that I would get another chance to ask it. Who knows when he was going to be in the mood to talk again. This guy was unpredictable that I didn't want to risk anything happening to me or my family. "How old *are* you?"

"Well," He turned his head and smirked at me, his deep blood red eyes glinting at me. He would need to feed soon. And that thought worried me. I didn't want to think of him feeding in Forks. "Let's just say, I predate history."

Now *that* didn't doubt.

"So you've got to be getting on a bit then." He didn't laugh, and neither did I.

"You have no idea." His tone was completely serious, and I knew that he was as old as Carlisle said he was. At least he wasn't lying about that.

"I'm sorry if I offended you." I took my eyes off of him and fixed them on a very interesting stone that was embedded there. Well, technically it wasn't very interesting, but it was still better than looking at *his majesty* .

"So you should be." I could feel his gaze on me, but I still didn't look up at him. I didn't want to know what I would find there. I didn't *want* to know what I would find there. "You can look at me you know. You're not going to spontaneously combust. Although, that would be kind of cool."

"Who for?" I asked him, trying to sound as polite as I could, whilst trying to comprehend what it was he had just said. Did he just say it'd be *cool* for people to spontaneously combust? "You or the combusting vampire?"

"Me." He grinned at me. It wasn't a comedy grin. Something about it told me that he really *would* enjoy watching a vampire, or even a human for that matter, spontaneously combust. That just seemed like that kind guy. "Of course." *Of course!* I thought sarcastically. "Gotta get some fun from somewhere, don't I?" *Of course you do!*

"I don't want to risk sounding rude or anything," *Believe me I don't!* "But has anyone told you you might be a bit sadistic?" I tried not to smile, but wasn't getting very far with that.

"Frequently."

"I guess it's something you're used to then." I looked away from him again. I figured he might think I was being rude if I looked at him for too long. I didn't want anything to happen if he thought that I was staring.

I didn't know what his plans for my family were yet. I didn't want to test him on that one. I didn't want him to feel the need to take anything out on my family. They didn't deserve anything that Edward could bring upon them. I didn't doubt in my mind that there were several natural disasters that *weren't* so natural.

I heard him chuckling darkly. Looking up at him again, I saw him watching me and realised that he was reading my thoughts. "You're right, you know." He smirked evilly again. "Who do you think

manipulated the germs that started the Black Death? The Spanish Influenza? Ring any bells?"

"You started those?" I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

He shrugged nonchalantly, as if it was nothing to him. Nothing that he caused millions of deaths. That he caused so much pain throughout the world. I knew that those wouldn't be the only two disasters he was responsible for. Just with those two alone he had been responsible for between seventy-five and two hundred and fifty million deaths.

And something told me that he wasn't even sorry about it.

This guy may have been the father of my species, technically *my* vampiric father but there was one thing that I was sure of.

He was, incessantly, evil.

And I didn't see that changing anytime soon.

I know that there's been a lot of overlap the last couple of chapters but it's necessary for these last couple of chapters.

Won't be much more of it, maybe in a few chapters time, but only covering events that I feel it's necessary to see the situations from both POV's.

Anyway's please review and let me know what you think.

XX

Hunting

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Edward

He's evil.

That was the last thought I heard running through Bella's mind before she disappeared.

Was I really?

I shrugged to myself. Maybe I was.

Did it matter to me?

I thought about it for a moment and came to one conclusion.

No.

It didn't matter.

It had been thought that I was evil for millenia. By both vampires and humans alike. It was something that had followed me around for my entire existence. In the beginning it might have bothered me, but that had quickly dissipated once I could use their fear to my advantage.

It had become part of the routine.

I watched where she had been standing for a moment, before I thought about what I was going to do for the rest of the day. She needed time alone. I may be a monster and "evil" as she put it but I realised the need for alone time. Hell, I'd had enough of it.

Hmmmm, I wonder what the food around here is like . I mused, looking in the direction that she had disappeared in.

I knew she had gone in the wrong direction to go back to her house, but I also knew how her mind worked. She was going to double around and run back that way.

What she didn't realise was that she had more power than anyone else in her coven. She just didn't know how to tap into it.

What no one but myself knew was that if a vampire was created by *my* venom then their powers were at a greater strength than the others of my kind.

It had been millenia since a vampire had been created using my own venom. It was not something that I took lightly. They were too unpredictable. The last time that had happened, their year in the newborn stage had taken out half of London before I destroyed them. Watching devastation and destruction might be amusing, but there was only so much you could get away with before people started getting suspicious.

I'd been stupid enough to leave him to his own devices. My first real lapse in judgement since I had been created. It wasn't something that I had done again. I had always made sure that I completely drained anyone that I drank of, knowing that if there was even a tiny amount of blood left in their bodies, the potency of my venom would turn them.

I couldn't have that.

The ones I created were more powerful than the rest of my species. That was what made the rest of them fear the Volturi. Because they were made from my venom, they had more power than the rest of my descendents. After that they were all on the same playing field.

That was the reason I had to travel back to London and destroy said vampire. It was getting out of control and I had to put a stop to it. No

matter who created it, even myself, my only rule *must* be adhered to. There were *no* exceptions.

The best way to get rid of the evidence was the fire.

The Great Fire of London. I smirked to myself. One of my finer achievements. The chaos that ensued. The fear that rang out of the city during the fire was intense. It was something that I would remember forever.

Making the fire look like an accident was something else I needed to ensure. The fact that the vampire in question happened to be feeding on a baker at the time, I guess worked in my favour. The fire was already going. Why humans needed to wake up at such a ridiculous time for them, just to make such disgusting smelling food parcels was beyond me. Personally, I figured that the human making them tasted so much better. But then again, that was my own personal preference. And apparently to the preference of my "children" as well.

It took them five days to put out that fire, as I stood and watched it burn.

They were amazed at how low the death count was. What they didn't realise was that the fire had been orchestrated so that those that burned were already dead. But humans being the dull and brainless creatures that they were, didn't realise the inner mechanisms of it. They were too busy trying to put it out.

It got rid of the evidence though.

So I wasn't complaining.

I decided to go and hunt before I decided what to do with the Cullens.

This place, *Forks* as it was called. *Pathetic name*, I thought pushing myself off of the boulder. Too small. Death would be noticed here

before the hour was out. And I was sure that there were little old ladies, peeping out through their curtains, just looking for a reason to call the police. Not that it would do any good where I was concerned, but still, best to avoid the situation. I didn't want to have to destroy this town as well. More than anything, I couldn't be bothered doing the whole clean-up afterwards thing. Too much hassle.

There was a nice little town not too far away from here. Slightly bigger than this place, but then again, where wasn't? There may be someone tasty there.

They wouldn't be happy that I was hunting so close to their home. But hey, who am I to care? It's up to them if they want to live off of animals, but there was no way that I was going to. I've had to do it before, but that was under duress. It was only because there had been no humans around to eat.

Animals weren't the most delectable of treats.

I stood up on the boulder Bella had been standing on and looked around, inhaling deeply. Bella's scent was still lingering in the air, despite the breeze that was blowing. Her scent would be here for hours, possibly longer.

I headed in the direction I knew the town was in, letting the ground flow underneath my feet. Running was the only thing that seemed to give me any form of pleasure anymore. When running, I could forget about the other things that plagued my mind otherwise. All thoughts of the Volturi and the vampire existence disappeared from my mind.

I stopped at the sign that welcomed people into the town.

Port Angeles.

Looks promising. It's big enough so that a few deaths wouldn't really go noticed. I smirked to myself as I made my way to the most crowded areas, flicking through the minds of those around me, seeing who was alone. Vulnerable.

Vampires that went after people who were in groups were foolish. If you went after a someone who was alone, then you avoided all of the instantaneous questions of where they were.

I can't believe he would do this to me! How could he?! Someone's painful thoughts came through the melee that was massing inside of my head. Maybe, I should just find some other guy to hook up with, you know, follow his lead. Hell, who would have me but him. Even he didn't want me. Where the hell was I going to find someone who would- Hello!

I stepped out of the shadows in front of the girl and smiled at her. I leaned on the wall next to me and looked at her intensely. She fell instantly, of course, as they all did. She stood there and smiled at me and batted her eyelashes. How the hell human girls thought that action was sexy was beyond me. All it did was make me want to snap their necks instead of draining them dry.

Still. I was thirsty, so I wouldn't pass up this easy meal.

"Are you okay?" I asked smoothly, smiling at her again. *Three ... two ... one ...* I counted in my head.

"Uh, yeah, I mean, um..." Cue blithering idiot. It gets them every time. "I-I-I-I-I'm fine. Th-thanks, for, um, uh, for, um-"

"Asking?" I offered and she stopped, stunned. Her thoughts told me what she wasn't brave enough to say.

Oh my God! Oh my God! He's-he's-he's gorgeous! Definitely what I need to make Jeremy feel like a definite loser! No one I've ever met could compare to this God! What I wouldn't love to do to him! Her thoughts were the same as every other ramblind adolescent that I happened to come across. The beauty of glamour. Works a treat. "Yeah." She whispered.

"You don't seem okay." I pushed myself off of the wall and walked over to her slowly, not breaking eye contact. "You seem kind of lost,

actually."

"I'm fine, I swear." She couldn't stop looking at me, and I knew that she was drawn in. "I-I-I-I-I was just on my way"

"Home?" I offered and she nodded. "Well, there are some pretty nasty people around. I wouldn't want you to get hurt. How about I walk you home?"

She stared at me, open mouthed, and nodded. *This is unbelievable. Did this amazing hunk of Godliness just ask to walk me home? Yes, he did! I'm the luckiest girl alive.* I smiled at her, not wanting to point out the flaws in her thinking. One: she was *not* the luckiest girl alive. Two: she wouldn't be making it home.

"Come on," I nodded my head behind me. "Where's home?"

"Uh, um, th-this way." She pointed behind me and started walking. "Um, it's on Rovello."

I looked at her and smiled again. She giggled and blushed again. I walked with her til we came to a bend. I noticed an alleyway to my right. I took her arm gently and stopped her.

"Come on, I know a short cut." I smiled at her and she was putty in my hands. Just like they all were. Sometimes I wished they would put up a fight. It would make this thing a whole lot more interesting. Dinner and a show. That would be something to work for. A little effort may bother some people, but feeding had been so easy for so long, that I would welcome it.

I led her down the alleyway. A bit cliché but hey, what are you gonna do? She looked a little worried, but a smile from me and she had that goofy grin on her face again. Teenagers were so stupid. It didn't matter what millenium, or century we were in, they were all the same. It was pathetic.

I stopped and turned to look at her. She smiled at me and moved forwards. I wrapped my arms around her and she sighed, completely taken in. Of course, her breathing in just made it worse for her. Everything about me was designed to draw her in. My scent was one of the more effective ways I could use.

I brushed a strand of hair away from her face and she shivered at my cold hands. The touch of most vampires were cool, but not uncomfortably so for humans, but mine was different. Mine was a good five degrees or so colder than the average vampire. All part of being the original I guess.

"Is something wrong?" I asked her, my voice low and seductive.

"N-no." She shook her head slightly, not looking away from me. "Your hands are just a bit cold that's all."

"Oh," I pretended to be concerned and she bought it hook, line and sinker. "Well, you know what they say. Cold hands ... warm heart." *Or dead, unbeating heart in my case* . I added on silently.

I moved my face in to hers, as if I was going to kiss her. She tilted her head up so that her lips would meet mine, but I moved my face slightly and ran my nose down the length of her jaw, taking in the scent of her blood. She moaned slightly, breathing in deeply, falling into my trap even more.

I ran my nose down her throat, before I stopped over her pulse point. I pressed a small kiss to the point and she whimpered slightly, making me smile before I sank my teeth into her throat. She let out a gasp and I smiled even more. She knew that there was no escape now, and she was running through all the things that she wanted to do in life.

As her delicious life essence flowed down my throat, she didn't struggle. She knew that there was nothing she could do to save herself. She wished that she hadn't shouted at her mother this morning for not letting her stay out. She wished that she had told her

friend Jennifer that some kid called Robert *did* want to take her to the dance. All these things flowed through her mind as she felt her life ebbing away as I ripped it out of her.

Yes, I was stealing her life essence but it was what I did.

I felt my thirst being satiated as her body emptied of her blood. I had to be sure that I had drained all of it. The last time I was careless enough not to, Bella had been created. I didn't want to risk that happening again. Having just one that was created by me around, seeing as all the others had destroyed each other millenia ago, was risk enough. I didn't want there being any more around.

As the flow of blood from the wound stopped I dropped her to the ground. She had a look of fear on her face, just as they all did.

I picked the girls' body up and threw her in the dumpster, setting it on fire on my way past. I didn't want to leave any evidence around for anyone to dig up. A dumpster on fire was not something that was uncommon. Humans were stupid enough to throw things away before making sure that they weren't still lit.

I walked at human pace to the edge of town before I sped up to my full speed. If I thought that running on an empty stomach was something I enjoyed, then it didn't compare to running after a feed. I knew that they would know instantly that I had fed. They had to know that I wasn't one for messing around. If they thought that I would be changing my diet just because I was here and they fed on animals.

As I approached their little town an incredible stench filled my nostrils causing me to stop. *What the hell is that stench?* I wrinkled my nose and turned into the wind. It was coming from my east. It was disgusting and I knew that if I followed it, there may be something that I could find amusing.

I followed the stench, breathing as little as I could, not wanting to breathe in more of the stench than I had to.

I was led to a beach. Not really what I was expecting. I was mildly disappointed at this I must say. I was expecting something a little more.....I don't know, just more, really.

There was something in the trees behind me. Whatever they were, they were the reason for the stench that had drawn me here. Geez, *these guys need to take a bath*. I wrinkled my nose again, not giving any other indication that I knew they were there.

Do you think he knows we're here? I heard a mind ask.

He's not made any move. Another one replied. They were talking to each other through their minds. These we're the spirit warriors that had dwelled many years ago. I thought that they had all died out. Just hearing their minds told me otherwise. *He smells different to the others.*

Yeah, his scent is stronger?! How is that possible?

"Well, maybe it comes from the fact that *all* vampires come from me." I smirked turning around to face them. "I know you're there. You can come out now." I kept my voice light and floaty, singsong, if you will. They knew I was a threat, but my tone confused them. They obviously weren't used to vampires being so rash with them.

How does he know we're here? One of them asked in their minds. There were three of them. I could tell that by their internal voices.

"Well, let's just say, your shielding technique sucks, and you smell *really* bad." I smirked at them. "So why don't you come out and we can play nice." I thought about it for a second. "Maybe."

"You shouldn't be here." A deep voice said, it's owner walking out of the woods and facing me. "Your kind isn't allowed on our lands."

The boy walking out of the woods was just that. A boy. He couldn't have been more than twenty. Barely out of diapers. He was tall, I'll give him that. He was dark skinned with dark hair. *Typical Quilete.*

Native Americans, all the same. These were the ones that had given me the name Apotamkin. They were the ones that the legend had come from. But they were stupid. Their legends were built on nothing but suspicious stories. They were stupid.

Even though they had the power to transform they were still essentially human. And that clouded their minds. They didn't have a clue what they were talking about.

I laughed a dark chuckle and he looked at me worried. "Do you really think that I abide by the rules that others put on my kind? Let me tell you something: *I'm* the one that enforces the rules of *my* kind. Because that's what they are: they're my "children" per se."

"Who are you?" He sounded afraid now, even as there were two enormous wolves walking out of the forest behind him. I looked at the two of them, grinning. Something tells me that they were looking for a fight. And I welcomed it.

"I'm the *original* ." That was the only answer I gave him and the fear in his eyes was overwhelming. I didn't need to tap into my power of empathy to feel and see it. It was there, plain and simple.

The other two didn't understand, but they felt his fear and started to move forwards, snarling at me. "Stop!" He shouted and they did, still snarling. "Quit it! Go into the woods and phase. Now!"

They walked backwards slowly and disappeared into the woods. They emerged a moment later, in their human form, sporting nothing but a pair of sweatpants each. They were the same as the boy in front of me, but noticeably younger. Even though it was only a few years, to me it was noticeable.

"Who is he, Sam?" The one on his left asked sharply, moving to stand directly behind the one he had called "Sam".

"Edward." He whispered, fearful.

"Well, it's good to see that your elders are keeping you up to date." I smirked and the other two behind the one called Sam, glared at me. "Oooh, I wouldn't keep that up if I were you." I scolded the two of them, shaking my head in mock disappointment. "On the other hand," I sighed, pretending to think something over and act disappointed. "It's been a while since I've had a good fight. You know, lately, people just have no backbone. It's sad really. In this day and age, people just run away."

"Yeah, well we don't run from your kind." The third one was challenging me. He had guts. At least, for now. "We stay and fight."

"No Paul!" Sam snapped at him, turning to face the other two he had with him. "Nobody will be fighting him." He looked back at me. "He's too strong."

"Like hell he is!" The one who's name hadn't been revealed growled, staring me down, as if I was supposed to be cowering in fear through his very presence. "That's what the others thought."

"He *is* too strong, Jacob." Sam replied, sounding anxious now. "The others that we've met, or heard about in our legends. They're nothing compared to him." His voice was no more than a whisper, and I could tell he feared me. I saw the images from the books he had studied about me flash through his mind. They were detailed and every single one of them was true.

"But we're three against one." Paul was starting to sound cocky now, so I tilted my head in his direction, silently telling him to try it. "And those are odds that I like."

"Not a chance, Paul!" Sam seemed to have regained his voice, though it still shook in fear. "It doesn't matter how many there are. We could have the whole pack. Hell, we could have an army and still, none of us would be enough to stop him. He's too powerful."

"You know, sometimes I wished that people *would* stand up to me. It would make my day so much more fucking interesting, you know?" I

shook my head in disappointment at the three of them.

"You really think you can take us?" The third one, Jacob, challenged me. "That's what the others of your kind thought. They thought that they were strong enough to beat us. Well, we'd let you ask them, but I don't ashes speak, do they?"

I returned his challenge with a deadly smile. "You're cocky." I chuckled. "I like you. And those vampires that you killed. Weak. Nothing. Hell, if you hadn't taken them out, if they'd crossed my path, I probably would have done."

"You'd kill your own kind?" Paul sounded defensive now. He had good reason to be.

"Wouldn't be the first time." I told them coldly.

"Doesn't that go against some sacred bloodsucker ordnance?" Jacob grinned as though his joke should be made into history.

"Well, I would know." I looked him in the eye as I said this. "After all, I'm the one who created the rules. Hell, I'm the one that created *vampires* ."

The shock on the faces of the two Quiletes standing behind Sam was priceless. They obviously hadn't taken him seriously when he called me "the original". I could see in their minds that they were trying to work out what they wanted to do. Both of them wanted a fight, and hell, I wanted one too. I was bored and people, humans, vampires and shapeshifters alike, pussy-footing around me because they were scared of what I would do to them was all very well, but hell, it got really *really* boring after a few thousand years.

Paul was more into fighting than the other two were. Sam didn't entertain the idea at all, knowing that there was no way, he or his friends would stand a chance. Well, at least the boy was smart even if he was young. Jacob on the other hand was switching between the two. He wanted a fight but he knew that if they did, there was very

little chance that they would get out of it alive. And he seriously doubted that they would take me with them. A well founded doubt, I might add.

"So boys." I said calmly, smiling darkly at the three of them. "What's it gonna be?"

They all looked at each other, worried at my being so upfront. Apparently, the other vampires they had faced had been more wary, knowing what they could do.

Whatever they decided, it was gonna be fun.

And here we have the wolves ^_^

You guys wanna know what happens?

Do ya?

Then gimme a review and I'll see what I can do.

xx

Explanations

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Bella

He's evil.

That's the last thought I had before I ran away from Edward, who, despite his revelations about what he'd done in his past, showed no remorse at all. He showed no emotions at all.

How could someone, even a vampire, not care about what he had done. He had caused so much hurt and he wasn't even bothered.

I couldn't stay in his presence for a moment longer after I'd learned what he'd done. I mean, it was *him* that had unleashed the Black Death on the world in the fourteenth century. And the one that had unleashed the Spanish Influenza that had wiped out most of my home city, that had killed my parents, just after I had been turned in 1918.

Correction: after *he* had turned me.

He claimed that he didn't realise I had still had any blood left in my system when he left me. He can't have been very hungry then, or he must have been distracted by something. Somehow, I didn't think that either of those were the right answers.

He didn't seem the type of vampire that would get distracted easily. Unlike the rest of us. It was kind of weird to think that we had such a huge brain capacity, able to withhold any knowledge we learned, able to remember *everything* about our immortal lives when something so simple could distract us. I knew from experience with Emmett that all it took – in his case anyway – was something shiny.

And he definitely wasn't the type of vampire that let a meal go unfinished. That much I knew from just being with him for these few minutes. He was bloodthirsty, just like every single one of our kind. He seemed to have control over his bloodthirst, but then again he'd had thousands of years to work on it. I didn't doubt that he had perfect control where it was needed. So how come he hadn't drained me.

It didn't make any sense.

Edward was cruel, heartless and cold.

He was evil.

Who knows what else he was responsible for.

I knew that Benjamin of the Egyptian coven had power over the elements, therefore, if Carlisle was correct, so did Edward. He could be responsible for any of the natural disasters that had happened over the years. But the real question was, was he? Was he the reason behind some of the natural disasters that had happened over the years? The earthquakes? Hurricanes? There was just no way to really know was there? He was capable of anything.

I couldn't stay there with him, so I did the first thing that came to mind. And the safest thing that came to mind. I couldn't confront him. That would be suicide. And I wasn't really in the mood to die today.

So I ran.

I didn't run in the direction of the house, because that would mean that I had to run past him, and if he didn't want me to leave, then he would easily stop me.

Not that there was much stopping him from catching up to me as it was. I just felt safer somehow running around in a large semi-circle and doubling back that way. He could obviously read my mind so

there was no doubt that he knew what I was doing, but somehow I didn't really care.

I ran at full speed back to the house, not giving what Edward would be doing now one thought. I didn't want to think about what he would be doing to occupy himself. If there was an earthquake or a flood of some sort then we would know that he was amusing himself. But I hoped for everyone's sakes, he didn't feel the need to do anything like that.

I didn't want to think about what he would be doing because somewhere in my mind I already knew.

Feeding.

That was something I didn't want to think about him doing. I knew that I couldn't stop him. There was no way for me to stop him. He wasn't about to convert to vegetarianism. I knew that must. So the best thing I could do at that point in time. I would block it out.

Thinking about him, feeding in Forks, made me feel nauseous. Or at least it would if I still could.

I didn't want to think of him draining anyone that I know. Even those I didn't like. It was too much to think about. I could only hope that he would go a bit further out and not feed in Forks.

We'll see tomorrow, won't we?

A death in Forks doesn't go unnoticed. It will be in the paper if anyone's died unnaturally or gone missing.

I approached the big white house I called home and stopped. I didn't know if I could go in there. I knew that Carlisle was there. I could hear his stressful pacing from here, and the others were constantly trying to find out what was wrong. He kept telling them that it wasn't right for him to tell them.

I couldn't hate him. Could I?

He had lied to me for almost a century, but I could also see that he was trying to protect me. If I had known that Edward had created me, I would have gone after him. I was certain of that one. And I guess he was just trying to stop me from doing that.

He knew how dangerous Edward was, and I couldn't hold it against him to want to keep me safe.

But the question was, could I forgive him?

"Bells." Jasper walked up to me, silently, stopping beside me. "Are you okay?"

"Yeah," I lied, not meeting his eyes. "I'm fine."

"Really?" He raised his eyebrows at me, knowing that I was lying. *Damn empath!* I thought, sighing. "Because you seem to be a bit torn at the moment. Something you want to talk about?"

I nodded. "But it's something that everyone needs to hear. It's not something I think I can repeat over again." He nodded and we both walked over to the house, moving at a human pace, just enjoying each others company.

Jasper was easy to be around. Whether or not that was because of his power I didn't know, but I had heard that he was a charmer when he was human so I doubted that his power was the whole reason behind it. Even though it came in handy quite often. He was easy to talk to. He never said anything that would instigate an argument. Personally, I think that was because he couldn't cope with all the emotions that were being thrown around when one was underway.

He was a true brother.

I smiled at him as he opened the door to the house and gestured for me to go in first. Always the gentleman. Something he'd brought

from his human days. His Southern charm was obviously something that he hadn't forgotten over his years.

If she were still alive, I would have had to thank his mother for instilling these charms in him.

I guess I could just thank Alice instead.

Carlisle looked up at us immediately, worry and fear etched on his face. Seeing that it was just Jasper and I, he relaxed visibly. He had obviously been fearing Edward's return.

Looking at his face, the worry etched there, the relief as he saw me walk through the door, I realised that I could not hate him. He was my father after all – well, not really, but you know what I mean – and he may have lied to me, but he had only been looking out for me.

Could I forgive him.

Yes I could.

I walked over to Carlisle and hugged him tightly. He relaxed as he wrapped his arms around me.

"I'm sorry." He whispered in my ear, low enough so that the others wouldn't hear.

"No," I pulled back and smiled at him. "It's forgotten."

"Carlisle," Emmett said, clearly getting impatient now. I turned around and looked at him. Everyone was there. The others had returned from their hunting trip while I was with Edward. And they weren't happy with the events of the day. "Seriously, what's going on?"

"It's okay, Carlisle." I said softly and he looked at me, his expression softening. "I'll tell them."

"Bella, you don't have to." He warned, seeming not to trust how the others would take it. "You're under no obligation to."

"Like hell she's not." Rosalie sounded pissed. She and I had never really gotten on and now I could see that things were going to come to a head. "Firstly, this all-powerful, and as Carlisle puts it, the "original vampire" comes into our home, without one word of warning-" Alice cleared her throat and stared at Rosalie pointedly. "Sorry, Alice. But you have to admit, it wasn't much of a warning." Alice nodded, probably feeling somewhat dejected and let down by her power. It had always worked so well and the only time that it had let her down before was with the Quiletes. She must be feeling even more anxious knowing that Edward could overrun her power so easily. "And then, we have to leave before he's done. And none of us have no idea why."

"Rosalie." Carlisle breathed, sounding extremely stressed. "What was said between Edward and I was not for your ears. No-" He held up a hand when she started to protest. "He's too powerful for any of us to handle. Take it from me, he isn't known for his patience but he *is* known for his quick temper and tendency to destroy even those that he has made. The Fire of London was proof enough of that." His voice had lowered to a mumble, but we could all hear him clearly.

"Sorry? Fire of London?" I asked, not believing what I had just heard. "Are you talking about the "Great Fire of London"?" I asked. Was this another mass destruction that Edward had started for his own amusement? Something in the pit of my stomach told me that it was. Call me crazy but that seemed to be the kind of guy that would do that kind of thing.

"Yes," Carlisle nodded sadly. "The only lapse in judgement that Edward has ever had, I think. He fed on a human, obviously, but didn't completely drain him." He looked at us all, and sighed, seeing the confused expressions on our faces. "When Edward feeds, he must completely drain the one he is feeding from. If there is any trace of blood in their system, then they will be turned, no matter how little it is. His venom is *that* potent."

That's what he must have meant when he said he thought I was dead. He must have thought that he had drained me completely, but hadn't. It was mind boggling to think that a vampire's venom was *that* powerful. And it was running through my veins.

"Anyway, the vampires that are created from Edward are more powerful than the rest of us. A result of being created from his venom directly." He was looking at me as he said this. "They were also reported to be harder to control and more savage than the ones they themselves created." He sighed and looked away from me. Then why was I so controlled. I had had one rebellious period, yes, but I had never lost control. "One such vampire was created in London in 1666. The only one for millenia. He was out of control. He rampaged through London, killing almost half the city before Edward returned and killed him.

"The stories say that the vampire was feeding off a baker at the time. That's how the fire starting in a bakery theory worked. Edward destroyed the vampire, but also needed to destroy the evidence and reduce the risk of more newborns being created. He knew that half of London being slaughtered by a vampire would be something hard to cover up. So, after killing the vampire, he started the fire. The reason the death toll was so low, was that because those caught in the fire were already dead, or changing." He sighed. "There hasn't been one created by Edward since."

"Until now." I whispered and everyone's head whipped around to look at me.

"What do you mean?" Emmett looked confused. "There's been another vampire created by Edward?"

I nodded and stepped forward, looking Carlisle directly in the eye. "Yep, in Chicago, nineteen-eighteen."

The rest of the family looked confused, but Jasper's face quickly morphed into an expression of realisation. "You mean...?" I nodded,

knowing that he was thinking the right thing. "Wow." He ran a hand through his hair.

"What?" Rosalie was looking between the three of us now, clearly not understanding what was going on. "What are you talking about, Bella?"

"Me." I whispered. "I wasn't created by Carlisle as we all thought I was. He just found me while I was changing and decided to take me under his wing."

"Then who changed you?" Emmett asked, his voice full of concern. I think that he was feeling a bit upset at the fact that I wasn't really his sister. I would always be. The vampires venom running through my veins didn't change that fact.

"Edward." I breathed, looking at the floor, not really wanting to meet the gazes of my siblings. "Edward changed me."

"No way." Emmett breathed. "How is that possible. You never met him before though, have you Bells?"

"Obviously I have." I shrugged, looking at him. "I just don't remember it."

"Carlisle, you knew?" Esme sounded shocked that Carlisle would keep such a huge thing from her. "You knew and you never told us?"

"Yes, I knew." He whispered. "I knew that Edward was in Chicago at the time. He had even paid me a visit-"

"Paid you a visit?" Rosalie asked, sounding angry, shocked and worried at the same time. How she could muster that I had no idea. Most of the time all Rosalie felt was self-involvement and anger. Nothing much else. So this was a real shock. "What does that mean?"

"Edward and I had met before." Carlisle explained. "When I was living in Volterra, I spoke with him on several occasions. I learned much of him then, especially about his temper." He chuckled darkly. "I've seen him rip apart many a vampire." He looked around at all of us. "Which is why none of you, I mean *none* of you, are to challenge him. At all. Do not aggravate him at all." He looked around at us all, as though he was a parent giving a lecture. "Anyway, I knew that he was in Chicago, and I knew that he was the only other vampire in town. Chicago might be a city, but a vampire is still easy to find. And there aren't many vampires that are brave enough to stick around when Edward's in town. I knew that he would be feeding in the area but I never thought that he would leave a human to change. But he did."

"He told me that he thought I was dead." I admitted. "That he thought he had drained me." They all looked at me in shock. "He followed me after I ran out of here. You know, after you ... told me." I trailed off, before refocusing my mind. "He um, obviously hadn't realised that I was still alive, or at least that there was still blood in my system. And I was changed. Obviously." I started to pace, feeling my own stress building. It wasn't a good sign. "He explained to me that he thought I was dead. That it had been a long time since he hadn't drained a human completely, you know, so that they can't turn. And he also told me in not so many words, that he would um destroy me, if needs be."

"What?!" Emmett stood up now, visibly angered.

"Emmett calm down!" Carlisle scolded him, but it didn't have any effect whatsoever. We all knew what Emmett was like when he was like this. There was no way to calm him down.

"No!" He growled. "There's no way that *anyone* speaks to my family like that. Who does he think he is?"

" *He* is the most powerful vampire in the world and he could rip you to pieces before you could say "vegetarian". Emmett he is not one to aggravate and you know it."

"It was just a warning Emmett!" I told him, forcefully. "He was just letting me know that if he had to he would dispose of me the same way he would any other vampire. That because I was made by him I don't have any special rights. Which I think the story about the vampire in London shows us. I don't think he meant that he was going to kill me for no reason, but only if he had to, just like anyone else."

I could see that Emmett was not appeased. He was muttering to himself as he paced up and down. I couldn't make out what he was saying as he wasn't actually making any coherent words. Just noises. It sounded like he was trying to work something out in his head.

"Emmett." I moaned, rolling my head back. "Stop this. There's nothing we can do about it now."

"Isn't there?" He was sounding worried now. "I mean there's got to be some way of getting rid of this guy."

"There isn't!" Carlisle snapped, looking at Emmett. "Don't you think that people have tried. Emmett, Edward has been around for more than ten thousand years! Don't you really think that people have tried to destroy him? People have been trying to kill Edward since he was created! People have tried and people have failed. There is *no* killing him!"

Emmett thought for a moment, before his eyes rested on me. A smile spread across his face slowly. "You say that Bella was created by Edward himself?" We both nodded. "Maybe she's the one that can finally get rid of Edward."

"No, Emmett." Carlisle shook his head. "That's not how it works. Bella may be stronger than the rest of us because she comes from Edward's venom, but she is still nowhere near Edward's strength. No one is or ever will be."

"How will we know, if we don't try?" Emmett argued and Carlisle looked at him, a look of complete shock on his face.

"So you're willing to risk aggravating the most powerful vampire in the world, possibly getting Bella killed and the rest of us probably following along soon after her, because you think that we need to at least try to get rid of Edward." Carlisle was getting angry now.

"Emmett, you forget, he is the father of our race and it is because of him that the humans do not know of us other than in legends. It is because of his rules that our race has survived for so long."

"But-"

"No buts, Emmett!" Carlisle snapped. "Edward is too strong! You *need* to understand that, Emmett!"

"I'm sorry, I just....I guess it's just getting to me." He slumped his shoulders, sitting down on the back of the sofa. "I don't like thinking of someone as powerful as him this close to my family is all."

"I know, Emmett." Carlisle said softly, walking over to him and placing a hand on his shoulder. "But there's really nothing that we can do until he decides to leave."

"And I hate that." Emmett growled, his fists clenching at his sides.

"We know you do, Em." I walked over to him. "But we don't know what he wants, and until we do, we're just going to have to resign ourselves to the fact that he's not going anywhere until he wants to." He looked up and nodded slowly. "And in the meantime, I'm going to see if I can get as much information out of him as I can. Without getting myself killed that is."

"Bells-" Emmett started but I cut him off.

"I know, bad joke." I sighed. "But still, if he's really the one who changed me, and if I'm more powerful than other vampires, like you say Carlisle, then I want to find out *why* he didn't make sure that I

was completely drained, why he allowed for me to change. There are things that I need to know, and he's the only who can give me some answers."

"Do you really want to be alone with the guy that started the *Great Fire of London* ? " Emmett asked, looking at me, his eyes pleading with me not to go.

"That's not all he's responsible for." I commented, crossing my arms over my chest.

"What are you talking about?" Jasper sounded concerned now. The look on his face told me that he knew there was something that I wasn't saying.

I took a deep breath and looked at them all. "Ever heard of the Black Death?" They nodded. "The Spanish Influenza?" They nodded again. "Well...seems Edward was bored in sixteen-sixty six and in nineteen eighteen."

"You mean to say that he caused both of those epidemics?" Alice looked at Jasper and then back at me. I nodded solemnly.

"Yup." I started to pace slowly. "He told me that as well. I think that his exact words were "Gotta get my fun from somewhere". Doesn't sound like much fun to be around does he?"

"That may be very well, but still, it shows that he's not one to play around with." Jasper said standing up and standing next to Carlisle. "From what I've heard of Edward, he's not one to sit around." He turned to face Carlisle suddenly. "From what I've heard, he often likes to go looking for trouble. Is that right?"

"Yes," Carlisle nodded. "He's not one to sit around and wait for trouble to find him. He's not that patient you see."

"We've heard." I rolled my eyes. I looked to Alice. "Can you see him at all?"

"I can try." She sounded pessimistic. "But he could be using the same technique he was earlier."

"We won't know unless we try." I smiled at her, showing her that had faith in her.

She nodded at me smiling. I saw her slip into a vision, or at least try to at least. She came back to us, looking worried. "I can't see him. At all."

"He changing his mind again?" Rosalie spoke up. She'd been so unusually quiet through the whole conversation that I'd almost forgotten she was there.

"No." Alice shook her head. "I couldn't see him. At all. At least when he was changing his mind I could see him. He was just making it confusing. Now, it's like, there's nothing. It's gone completely black. As if he doesn't have a future or whatever. And I know from what Carlisle has told us, that's not likely to happen any time soon." She sighed, obviously frustrated that her power was letting her down. "What do you think could have caused that?"

I shook my head and looked at the others. They seemed at a loss as well.

Suddenly it dawned on me. "The wolves."

"What?" The others sounded confused.

"The wolves." I repeated. "He's in La Push."

"We can't go there!" Jasper looked at Carlisle, expecting him to make some sort of decision. "What do we do?"

"We have no choice!" Carlisle replied, looking at us all. "We have to go to La Push! They don't understand the power that Edward has! We have to warn them."

"Right." I agreed, not really realising what I was agreeing to. "They may not like us being on their land, but I guess they can't hold anything against us. I mean, if we go, we will be saving their tribe."

"We have to go." Carlisle was already making his way out the door. "If the tribe wants to survive their encounter with Edward. We must go now!"

He ran out the door and we all followed. As we followed Carlisle into the woods, it finally dawned on me what we were about to do.

We were going to break the treaty!

What will the wolves say about the vampires coming on their lands?

Not going to be pretty :P

Please review and I'll let you know what happens.

xx

Confrontations and Questions

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Bella

We were doing this, weren't we?

We were going to shatter the already tentative truce between our family and the wolves.

But we had no choice.

Knowing the wolves like we did, we knew that there was very little chance they wouldn't *not* smell a vampire on their lands. Especially one like Edward. His scent was so individual and overwhelming, they would definitely be drawn to it. Even though it differed from ours, it was unmistakably vampire.

As we ran flat out, Carlisle pulled out his phone and dialled a number I recognised to be that as Billy Black, one of the tribal Elders.

"Billy." He said calmly into the receiver. "It's Carlisle Cullen. We have a situation."

"*What is it?*" I could hear Billy from the other end of the phone. There was obvious distaste in his voice. He was the descendant of the Ephraim Black, the man that Carlisle had struck up the treaty with. "*What do you want?*"

"We need to come to La Push." Carlisle stated simply and calmly.

"*I don't think so!*"

"If we don't then you can say goodbye to your tribe." Carlisle was so matter-of-fact at times. Even so he always remained calm.

" *What are you talking about?*"

"Apotomkin."

" *What?*" I could hear Billy's voice waver slightly. All it took was that one name to strike fear into his heart. He knew exactly who Apotomkin was, seeing as it was a Native American legend.

"He's here." Carlisle explained calmly. "He's come to Forks. Why, we don't know. But at the moment all we know is that he's at La Push."

" *How do you know that someone's there with him?*" Billy sounded skeptical of the situation and reasons Carlisle was giving him.

"Because he's disappeared. Not just in the physical sense. Alice can't see him and that means that there are wolves with him." I could tell that Carlisle was becoming as annoyed with Billy as I was at the moment. Even though this conversation was happening quickly, it wasn't happening fast enough. We were approaching the border and all I knew was that I was crossing it. With or without the Quilette's permission. I didn't want death on my hands. Even if it was the deaths of wolves. They were still humans. Most of the time. "And those that are with him are in incredible danger."

" *We'll deal with it.*"

I held my hand out, beckoning for the phone. Carlisle looked skeptically at me but I shook my hand as I ran, insisting he give me the phone. After less than a second he did.

"Billy, you don't seem to comprehend the danger that those boys are in." I said quickly into the phone. "This guy is *not* like the other vampires the tribe has faced. There is no way out with him. Our only hope is that he will get bored and leave without hurting anyone. But then again, with what we've discovered about him over the last day or so that is *not* going to happen. And if I know the wolves as well as I think I do, I know that they are going to severely piss him off. And that is not something you want is it? I don't think so. Now, we're

approaching the border, and we're going to cross. We're only doing this to save your kids Billy. No other reason. We're not looking for a fight Billy, so we would appreciate it if no one else did. Tell the other's of the tribe to stay away, or it'll cause even more problems. After this, we'll not come onto your lands again, but this time it's *necessary* ."

I hung up the phone and slipped it into my pocket before he could say anything and within a second the whole family had crossed the border.

"You realise that you've probably just pissed him off even more, right?" Jasper asked, keeping level with me as we ran.

"I know." I replied shortly, taking in a deep breath, through my nose.

I could smell Edward now. There was also the stink of the wolves mixed in there, but that was washed away by the sweet, heavenly scent of Edward. I had no idea why his scent captivated me in such a way. It just did.

I followed it as it got stronger, breaking away from the others and pushing myself as fast as I could go. There was something else as well. Even if I hadn't picked up his scent I would have carried on in this way. It was weird. It was like there was a magnet, buried deep within the depths of my chest, where my unbeating heart lay, cold and still, pulling me in this direction.

Towards Edward.

He had a hold on me. Something I couldn't describe. I put it down to the fact that he had made me. Nothing else. There was no way it could be anything else. There was no way that I could feel anything but disdain and dislike for the creature that made me. Well, made all of us. Not after all that he had done.

Could I?

I found that Jasper had caught up to me again and was now looking at me with a curious expression on his face. His eyebrow tilted up as he smirked.

"Why the conflict Bells?" He asked casually as though we weren't sprinting to save our instinctual enemies.

"I don't know." I shook my head. "Just thinking I guess."

"About?" He asked, not pushing as someone like Alice would do. He was just curious is all.

"Something confusing." I answered cryptically and he decided to drop it. Jasper was never really one to push, but he always made sure that everyone was okay.

We were approaching the cliffs now. I knew that this would be where Edward was. I could feel something in my chest swelling as we approached, which earned me another curious look from Jasper. I chose to ignore him.

Reaching the cliffs I saw that he was not there, so I swerved sharply, veering down towards the beach. I knew that Edward would be down there. The feeling in my chest only increased the closer I got to him. I would have to ask Jasper if he knew what it meant later on. Assuming we got out of this alive.

I could see them.

There were three of them standing as a kind of united force against a lone figure.

Edward .

I could tell from his stance that he was bored. That really didn't surprise me. He always seemed bored. I couldn't hear what was being said, but whatever it was, it was aggravating the wolves.

Please let them have some sense. Please please please please . I really didn't want any of them to get hurt. Not that they meant anything to me really, but I didn't want to have to deal with the thought of there being deaths that we could have prevented.

As I ran, I gathered that Edward had said something that had severely pissed off the wolves as one of them phased then and there, launching himself at Edward, only to be met with Edward's hand, throwing him off course and into the cliff that ran along the back of the beach.

I could hear Edward chuckling darkly, turning back to the other wolves, completely unphased. The large russet wolf that had been thrown, Jacob, stood up shakily, completely caught off guard by Edward's power.

He made to launch himself at Edward again, probably thinking that because he wasn't paying attention to him, that he didn't realise what was going on.

"STOP!" I screamed, still running towards the four and the three wolves turned to face the direction we were running from. They all started to snarl at us, obviously displeased that we were on their land.

We came to a stop, standing between Edward and the wolves before the other two could think to attack him and get themselves severely hurt. Carlisle was standing directly in front of Sam, as he would be the one to talk with the Alpha, to get him to see reason. Jasper and Emmett were standing in front of the Jacob, who was still in his wolf form, and judging by the scraps of material that were littering the ground, he would be staying that way until someone gave him something to put on. The rest of us were scattered around, making sure that the wolves weren't able to attack Edward. Not for his safety. But for theirs.

"Carlisle." Sam growled, glaring at the calm and collected vampire that was standing in front of him. "What are you and your family

doing here?"

"Saving your asses." He replied. I was surprised. Carlisle never swore. To any extent. He saw it as pointless and vulgar use of the English language and didn't like the way it was so easily thrown around nowadays.

"What are you implying?" Sam crossed his arms over his chest, squaring up to Carlisle. "You do realise that this is a direct violation of the treaty don't you?"

"What would you prefer?" I shot back, not caring what Carlisle thought at the moment. He had to know the danger he was in. How could he not? "A violation of the treaty or death?"

That seemed to stump him, which was unfortunate for me because it gave me time to realise the intense magnetic pull that was attempting to draw me backwards. I tried to ignore it, but it wasn't doing any good. It was as though someone had wrapped rope around both Edward and myself and was now tightening it in an attempt at getting us closer together. If I wasn't so shit scared of him I wouldn't have hesitated.

"Why did you have to interrupt?" The Quillette standing next to Sam spoke up. I recognised him as Paul. Figures. He was always diving head first into any sort of trouble he could find. He reminded me of Emmett, but Emmett didn't smell bad like Paul did.

"Do you have any idea who you're dealing with?" Carlisle spoke softly and calmly. The look in Sam's eyes told me that yes, he did know who he was dealing with. I knew that Sam would not condone any behaviour that put his tribe in danger, so Jacob must have acted out without permission from Sam.

"Who cares?" Paul spoke up.

"Well you know what? You should." Rosalie spat at him. She was not happy about being here, but she cared about her family too much

not to come with us. She knew that if anything happened to the wolves, it would be us that was blamed, seeing as the tribe wasn't one hundred per cent sure that Edward was here. Well, they were now, but that's not the point.

"And why's that?" Paul was glaring at Rosalie now, looking at her as though he intended to rip her to pieces. This earned a low growl from Emmett, and I turned to see him contemplating the same thing that Paul probably was at the moment.

"Because this one vampire can rip you to pieces in a matter of seconds. If that." Jasper spoke up, his gaze flicking between Paul, Sam and Alice. He wanted to make sure that nothing would harm her and I could tell that he was weighing up strategies on how to protect her in case a fight did ensue.

I heard a chuckle from behind me and I turned to face Edward. He had an amused look on his face, but his eyes told a completely different story. He was *pissed*. Majorly. "You're no fun." He looked around at all of us, giving us all the once over. He was silently telling us all that he would deal with us all later.

I turned back to face the wolves and saw them staring at Edward, hate in Paul's eyes and fear in Sam's. Of the two, Sam was definitely the smarter one. Jacob was still sitting there, growling and glaring at Edward in his wolf form, preparing to attack if needs be.

The magnetic pull in my chest alerted me to Edward's disappearance before anything else did. I turned around and he was simply gone. Even though I had not conversed with him or even made any contact with him at all, simply being close to him seemed to affect me in a way that nothing else had in my life. This was something I wasn't comfortable with.

I knew he was moving away from us with an incredible speed because the pulling sensation in my chest was both disappearing and intensifying at the same time. Would definitely have to ask Jasper about that when we got home. I didn't know where Edward

was going, but I knew I also needed to talk to him. I had many questions I wanted answering.

I just hoped that he let me ask them.

"What the hell is going on here?" Sam seemed to have found his voice now that Edward had disappeared. "And where the hell did he go?" He waved at the space behind me I knew was now empty. "One second he was there, and then the next he's not. What's going on?"

"Sam, calm down." Carlisle breathed in his collected and calming voice. Sam was starting to shake now. Not a good sign. "We can explain everything."

"Well, go on then." He waved a hand, indicating for Carlisle to continue.

Carlisle explained everything to the wolves. Who Edward was and his standing and power in the vampire world. The strength and powers he possessed. Basically everything that he had told us when Alice had discovered Edward was on his way here. The wolves were less than pleased.

"So why is he here?" Sam asked, his voice a little calmer now he was on the level about Edward. On the level? Did I just think that? Wow, sophisticated Bella.

"We don't know." Carlisle admitted. "All we know is that he won't be going anywhere until he's got what he came for. What that is, we won't know until he wants us to. My advice is to steer clear of him. Completely."

"And why should we?" Paul snapped glaring at Carlisle.

"Because the next time you come across him, we may not be able to help." Carlisle stated calmly. I knew that he was gazing into Paul's eyes, meeting his glare with a cool stare of his own. "You have to trust us on this. You know of the Volturi and their power?" The two of

them nodded and I heard a growl come from Jacob, showing his distaste for our rulers. "Well, Edward created the Volturi. Yes, he is *that* powerful." Carlisle shook his head. "If you do happen to run into him, or even smell him at any point in time, run. As fast as you can in the opposite direction."

Sam nodded. He knew the danger involved. "Thank you, Carlisle." I felt my eyes widening. I hadn't expected that. Especially in the calm voice that it was delivered in. But then again, Sam had wisdom beyond his years. He knew when he was in over his head. And this was definitely one of those times. "We owe you for this one. This meeting will not be considered a violation of the treaty, though the next time, it will be."

"Hopefully there will be no next time." Carlisle sighed gently. "We'll be going now. Remember, you see him again. Run."

With that he turned around and we all knew that it was time for us to go. Everything was pretty uneventful, but then again that was kind of the best way for everything to be. We didn't want a confrontation to happen. We knew that this was not the best time for that. Even Emmett knew that much, so it must have been obvious.

We ran back to the house, but not with the same amount of urgency as the previous journey. Getting back into the house, it was as though everyone let out a breath.

"Well, that was one crisis averted." Jasper breathed, settling himself on the couch. Alice walked over to him and settled herself down next to him. "But what I can't understand is why Edward disappeared."

"You're right." Carlisle ran his hand through his hair, a puzzled look on his face. "It doesn't seem right. It's not like him at all to just take off like that. There must be something else going on in that mind of his."

"Too bad that one of us isn't a mind reader." Emmett joked wandering through into the room.

"Even if one of us was, he would just be able to block them anyway." I reminded him and his face fell slightly. "Carlisle, what did you mean 'til he got what he came for"? What do you think he's after?" I was confused to say the least.

"You don't think.....?" Rosalie started to say before trailing off and stopping.

"What?" We all turned to look at her and she glanced around. Something told me that she didn't even realise she had spoken out loud.

"You don't think that he came for Bella, do you?" She said in a voice so quiet that it was almost a whisper.

I hadn't ever thought of that. But wait. No. He couldn't be after me. He told me that he he didn't even realise I wasn't dead. So that couldn't be the reason.

"No." I shook my head. "He thought I was until he saw me here. He's not here for me."

"Anymore." Emmett mumbled.

"What's that supposed to mean?" I asked, looking at him.

He looked up at me, giving away nothing but concern in his eyes.

"What if he *wasn't* here for Bella to begin with, but what if he is *now*?"

"You really think so?" I was starting to get a little worried now.

"Yeah." He nodded, looking around at us all. "What if he came out here for another reason completely, but then.....comes across Bella, only vampire he's made in like a ba-gillion years or whatever. Maybe he's looking at her as some sort of trophy. Looking to take her back wherever it is he comes from."

Carlisle stood there shaking his head. "No." He whispered. "That's not his style." He sat down across from Jasper and Alice. "He wouldn't come here for one reason and then flick to a completely different one after arriving. Edward doesn't have the same problems with distraction as the rest of us do."

I thought back to the pull that had sparked back up in my chest when Carlisle mentioned his name. Jasper turned around and looked at me incredulously and I shrugged. I told him with my eyes that I wanted to talk to him outside. He seemed to understand because he kissed Alice on the temple and stood up, following me outside. We walked in silence into the woods until we knew we were far enough away so that we wouldn't be heard.

"What's going on with you, Bells?" He asked quietly, stopping behind me. I walked a few steps and stopped, turning around to face him. He had a curious look on his face, as though he was trying to see through mud.

"I don't know." I whispered back, looking down at my hands. I really didn't know what was going on.

"Because every time someone mentions his name, your emotions go haywire." He walked up to me and took my hands in his own. I looked up at him and he smiled at me. "What's going on?"

"I don't know." I repeated shaking my head. "And my emotions do *not* go haywire."

"Really?" He raised an eyebrow and I nodded. "Edward." He smirked when I felt my emotions conflicting. I was conflicted. I really didn't know what I felt when it came to Edward. It seemed like my head was telling me to run. To put as much distance between Edward and myself as possible. Telling me that he was dangerous and that he was not good to be around. But it seemed that my body, maybe even my heart ... was pulling me towards him. Telling me to go out and find him right now. Was wanting to get into his head and possibly his heart and I really didn't know what to do. That was one

of the reasons I wanted to talk to Jasper about this. I wanted to see if he could make heads or tails of my emotions. "You're conflicted. You need to work this out."

"You don't say." I rolled my eyes at him and he chuckled.

"What I mean to say, is that maybe you need to talk to him."

"What?" I couldn't believe what Jasper was suggesting. "Talk to him?"

"Yeah." He nodded, letting go of my hands. "I don't think he'll go all psycho on you. Not if you make it clear you just want to talk. I mean, you never know, having someone who's closer to him in that way-"

"In what way?" I asked raising my eyebrows.

"Not like *that* !" He laughed. "Well, with your emotions behaving the way they are, who knows?" He smirked at me and I threw a branch at him, which he easily dodged. "But, you know, he made you. Having someone that close to him, vampirey speaking, I don't know. It's gotta be weird for him."

I nodded, thinking over what he was saying. "Did you just say 'vampirey speaking'?"

He grinned at me. "Yeah." He shrugged his shoulders. "I didn't know how else to put it."

"Wow." I could feel my eyebrows rising. "Jasper Whitlock Hale at a loss for words. Now the world is completely out of whack." He shrugged again, grinning slightly. "You really think that I should talk to him?"

"I really do." He nodded, placing a caring hand on my shoulder. "I mean, what's the worst that could happen with just talking?" I opened my mouth to argue. "Just talking Bells. Nothing else. I don't think that he'll wig out on you for just talking."

"You have been spending too much time with Emmett." I laughed as his brow furrowed in confusion. "'Wig out on you'?" He shrugged again.

"Seriously, Bells." He looked me in the eye. "How long do you think it's been since Edward had a real conversation with someone. I mean, you've seen how people react to him. People, humans, vampires and werewolves are terrified of him. That's gotta get kinda lonely."

"I guess." I nodded.

"And, judging from earlier, you won't have any trouble finding him." He was talking about that pull that I had felt earlier. I had wanted to ask him about that.

"You felt it?" He nodded. "What was that? I mean, I've never felt something like that before. Do you know what it is?"

"I'm gonna let you figure that one out on your own." He replied cryptically, meaning that he *did* know, but he was going to be an ass and not tell me.

"Ja-sper!" I whined and he smirked at me.

"Sorry, Bells. There are just some things people have to figure out on their own. And this is one of those things." He smiled at me, understanding my frustration. Mostly because he was feeling it as well. "You'll figure it out. But you have to do it solo."

I nodded understanding where he was coming from. "I guess I'd better get it over and done with."

He nodded. "No time like the present."

"How will I find him?" I wondered out loud.

"You don't need me to tell you that."

I nodded, feeling that magnetic pull that had calmed slightly, but not gone away, flare into life again. It was pulling me away from Jasper, so I turned around. I looked back over at Jasper and he smiled at me, nodding for me to go and find out what I needed to. I needed answers to my questions. I needed to know.

I ran in the direction the pull directed me to, feeling it getting stronger with every step I took and I couldn't help but wonder if Edward felt it too. He had to right? Something like this couldn't just be a one-sided thing.

I didn't know.

I completely ignored everything else around me and centered my concentration on the feeling in my chest, feeling it growing stronger and pulling me, urging me to travel faster and faster the closer to him I got.

Finally I caught his scent. It was strong. He must have come from a completely different direction for me not to have caught it before now. I ran out into a clearing and he was sitting there, on a boulder, just as he had been the last time I had been alone with him. We were somewhere different now. Somewhere we hadn't come before. Now that I thought about it, I didn't know why. We just hadn't.

I approached him slowly, not wanting to give him any reason to attack me.

"What are you doing? Imitating a snail?" He sounded irritated and that was not a good sign.

"No." I answered, running over and standing on the rock he was sitting on.

He turned and smirked at me. "That's more like it." He closed his eyes and leaned back on his hands, tilting his head up to the sky. "Now, what can I do for you? Come to scold me for playing with the wolves?"

Beneath his light-hearted tone, I could hear a sliver of irritation shining through. Somehow, I couldn't bring myself to fear him. The pull in my chest was at its peak and something was telling me that it wouldn't be satiated until I felt his skin, which was several degrees colder than mine, with my own. I couldn't explain these feelings. They were kind of freaking me out.

"Can't you just read my mind?" I challenged him, sitting down indian style on the rock. Jasper had been right. It didn't seem that he was after a confrontation. Maybe all he wanted was a real conversation.

"If I wanted to, then yes I could." He sighed, not looking at me. "But as it so happens, I really can't be bothered. So ... why don't you tell me instead." He looked at me and I saw that there was something stirring beneath his vibrant red eyes. As if something was troubling him.

"Actually, I didn't come to talk about the wolves. Despite impressions, they're not really my main priority." I smirked at him and I thought I saw some form of humour in his eyes. "I just didn't want them all dead. They can make for some good fun when aggravated." *Where did that come from? I wondered. That wasn't like me. Maybe Edward's rubbing off on me.*

"Interesting." He mumbled, looking out in front of him.

"Really?"

"No, not really." He shook his head. "It just seemed like the right thing to say." *Maybe he's not as bad as I thought he was.* "So, if you didn't come to talk about the oh-so-smells-a-lot tribe, then what did you want to talk about?"

"I um, wanted to ask you some questions." I was nervous now. Not scared. Just nervous. I wasn't really sure whether I wanted to know the answers I sought, but I knew that it would never leave me alone if I didn't ask them.

"What about?" He seemed okay enough. So far, so good.

"Us." I whispered, trying to gauge his reaction.

He looked at me, his blood-red eyes boring deep into mine as we stared at each other. What the hell was he going to do now? I had no idea. This was a really stupid idea. Stupid Jasper, I shouldn't have listened to him. He's probably going to rip me apart now or something along those lines anyway. I closed my eyes, expecting him to attack me suddenly for being rude and asking him about it. Who knows, maybe it wasn't something he wanted to talk about. What I wasn't expecting was the answer that I got.

"Okay." He said plainly. "What do you want to know?"

I opened my eyes and stared at him, disbelieving. I tried to find some trace of humour or anger or something in his eyes. But I found nothing like that. All I found was sincerity and honesty. He was on the level about this. "What?" I think he was anyway.

"I said, okay." He shrugged, not seeming angry at all. *Um, who are you and what did you do with Edward?* I thought, suddenly wondering if this whole thing was a joke. Maybe it was and this wasn't really Edward. Did he have the power to create an opposite to himself. It's possible. Carlisle did say that he had a lot of powers at his disposal. Maybe that's one of them.

"I'm sorry." I shook my head, trying to comprehend the idea that he was actually going to talk to me about this. "What?"

"What do you want to know?"

There's another chappie for you.

Sorry it took so long to update.

I actually don't have an excuse ready for you, so I hope that the actual posting of the chapter, and the content within it was worthy of

forgiveness.

Just so you know, I'm not doing the whole "Bella and Edward meet and fall in love a day later" storylines. I'm not a fan of those storylines at all. The reason Bella feels so drawn to Edward and Edward's feelings on the matter will be explained in the next chapter. So you'll just have to wait for that.

Review and I'll update soon. It won't take as long this time. I promise.

xx

Why?

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

A lot of you are a little confused as to why Edward suddenly vanished when the Cullens appeared on the beach and I can tell you that the answer to that question will be answered in this chapter.

Also a couple of you don't understand why Jasper won't tell Bella what the sensation in her chest and the pull is all about, but you have to understand, someone can't just *tell* you what you're feeling and *why* you're feeling that way. It's something she has to figure out on her own. And she will figure it out.

And yes, Jasper does know what's going on.

Edward

What the hell is going on with me?

One minute, I'm standing there, terrorizing some wolves, actually finding something entertaining for once and the next I can't get off the beach fast enough. And it's because of her. She's managed to reignite that spark from a hundred years ago. The first time I had felt anything in my stone-cold heart in my entire existence. Now it was being thawed for a second time, all in the space of a century. And because of one girl.

Isabella .

She had this effect on me the last time we met. She has no idea what she's doing, but she does it anyway.

This magnetic force inside of my chest.

I can't stand it.

But the thing is, I know how I can stop it, but I can't.

I can't bring myself to do it.

I can't bring myself to kill her.

Every time I think about it, something in my head and my heart screams at me not to. I don't even know what it is. Why she drives me crazy. But she does.

Getting away from her was the only thing that I could do. Everything was screaming at me to stop. To turn around and head back to the beach, but I ignored everything my head and heart were telling me. How could this one girl have this effect on my. Thankfully, I had become so good at hiding my emotions, the empath of the group, didn't notice any difference.

I had to run.

I had to get away from her.

I knew from tapping into my empathic ability that she was feeling the same way as I was. The uncontrollable pull that was commanding her body to make some form of physical contact with mine. It was overpowering. Not something I was accustomed to.

I ran until I reached a clearing of rocks and boulders. I hoped I would be able to find some peace. To rid Isabella from my mind.

But as it turns out, my body had other ideas. It wasn't going to let me be.

Sitting down on the largest boulder there, I tried to relax. I closed my eyes and tried to steady my mind through levelled breathing, even though I didn't need to breathe. It made sense for some reasons. I had travelled through civilisations that used this technique to sort through their thoughts. It had become worldwide now. Humans

called it yoga. Why they thought they needed to steady their thoughts was beyond me. They were all so tedious.

Though, how I tried, I couldn't get my thoughts off of Isabella.

I cursed myself internally. The last time I had encountered her, I had felt the same way. At first, it seemed to be only bloodlust. My desire for her blood was overbearing. The only thing stopping me from killing her then and there, in that park was the silence that radiated from her mind. I'll admit I was intruiged. But that wasn't what stopped me from killing her.

It was this very same feeling. The feeling that screamed at me when I even thought about harming her. There was something inside of me that was stopping me from doing so.

Even at this very moment, I knew she was running towards me. She was coming at such a speed, pulled by the invisible magnetism that connected us. I couldn't smell her. Yet. But I could *feel* her approaching me.

She stopped behind me in the clearing. I didn't try to access her thoughts. Something inside of me wanted to be considerate and not invade her thoughts. That confused me. Since when had I been considerate? Normally I didn't give any thought to others, acquiring the information I needed and then moving on. Not this time though.

This would need investigating.

Normally I would have come, found that Aro's suspicions were nothing more than his own paranoid musings getting the better of him, travelled back to Volterra, let him know that he was an insufferable moron, in the most memorable way of course, and then carried on my way. That was how I normally worked.

But one thing was keeping me here. Not wanting me to leave this place.

Isabella.

She had the same effect on me as she had back then. And it was aggravating me more than anything had. It wasn't *her* per se, so I couldn't really blame her. But it was the feelings she ignited within me.

She still feared me, but not to the extent that she had, her feelings getting the better of her as well. It seemed they were throwing us both for a loop, neither of us knowing what to do about them.

She was walking towards me at an incredibly slow pace. She had to know that I knew she was there. She was just trying to calm herself before she reached me.

"What are you doing? Imitating a snail?" Her slow pace was annoying. She was going slow enough that a human would get annoyed. And that was saying something.

"No." She answered, sounding confident before appearing at my side, standing on the boulder I was currently perched on.

"That's more like it." I smirked at her before closing my eyes. Leaning back on my hands I settled into a more relaxed position, letting her know that she wasn't in danger. Yet. Whether or not she got that I didn't know, but I wanted her to tell me that. Something within me was telling me to respect her privacy. If I could just figure out what it was then everything would be alright. It was evading me for the time being. "Now, what can I do for you? Come to scold me for playing with the wolves?" *Like she'd be brave enough to do that.*

"Can't you just read my mind?" She answered in a challenging tone. She sat down indian style on the rock next to me, her confidence growing slightly as time passed. So we was brave enough to challenge me. Huh. Not had that happen before. It was a change, I guess.

"If I wanted to, then yes I could." I sighed, wondering whether to tell her the reason I wouldn't read her mind. She'd probably get freaked out. *Wait!* I thought, suddenly. *Since when did I care?* I decided on not telling her the truth. "But as it so happens, I really can't be bothered. So ... why don't you tell me instead." I looked at her, into her golden eyes and I found something there that I hadn't ever seen in another beings eyes. Normally, all I saw was fear, anxiety and terror. But in hers there was something else. Curiosity, maybe?

"Actually, I didn't come to talk about the wolves. Despite impressions, they're not really my main priority." She gave me a small smirk at that. I knew they weren't. I knew that there was very little other than extreme distaste and animosity between the Cullens' and the wolves. It was amusing how she thought she had to explain this to me. "I just didn't wan them all dead. They can make for some good fun when aggravated."

I managed to suppress a snort. That sounded like something I would say. Maybe she was discovering what she would have known all along if I had known about her. Something that happened when she was around others. Something I would have to educate her in, if I told her about it at all that is. She was discovering it unconsciously though, and that could be dangerous.

"Interesting," I mumbled, turning my gaze away from Isabella. Maybe I would have to stick around longer than I had thought I would.

"Really?" She thought that I was talking about the wolves.

"No, not really." They're not. But you are. "It just seemed like the right thing to say." What the hell was going on with me? Whatever it is, it has to stop. "So, if you didn't come to talk about the oh-so-smells-a-lot tribe, then what did you want to talk about?" This was starting to get annoying. Maybe there was more to this whole situation than I had thought there was.

"I um, wanted to ask you some questions." I could feel the anxiety coming off of her. She was nervous about speaking to me. Curiously

though, she wasn't afraid. Most, no all creatures were afraid of me. But not this girl. She was curious about me. No doubt our past has something to do with that.

"What about?" Something told me that she was expecting some form of reaction from me. Why though? I knew the answer to that question. Because something deep down was telling her to be afraid. She wasn't though. That was the interesting part.

"Us." She whispered softly. I could sense that she was watching me, wanting to know what was going on inside my head.

I turned to look at her, gazing into her eyes again. Something was drawing me into them, something I hadn't felt before. In all of my years, I had never had these emotions before and they were pissing me off.

"Okay." I stated simply. "What do you want to know?"

I could tell that my answer had taken her by surprise. I could see that she had been expecting some sort of extreme reaction from me, or at least something other than the one she received. I figured she had a right to know where she came from. The circumstances behind her change. I myself had no idea why I became like this, why I was changed. Why I was cursed into living for all eternity, in the same body, stuck at the same age. I knew how confused she was feeling. I had given up long ago, reaching the conclusion that I would never know my reason for being, but that didn't mean I was going to keep it from Isabella. She had the right to know where she came from.

I might be a monster, but that's one thing I will not withhold from her.

"What?"

"I said, okay." I repeated, shrugging, showing her that it was no big deal. I knew she was confused. I guess I would be as well. I hadn't really given her the impression that I would agree so easily.

"I'm sorry." She shook her head, trying to process everything.
"What?"

"What do you want to know?"

"Um," She thought for a moment, clearly recovering from my agreement to the conversation we were about to have. It was quite amusing actually. "I'm not going to ask *why* you changed me, because you've already told me the answer to that question." I nodded once. "But there is one thing I want to know." She took a deep breath, trying to steady herself, even though it was redundant. "How old are you?"

"That's not about *us* , as you put it." I pointed out and I saw the panic in her eyes.

"I know, I know. It's just, it's something that I've been wondering since Carlisle told us about you." She recovered quickly. I could see why she was curious, yet she was the only one in existence that had ever asked me outright about my age. Others just made assumptions. "Carlisle told us that you pre-date language completely. Is that true?" I nodded once. "Whoa." She was impressed.

"There's more behind this than simple curiosity." I stated, knowing she was avoiding something. For some reason, I still didn't go into her mind. The thought that I didn't even *want* to was bugging me. I looked into her eyes and I saw that they were nervous. *Busted* ! "So, what else did you want to know my age for?"

"Well, um, I guess with everything that I've found out today, I just wanted to know, um, the kind of thing I had to live up to, you know." She said softly.

"Just because I made you, doesn't give you any special priveleges." I told her sternly. *That* much was true. She wouldn't be given special priveleges because of that.

"I know." She answered quickly. "But you know, you have a reputation, obviously, and I was just wondering how long you've been around to uphold that reputation, as it were."

She had guts, I had to give her that. But the chances that this bravery and confidence wasn't her own was high.

I looked away from her, and shrugged, closing my eyes again, tilting my head back slightly. "Fifteen thousand years. Give or take a century or two." I looked at her and smirked seeing the shock on her face. "I've stopped counting. Gets a bit pointless keeping track over the millenia." It was true, I had stopped counting. There really was nothing interesting about keeping track of ones age. To me, the years had become like days, passing in an endless vortex of time, in which I had no place.

Creatures were supposed to wither and age. I was an oddity of nature, as was every human being that followed me into eternal damnation.

"Wow." She breathed. "Carlisle was right."

"Sometimes they are." I smirked looking back at her. "Anything else or was that it?"

"Um," She looked down at the boulder we were both sitting on. "When did we first meet? I mean, I feel like I know you from before. And not just through you finding and attacking me. Like, I don't know. Like we've talked before."

So she did remember. Well, not explicitly, but her memory was attempting to make itself known, but the memories it was trying to recapture and bring to the surface were human and unclear. She probably wouldn't remember completely what had happened, but the chances that some parts would become known was likely.

"That's probably because we did." I stated plainly, not putting any emotion into it although my body was screaming at me to tell her

what was really going on in my head and stone cold heart. I wasn't going to let her know that though. Mainly, because I didn't know yet. After being around for so long you'd think that there wasn't anything I hadn't experienced. Well, you'd be almost right. I hadn't experienced this until Isabella came along.

"We did?" She sounded confused.

"Yup." I popped the "p" on the end. "You may think of me as a monster, and hell I am, but there was something about you. Something that told me not to kill you."

"What?" She whispered, not taking her eyes off of me.

"I didn't what it was then. I'm still not one hundred per cent sure now." I shrugged. "You may think that because of my age, I know everything. And in all but one respect I do. There is only one thing that still confuses me."

"What's that?" The way she responded told me that she didn't really want to know, but her curiosity got the better of her.

"You." I stated simply and the look on her face changed from one of apprehension to one of confusion.

"Me?" She really didn't know what I was talking about. She didn't remember so how could she?

"Yes." I replied, nodding my head once. "I attempted to figure you out when we first met, which by the way, was more difficult to do because at that point I couldn't read your mind. Seeing as you were human."

"How come you didn't just kill me?"

"Because of the way I couldn't get into your mind." I answered truthfully. She deserved the truth for some reason. I knew she wouldn't give this information up to anyone. Something told me that

she didn't really want the rest of her coven to know that she was here. The big one and the blonde would have something to say about that. "It was intriguing, to some extent."

"What do you mean?" She asked, bringing her knees up to her chest and wrapping her arms around her legs. Normally, this would be seen as something defensive, but I remembered her sitting the same way as a human, even when she didn't realise I was there. Something she carried across into immortal life.

"In fifteen thousand years there has only been one creature; human, vampire, whatever, that has been able to keep me out." I turned to look at her again, seeing the confusion in her eyes. "You." I shrugged. "It intrigued me. Nothing had ever been able to keep me out before. It was like a game."

"So that's why you didn't kill me, outright." She whispered, talking to herself. "Did you discover anything you liked?" She smiled a genuine smile at me, no longer afraid or nervous. That wasn't something I was used to. It was always someone being afraid of me when in my presence, nervous that I was coming. Something like that anyway, but this was different. It was nice to some extent. Why? I don't know. Maybe this was something that I had been missing all these years.

Not the situation, but the creature sat across from me.

She was the only one who wasn't afraid of me, or so it seemed.

"You're not afraid of me." It wasn't a question. It was a statement. And one she seemed confused by. She sat there for a moment, thinking over what I had just said.

"No." She whispered, her expression betraying the realisation that she, in fact, *wasn't* afraid of me. She didn't meet my eyes and I smirked at her sudden shyness.

"You weren't as a human either." She looked at me, her eyes wide, not believing me. "It's true. That was another thing that drew me to

you, *and* kept you alive a little longer."

"How come?"

I shrugged. "I don't know. After several millenia of civilisation fearing your very name, it becomes tedious. Even if it isn't your true name."

No one knew my true name. No one had ever even asked me my true name. Not something I cared about. My original name linked me to my humanity. Something I had left behind when I had awoken from the change a bloodthirsty monster. It linked me to a world that was best left forgotten.

"Edaar." She whispered and my head snapped around.

"How do you know that name?" I growled. Okay, *now* she was afraid.

"I-I-I-I don't know." She stuttered, shifting away from me slightly. "It just came into my head. I don't know where it came from. Does it mean something?"

"It's the answer to one of the many questions the vampire race has about me." I narrowed my eyes at her, judging her reaction.

"Your *real* name." She whispered, so low that it barely registered as a sound. "It is, isn't it?"

"Yes." I stated simply and she smiled slightly. She was the only one who knew that. "You are the only one with that knowledge. *How* you knew that, I don't know, but I *will* find out. If I hear that name on the lips of *anyone* else in the world, retribution will be swift. No one is to *ever* find out what you know. Is that clear?"

"Crystal." She replied quickly. "But, if I may ask, *why* don't you want anyone to know your real name?"

"Because it ties me to a humanity I discarded a long time ago." I growled in a tone that unmistakably put an end to that segment of

the conversation. She nodded, processing what she had just learned. "Was there anything else you wanted to know?"

"Um, yeah." She was still trying to process the idea that she was the only one, other than myself, that knew my real name. It must be something huge for her. "If you were able to *not* kill me for a certain amount of time ... what made you?" She shook her head. "Did I find out or something? What you were?"

"No," I shook my head. "I could tell you were on your way to working it out though, but that wasn't it. You want to know what pushed me into killing you?" I turned to look at her and she nodded tentatively. "It was that goddamn blush of yours." I saw the confusion on her face and in her eyes. I chuckled at her ignorance. She couldn't even remember how she blushed. "You know of La Tua Cantante." It wasn't a question, but she nodded anyway before her eyes widened in realisation.

"I was yours?" She asked slowly.

"Yes." I replied, looking into her eyes again. "Vampires have often said that it is impossible to resist the blood of La Tua Cantante, or roughly translated "your singer". However, I have found that to be untrue. But then again, that could be the result of years of self restraint." She smiled at that. I knew from my explorations of her mind earlier in the day, sifting through her memories that she had been perfecting her control for many years now. She was almost there.

"So what changed?" Her voice had become timid, not through fear of me as it were, but fear of hearing what had happened almost a century ago.

"You tested my restraint without even realising it." I explained. "That blush of yours would make an appearance at the most inconvenient times. One day, it was just too much." I shrugged.

She was quiet for a moment. I could see in her eyes that something was working in her mind. I accessed my negation power for a second, to see murky, unclear images from nineteen-eighteen flooding through her head. She was remembering. Her memory was unlocking for her.

"I remember." She mumbled, her attention flicking back to me as I released the power and looked out in front of me. "That's the first thing I've remembered of my human life that was just more than an feeling or a fleeting sense of déjà vu." She blinked a couple of times, her newfound knowledge overwhelming her slightly. "Thank you."

"What for?"

"Helping me to remember." She looked in the direction that I was.

"You're thanking me for helping you to remember your death." I turned to look at her again. "Do you realise that you sound almost as warped as me?" She shrugged, smiling and looking down at her hands. If she had been able to blush then she would have done at that moment. That expression gave it away. "You're welcome though."

"You said that fifteen thousand years that I was the only one who could keep you out." She mumbled. "Did that mean that you created a vampire with a gift?"

"No." I shook my head. "Telepathy is actually *my* gift. It was the gift that I entered this life with. The others are just bonuses, I guess."

"Do you remember what happened to you?" She asked tentatively, seeming unsure of whether she should ask this question. She was the first one to ask me outright. Aro, Marcus and Caius, had been hinting for years about if I knew what had happened to me. Well, more Aro and Caius more than Marcus. Marcus didn't give a stuff about anything in general really.

"No." I stated simply.

"Do you wish you did?" She didn't know when to let up did she? She was the same as a human. Something in her mind told her to keep asking questions. She was too inquisitive for her own good. Maybe even more so now she was a vampire.

"Sometimes." I mumbled. I sighed. "I gave up trying to discover my origins a long time ago."

"Oh," She sighed, looking out over the clearing again. "I have to know. Why did you make Carlisle tell me that he didn't change me."

"For that very reason." I answered simply. "I've seen it before. A vampire stumbles upon one that is changing and they take them under their wing. Occasionally, the truth will be told from the word go. The newborn will know that the vampire they're with, didn't change them. But more often than not, the newborn won't be told of their origins. But they always find out, and more often than not, it doesn't tend to end well for either vampire."

"Oh." She said simply. She looked shocked to say the least.

"Lemme guess, you thought that I was trying to drive a wedge between Carlisle and yourself. Between you and your "family" as you call them." She looked me in the eyes, expressing what she wouldn't say. "Well, that's not true. Other than the reason I just gave you, I know how it feels not to know where you came from. Why you're here. It's not something anyone should go through."

"Okay." She shook her head slightly. "I don't want to be rude, but was that the great Edward, opening up about something?!"

I shrugged looking at her. "Don't get used to it."

"I won't." She smiled, and I looked out in front of me again. "I have one more question though."

"Which is?" I didn't look at her again.

"Why did you stop?" She was quiet again. "Why didn't you "make sure" that I was dead. I mean, from what I've heard, you're careful about changing people. From what Carlisle's told us, you've always been careful about that. Well, aside from the newborn stage we all go through. You...did go through that right?"

I chuckled at her uncertainty. "Yes, I went through the newborn stage. More violently than any other vampire I might add."

"Should I be shocked that that doesn't surprise me?" She was definitely becoming braver and more confident around me. Surprisingly, it didn't bother me as it would if it came from any other vampire. I would have to investigate this deeper, as well as testing out her dormant powers.

"No." I shook my head, still trying to get my head around how natural this all felt. "The original of anything is usually more violent or unstable than those that follow. It's just a natural process. As for stopping, I don't know why I did."

That was a lie.

I knew why I stopped.

I knew back then, just as I knew right now.

Even though the scent of Isabella's blood was overpoweringly strong, something within me refused to accept that I wanted to feast upon her. Something within me wanted to preserve her life. To allow her to live.

But the monster inside had won out that battle and I attacked her. If it hadn't been for that goddamn blush, I would have done it. But then again she tasted so sweet and her blood was so incredible that some part of me regretted not tasting it sooner.

It was then, as I was feeding off of her that a voice screamed inside my head. It wasn't Isabella's but my own. It told me to let her go, to

release her.

It was in that moment, that I felt something I had never felt before.

Regret.

I released her and ran, as fast as I could, away from her body. I had killed her. I had killed the one creature that had stood out in this world, that had drawn me to her, more than others.

Now, sitting here, talking to her I realised why I had been drawn to her back then, just as I was right now. Why I didn't feel the need to destroy her when she began asking questions. Why I gave her some semblance of privacy when it came to her thoughts. I now knew the reason behind that incredible magnetic force that seemed to pull us together, which was at full strength, urging me to move towards her and make physical contact. I wanted nothing more, but I refrained, resisting my urges just as I had been doing all day. It seemed to hum, and vibrate between us. And now I knew why. It seemed so obvious now I had it worked out and I mentally chastised myself for not figuring it out all those years ago.

She was my mate.

So Edward's figured it out, but has Bella?

Tune in next time to find out.

I know there's a lot of talking in this chapter, but then again, it's needed for the story.

Before any of you ask this, yes, Edward is confused and conflicted about his feelings towards Bella, but this does not mean that his behaviour towards the rest of the Cullens' will be changing. Bella is the only one who confuses and encaptures him enough to warrant that.

Next chapter will be BPOV. And no it won't be a BPOV of this chapter. I told you that was it for the alternate POV's of chapters for now, and that's true. There will be some at some point, but only when they're needed.

Anyways, I'm going to stop my rambling now, so please review. You know how I love them so.

xx

Realisation

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Bella

"One day, it was just too much."

With that sentence, it seemed as though I was physically transported back almost a century in time. I hadn't ever known any specific memories of my human life, only feelings and thoughts that I'd had and a major sense of déjà vu when something happened.

But this was completely different.

~Flashback~

Chicago 1918

I went to the park again. I loved it here. Even though it was overcast and dreary this time of year, it was one of the most peaceful places in the city.

I loved coming here to be alone with my thoughts, to read or just to be alone for any given amount of time.

I might only live with my father but he was so overprotective of late and didn't want me going out so much. And I knew that it wasn't because of the Influenza threat that could befall the city soon. No, it was because I had come of age and he could soon be asked for permission to court me. I knew that this was his worry. He didn't want to let me go. Especially after the death of my mother. It was hard for him to think about that.

Little did he know that there was already a man besides him in my life.

Edward.

When I had first met him, I was immediately struck with the notion that he was different.

He was insanely beautiful. That was the only way I could describe him. He had untameable hair that was an incredible colour. A mix between red and brown. I could only describe it as bronze. His features were perfect. His nose perfectly straight, and an incredibly sculpted jawline and cheekbones. He was beautiful.

But it was his eyes that were the most captivating. They were a deep coal black. I had never seen eyes that colour before. I hadn't even thought that it was possible to have eyes that colour. Obviously, it was, or else he wouldn't have them.

He always seemed to know when I was in the park. It was the only time I saw him.

As I sat there, I looked around and saw that there was no one else around. Normally, the park would be teeming with life at this time. Families would usually be out here, entertaining children. Or couples that were courting would be wandering in and out of the trees that wound their way through the park. But today there was nothing. No one. I really was alone. Maybe it was the ever growing threat of the influenza that had people staying inside.

I didn't really care. In my mind, it wasn't here yet so there was no real reason to fear it. I always kept an ear out for it though, heeding the time when we would all have to fear it.

" Hello, Isabella." I heard his soft velvety tones calling me and I looked behind me to see him wandering slowly towards me.

Just looking at him seemed to spark something within my chest. I had known he was there, without him even saying a word. It seemed that when he was around, there was an aching within the depths of my heart, pulling me towards him, begging me to touch him. I never

did. It wouldn't be prudent for me to, but the yearning in my chest only increased when he was near. I'd realised from when I arrived home on the first day that I had met him, that it was there. It hadn't left in all the time I'd known him, which by this time was a good two months or so. And it only seemed to become stronger the longer I knew him.

" How many times do I have to tell you, I don't like to be called Isabella." I threw back at him teasingly. "Call me Bella."

" But Isabella is so much more beautiful." He sat down beside me, staring into my eyes as he always did. He always seemed to be concentrating on something when he was around, like there was something else on his mind. I had asked him what he was thinking and he always replied with the same remark. "What are you thinking"? That would always be his answer, and I would get nowhere with him. Sometimes I wished I was a mind reader, just so I would be able to know what was going on behind those captivating eyes. "And someone as beautiful as you, deserves to be known by a name that is equally as beautiful."

I could feel the heat rising into my cheeks. Godforsaken blush , I though angrily. It always gave me away. There was no hiding anything from anyone with my blush. No one ever made me blush the way he did though. He always seemed to know exactly what to say. Whether it was intentional or not, I didn't know, but still, that wasn't the point.

" You always know how to embarrass me." I mumbled, looking down at my hands that were clasped in my skirts.

" I don't mean to embarrass you." He whispered softly in my ear. "But in my experience, it's always best to tell the truth. And I'm not going to lie to you, Isabella. " He emphasised my name. Truth was, I didn't mind him saying it. It did sound beautiful coming from his lips, but then again, everything sounded beautiful coming from his lips.

" Well, thank you for being honest with me." I met his eyes again and I felt myself being drawn into them, yet again. He was so close that I could smell him. He smelled incredible. Not like any of the other men that I had met with over the years, who all smelled of some artificial substance they had covered themselves with to try to impress others around them. No. He smelled the same way the world did as the sun set after a long hot summers day. His scent was indescribable. It was tantalising and beautiful. If I could bottle it I would wear it every day, purely to remind myself of him.

" That is not a problem." He smiled. His smile was also something that drew me to him. It was not an even smile. More of a crooked grin, his mouth lifting up slightly higher on one side. It was individual. His alone. "Especially when it comes to you."

" Why is that?" I couldn't help but ask. Anything I could learn about him, I lapped up with earnest.

" Because there is something about you, Isabella. It seems to make me completely incapable of lying." His eyes held mine as he said this, and I could help the blush that crept back up my cheeks. I swear that you could cook a dinner on my cheeks, they were so hot. "You captivate me in a way that I have never known. Your beauty is only the tip of the iceberg in that respect. Your insatiable thirst for knowledge and curiosity only spark the same feelings within me when it comes to you."

I don't know how it was possible, but I felt even more heat pooling in my cheeks. I closed my eyes and willed it to go away, but I could feel him staring at me in the way he always did and I could also feel the heat making its way down my neck. How did he have this effect on me, when no one else could ever make me feel this way.

I then heard a sound that made my eyes fly open. It sounded like a feral growl. I looked around quickly, searching for the animal that had made it and yet saw nothing. The proximity that I had heard it, would put it at right next to me. But as I gazed around it was clear that Edward and I were the only ones in the park at that time.

I looked back to Edward and saw that his eyes had become even darker than they had been before, if that was at all possible.

"Edward, are you okay?" I asked timidly. His eyes were trained on my throat. It was unnerving me, slightly. I lifted up my hand to pull my hair over my shoulder, concealing my neck, but before I could get my hand anywhere close, his fingers were wrapped around my wrist, locking them in an iron grip. "Edward what are you-?" His fingers tightened on my wrist with every word I spoke, as if the very breath that was coming from me was aggravating him somewhat. "Edward! Ow! That hurts! You're scaring me! What you are you-? Ow!"

His grip on my wrist had tightened exponentially and it felt as though he was going to snap the bone. How could someone be so strong. It wasn't possible for someone to snap bone with their hands was it? No. It wasn't.

In the next instant, he had pulled me violently towards him and I felt a searing pain in my throat as something broke the skin. I tried struggling, trying to get free, but it was in vain. I was locked in an iron grip.

Was he biting me?

I whimpered in pain, but he seemed to take no notice. I could feel his lips on my neck as he sucked on my throat, a deep guttural growl releasing from his throat as he fisted a hand in my hair. He was drinking my blood !!! That's not possible. Why would he be doing that?! Unless, he's not human.

I tried in vain to get free, but it was absolutely useless. He was too strong and I was getting weaker with every passing second. He was drinking my blood. He was a monster.

As I felt my life-force leaving me I lost my vision, although I could still hear and feel everything that was happening around me. I felt myself going completely limp in his arms, not having the strength left to keep myself composed or to struggle. He was killing me.

Father!

How could I leave him like this. I hadn't had the chance to tell him that I loved him this morning. I hadn't had the chance to say goodbye at all. He had left early to get to work. There had been a murder last night, something they hadn't seen before. Charlie told me that it looked as though the victim had been bitten by some sort of animal, but the body was completely drained of blood. This wasn't something they had ever seen before. I understood who, or should I say what it was now.

It had been Edward.

Suddenly, I felt myself make contact with the ground, Edward pushing me away from him. I knew that I was barely alive anymore. I would most definitely die, here in the park, in the same way that poor person had last night.

I felt a surge of wind come over me as I succumbed to the blackness that I assumed was death. At least that was until something started burning within my veins. Fire. It spread quickly, and it was excruciating.

If this was death, I knew I was in Hell.

~End Flashback~

Even though it wasn't clear and vivid like the rest of my memories were, it was still clear that it had happened. That was the day that I had "died".

That was the day Edward attacked and changed me.

What had caused him to suddenly attack me though. He had said that it was my blush that did it. Maybe it was that that undid him.

I was still confused about many things though. Like how he had just dropped me and run off. There was something wrong with this

picture.

I didn't want to press him on it though. Who knew how far he was willing to take this whole leniency thing. But then again, he hadn't attacked me when I had mumbled his real name. He had been pissed that I knew it, yes, but he had let it go.

How I knew his real name, I had no idea. When he mentioned something about a true name, it suddenly popped into my head. I didn't know where it came from, but it was just hanging there in my mind, seeming to float in front of my eyes. I didn't know what it meant. I didn't even realise what it was until he growled at me.

I knew then that I had stumbled upon something that he did not wish others to know. I wouldn't tell anyone of my discovery. Not because I feared for my life, but out of courtesy. I knew that if he wanted people to know it, then he would have kept it, or at least told someone. He wished for it to remain a secret, and I would respect that wish. It still didn't answer the question of *how* I knew it though.

Maybe it had something to do with this pull I felt when thinking of him.

This Edward was a different Edward to the one I had met earlier on in the day. It was as though he was the Edward I had witnessed in my memory. Without the whole attacking me and draining my blood bit.

Something told me that he wouldn't be like this around the others. That there would be another shift in his behaviour. Something within my chest told me that this Edward was reserved for me and me alone. Whether or not that was coming from me or him I didn't know.

Something was stirring within my unbeating heart, but it felt foreign. As though it was only a projection of a feeling, drawing me to him in some unknown way. Could these feelings be coming from him?

That was impossible.

How could I be feeling what he was? Jasper was the empath, not me.

But then again, thinking about Jasper, something seemed to stir in my memory. Of talking with Alice and Rosalie. They were both gushing about Jasper and Emmett who had gone out hunting at the time.

I closed my eyes as the memory washed over me, hoping that Edward was telling the truth about not reading my mind at the moment.

~Flashback~

I was sitting with Alice and Rosalie in the living room. We were alone in the house. Emmett and Jasper had gone hunting, Esme was in the backyard and Carlisle was at the hospital. The two of them were going on about Jasper and Emmett.

Why they felt the need to go on while I was around was a mystery to me. They made no secret about their musings on how I should find a mate. They didn't seem to get that I was perfectly content on my own. I didn't need a mate to make me complete. They didn't listen to me when I told them this.

I think that somehow they knew I was lying. In some respects, it felt like I was. I didn't know what it was, but every time I found myself thinking of how it would be to have a mate, something stirred in my chest. It was a form of longing. Not the longing to actually find a mate, but the longing one feels when they have lost something. I didn't understand how that was possible though. Seeing as I had never found a mate to begin with.

"I can't bear to be away from him." Alice was crooning, bringing me out of my little reverie. "It's like, I don't know how to describe it. All this time with Jasper and I still don't know how to describe how it feels to be away from him." She smiled, obviously remembering some of the more obvious aspects of their relationship.

" It's like there's a chord connecting you. Willing you the two of you back together whenever your apart." Rosalie finished for her, a dreamy look spreading across her face.

" Exactly." Alice nodded. "And when you are back together, it's like you won't be satisfied until you touch them physically."

" More than just touch." Rose added with a sneaky smile and I shuddered with disgust. The whole family knew what happened between Emmett and Rose when they were reunited.

" You see what you're missing Bells." Alice turned to look at me.

I didn't answer, but felt that familiar pang in my chest, telling me that there was something missing. I didn't know what it was so I just dismissed it.

If it happens, it happens.

~Flashback~

I opened my eyes, my mind reeling from the memory. What they had described. What they had told me about how they felt when being away from Jasper and Emmett. It was identical to what I had felt, being away from Edward.

That couldn't mean that..... He couldn't be.....

Looking at this perfect creature sitting next to me, it couldn't be possible. Could it?

At that moment, my phone began vibrating in my pocket and I didn't need to look at the caller ID to know it was Alice. She had 'seen' my realisation. Damned pixie.

"Yeah." I asked pressing my phone to my ear. Edward turned his head slightly to look at me. *Please please don't let him be reading my mind at the moment. He would think I was insane if he was.*

"You might want to come back to the house." She said quickly and quietly into the receiver. I had no doubts that Edward had heard her. His hearing was more advanced than the rest of ours after all.

"Gotcha." I hung up the phone and stood up quickly. Edward made no movement at all. "Um, I'd love to continue this, but I have to go." I hopped off of the boulder so that I was standing in front of him and turned to face him. "Can we continue this later?"

"Sure." He shrugged, a smirk on his face. He definitely knew there was something up.

I nodded and turned to run in the direction of the house, my mind reeling. He couldn't be. Could he?

It was preposterous. How could he be?

If I was, did he realise it too?

Maybe that was why he had changed his behaviour around me. He had said time and time again that he wouldn't treat me any differently because he had made me. But he was treating me differently. Maybe that was because he knew what I now considered.

And there was this pull in my chest. This yearning that was screaming at me to turn around and run back to him. I did my best to ignore it, but it was getting harder and harder to do so, now with these thoughts running through my head.

I made it to the house in record time and ran into the living room where the rest of the family were sitting. The others were looking at me confused, but Alice and Jasper were sitting there with grins on their faces.

Alice had obviously 'seen' something to do with my realisation and Jasper... ooooh Jasper! He knew what was going on to begin with. He was right about me having to discover it by myself though. If he had told me outright there would be no way that I would have

believed him. I would have laughed at him, but now that I had come to the conclusion on my own, I believed it somewhat.

"Is it true?" I asked the two of them, flicking between their beaming faces.

"Is what true?" Rosalie asked, obviously out of the loop on this particular snippet of news. The others in the room seemed to be out of it as well as they were all constantly looking between me and the grinning couple.

They looked at each other and nodded in unison.

It was true!

"Is *what* true?" Emmett whined like a child, not liking being left out.

"You want to say it or shall I?" Jasper asked me quietly, looking me in the eye. I shook my head, indicating that I couldn't even speak, let alone admit what I had just had confirmed. He nodded, understanding. "It would seem that all of the family's pushing Bella to find a mate was unneeded."

"What do you mean?" Rosalie asked, confused and staring at me.

"She already has one." Jasper smirked. "Has had this whole time."

"Who?" Esme rose off of the sofa and walked over to me, wrapping her arms around me.

"Edward." I whispered, not meeting their gazes.

"*What ?!*" Rosalie spat. She wasn't happy about Edward being here in the first place, and she wanted him gone as soon as possible. The realisation that he was in fact my mate meant that there was a very good chance he would be around for longer than we had thought he would be.

"Jazz." I called quietly and he looked at me. "Does he feel the same way? I mean, does he..... you know what I mean."

"He does." Jasper nodded, smiling at me. "At least I think he does. His emotions are hard to read. But judging by what he was feeling in the split second before he took off earlier, I'd say we have a winner."

He felt the same way!

That must mean that he knew he was my mate!

Maybe that was why he was so open to talking to me earlier. Or maybe it was just because he felt like I should know where I came from. I don't know. This was all so very confusing.

Hang on! If he knew he was my mate, that must mean that he felt the same pull I did in my chest. He would feel the same magnetism that drew me to him. He would feel the same hollowness that I felt when I was away from him.

All of this was so foreign to me, I didn't know what to do.

I shook my head, trying to clear my mind, realising how I must look to my family.

I looked at Alice and I saw that she was still grinning at me. She must have 'seen' something about Edward and myself. And I knew it wasn't just my realisation on the matter. "What did you see Alice?"

"You'll see." She answered cryptically. It *must* be good then. If it was Edward and I confessing our undying love for each other then I was pretty sure she'd be waiting an eternity. Did he even know *how* to love? I wasn't sure. Maybe. If he felt the same things I was feeling then it had to be possible right?

I didn't know if I loved him. I couldn't love him right? I mean, I had only met him today. Not counting the meetings we had almost a

century ago. I wasn't counting those. I was *drawn* to him yes, but did I love him? I didn't think so.

Could I love him eventually?

I guess it was possible.

Maybe.

"So you're saying, that *Edward* is Bella's *mate* ?" Emmett repeated, staring at me.

"That's about it." Jasper nodded, answering for me. He obviously sensed my confusion as I felt a wave of calming energy pass through me. I smiled in appreciation.

"Whoa, Bells!" He laughed. "Going straight for the top aren't ya?!"

"When did this happen?" Rosalie sounded pissed. She wanted her family safe and she didn't feel it was with Edward around.

"Oh, about a hundred years ago." I choked out. "When we first met. I remember feeling some sort of pull towards him. Of course I had no idea what it was, but it was there all the same. Just as it is right now."

"You've been holding out on us girl!" Emmett gaffawed.

"Emmett, this is serious." Carlisle scolded him and he shut up immediately. "Are you sure about this Bella?" I nodded and his eyes softened slightly, his face breaking into a small smile. "Well, it seems that none of our family is alone anymore."

"But he's *dangerous* !" Rosalie argued.

"Can't the same be said for the rest of our species?" I retorted, feeling oddly protective all of a sudden. "I mean, we're the only things that can destroy each other. So technically we're all dangerous."

"She's got a point, Rose." Alice agreed before looking back at me, a knowing smirk on her face. Damned pixie!

I turned away from my family and walked at a human pace up to my room. I stopped outside my door, feeling the pull in my chest at its peak. He was in my room. I *knew* he was.

What on earth was he doing in there?

Only one way to find out I guess.

I slowly opened the door and saw him standing there, leaning against the frame of the floor to ceiling window that spanned the half of the wall. He was looking at my music collection and looked at me as I closed the door behind me.

He really was entrancing. Even more so after my realisation.

He smiled at me, but it wasn't his usual knowing, cocky smirk. It was the smile I remembered from my memory earlier on. It was that crooked grin I remembered loving as a human.

His eyes told me that he knew I had figured it out, remembering, just as he had done.

I didn't say anything at all. Not needing words.

I walked over to him, stopping directly in front of him, gazing into those deep blood-red eyes of his. I couldn't help but imagine what they would look like gold, even though I knew that would never happen.

I slowly lifted up my hand, still looking him in the eye and placed it on his chest. The feeling in my chest was almost unbearable and I knew that it wouldn't be satiated until I made contact with his skin. I wasn't going to push that just yet though. He didn't push my hand away or move away from me so he can't have been irritated or anything at my behaviour. Maybe he was feeling the same things I was.

In contrast to what I thought he was going to do, he slowly lifted his hand and placed it on my cheek. I felt what felt like a deep electrical current passing through his fingertips into my cheek, enveloping every single molecule of my being. I didn't pull away. I knew that there would be no way that I could. I wanted this too much.

But did he?

He hadn't disappeared yet, so there must be some part of him that did.

The sensation in my chest hadn't subsided. If anything it was becoming more and more fierce with every passing second.

Without really thinking about it, I tilted my head up and leaned up towards his face. I expected him to pull away, so I was extremely surprised when his lips met mine in a soft kiss.

It was soft and tender, neither of us wanting to push anything.

I felt as though my still heart had exploded as the both of us deepened the kiss slightly. I felt different to how I had over the last century. I felt whole.

Everything was so sweet and tender. Almost loving in a way. I didn't want this feeling to end.

Now *this* Edward I could get used to.

So there you have it.

They've both realised their bond as mates.

I will stress this though, they are only drawn to each other. They are not, and I cannot stress this enough, they **are not in love**.

Like I said in a previous chapter, this is not one of those "they meet and fall in love in a day" stories. Remember, they have a past, and were drawn to each other back then.

Do not for a second think that they are in love. They need to work up to it. Okay? Good.

Now with that out of the way....leave me some reviews please. I love them all so much :D

xx

Unchangeable

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Bella

I had never felt so complete as I did right now.

With my lips on Edwards everything felt right. Like everything that I had been waiting and working for over the last century was just falling into place. Like nothing else mattered.

Because in that moment, nothing else did.

I hated to think of how Jasper was feeling at the moment. If he was feeling even a hundredth of what I was feeling right now, then he was in trouble. I didn't even understand what I was feeling. I had never felt this way before.

I didn't want this to end.

But it did. All too soon he pulled away and looked into my eyes. I couldn't help the contented sigh that escaped me.

He looked into my eyes with his deep red orbs that were so entrancing and yet so deadly. The colour of his eyes was a reminder of how he lived. He was not, and probably would never be, like me. He would feed off of humans for the rest of eternity. And who was I to judge. I had gone through a rebellious stage some years ago, killing humans, and he was older than I was. He had survived off of human blood since he was created. I doubt anything could deter him from that diet. Not even me.

"Your family think you're insane by the way." He whispered, not breaking eye contact. I couldn't help but chuckle.

"I suppose I am." I nodded. "I mean, what sane person, even a sane vampire, would be as drawn to someone like you as I am?"

"Someone like me'?" He asked, raising an eyebrow.

"Yeah." I whispered. "Well, what-"

He placed a finger over my lips, effectively silencing me. "Not here." He pressed his lips to mine again and disappeared, leaving me standing there, stunned for a moment. I knew what he was leaning towards. He didn't want to have this conversation when it was so obvious that my family could hear everything that was being said.

I decided to go downstairs and face them, knowing that the longer I put it off, the worse the reaction would be.

I walked into the living room to see five grinning faces and a scowling Rosalie.

"Are you insane Bella?" She practically screeched at me, leaping up off of the couch. "I mean, what the hell are you thinking?"

"I'm not thinking, that's the whole point Rose." I hissed at her through clenched teeth. "You think I want to feel this way? I *know* how dangerous he is."

"So why are you doing this?" She spat, marching around the sofas at a human pace. "Why are you putting the whole family in danger?"

"It's not like I have any choice, Rose." I knew that if I could cry, I would have tears streaming down my cheeks at this moment in time. "I don't know why this is happening. I don't know why I'm feeling this way. But it's ... it's like ... when he's not here, like right now ... it's like something's missing. There's this force in my chest, pulling me towards him. Urging me to go and find him, just to be with him."

"You're saying you're in love with him?" She sounded taken aback.

"No...I don't know...I don't think so." I shook my head. I was thoroughly confused.

"What do you mean, you don't know?" Alice stood up now, walking up behind Rosalie slowly, a look of concern on her face.

"I don't know." I shook my head. "Maybe, when I was human, I was, but right now...I don't think so. How can I love someone like him? I mean, some of the things that he's done...they're just..... awful." I wrapped my arms around myself, looking away from my sisters.

"What do you mean?" Rosalie asked, sounding curious and yet afraid at the same time. I shook my head, not wanting to answer her. "What does that mean?"

"It means, you don't want to know." I whispered, turning away from my family.

"Where are you going Bells?" Emmett asked and I could hear him standing up off of the sofa. "You're not going to find him are you?"

"It doesn't matter what's going on between us. *If* there's anything between us. And honestly, I don't think there ever will be but, none of that matters." I shrugged turning to look at the group of vampires gathered in front of me. "He's still the one that made me. He alone holds the answers that I need. He's the only one I can talk to."

"If you're sure Bells." Jasper stood up and wrapped an arm around his wife. He stood there and looked at me, a small smile forming on his lips.

I nodded looking at my family. Gazing over the three couples in front of me, how loving they all were, how much they cared for each other, it really hit home. I had never felt as alone as I did right then.

I knew that Jasper could sense the pain that I was feeling at the moment, because his face contorted into a sort of grimace. He didn't

want me to hurt, but he didn't try to manipulate my emotions either. Something I was thankful for, because I needed this.

In my mind, even though I would like to see it working out between Edward and myself, I knew that it wasn't likely to happen. He was still the master of an entire race, whether or not he was my mate. I didn't think I could leave my family, and he didn't belong tied to one place. He was essentially a nomad. It was the way he had to be. I on the other hand, needed my family.

It would never work.

I would have to figure out my feelings and then put them to rest. What was I feeling for Edward? I had never felt this way before. Not that I remembered anyway.

It was all foreign to me.

"Personally, I don't think Edward will harm Bella." The whole family looked at Emmett. He looked at all of us before settling his gaze back onto me. "I mean, think about it. Our first instinct: protect your mate. I mean, if Edward's the 'father of us all' as you've said before Carlisle, then wouldn't that instinct be in him too? Even if he doesn't know it." I looked at the rest of my family. All of them but Jasper and Carlisle looked extremely confused.

"I guess so." Carlisle didn't look as worried anymore as he mulled over Emmett's theory. I was still surprised that Emmett could come out with anything as profound as that. He actually made sense for once. "It would make sense." He turned to look at Jasper. "Jasper, what did you get off him?"

"Nothing." Jasper shook his head, looking apologetically at me. I smiled at him. I didn't expect him to get a reading off of Edward. He was too old to let something like that happen. "He's too skilled at hiding his emotions. I haven't gotten a single thing from him. At all."

"I didn't expect anything else." Carlisle frowned, running a hand through his hair. "I just wish I knew what all this means."

I turned and walked out of the door at a human pace, strolling out and away from the house, not wanting to rush into anything. I still needed to work everything out in my own head. I was too confused to think straight at the moment, and trust me, that is not an easy feat for a vampire to achieve.

You might as well get it over and done with. Who knows, he may be as conflicted in his emotions as you are. You'll never know if you don't try.

Dammit! The annoying little voice inside my head was right.

There was only one way to work through this. I had to talk to Edward. Now. Before it all got out of hand.

I turned my walk into a jog and then into a flat out run. I knew where he was. The tug in my chest was letting me know that I was going in the right direction.

He would be at the rock clearing that we were at before. He knew that my family didn't hunt here, and that we wouldn't be disturbed. It was the perfect spot really.

I stopped in the clearing, seeing him sitting on the same rock he had been on before, staring off into the distance. I knew better than to think that he was ignorant of my arrival. He always knew. It was like he knew everything, but then again, being who he is, he probably did.

I ran over to the boulder he was sitting on and sat on it, just as I had done earlier on in the day. He didn't move, so I guessed that he wasn't aggravated that I was there. Then again, he was the one that practically suggested we go somewhere else and talk.

"Someone like me'?" He said softly, not looking at me. I didn't really know what to say to that.

"Um," I replied in a not-so-smooth manner. "Yeah. Well everyone knows who you are. And how you are. I guess they're just afraid for me."

"They're afraid that I'm going to hurt you." He said softly, closing his eyes and sighing. I nodded, knowing that he couldn't see me. Some part of me felt that he'd know what I was doing anyway, so I didn't bother to say anything. "Bella." He said my name so softly, that if I were human, I wouldn't have heard it. "It's strange, but I don't think that I ... *could* hurt you even if I wanted to."

"Really?" I whispered, inching closer to him, ever so slightly. He opened his eyes and nodded. "I don't understand any of this."

"And you think I do?" He turned to look at me and I saw that he really didn't know what to do. *Of course he doesn't you idiot!* I mentally scolded myself. A vampire has but one mate for all eternity. And he's practically lived for eternity. "Truth is, Bella. I don't understand this any more than you do. All I know is that I feel *something* for you. And I don't know what it is."

"Maybe we could figure it out together?" I asked, my voice barely more than a whisper. I didn't know how he would react to that suggestion. Would he blow it off completely? Revert to the Edward I had seen earlier on? Or would he remain *this* Edward? One that I was beginning to think was reserved for me and me alone.

He sighed gently, closing his eyes again. "I don't know."

"Can I be honest with you?" I asked, my voice low and timid. I hated that he was intimidating me again. I could tell that it wasn't intentional this time. It was just something about him that made me nervous, even though he had practically admitted that he wouldn't hurt me. He looked at me and nodded slowly. I took a deep breath, trying to steady myself. God, how I wished air had some sort of

benefit for me. "I don't know ... *what* ... I'm feeling right now. I don't know what to make of it. I've never felt this before. This *pull* ." I placed a hand over where my still heart was resting and his eyes immediately flicked to it. "You feel it too don't you?" He looked back up at me, his eyes telling me the truth. He *did* feel it. "I don't know what it is, but what I do know is that, somehow, I feel like I need to be near you. Like something's missing when you're not there. I don't know if it's something that I've carried over from my human life, because honestly, all I remember of that life is when you ..." I trailed off but he nodded, knowing what I was talking about. "But in that memory I remember feeling ... complete ... when you were there. I don't know..." I looked down at my hands, not knowing how to finish.

"Bella." He whispered. I looked back up at him. He had his eyes closed and there was an unreadable expression on his face. He looked almost pained. "I know what you're talking about. Why do you think I left the beach earlier on?" I hadn't thought about that. Did he leave because of me? I thought that he was just pissed because we'd stopped him from destroying the wolves. "I know what you're thinking, and no, I'm not reading your mind at the moment, but it's obvious and yes. It was because of you that I left." He took a deep breath, opening his eyes but not looking at me. He was gazing over into the distance, seeming to try to figure out something in his own mind. How I wished that I was the mind reader of the two of us. "I'm going to tell you the truth, Bella. It's something I've never told anyone else. Something that I didn't even want to admit to myself, but I think you need to know. I've felt this before, almost a century ago." Was he saying that he'd felt this connection to someone else? "When I was in Chicago almost a century ago, there was someone there. She completely captivated me. I don't know what it was about her, but she seemed to draw me in. It was like I couldn't get enough of her."

"Like a drug?" I offered in a low voice.

"Exactly." He mumbled, still staring off into the distance. Maybe Jasper was right. Maybe all he had ever needed was a real conversation with someone. I wasn't afraid of him, like I had been before. I was still nervous around him, and I knew that to some extent I always would be, but I wasn't scared of him, like so many, well everyone else was. "When I first met her, she seemed like every other human. Insignificant. But there was something different about her. I found that no matter how much I wanted to ... I couldn't kill her. I couldn't bring myself to harm her." He looked at me, his expression now unreadable. "I felt drawn to her, much like the same way I do now. But it wasn't as strong back then. Do you know who that girl was?"

I shook my head, trying to figure out where this was leading. Who he was talking about. "Who?"

"You."

Me? He had felt this way about me before he had turned me. Of course. I remembered from my one memory, thinking about how I had known him for two months or so before he attacked me. Why would he have left me be, not killed me if he hadn't felt something for me.

"And now?" I asked softly.

"I don't know." He shook his head, turning away from me again. "This is the same, only more intense. Maybe it's because you're a vampire now. I don't know." He sighed and a single chuckle escaped his throat. "I'm fifteen thousand years old and all of this is new to me. Who would have thought?"

"Well, my family believe that every vampire has a mate. Just one." I said softly. "I'm not too clear on it, seeing as I'm new to this myself, but ... they say that, when a vampire finds their mate, that's it. That's them sorted for eternity. That they would do anything for their mate. That it's physically impossible for them to hurt them or allow any harm to come to them." I took another deep breath, not really

believing that I was going to say what was about to come out of my mouth. "Maybe that's why you can't hurt me." I sighed. "Maybe that's why you feel like you can't hurt me, even if you wanted to. Maybe that's why you didn't kill me outright when you first smelled me. Because some instinct within you was telling you not to."

He snorted. "It fits." He mumbled gently.

"I think that maybe we can work this out together." I suggested quietly, watching him carefully, trying to gauge his reaction. "I mean, it's pretty obvious that *something* out there wants us to be together."

We sat in silence for a moment, not needing to talk at all. I was all too aware of the pulling, burning sensation in my chest. The part of me that was longing to touch him, to just have some form of physical contact with him. I wouldn't give in to it though. Even though now I knew that he wouldn't hurt me, he was still dangerous.

"We could." He mumbled, turning to look at me, a small smile on his face. "Seeing as I'm stuck with you."

"Hey!" My mouth dropped open. "That's not nice."

"Hey, I never claimed to be nice." He shrugged and I laughed.

"True." I smiled and found him doing the same. Maybe he wasn't the monster that I had first perceived him to be. Maybe Jasper was right and he was just lonely. He didn't need to be any longer. Whatever higher power there was in the world had ensured that. I didn't know if I could physically be separated from Edward for any length of time.

I hadn't noticed it before, but while we had been talking, we had somehow grown closer together. His face was mere inches away from mine and I knew that if I leaned forward even the tiniest amount, my lips would be on his again. Would he want that though? I didn't know.

My answer came swiftly though as he tilted his head up and his lips connected with mine gently. That same electric shock was there and I could only wish that he felt it too. The fact that he didn't pull away from me was encouraging.

I took it upon myself to be a little bolder as I pushed myself slightly harder into the kiss. I felt something within me soar when I felt him doing the same thing. He placed a hand on the back of my neck, seeming to draw me in closer to him. This was a side to Edward that I knew no one else in the world would ever see. But I didn't mind. I kind of like the idea of there being an Edward that was reserved for me alone.

He suddenly pulled back, turning away from me, a feral growl rumbling in his chest. *Okay, maybe he didn't feel the same way.*

"Edward?" I whispered and he looked back at me, his gaze furious. "Are you okay?"

"The fools!" He growled, turning away from me and jumping off of the boulder.

"Edward, what's wrong?" My voice was barely audible to me, yet I knew he would hear it. Being the original, everything about him was advanced, right?

He looked back to me, before turning and scanning the area again. "Two of them." *Two of who?* "The Volturi." He snarled. "The idiots!"

"Edward?" I called, jumping off of the boulder and joining him. "What's going on?"

"What's going on is that *Aro*, *Marcus* and *Caius* , have a lot of explaining to do." It didn't escape my notice that he practically snarled their names. I was guessing that he didn't like the brothers all too much.

"What have they done?" I wasn't sure I wanted to know the answer to that question.

"They disobeyed me." His voice was little more than a hiss. They *were* in trouble. I could tell that Edward didn't take disobedience lightly.

This was the Edward that scared me. I wanted the Edward that I had been so close to not a minute ago back. *This* Edward was the Edward that the legends were based on. The monster that humanity perceived him to be.

Then he was off. He suddenly took off running. He was running towards the house. I followed as closely as I could, but he was a lot faster than I was. Even though I was the fastest of my family, even I found it hard to keep up with him. Like I said, everything about him was advanced.

I stopped in the clearing where my family and I hunted regularly. It was another rocky area, known for its booming mountain lion and elk population. It was our favourite place to hunt. Edward was standing there, two vampires with him. One was cowering in front of him and the other, well the other wasn't going anywhere. Edward was standing there, as cool as anything with his foot on his head. I knew he wouldn't hesitate to crush him.

"Now." Edward snarled. "Tell me. Why does Aro think that he can disobey my orders. It was made clear that *no one* from the Volturi was to approach this area unless *I* gave the order." The vampire standing in front of him, which I now recognised to be Demetri didn't answer. If he could scare Demetri, then I knew that all the stories Carlisle had told us about him were true. Not much scared Demetri, so if Edward was worthy of his fear, he had to be powerful. "Tell me now, or I'll pop his head like a grape." He looked down at the vampire that was being held prisoner by his foot. "Hell, I might do it anyway, *but* you're going to tell me either way."

"I'm sorry, my lord." Demetri bowed his head as a sign of respect. "We were unaware that you *hadn't* given the order. Aro told us that we were needed here, so we followed our orders given."

"Well." Edward was angry now. It was clear that Aro had known that Edward had given no such order, and since I had been with him for most of his time here, except the brief hunting trip he had obviously taken, anyway. "You can go back to Volterra and deliver Aro a message from me. Let him know, that if I get the slightest inclination that *any* vampire loyal to the Volturi is in these areas, then I will be flying back to Volterra, destroying every single vampire there and starting over again." He took his foot off of the vampire's head and grabbed the front of his shirt, lifting him up and glaring into his eyes. "Understood?" The two vampires only nodded, seeming too afraid to voice anything coherent. "Good." He threw the second vampire, who I noticed to be Felix in the same direction that Demetri was standing. "Now get out of my sight."

I walked towards Edward a few steps, which caught the attention of Demetri. He had been interested in me since he had first met me fifty years ago. He had never interested me. And now I knew why. He must have been thinking some pretty unsavoury thoughts, because an extremely feral growl erupted from Edward and he looked back to him in fear.

The two vampires in front of us, started to run and Edward lithely jumped onto a large boulder, so he had a better vantage point. I joined him at his side, standing a little way away from him, still slightly afraid of *this* particular side to Edward. He was unpredictable and dangerous. Not like the calm, almost sweet Edward I had been with not five minutes before.

His head cocked to the side slightly as we watched them run across the clearing that was spread out beneath us.

"Bella." He asked, his voice light and wistful again. "How many vampires does it take to deliver a message?"

I gulped slightly, not really knowing how to answer. *How many people did it take to deliver a message? Especially with our memory.* "One?" I asked quietly, not really trusting my voice all too well.

"I thought so." He smirked, his eyes growing dark.

The next thing I knew, the sky had clouded over and there was a great clap of thunder, a bolt of lightning crashing down from the sky, hitting one of the fleeing vampires dead on as they ran.

I gasped as the bolt made contact and I heard the vampire – I couldn't tell if it was Felix or Demetri – scream in agony as they were engulfed in fire. The other vampire sped up, trying to get as far away from the area as possible, before Edward could do the same to him.

"What was that?" I breathed, not wanting to watch the vampire beneath us, writhe in agony as he burned, but also unable to tear my eyes away from the scene.

"Another little message to Aro." He stated simply, as though it was nothing for him to take the life of a vampire. But then again it probably was nothing to him.

It made me realise that he *was* still dangerous. Probably not as big of a threat to me, seeing as he had pretty much admitted to me that he wouldn't be able to hurt me even if he wanted to, but still I was a little more than nervous now that I had seen him take the life of a vampire so easily.

Surprisingly though, the pull I felt didn't diminish.

It didn't change anything.

Now, if any of you can tell me where Edward's last question to Bella was from, then you'll get a sneak peak of the next chapter.

I'll reveal where it was from in the next chapter, so you're not left hanging for too long.

A bit of an incentive for you. Aren't I cruel?

Mwahaha! Yes I am :D

Please gimme a review. I love them so.

xx

More Than Meets The Eye

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

For all of you wondering the movie was in fact Mulan. So many of you got it right, and it's sparked an idea in my head. Within each chapter I'm going to hide a line from a movie or book, and the ones who can find it and name where it's from will get a sneak peek of the next chapter. Heehee. And yes, there is a line from a movie hidden within this chapter. Good luck finding it :D

Edward

Everything felt so right in that moment.

Yes, I may have been confused about the emotions that were coursing through my body at this point in time, but I now knew that she was too. I've never felt something like this before. In all my years, not one creature, vampire, human or anything else, has affected me in the same way that Isabella Swan – now Cullen – has.

She was correct in her musings. She was like a drug.

I knew now that I wouldn't be, I *couldn't* be the same vampire around her. There was something about her that drew out another side of me. Even though I hated to admit it, it was a *softer* side. One that I would never show the world.

With her lips pressed against mine, everything seemed to click. I had never had this before. It was as though Isabella and I were trapped in a cuccoon and nothing could disturb us. Or that's what I thought.

I knew that my growl had startled her, she probably thought that I was unhappy with what was happening between to two of us. That wasn't the reason behind my anger.

I was angry because I had been disobeyed. And by the one vampire that knew *never* to disobey me.

Aro.

If he thought that he could undermine my authority then he had another thing coming. Shouldn't he know by now that *no one* undermines me. Hell, he's been around for a couple of thousand years. You would have thought he would learn by now.

I was going to have to do some serious clearing up when it came to Aro and the other two.

As I stood on the boulder, sensing the retreating form of the vampire I had left alive to deliver the message. I had taken out one of Aro's most prized *pets* because that's all that they were. He held no affection for any of those in the guard. He might give off the impression that he does, but that charade is for everyone that is unable to read his mind.

I was angry.

Not only at Aro, but at myself. I had been so wrapped up in Isabella that I hadn't been on the lookout for any signs that Aro would disobey me. Maybe I had fooled myself into thinking that he would actually listen to me. He seemed to be under the impression that he was in fact in charge of the race. A fruitless ideal.

And one that will stop. *Now!*

The fact that he sent two of the guard and only one returns will serve as a reminder of that. Aro knew that I wouldn't destroy the guard unless I needed to. They were useful for keeping the rest of the race in line.

But he had crossed a line. And I was not kidding when I made the threat. If needs be then I *would* return to Italy and destroy them. I

wouldn't hesitate in trapping them all in that godforsaken castle before setting it on fire.

And Aro knew me well enough to know that I would.

"Edward?" A whisper came from beside me and I turned to find Isabella standing there, looking at me with worried golden eyes. She was nervous, anxious around me. A complete change to how relaxed she had been not a few minutes ago. Some part of me didn't want her to be afraid of me. Wanted to reassure her that everything would be alright. To *comfort* her. I had never had that urge before. It was strange and foreign. Another part of me wanted her to fear me. She *needed* to fear me. Even though I wouldn't harm her, I knew that within myself. I couldn't harm the creature standing beside me. It had nearly destroyed me when I thought that I had ninety years ago. I couldn't even comprehend harming her now. "Edward, are you okay?"

I looked away from her and sighed heavily. "It surprises me how difficult it is for some people to accept orders."

"What do you mean?" She asked, her voice low. So low that it would have been inaudible to human ears. It was another sign that she was wary of me. *With good reason* I thought, bitterly.

"Before I left Volterra I left specific orders." I looked at her again. "No one from the Volturi was to enter this area unless I gave the order." I couldn't stop the low growl that rumbled from my chest. She backed away from me slightly. "Aro is ridiculous if he thought that he could get away with sending Demetri and Felix without my finding out. He knew that I would."

"Maybe there's just some information that he wants quickly." She suggested, shrugging her shoulders slightly.

"No." I shook my head. "He's undermining me. He thinks that if he does it enough, then there's a chance I'll relinquish my power over

the race. That he *really* will be in charge. The only day that'll happen is the day I burn."

"But you're indestructible." She pointed out, her tone lighter than before. "I mean, or so the stories say. From what Carlisle's told us, fire even has no effect on you."

I turned to her and smirked. "That's the whole idea." Her mouth formed a slight "oh" shape as she realised that what I had just said meant that I would *never* be relinquishing my rule and power over the race. I had created them. It was my responsibility to keep them all in line.

"I guess that killing one of his most prized vampires will be proof of that." She sighed. "I'm never going to get used to that." She whispered and I turned to look at her again.

"Get used to what?" I asked her, watching her expression.

"How easy it is for you to take life." She looked away from me, and gazed over at the slain vampire that was now nothing more than a pile of smoldering ashes. "How you can do that and not feel anything. I could never do anything like that."

"Then I guess it's a good thing no one's asking you to." I retorted, a little more coldly than I had meant to. She looked back at me, hurt shining through in her eyes. "It's got to be done. There's no way around it."

"There has to be." I could hear the hurt in her voice. She probably couldn't believe that the fates had been so cruel as to make her the mate of a monster. Because I was. That was the one thing that the legends got right about me. I was a monster.

"There isn't." I stated simply. "If Aro believes that he can undermine me, if he has even the slightest inclination that he can, then he has to be prepared to lose something in return. There is nothing else that

matters to Aro more than his force of power. Something that you're all too familiar with, I understand."

She nodded quietly by my side. "He wants me for my shielding ability." She sighed and I nodded, knowing full well that Aro wanted her. He had wanted her for over half a century, when he had first met her. He had become interested in her because he couldn't read her mind, as he could with everyone else. Other than mine of course. Isabella wasn't the first shield in existence so I had that power from previous. I'd had that power since before I created the brothers actually, so that was a bonus.

He had been coveting Isabella for over half a century, and I knew from reading his mind that each and every time she declined, in the politest possible way. Personally, I would have told him to fuck off and not to bother me again. But Isabella was always so kind. So gracious.

It was endearing.

Wait! Did I just think something was endearing?! I really didn't know what to make of these emotions that Isabella was stirring within me.

"So he should." I mumbled and she looked up at me, confused. "With you the guard would be able to shield against any mental attack. You'd be a valued asset."

"But I don't want to join the Volturi." She argued gently, shaking her head.

"And you think I want you to?" She shrugged looking down at the ground. "The Volturi have become arrogant and egotistical. Especially Aro."

"Why did you create them?" She asked and it was my turn to shrug. She scoffed gently and shook her head. "Come on, you must have had a reason."

"Boredom, I guess." I sighed. I sat down on the boulder and she joined me, sitting on her knees, her hands palm down against the rock. "Telling the truth, after you've travelled the world a couple hundred times, tracking rogue vampires and newborns, it kind of becomes tedious. I created the brothers so they could do the job for me." I shrugged.

"And now it's coming back to bite you in the ass." As soon as the words came out her hand flew to her mouth. I knew that it was a genuine slip. I turned to look at her and saw that her eyes were wide with fear. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean for that to-"

"I know." I said smirking. "That sounds like something I would say."

"Really?" She sounded confused. "You're not mad?"

"Why would I be?" I raised an eyebrow and she shrugged again. "Well, in some respects its true. Worst comes to worst I'll just have to start again."

"You would do that?" She sounded fearful now. "You would really wipe them all out."

I nodded. "Someone's gotta do it. If the Volturi get to arrogant then they become dangerous. Not only to my position of power, which will be staying mine by the way." She nodded at me. "But to humans as well." I saw her brow crease in confusion. "I know. I know. 'How can someone like him be thinking of humans' safety' right? Truth is, Aro, Marcus and Caius don't like hiding in the shadows. They believe that vampires should be the rulers of the planet and not humans."

"You don't agree with that?" She asked, bringing her legs around so she was sitting indian style facing me.

"You do?" She shook her head, a few loose strands falling over her eyes. I reached over and gently brushed them aside, feeling that familiar electricity flowing between us. She looked down at her hands and I could tell from the expression on her face that if she could

blush, she would be doing so right now. "Well there you go." She looked up at me and smiled. "In all honesty, I don't believe that vampires should rule the earth. If we were meant to exist naturally then we would have evolved. *Something* created me for some reason, a reason I gave up on discovering a long time ago." I looked over to her and saw something unreadable in her expression. "We are oddities of nature, you and I. Nothing more. This" I gestured around at the scenery around us. "This is a world for humanity."

She nodded, smiling. "You know," She reached out and placed a hand on mine. "Legends say that you're a monster." She sighed. "I don't see that."

"Well you should." I scoffed and she shook her head.

"Well, I don't." She replied defiantly. I turned to look at her and she just stared back at me. "I don't think you're a monster Edward. I see what you mean about having to do things because they're necessary. And while I don't agree with most of them, it's up to you what you do." She smiled a little. "And besides...I hate Aro."

I couldn't help the laugh that escaped my throat when she said that. I gazed around slowly, taking in the scenery. It wasn't anything special. I turned back to look at Isabella only to find that she had another unrecognisable look on her face. I wanted to reach into her mind to find out what she was thinking, but some part of me urged me not to. It was as though I was at war with myself over this one girl.

"Well." I laughed dryly. "Who doesn't hate Aro?" She smiled at my rhetorical question.

"Touche." She giggled. I couldn't help but smile at her laugh. It was so girly. So human. "I know what you mean though. About this being a world for humans. Everything else around us, all creatures, plants you name it, everything withers and dies and we don't."

"We linger." I mumbled. "Unchanging." I sighed. "For eternity." She nodded slowly, her eyes becoming unfocused.

"So tell me, what made you choose the icky brothers anyway." She asked me, her posture becoming suddenly child-like.

"The icky brothers'?" I raised my eyebrows and she shrugged, grinning at me.

"Yeah." She nodded. "I couldn't be bothered to call them by their names... too much effort ... and they're icky ... so there you have it. The Icky Brothers."

I couldn't help but laugh at her reasoning. She was becoming more confident in my presence. Whether or not that was a good thing I didn't know. I wanted her to fear me, because that was the way I was perceived by the world. I was seen as a monster, and that was what I was.

But there was another part of me that didn't want her to be afraid. The part of me that relished the thought of her being there. That enjoyed the feeling of her hand on mine. This was a new development. For me especially. I didn't know what to think.

"If I'm honest. I don't know." I shook my head. "It was a whim. I wanted someone to handle the "day to day" as it were, maintenance of the race and they seemed to be suited for the job. I'm beginning to rethink that decision now."

"It's only taken you, what? A couple of thousand years to work it out." She looked shocked again, but didn't remove her hand from mine. "I'm really sorry. I don't know what's up with me today."

"I do." I whispered and her eyes widened.

I looked around, noticing for the first time that the sun had gone down and the stars were littering the night sky, shining against the blanket of deep blue. The smoldering vampire had long since gone

out and all that was left there was a pile of ashes that would be discarded when the next wind decided to pay a visit.

"What do you mean you do?" She sounded shocked. "Is there something wrong with me?"

"No." I shook my head again. "Not wrong with you." I felt my brow furrowing. "I'm wondering *why* it's only manifesting now." I mumbled softly.

"Why *what's* manifesting?" She started to sound worried now.

"Isabella." She scowled at me, something that no one else would be able to get away with. So why was she? I didn't understand this.

"Bella." She smiled at me and I shook my head. "Better not get used to that. Do you believe that the only power you possess is your shield?"

"Yeah." Her eyes narrowed at me skeptically. "Why?"

"Because you are sadly mistaken." I smirked at her.

"What do you mean?" Her eyes became worried now. What she had to be worried about, I had no idea. "I have another one?"

"You do." I nodded.

"How?"

"It comes from the face that you were made from me." Her brow furrowed in confusion at my words and I couldn't help but chuckle.

"I'm right in thinking that you know of my abilities." She nodded.

"Which one?" She laughed. "There are so many. It's kind of awe inspiring actually. How you have so many powers." She sighed, looking down at the hand that was still resting atop mine. "I mean, I couldn't imagine having access to that many powers."

"Well you do." Her head snapped up and her eyes widened. "Not to extent that I do, of course. But to some extent you do."

"What do you mean?"

"Nobody but myself knows this, but when I myself create a vampire they are automatically created with the power to absorb the powers of those around them. A type of diluted version of the way powers manifest in me as it were."

"Wow." She breathed. "That's weird."

"But it doesn't just stop with powers, as you've been demonstrating today." She looked confused again. "It seems it can also be attributed to personality traits. Your sudden little outbursts today are proof of that. Haven't you wondered why you've become more confident in my presence? Why you've said things you wouldn't normally?" She nodded slowly, thinking things over. "That's because you unconsciously been channelling aspects of my personality."

"That's actually quite cool." She whispered, looking back at me, her eyes slightly alight. "You mean, that if I can learn to control this power that I've got, I can use other vampires' powers?"

"Exactly." I nodded. "I'm wondering why it's taken so long to manifest though. It's odd."

"Maybe it needed something external to make itself known." She mumbled and I could see her getting lost in thought again. "Maybe it needed you around, you know?"

"It's possible." I mused, looking back over at the landscape before us.

"Can you ... teach me?" She whispered, not looking at me. "Can you teach me to use it?"

"If you want." I felt a smile forming on my lips. This girl really was like no one I had ever known before.

After that we sat in a comfortable silence, neither of us moving or speaking at all. We didn't need to. Her hand was still placed on top of mine, which seemed to appease the pulling in my chest somewhat. It hadn't disappeared. It had only dulled slightly. I knew now that it wouldn't disappear completely. Or maybe it hadn't disappeared at all. Maybe it had been there for the last century, but I had pushed it to the back of my mind. I would have to discover what it was all about.

I still remembered the first time I felt it.

~Flashback~

Chicago 1918

It had been a month since I first laid eyes on Isabella. Somehow I had managed to stop myself from draining her dry. How I had done that I didn't know. She was unlike anything I had ever smelt before.

My animal instincts were screaming at me to taste her. And I wanted more than anything to comply. To give in, but due to my extensive years of control I managed to resist.

She was there, every single day, sitting in the same spot, reading her book. I noticed that it was always a different book that she was reading. She seemed to have a thirst for knowledge that not many humans had nowadays. They were content with being ignorant, and I could have laughed out loud at their stupidity. They often dismissed things that were so blatantly obvious, so they wouldn't have to put any energy into working something out.

Isabella was different though.

She seemed to have an unquenchable thirst for the knowledge that other humans pushed aside. It only made me want to get inside her mind more and more.

I made my way into the park, hating having to walk at a human pace. It was necessary though. I was the one that placed the secrecy rule into effect, it wouldn't do for me to go breaking my own rules would it? But then again, rules were there to be broken.

As I approached I discovered that there was another scent mingled in with Isabella's. It was a male scent.

"Jonathon, I said no!" I heard Isabella cry earnestly. "I don't want to. How many times do I have to tell you that?"

"Come on, Bells-" A cocky voice replied smugly.

"Don't call me that." She snapped.

I could see the two of them now. They were both standing up, Isabella's book discarded on the ground. She had been reading and something, namely, this pathetic little human, had disrupted her.

I felt a growl rising in my chest. Where it came from I wasn't entirely sure. All I knew was that I was overcome with a powerful desire to protect her. Absurd really.

"Come on, Bella!" He pleaded, but I could still hear the cockiness in his voice. "You know you don't want to sit out here. Come on. I know you're waiting for a man. And honestly, I'm so much better for you than anyone else."

"What makes you so sure?" She snapped back.

"Because I am." He smirked. I could see him now. He was taller than Isabella, but almost a foot. He was largely built as well. He could easily overpower her if he wished, and by the way he had her wrist locked in his hand, I could tell he wished to. "You know my lineage. You know my father. And besides, it's not like you'll find anyone else that can look after you the way I can. Or anyone as handsome."

" Think a lot of yourself, don't you?" She snapped, trying to wrench her arm out of his grasp. "Let me go, Jonathon. You're hurting me."

" Only because you're making me." He sneered, his smirk faltering somewhat.

" Isabella!" I called, increasing my pace to a human jog.

" Edward!" She called seeing me. Her eyes lit up slightly and she smiled at my approach.

I walked up to the one holding her, holding his gaze. "I believe she asked you to let her go."

" What's it to you?" He sneered. Oh, how I would have loved to rip his pathetic little head off, but unfortunately there were witnesses, so that was out of the question. Maybe I could corner him later on. That would work.

" Let. Her. Go." I repeated quietly, menacingly, whilst taking a step towards him. His expression turned from smug to terrified in less than a second. He dropped her wrist in an instant, backing away from me. "Leave."

He continued to back away, his eyes flicking from myself to Isabella, who was sobbing lightly behind me. "I'll see you later Bella." He called, before his eyes narrowed at me.

" No." I said softly, smirking at him. "I don't think you will."

He must have heard me because he turned in an instant, practically running towards the edge of the park.

I turned around to look at Isabella, who had tears streaming down her face. "Are you okay?" I asked and she nodded.

" Thank you." She stepped towards me and flung her arms around my neck, sending her scent flying up into my nose and overwhelming my senses. I quickly swallowed to mass of venom that had pooled

instantaneously at the back of my throat. She stepped back quickly. "I'm sorry." She apologised quickly. Her hands were still clasped around my neck as she looked up at me. "It's just I I..."

"It's okay." I placed a hand on the back of her head, at which she seemed soothed slightly. She rested her head on my chest, sobbing gently.

I wasn't overwhelmed with the usual images of wanting to kill and drain her dry like I normally was. Instead I was filled with an overwhelming desire to protect her. To shield her from the dangers of the world. Ironical, seeing as she was in the arms of the most dangerous creature on the planet. I felt this incredible pull aching in my chest in that moment. Whether it had something to do with Isabella I wasn't sure, but somehow, her being in my arms, seeking comfort in me, it felt right.

Like it was meant to be.

~End Flashback~

"Anything interesting going on in that mind of yours?" Isabella's soft voice broke me out of the memory. I turned to her and smiled. "You were zoned out for a while. Must have been good."

I shook my head. "Nothing really." I didn't really want her finding out what was on my mind, but then again, if my theories were correct, it would be only a matter of time before she could. I would have to test her on this one.

I knew for a fact that what I had told her was true. I had witnessed it before. Maybe it was a good thing that she was the only one left alive that I had created. Who knows what kind of a mess that could have caused?

"Something wrong?" She asked, her voice soft.

I looked at her and saw her smiling at me. I couldn't stop the small smile that appeared on my face. "No." I looked down at our hands, noticing that Bella had intertwined her fingers with mine. It seemed right somehow. Like that's how they were meant to be. "Everything's pefect." She smiled at me, appearing to think the same thing.

And everything was perfect.

But I couldn't help thinking that none of this was meant for me.

How could a monster feel this way?

This chapter might not be up to the standard of some of the other ones. I did have a bit of writers' block with this one. Before you say anything, Bella is not always going to be as understanding when it comes to Edward's capital punishments. You'll find out what I mean later on in the story.

I thought I'd put in a little bit of Protective Edward in there.

Did any of you get the line?

If so lemme know.

Please review. I don't mind if you thought it was crappy and decide to tell me so. I'll be the first to admit, this isn't the best work I've written.

xx

Learning

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I am so sorry that I haven't updated in ages. I think I was actually starting to get withdrawal symptoms from lack of updating. Not kidding. I had no internet connection and while I could read and reply to reviews on my phone – get little piece of technology. Love it! – I could not update from it. Anyways, I'm back. And I've got lots in store for you.

See now, I'm disappointed in most of you. There is a *very* obvious (and intentional) I might add flaw in this story. Some of you have worked it out and they know who they are. Kudos to you. Well, at least if they don't know who they are, they'll find out by the end of this chapter.

It's in an A/N at the bottom of this chap.

I bet you're wondering 'why would you intentionally put a flaw in your own story?' Well the answer to that is simple my lovelies. To make sure you're all paying attention to what you read. There are lots of little snippets of information in this story that counteract each other and get the reader thinking. That's part of the story. The flaw I'm talking about is a pretty big one and going back a couple of chapters you'll probably think 'oh yeah.'

Lastly, I want to tell you that Saving Edward has been nominated for Best Angst over on the Golden Chocolate Awards. I want to say a HUGE thank you to whoever it was that nominated me. YOU ROCK AND I LOVE YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Putting the link on my profile, so when you can GO VOTE!!!!!!!

Well....on with the story.

Oh yeah! Oh yeah! Find the quote hidden in the chapter!!! :D

Edward

I don't know what I expected from Isabella. Then again, it seems that no one ever does. From what I've seen in the minds of her family, she always does the opposite of what is expected of her. She was more like me than I gave her credit for.

She seemed genuinely pleased and intrigued when I informed her about her dormant power. My only concern was why it had taken so long to manifest.

In the others I've created it has made itself known within days or hours. It's never taken almost a century before. Unless it's concerning the Volturi, but then again, that's my little secret.

One I plan on keeping.

One I don't even plan on telling Isabella. She needn't know. Neither should the world. Everyone is quite happy and content with where they are right now. Apart from, Aro, it seems, but I'll have to deal with him later.

She wanted me to teach her, another sign that she was becoming more confident around me, probably drawing on my personality without realising it.

I could feel the excitement rolling off her in waves. She was the only one in her family, with a gift, that didn't really have a use. Alice was used to forewarn them of such events, like my coming – which had been thrown off by my extensive knowledge of the gift – and simple things such as weather reports, which would help them maintain the secret. Jasper of course used his gift, most of the time to settle arguments within the house. Something that was very useful when living in a houseful of vampires, or so Isabella says anyway. I have no reason to doubt her.

But she seemed genuinely happy, and for some reason that made me feel happier.

Odd.

I had never felt happy on someone else's behalf before. Hell, I don't think I'd even felt happy on *my* behalf before. I'd never had any reason to *feel* happy.

But now it seems I did.

She was a mystery unto herself, was Isabella. She was one I was looking forward to unravelling.

And spending time with .

Where did *that* come from?

I had never thought about anything or anyone like that before. Would I enjoy spending time with Isabella? Something told me that I was going to enjoy spending time with her. But another part of me wondered why.

"Maybe it's because we're mates." I heard Isabella comment. She'd appeared beside me while I had been lost in thought. Seeing as I had to work to read her mind, she was the only one who could sneak up on me in that respect.

"What are you talking about?" I asked her. Was she tapping into her powers? Into *my* power of mind-reading? That would be the most logical thing, wouldn't it?

"You were confused about us. About me." She smiled shyly at me, as though she was a human child that had been caught somewhere they shouldn't be. "About spending time with me, maybe? I'm not too sure."

"Are you reading my mind?" I asked her, raising an eyebrow and she shook her head.

"I don't know what it is." She frowned slightly. "I think maybe ... I'm picking something up from Jasper."

"The empath." I nodded.

"Yeah." She nodded alongside me. "I mean, he would be able to feel if someone was confused and when I walked into the room, it was like I was confused, but I didn't know why. And then something in the back of my mind told me that it wasn't *me* that was confused, but *you*."

"It seems you're growing into your powers quickly, Isabella." I smiled at her. She was definitely going to be strong. I wouldn't let her know that she in herself was actually more powerful than the Volturi.

Not yet anyway.

"Could you call me Bella please?" She mumbled, not looking at me and I smirked.

"Why?" I cocked my head to the side, confusing her. Hell, I was confusing *myself*. I never behaved this way. It was like when she was around, I was completely a different vampire. It was as though who I was meant nothing. Like it was just the two of us. Nothing else there to stand in the way. I had never felt like that before.

"Because I prefer Bella." She said a little louder, her eyes going slightly wider. "And you're going to say no."

"How do you know?" I asked incredulously. I hadn't actually made up my mind about whether or not to grant her request. Personally, I preferred Isabella to Bella, but if it was what she wanted I would call her by her requested name. Which was something I would never normally do.

This was aggravating.

It was as though, everything I had been for fifteen thousand years was changing. And all because of this one woman standing in front of me. And there was nothing I could do to stop it.

"Because you're you." She whispered, wringing her hands in front of her.

I didn't like her doing that, so I took her hands in my own, feeling that jolt of electricity that I felt whenever we touched. "Well, maybe you don't know me as well as you think you do Bella." She looked up at me and smiled at the use of her preferred name.

"Thank you." She whispered, pressing her lips to my cheek gently.

"Anything for you." I whispered back in her ear. *Where the hell did that come from ?* I asked myself, but oddly enough, I found myself not really caring.

Before she could move away from me, I turned my head and captured her lips with my own gently. She pressed her lips harder to mine and I felt myself reciprocating. This girl really did bring out an unexpected side to me.

"That was unexpected." She breathed as we pulled apart.

"I was just thinking the same thing." I smiled down at her, pressing my forehead to hers gently.

"You know what makes me smile." She commented gently. I lifted my head and tilted it to the side, silently telling her to continue and she giggled gently. "That I'm the only one that gets to see this side of you." She smiled broadly up at me. "It makes me feel special. Special to you, even."

"You are special to me." I confirmed and even though I didn't think it was possible, her smile grew even wider.

"Really?"

"Yes." I took in a deep breath, finding it steadied me, even though I didn't need it. "I don't know how to explain it, but, for some reason, I find myself feeling incredibly protective ... of you." I shook my head, chuckling darkly. "Even though I know it's not necessary, I can't help but feel it. It's like you have some sort of hold ... over me. One that I can't break."

"Is that a good thing?" She asked, sounding slightly confused. Possibly as confused as I was feeling at the moment.

"I haven't quite worked that out yet." I sighed, looking into her deep amber eyes.

"What do you mean?" She asked, her brow furrowing slightly. "Come on, let's sit down."

"Why?" I asked her, a small smile spreading across my lips.

"I don't know." She shrugged and I had to chuckle. "It's just less formal. If you get what I mean."

"I know what you mean." I nodded.

Seeing as we were in her bedroom at the moment, we moved over and sat on her bed. I had asked her why she had a bed, and she told me that she liked having somewhere she could relax for a few hours a day, even if she couldn't sleep. Apparently, it was nice for her to just lie down and let everything seep away. I could understand where she was coming from.

She sat on the bed, indian style in front of me, smiling up at me as I sat down, leaning back on my elbows.

"What did you mean 'you haven't quite worked that out yet'?" She asked me, running a finger back and forth over my hand, looking into my eyes. I surmised that it was a subconscious action seeing as she didn't seem to be aware that she was doing it. "Is it a bad thing that we're connected."

"I don't know." I sighed, not looking away from her. "For me, I've never felt this way before. This connected to anyone. I've never actually felt connected to anyone at all before, so all of this is new to me. Which is a bit ironic if you think about it."

She smiled at me. "Well, you would have thought that someone who's been around for as long as you have, would have felt connected to *someone* before."

I shook my head. "Nope." Her smile dropped slightly. "I've not felt anything for anyone before. Not like this anyway. I don't know, maybe the closest thing I got to an actual friend of sorts was when Carlisle used to live in Volterra and I would visit. He was the only one that didn't cower and run at the first whispers of my arrival."

"That's Carlisle for you." She smirked. "Always believing in the best in people."

"I know he does." I turned my hand over and grasped hers lightly. Her tiny hand seemed to fit perfectly within my larger one. Like we were two puzzle pieces made for each other. "I guess that was one of the reasons he welcomed you back after your little rebellious period."

"You know about that?" She asked, shock passing across her face.

"I know everything about you Bella." She smiled at the use of her name.

"How?" She asked, her eyes narrowing slightly.

"You remember Aro's power?" I raised my eyebrows at her and realisation replaced the shocked expression.

"Oh." She mumbled quietly, going into thought. "When did you find that out."

"The first time I touched you." I admitted, shrugging slightly. "When I negated your shield for the first time."

"Oh. When I thought you were going to kill me." She nodded, her smile forming into a slight frown. "You weren't going to kill me then were you?"

I chuckled slightly. "At that point in time, if you'd pissed me off enough then I might have done."

"And now?"

I inhaled deeply. "Now I don't think I could even if I wanted to." I turned to face her again and I saw her eyes filled with an emotion I couldn't really put a name to. "Like I said, you have a hold over me that I can't break."

"Getting back to that." She grasped my hand tighter. "Is it really a bad thing that we're connected? Because the way that I feel at the moment, sitting here ... with you ... I don't really see how it could be."

"Not from our focal point, no, I don't think it is a bad thing." I nodded my head and she smiled. "But you have to comprehend all those outside our little bubble. I mean, take the Volturi for instance. For some reason, Aro's been really irritating recently and I can only imagine what news of our ... relationship ... as you'd call it would mean to him." I looked her sternly in the eye. "You have to understand, to those around us, you are a weakness of mine. Probably my *only* weakness. And I know that Aro would be only too happy to take full advantage of that."

She sighed, shaking her head slightly. "Aro's always got a bug up his butt about something."

I chuckled at her choice of words. "Interesting way to put it."

"You have to admit it, it's true." She grinned cheekily at me and I nodded.

"Yes, I suppose it is true." I couldn't help but smile at her. Maybe it was because of the connection that we had, or maybe it was just because she had an infectious personality, but whatever it was, I couldn't help but feel what she was feeling.

"So..... Aro would really see me as a way of getting to you?" She asked, a slight twinge of fear in her tone. She looked down at our hands sadly.

"Hey." I placed a finger underneath her chin and lifted her gaze up to meet mine. I could tell that if she could cry, she would have silent tears running down her cheeks. I knew from her memories that she hated feeling like a burden. "I won't let it come to that, alright? I won't let you happen upon that kind of danger."

"What if you can't stop it?" Her tone was still laced with fear. Understandably.

"Honestly, Aro is the only one stupid enough to try anything against me. Marcus and Caius, yes, one may be extremely irritating and the other incessantly morbid, but they're not stupid enough to try anything. The only way that the guard will do anything is through Aro's orders."

"Isn't that enough to worry about?" She asked, raising a skeptical eyebrow at me.

I shook my head, smiling at her. "No." I sighed gently, grasping her hand ever so slightly tighter. "Even if Aro was stupid enough to challenge me, he wouldn't get very far. If he ever did find out about you, then the safest place for you, is with me." She still didn't look as though she believed me. "You remember the clearing yesterday?"

"With Demetri and Felix?" She asked, sounding even more confused than earlier.

"Yes." I nodded. I waited for her to get what I was talking about. It took less than a second for her lips to form a perfect little "oh" shape as she realised what would happen if anyone challenged me. "You see?"

"I do." She smiled slightly. "Why *did* you destroy whoever it was?"

"It was more of a message to Aro. For undermining my authority." She didn't look appeased by my answer. "Also, they were both thinking pretty unsavoury things about"

"About what?" She was curious as to what could have caused that reaction from me. As if it wasn't obvious by now.

"You." I whispered, looking into her deep amber eyes.

She smiled slightly, even though it was a sad smile. She didn't like the fact that I had ended the life of another being, even if it was one of the Volturi. "You did that for me?"

"Why else would I?" I shrugged. "Like I said, you have a hold over me."

"Does this mean I'm stuck with you?" She asked, her tone mocking exasperated, but her eyes were bright with anticipation and excitement.

I took a deep breath, weighing my options. *Would* I stay with her? Some part of me didn't really want to think about not being there with her. It caused my chest to ache in a way I had never felt before.

"Only if you'll have me." I whispered again, looking into her eyes, some part of me wanting her to tell me to leave. To want me to disappear. It would be safer for her and it would save me a hell of a lot of confusion.

"Good." She mumbled, leaning forward, pressing her lips to mine gently. "Because I don't want you to leave." She mumbled against my lips before pressing them to mine more firmly.

If being confused felt like this, then I would have to be prepared for a lot more confusion in the future.

I froze and broke away from Bella, gently easing her away from me as a flash of images passed through my mind. And they were not images that I was best pleased with.

They centered around Bella and the Volturi.

Aro had learned of Bella. And the bastard was planning to use her against me.

The flashed I was getting was showing me her in Italy, chained in the starvation cells. She would be beaten and bitten, knowing that each and every moment of pain that was inflicted on her would aggravate and anger me even more.

I was shown flashes of her torture and Aro's gleeful face as he watched her in pain.

Those images would not come to pass.

Ever.

A low growl escaped my throat. "Shit." I cursed, stepping away from her and planning my return to Italy.

Aro would not get away with his insolence.

I would make sure of that.

Bella

Kissing Edward was the best thing that ever happened to me.

Each and every time my lips met his it was as though the rest of the world melted away and there was nothing left but the two of us.

I could kiss him forever.

And I would have, had he not stiffened and pulled away from me.

I opened my eyes and looked at him, but his posture was stiff and his eyes were glazed over. I had seen this look many times before from Alice.

He was having a vision.

It was strange seeing him, rather than my sister going through the motions of foresight.

From his reaction, I could tell that it wasn't a pleasant vision.

I was a little worried when he growled moving away from me. "Shit." He swore under his breath, moving away from me and walking over to the window.

"What is it?" I asked, swinging my legs over the side of the bed, watching him cautiously. "What's wrong?"

His head snapped around to face me, as though he had forgotten I was there. It must have been a disturbing vision if it caused him to lose his focus. I mean, yes we vampires are easily distracted but Edward's focus was second to none. After all he had had a long enough time to perfect it.

"Edward?" I called slowly getting off the bed and making my way over to him. "What's wrong? What did you see?"

"Nothing that concerns you." I couldn't help but flinch at his harsh tone. "I'm sorry." He shook his head as though he was trying to clear it. "I just don't want you getting involved."

"Edward, I've had enough experience with Alice's visions to know when there's something wrong." I told him, my voice more confident than I felt. I was sure he would be able to feel the nervousness radiating from me. "Now what did you see?"

He turned to look at me, his ruby eyes evaluating my stance. He sighed, running a hand through his hair. When he was like this it was hard to imagine how anyone could be scared of him. But I've seen enough of his violent nature to be wary, and to know why others feared him. Maybe it was because of our bond, the fact that he was my mate, that I couldn't bring myself to fear him. Not in the way I had when I'd first met him. But then again, he'd admitted outright that only a few days ago he would have had no qualms about destroying me.

"It's Aro." He sighed and I felt my brow furrow in confusion. "He knows about you."

"What?" I whispered, not wanting to believe him. Even though he had said that Aro shouldn't be a threat to me, especially with Edward around, I couldn't help but think of him as one. My previous experience has shown me that Aro is nothing if not persistent. "How?"

"It seems I should have destroyed both of them." He growled, turning back to stare out of the window.

"You couldn't know that-"

"I *should* have known." He snapped, cutting me off. "I should have seen what would happen if I let them both escape. If not for you then I would have done."

"So this is my fault?" I couldn't help the pang of hurt that spread through my chest. He was *blaming me* for the decisions of some power-hungry vampire a few thousand miles away.

"No." He shook his head, looking at me again. "No, it's not your fault. It's mine." He sighed walking over to me and taking my hands in his own. "It's just, I've been so wrapped up in you. In *us* , that I completely bypassed Aro's way of thinking." He brushed a few strands of hair out of my face. "This isn't your fault. Not at all."

"It feels like it." I sighed, closing the small distance between us and placing my head on his chest, right above where his heart should be beating.

"Don't blame yourself." He sighed, running a hand through my hair.

"What are we going to do?" I asked, closing my eyes and wrapping my arms around his waist, as his encircled my body.

" We aren't going to do anything." He told me. " / on the other hand am going to Italy. I need to put Aro in his place once and for all."

"On your own?" I couldn't help the slight panic in my voice as I looked up at him.

"Yes." He nodded. "On my own."

I sighed and rested my head back on his chest, never wanting to let him go. What were these feelings I was having towards him? Why would I be so afraid that he wouldn't come back? I wanted to stand here and hold him like this forever. And I knew that I could, if he would stay.

Who's to say he would even come back here when he was done in Italy?

What reason did he have to come back?

"You." He mumbled against my hair.

"What?" I asked, confused.

"You were wondering what reason I would have to come back." I could feel him smile against my hair. "I have a reason. A pretty big one." I lifted my head up from his chest again. "You."

"Don't go." I whispered, running a finger down his perfect jawline.

"I have to." He pressed his lips to my forehead.

"Then I'm coming with you." I told him, confident and defiant.

"No." He growled, his grip tightening on me.

"Yes." I countered, remembering his earlier confession of how he didn't think he could hurt me, even if he wanted to. I was going to put that to the test right now.

"Not a chance in hell." He mumbled a low growl rumbling in his chest. It was such a feral, wild sound. I hadn't heard a growl like that come from anyone other than him.

But for some reason, I wasn't afraid.

"Why not?" I asked, looking up at him, but unable to move. His grip on me wouldn't let me. He was stronger than anyone I'd ever come across. Something told me that he would be able to dispatch a whole army of newborns if he so wished to. Maybe he had in the past. Maybe it wasn't the Volturi that had silenced the vampire wars raging in the south. But Edward. Maybe that was why it had taken so long for the wars to start up again. Because the threat wasn't the Volturi, it was Edward.

"Because I won't have you in that kind of danger." He looked down at me, his vibrant eyes boring into my own.

"Didn't you say that the safest place for me would be with you?" I asked him, bringing up one of his previous statements. "Was that a lie?"

"No, but-"

"There we go then." His eyes narrowed at me and I knew that if I was any other vampire then I would have been reprimanded for cutting him off. As it was, I had that belief that he wouldn't hurt me running through my mind. I just hoped that he was being truthful about that, and that he *wouldn't* hurt me for whatever reason. "Face it, the safest place for me *is* with you, and you can't deny it. You said it yourself." I rested my head back on his chest. "Besides, I don't think I could handle being away from you. Not that I've found you."

"What?" His voice was filled with confusion and I knew I had caught him off guard.

"Do you think that I understand anything that's going on between us. I have no clue, just as you don't. I'm playing it by ear – or more appropriately by *feel* – as much as you are." I kept my head on his chest, but looked up at him, seeing him staring off into space. "I don't know what's happening to me, but I *do* know that the thought of not being near you, for whatever reason it hurts."

"I don't want you getting hurt." He whispered, closing his eyes.

"Not a problem." I smiled against his chest. "I just want to know that you're okay."

"I'll be fine, Bella." He snorted, looking down at me. "You're the one that's breakable when it comes to other vampires."

"So, I'll stay hidden." I smirked up at him. "Demetri can't find me because of my shield. He'll have no idea I'm in the city, or even the continent. Unless he's the one you blew up." My brows furrowed in confusion.

He chuckled slightly at my reasoning. "Well, I guess that *is* one less worry. No matter which way you put it."

"I'm coming with you." I stated firmly, letting him know that he wasn't going to sway my resolve.

"What about your family?" He asked, playing the one card he knew that would get me to stay. I thought about it for a moment, and then smirked back up at him.

"It's not like we've not been separated before." I grinned at him. "And anyway, I've been away from them as a whole. I can handle being away from them, but being away from you something inside is telling me that I won't be able to handle that."

"You don't know what you're asking of me." He mumbled against my hair and I smiled to myself. Maybe it was me, or maybe it was something I was picking up from somewhere else, but I could feel his resolve slipping.

"I think I do." I tried to keep the smugness out of my voice, and I think I achieved that to a certain extent. "Because you're asking the same thing of me if you tell me to stay."

"Would you stay if I told you to?" He asked, his voice sounding skeptical.

"Probably not, no." I shook my head against his chest. "I'd probably be on the plane right after yours, following you."

"That's not a good thing, Bella." His voice turned cold now and I wished I knew what was going on inside his head.

"Says you." I shot back, smugly. He didn't answer me, but instead he sighed unhappily, knowing that I wasn't going to be relinquishing this fight any time soon.

I looked up at him, thinking about what he had told me only yesterday. *"Nobody but myself knows this, but when I myself create a vampire they are automatically created with the power to absorb the powers of those around them. A type of diluted version of the way powers manifest in me as it were."* If that were true, then wouldn't it mean that I could use *his* power? Would I be able to tap into his power of mind reading?

Closing my eyes and resting my head against his chest again, I inhaled a deep breath, concentrating on the inner workings of Edward's mind. I hoped that he wouldn't catch on to what I was doing, but some part of me knew that he would.

I wondered what it would be like to see into Edward's mind for even a moment. There had to be so much happening in there. It would be incredible to hear.

- couldn't bear it if she was hurt.

My eyes snapped open and I took a quick breath. I had *heard* him. His mental voice sounded almost as incredible as his spoken voice.

"Get out of my head." He mumbled with a slight chuckle. That told me that he wasn't really mad at me. Something I didn't quite believe.

"You're not mad, are you?" I asked quietly.

"No." I could feel him shake his head. "I'm actually impressed that you managed to do that."

"Really?" I asked, sounding slightly smug. Who knew how long it had been since he had been impressed with anything.

"Yes." He sighed gently, resting his head on mine. "The fact that you managed to tap into my own power *and* get into my head is quite an achievement."

"Yay!" I smiled up at him and he shook his head at me. I sighed gently, looking up at him, before standing up on my tiptoes and pressing a gentle kiss to his jaw. I felt the electricity that flowed with the contact of our skin lingering on my lips as I pulled away. "I'm thirsty." I mumbled against his shirt.

"Go eat, then." He chuckled loosening his grip on me.

"Come with me." I asked in a timid voice, wanting him to come. I could tell from the colour of his eyes that he didn't need to feed,

something I was thankful for. I didn't want to see *him* feed. Not something I had come to terms with yet.

"Alright." I mumbled. "But don't expect me to eat anything."

I chuckled gently, pulling away from him, instantly missing his embrace. "Of course not. Only if you want to."

We jumped out of my window and I noticed the sounds and smells of my family approaching from the other side of the house. They had been hunting, leaving Edward and I alone in the house, much to the displeasure of Rosalie. She didn't want Edward anywhere near the house let alone me. She thought that he was too dangerous to have around. To others, yes, maybe he was. But I felt oddly safe with him.

We ran towards the clearing we had visited twice in one day. I loved this spot. It was somewhere secluded and beautiful.

It also had remnants of the lion population that I so regularly hunted.

Edward sat on the largest boulder, the one that we sat on when visited this clearing. I felt slightly self-conscious as he watched me hunt. I knew that he despised feeding from animals. That he didn't even entertain the thought of it. But I had the notion that he had to have fed from them in the past. When humans were scarce. He couldn't have existed this amount of time and not have fed from an animal. That was a little too hard to believe.

After I took down a large male lion I turned around and saw him watching me. But it wasn't that fact that kept my eyes glued on him.

It was the fact that the sun was shining on him, full force.

I knew that it had hit me, and that I was probably sparkling, but there was nothing in the world that could compare to the beauty of Edward in the sun.

He was beautiful anyway, but the way the sun reflected off of his skin, creating a swirl of sparkles and rainbows in the light, made him look ethereal. I had seen many a vampire in the sun, and none, not one could ever compare to the sight before me.

Looking like he did, Edward belonged in the clouds, not sitting on a rock, damned to existence for eternity. He didn't even have the notion that he wouldn't be here in the next ten thousand years or so. He would always be here.

But, with him looking the way he did, that wasn't something I was going to complain about.

I managed to tear my eyes away from him just long enough to take down another unsuspecting animal, before I returned to where he was sitting.

He was still shimmering and sparkling and if I had breath, it would have been stolen away.

I sat down next to him, and he ran his fingers down my cheek, gazing into my eyes, which I was sure would now be a liquid gold.

"Beautiful." He murmured. I tilted my head to the side, confused about what he meant. He smiled slightly. "The way your eyes shimmer. Like the gentle waters of a stream."

I scoffed at his notion. "Right." I rolled my eyes slightly, not fearing him anymore. Not when he could come out with something like that. "Is that meant to be a compliment." I was testing him now. Just to see what his reaction will be.

"Actually yes." He nodded and I blinked, surprised. "Water is powerful. It can wash away earth, put out fire and even destroy iron."

"When you put it that way." I smiled, leaning in and brushing my lips gently against his. I don't know why, but I just couldn't get enough of him. Maybe I was falling for him. Slowly but surely. I may have been.

He pressed his lips against mine, turning my meer brush into a true kiss and I melted. I didn't just *think* I was falling for him. I actually *was* .

Oh, help me!

He pulled away from me slightly, and I opened my eyes to see his slightly out of focus. He was having another vision.

When he snapped out of this one, he didn't seem as upset as the last time. Obviously it wasn't something to do with the Volturi.

His eyes focused back on me quickly. "You have visitors." He stated simply and at the same time my phone started to vibrate in my pocket.

I knew that it was Alice without even looking at the caller ID. She would have most likely seen the same thing that Edward just had.

"Alice." I answered, holding the phone to my ear.

" *Bella. Where are you?*" It was Alice alright.

"I'm out hunting." I sighed. "Or at least I was ."

" *I thought you should know, we have-*"

"Visitors. Yes I know."

" *How did you know?*"

"I'm with Edward." I smiled at his name. He chuckled at me and I pouted at him, which only caused him to chuckle even more. *This* Edward I liked. It was the other Edward, the authoritative Edward that I wasn't so keen on. He could stay locked away right where his is right now.

" *Oh. Okay then.*"

"I would have thought you'd known that." I mumbled, confused. Alice always knew where each of us was. She had never lost one of us, unless it had something to do with the wolves. The only other one she'd lost was..... "Hang on a sec, Ali." I turned to Edward, moving the mouthpiece away from my face a second. "Are you messing with Alice's visions again?" I asked, my voice accusing and he only raised his eyebrows at me in a smug fashion and turned away from me. "Uh-huh." I put the phone back into position so I could talk to Alice. "I think I know why you can't see me at the moment."

" I think I do, too." She sighed. " Nope. I'm trying to see you now, but all I'm getting is a jumble from Edward."

I turned back to him. "Edward! Stop it." I told him and he smirked at me.

" Wow. Someone's relaxed around the almighty." I heard a snort come from next to me and I scowled at him.

"Moving on." I said, narrowing my eyes at a still smirking Edward. "Who's here?"

" The Denali's." Great. It wasn't that I disliked our cousins, but I didn't get on so well with one of them. A female. Tanya. She got on my nerves a lot. I wasn't sure why, but still, she just did.

She was constantly letting me know that she was "higher on the pecking order" as it were. Just because she was over a thousand years old and blonde. Hell, I'd like to show her who was higher on her bloody pecking order now. With Edward sitting next to me, it was no contest.

" I know you don't get on with Tanya, and that's why I thought I should warn you. Only Kate, Carmen, Irina and Eleazar are here with us at the house. Tanya's gone looking for you."

"Perfect." I mumbled, sarcasm thick in my voice as I dropped my head into my hand.

"Bit of animosity there?" Edward chuckled from beside me, taking my hand in his. I felt instantly better with the skin on skin connection. He was all I needed to calm down.

" *Have you told him about Tanya?*"

"Nope." *And I didn't plan to before this. He would probably know by now anyway.*

" *I still can't see you!*"

"I'll try and get him to stop." I chuckled, rubbing my thumb over the back of his hand.

" *Good luck.*" And I knew she didn't just mean about getting Edward to quit messing with her visions. I knew that it amused him to do so, but still, it wasn't fair to Alice.

"So." He mused as I hung up the phone. "You've not got a lot of patience for Tanya." It was a statement, not a question. He had seen all of my memories, so he knew that I hadn't got a lot of time for the Russian vampire.

"Nope." I popped the "p" on the end. "How long before she finds us?"

He looked at me, and his eyes glassed over for less than a second before he focused again. "Two minutes."

"Long enough." I pressed my lips back to his and taking a chance, I flicked my tongue across his bottom lip.

He opened his mouth slightly and I eased my tongue into his mouth, tasting him properly for the first time.

To say he tasted *incredible* wouldn't be doing it justice. He was divine.

He was unlike anything I had ever tasted before. He was so much *more* than anything I had ever tasted. Even the sweetest human

blood could not compare.

If I thought that he *smelled* incredible, it was nothing compared to the way he tasted. It was like honey and lilac and the gentle breeze as the sun sets all rolled into one. And I could have tasted it for the rest of eternity.

If I had been allowed to, that is.

"Well, Bella, it seems you've finally taken the plunge and got yourself a man." The sweet, bell-like voice that had encroached on us broke us apart, earning a low growl from Edward. I took that as a sign that he was enjoying himself as much as I had been.

I looked down from the rock to see the beautiful, yet ancient – although, with present company she couldn't really be considered ancient anymore – vampire standing there, arms crossed over her chest and a huge smile on her face, eyeing Edward up and down. It obviously hadn't clicked as to who he was yet.

Tanya made it her mission to tempt unattainable men. Hell, she had gone after Carlisle, Jasper and Emmett when she had first come into contact with them. I knew that she was going to have one hell of a time with Edward.

Literally.

And it wouldn't be *her* doing the manipulating.

Bring it on!

thinks for a moment

There was something you probably wanted to know wasn't there?

Now what was it again?

Ah, yes! I remember! The flaw that I put into the story.

Well the flaw is the mentioning of the three 'Icky Brothers' as Bella likes to call them. I have mentioned that they were in fact created by Edward, and yet in the same chapter I have mentioned that Bella is the only one created by Edward still existing. How does that work?

See now, if you'd caught that, then you would have asked. In all honesty, I've only had half a dozen people at the most come to me with the question of what's going on. I would have thought it was more.

Don't worry, you'll get your answers in the end.

In the meantime: WHAT'S THE QUOTE HIDDEN IN THE CHAPTER?! I personally think it's a good one this time. Whoever gets it will get a mention in the next chapter :D

Playing Games

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I realised after I posted the previous chapter that I didn't put where the quote was from.

The quote from Chapter 13 was "We are oddities of nature you and I. Nothing more. This is a world for humanity." From Underworld Evolution. The ones that got it are *krissy*, *DarkBloodyFangs*, *BeautyComesFromTheHeart*, *Deakon*, and *pietje*. If I've missed anyone I'm sorry.

The quote from the last chapter: Chapter 14 was " Water is powerful. It can wash away earth, put out fire and even destroy iron." From Memoirs of a Geisha. The ones that got it are *ClancyBB*, *TheMissSmith*, *nashstheory*, *BeautyComesFromTheHeart* (she's good at this game) *Sumomo14*, *pietje* (also another one who's good at this game :P) and *BloodSub09*. Again, if I've missed anyone then I'm sorry.

I'm hoping that the one in this chapter will be a little harder to get :P There'll be people who get it, but I'm hoping not as many.

Edward

Damned succubus.

What the hell did she want?

Well, in a sense, I knew what she wanted, and I also knew that she wasn't going to get it.

I broke apart from Bella, a low growl echoing in my chest. Bella heard it and gave me a worried look. She knew I wouldn't hurt her,

but even though she wasn't too fond of this Tanya standing in front of us, she didn't want her to end up like so many others before her.

Why Bella wanted me to be merciful on this vampire I don't know. I didn't have much time for succubae. They'd caused me enough problems in the past. I should put an end to the lot of them right now.

"Well, aren't you a cutie." She eyed me up, thinking of the best ways to get me away from Bella. "What's your name, honey?"

I smirked at her, tilting my head to the side, playing along with her. "Now why in the world would you want to know that?"

"Well." She stepped towards the two of us as we sat in front of her on the rock. "It makes for being better *acquaintances*, if you catch my meaning." I could hear the faint tint of a Russian accent in her voice.

"In my experience, talking isn't a major factor when it comes to that." I answered her, and I heard Bella's mind go into a state of confusion.

I pressed into her mind gently, knowing that she would be able to feel me doing so. *I'm playing her at her own game. Do you trust me?*

The look of shock on her face was apparent for less than a second before she placed an emotionless mask over the top. *I heard you! How is that possible?*

I'll explain later. Do you trust me?

Yes.

Good. I smirked at Tanya, who smiled back. *That will make this more fun.*

Don't blow her up. She pleaded with me and I turned to look at her, my eyebrows raised. *Please. My family and hers are good friends and I don't want to lose that with them. It's not fair on my family.*

I gave a minute shrug that only Isabella would notice and turned back to look at this Tanya. The one that had flaunted the fact that she had had any man she wanted. That no one had ever been able to say no to her and her mind was incredibly pleased that Isabella now had someone for her to go after, feeling that she would finally 'get somewhere' with someone with a Cullen. Good luck.

I smirked at her and her thoughts. She thought that it was going to be exceedingly simple to get me away from Isabella. Maybe I should make it seem that way. Its been a while since I've had a good game.

What are you going to do? Isabella thought, her internal voice worried.

Have some fun. I smirked.

"Well, if *that's* the kind of fun you're looking for," she gave a patronising look towards Isabella and I bit back a growl, not wanting to ruin the game this early. "Then Bella isn't really the one you want to be playing with."

"And why is that?" I asked, making myself sound confused and ignorant of Isabella's virtue. I knew that she was a virgin and that wasn't something I cared about. In fact, it made her all the more desirable to me. Knowing that no one else has held her interest in any way, or at least, enough to warrant stripping her of said virtue, made her all the more precious.

"It's not exactly a secret that Bella's unexperienced in that area." She smirked at Isabella, thinking that she now had the upper hand.

I gave Isabella's hand a quick squeeze and hopped off of the rock the two of us were sitting on, casually making my way over to where Tanya was standing. "And you think that you ..." I walked around her slowly, flipping a lock of her strawberry blonde hair over her shoulder. "Have what it takes to satisfy me?" I looked over at Isabella, grinning at her from behind Tanya. The small smile on her

face told me that she was onto my little psych-out plan. *Good girl* . I thought proudly. *She's more like me than I thought. She's enjoying this.* I knew that for a fact as I could feel the excitement and glee coming off of Isabella. She really was enjoying this game of mine. "Well?" I whispered in Tanya's ear. "Do you?"

"I ... I can give you what you need better than she can." She whispered seductively.

"And how do you know that?" I whispered back, my voice filled with the same amount of lust as hers was. The only difference was that whereas hers was genuine, mine was all fake. The only one that those feelings were reserved for was sitting on the rock in front of us, a gleeful smile on her face.

"Well, the stories about me and my sisters should illustrate that fact." She turned her head, her intention to kiss me clear in my head. I moved away faster than she could move. "Want to test them out in person?"

I pretended to think about it, moving to the side of her. "Sorry," I shook my head, giving her a fake regretful expression. "But I don't go for succubae. Far too much trouble than they're worth."

"What?" She straightened up and I heard Isabella giggle from where she was sitting. "What do you mean 'far too much trouble than they're worth'?" She was getting pissed now and that was just the reaction I was looking for.

"Well you are." I shrugged nonchalantly, watching her try to come up with a reason for my sudden indifference towards her. She had never been denied and the only reason she or her sisters hadn't been able to get their claws into Emmett, Carlisle or Jasper was because they had almost been ripped apart by their wives. They quickly learned that the three of them were unattainable.

"Clearly, you've never had the chance to 'get to know' one of us then, if you get my meaning." She started to twist a lock of her hair in

between her fingers.

"Oh I know you very well." I crossed my arms over my chest. "Been cleaning up after you for nigh on a thousand years."

"What?" Her expression became confused and I could feel the pleasure of watching Tanya fall into *my* games coming off of Isabella. "What does that mean?"

"It means that you and your sisters are very messy children." I answered her, openly mocking her and her sisters in my tone and in my words.

" *Children* ? My sisters and I are over a thousand years old."

I pretended to think for a moment. "Yes, I was correct. Children."

"If you think that we're children, then you should know that *Isabella* over there, has only just cleared a century!" She was seething now, more annoyed at the fact that she hadn't been able to get me away from Isabella. And she was facing off with the wrong monster if she wanted to bad mouth Isabella.

"I am fully aware of Bella's age." I acknowledged the fact that Isabella liked being called Bella over her given name. Even though, in my mind, she would always be Isabella, I respected her wishes and called her the name she preferred.

"Then, wouldn't you prefer someone with more ... *experience* ?" Her voice was low and sultry again and I *could* see why no one had been able to refuse her before, but honestly, she just didn't do it for me.

"It's not all about experience." I replied, tilting my head to the side, pretending to be engaged in what she was doing. I heard Isabella giggle slightly from behind me. I had allowed her full access to my mind, temporarily mind you, and she could only access what I allowed her to, but it was enough. She was listening to the running commentary I had going on in my head about Tanya. And from the

sounds of it she was enjoying it too. It took all of my control not to smirk or smile when Isabella added in stripper music in her own mind. Was this what it was like to be fully at ease with someone?

"No, but I find it helps." She looked up at me through her eyelashes. Isabella had done the same thing many times in this day and it had taken all of my self control – of which there was a lot – to just remain where I was, and she had no idea she was doing it, and yet standing in front of me was a thousand year old succubae – whether she is nowadays is irrelevant, to me that's what she and her sisters will always be – doing exactly the same thing and nothing.

Again, I pretended to think. "Well then, looks like we're at an impasse."

"That's something we can work around." She stepped towards me and I stood my ground, keeping my eyes connected with hers. I could hear in her mind that she was starting to wonder about me. Who was I? Where did I come from? Why were my eyes red? Thinking that surely Isabella wouldn't be one to be with a human-blood drinker. Well, my dear, she is. She was trying to remain unaffected by my presence, as so many did, but I had learned that it was only Isabella who seemed truly unaffected by my status within the world. Technically, I was on top of it. But that didn't seem to matter to her whereas creatures like the blonde standing in front of me would be bellowing it out for all of creation to hear. Isabella did nothing of the sort.

"I don't think so." I replied, shaking my head. "You see, I don't really go for succubae and I doubt that Kate and Irina would be too pleased about you going back on your promise, would they?"

Her face fell slightly at my mention of her sisters name and the promise that she made the Cullen women of leaving their men alone. "How do you know about my sisters? And about that?"

"Oh, Tanya." I sighed, smirking at her again. "I know *everything* about you." And it was true. When I had touched her a moment ago,

I had used the power I had gained from Aro and retrieved every memory and every thought that had ever passed through her mind. Most of them were sexually inclined and that to me screamed whore. But then again, that's what she and her sisters had become legend for, wasn't it?

"What?" Her voice quavered slightly at my revelation. Isabella was getting slightly nervous about where I was taking this now. She could hear in my own thoughts how much trouble I had had over the years, keeping the succubae legend as just that. A legend. The continued exploits of the sisters had done nothing to help my efforts in that respect.

"I know *everything* you've ever done in your existence Tanya." I continued in a low, threatening voice. "I know every little thought you've had, are having, and I can see what you're going to do in the future." That last one wasn't one hundred per cent true, but hey, it worked as a good threat. "And let's just say, over the last thousand years or so, you and your sisters have done nothing but *piss me off*."

She took a breath and squared her shoulders, holding her chin up high, defiant. "And what does it matter to you? It's not like it's anything to do with you what I have done or will do." She looked me up and down again. "You might be cute, but it's not like you can stop me from doing anything."

I smirked and heard a quiet "uh-oh" come from behind me. "Is that so?"

She nodded and smirked at me. "Yes, it is. No one can stop me from doing what I want."

"Really?" I raised my eyebrows at her and heard Isabella let out a breath when she heard what I was going to do. She didn't like it, but she knew that if Tanya was going to get the message, then it was necessary. I reached into the vault of powers I had accumulated over

the millenia, accessing the one that I would need, slowly extending it towards Tanya.

She stiffened, feeling the effects of the power, not quite understanding. I didn't use the full effects of the power I had gained from Alec's creation, leaving her with her basic senses, but I cut off all the nerves that allowed for movement.

"What are you doing?" She asked, her voice quavering as she tried to fight off the power. Now *this* was fun. I always had fun with this particular power. In some ways it was merciful but in others it was completely and utterly debilitating, leaving the victim completely helpless and vulnerable. I wasn't going to kill her, just scare her a little, well a lot.

"So much for nobody being able to stop you from doing what you want." I stated, amused walking towards her slowly. "It seems that you can't do *anything* at the moment. No matter how much you want to."

"Stop it!" She practically screamed at me, desperately trying to move, to feel her limbs again. To gain some semblance of control over the situation. That was the one thing I had learned about the three sisters. They were always in control. And by the looks of it, they hated it when that control was taken away from them.

"Why?" I asked, tilting my head to the side, acting confused.

"What do you mean, why?" She was scared and that was exactly what I wanted. Even Isabella was feeling a little fear, fearing that I would go back on my promise not to hurt Tanya, and I'll admit, it was tempting, but I wouldn't do that to Isabella. *Well*, that *was new*. I thought, not used to the notion that I would put someone else's wishes before my own amusement. "Because I don't like it and I'm scared." The last word came out as a whisper, but I heard it and the smirk made a reappearance again. How I loved hearing those words. 'I'm scared' made my day no matter what mood I was in.

"The world is full of things we don't like. The world is full of things that scare us. I would have thought being a vampire, you would know that. And I would have thought that being a vampire, you would know that not everything you hear, is just a legend."

"What what do you mean?"

"Things like me, for example." I started to circle her immobile body slowly revelling in the fear that was rolling off her in waves. "Being so old as you are, you should know about me, child."

"I am *not* a child. Even by our standards, I am not a child. I and my sisters are older than anyone in the Cullen family. Even Carlisle does not come-"

"Ah, yes. You may be older than those in the Cullen family. But, dear child, you are *not* older than I." I heard a small vibration coming from where Isabella was sitting. I looked over at Isabella, and found her looking at her cellphone. *Edward*. She looked up at me. *Tanya's sisters and the rest of their family are looking for her. They're coming this way.*

Alice? She nodded.

"Oh, dear. It looks like your sisters are coming to play." I told her in a fake innocent, sing-song voice and the fear in her eyes was evident. She thought that I was going to 'play' with her sisters in the same way I was with her.

I heard eleven minds approaching and stepped back towards Isabella, releasing Tanya and smirking as she fell into a heap on the floor.

"Tanya!" A feminine voice appeared as another blonde vampire appeared in the clearing, running towards her fallen sister. She looked very similar to Tanya, the only real difference being that her features were softer and her hair was a dirty blonde in contrast to

Tanya's strawberry blonde. "Are you okay? You went off to find Bella and didn't come back. I would have thought-"

She stopped when she saw me leaning on the rock in front of Isabella. Her eyes were the same gold as the others in this area. Kate. I knew her from Tanya's memories and from the thoughts of others as I had passed through towns she and her sisters had passed through, cleaning up their mess.

"I'm sorry." She apologised, helping up her sister, who had not yet regained full use of her limbs. "I don't believe we've met. I'm Kate." She walked towards me and held out her hand. I looked down at it and back up at her, not taking it or giving her a response. *Rude! You would have thought someone would have more respect or at least common courtesy.* I nearly snorted at this thought and I looked at Isabella who was trying to hold back a giggle. What Isabella didn't realise was that by allowing her limited access to my own mind, I was in fact strengthening her own mental skills. If I started with my own power of mind reading, that meant that I could strengthen her ability to control her power and teach her how to extend her reach to other vampires. *He's cute. I hope that Tanya didn't go back on her promise and try to bag him like she did with the others. We need the friendship of the Cullens' and going for yet another one of their men would most likely dissolve the allegiance we've had. I hope she didn't try.*

"Kate! Tanya!" More voices and footsteps were appearing now. I instantly recognised one of the newcomers. I smiled to myself, knowing that he would recognise me before he even saw me.

Another woman stopped next to Kate and Tanya. This woman was different. She had dark hair, alabaster skin, like the majority of my kind and deep set golden eyes. She looked between the two sisters and then looked at me, a small smile appearing on her face. *Well, it seems someone has finally put Tanya in her place.* I couldn't help the growth of my smirk at this thought, which confused and unnerved her.

It can't be! What's he doing here?

I turned to face where the mental voice had come from, spotting it's owner immediately. I pushed off of the rock, slowly walking towards him.

"Eleazar, old friend." I smiled at him. He, like Carlisle, when in Volterra had not been preoccupied with power as many others had been. He had been unhappy and unfulfilled when with the Volturi and it had been upon my encouragement that he left. It seemed that he was now happy and mated with the dark haired woman standing with Tanya and Kate. Carmen. I heard her name roll over in his mind a few times and I had the memories I had acquired from Tanya to confirm it. See, I'm not a monster *all* of the time. I can be nice-ish when it suits me. "It's been a long time."

"Edward." He whispered, and the minds of the other members of the clan from Denali were immediately silenced. Tanya's was in a state of shock the longest. She now knew what I had meant when I had mentioned legends and stated that compared to me, she was in fact a child. Eleazar managed to compose himself after a moments shock and he smiled at me. "*It has* been a long time." He nodded. "Without meaning to sound rude, my lord," I rolled my eyes at the term used. *Always with the formalities* . "I am shocked to find you here, of all places." His eyes widened with fear as numerous thoughts ran through his mind. "You are not here to harm the Cullens' are you, my lord. For I know for a fact that they mean no harm to you, the Volturi or anyone in the vampire world. They have been nothing but-"

"Eleazar." I held up my hand, cutting him off. "Shut up." His mouth closed instantly and I shook my head. Even though I had spent time with him in Volterra on my many trips, he still feared me. And rightly so. "I am not here to harm the Cullens. Yet." I added, hearing the sigh of relief that blew through the minds of those around me. At the addition of that little word they all tensed again, not understanding my meaning. The only mind that seemed relaxed was Isabella's.

"They have, as of yet, done nothing to warrant that type of punishment."

"Then, again, begging your pardon, why are you here?" His mind was as much a mix of confusion as his question led me to believe.

"I have my reasons." I replied and he dropped it, knowing that he wouldn't be getting anywhere with that line of questioning.

I looked over at Isabella and saw that she and Tanya were sitting there having some sort of stare-down. The only difference was that whereas Tanya had a murderous glare on her face, which I, myself found amusing, Isabella was sitting there with a smug smile on her face and it didn't take a genius to work out what they were silently arguing about.

Tanya huffed and looked away from Isabella as her sister whispered in her ear about her being stupid enough to 'go for me' as she put it. I caught Isabella's eye and she grinned back at me. I couldn't help but feel a small amount of pride at seeing her like that. From Tanya's memories I had seen that Isabella had never been too confident in Tanya's presence and had always shied away from any confrontation with the other, much older vampire. But now, standing here, watching her, it was clear that she had confidence. Whether that was because she had something, namely me, to fight for or whether it was because she was subconsciously feeding off of my own sadistic, over-confident personality I didn't know, but hell, I was going to find out.

She looked at me more closely and a wider grin appeared on her face, just as another smirk appeared on mine.

That's my girl.

Bella

I couldn't help but feel slightly smug when I saw Tanya's reaction to who Edward was. Yes, I might have had a similar reaction myself,

but that was beside the point. I didn't shamelessly throw myself at him. But then again, he had kind of cut off all the feeling and nerves to her limbs, making it so that she couldn't move. That must have been Alec's power. I had heard of it, but I had never seen it in action. Until now, that is.

I don't know how long it was before anybody moved and to nobody's surprise, it was Edward who broke the silence.

"This has been fun." He smirked sarcastically. "But I have some *errands* to run."

With that he was gone. I knew that I shouldn't have been, but I felt slightly disappointed about the fact that he hadn't said goodbye in any way at all. Not that I should have expected anything. He had an image to maintain after all.

As soon as he was gone, Tanya turned on me. "So what did you do, Bella?" She asked, standing up straight and walking over to me, stopping in front of the rock I was still sitting on.

"What are you talking about, Tanya?" I asked, my voice sickly sweet with innocence. My family knew exactly what Tanya was talking about and Alice had obviously seen how this was going to go down. It must have some funny results because she was trying to stop giggling as Tanya glared at me.

"Yes, what are you talking about Tanya?" Carmen asked, her eyes flicking between Tanya, myself and Eleazar, whom she knew knew something about why Edward was here. Or at least, she must have *thought* that he knew something.

"I'm talking about little *Isabella* here sucking face with the most powerful vampire in existence." She spat at me, disgust lacing her tone. Well, I say *lacing* , more like overpowering in her tone.

Kate, Irina, Carmen and Eleazar all stared at me, while my family stood there, bored, already knowing this information. Alice and

Jasper had obviously told them what had happened in my bedroom and here as well. They had obviously been well informed that Edward and I had kissed. I glanced over at my family, noting the looks of joy coming from Carlisle, Esme, Alice and Jasper, probably at the fact that I had finally found someone, the slight look of boredom coming from Emmett - I knew that he wanted some action to come from this, not just talking. This was Emmett after all – and a look of justification and pride? coming from Rosalie.

She looked at me and nodded. I would have to ask her about that later on. Something had happened with her and I had no idea what it was. I would find out though. It wasn't like Rose to just change her mind about something. Or someone. Maybe something Alice had seen had changed her mind.

"Is this true, Bella?" Eleazar asked, moving to stand next to Tanya.

"And if it is?" I countered with another question, my gaze turning back to Tanya who looked as though she would rip me apart and set me on fire if she had the opportunity.

"You must know that he's incredibly dangerous." Eleazar sounded worried now, and I looked at him to find his eyes a deep amber colour, indicating he needed to feed, filled with worry. "You need to be careful, Bella. He's unpredictable and-"

"You don't need to worry, Eleazar." I hopped off the rock and stood in front of him, placing a hand on his shoulder. "Everything's fine."

"You don't know that, Bella." He whispered, sounding worried.

"But I do." I smiled at him, but the worry didn't leave his face.

"Bella." Irina stepped up behind me. "You have heard the legends of Edward, right?"

"Of course I have, Irina." I nodded. "And you need to know that none of those matter when it comes to us. It doesn't matter."

"Of course it does." Carmen came to stand in front of me, effectively completing a circle around me. Kate stood slightly away from me, not really wanting to get involved. Kate always preferred to stay out of any kind of confrontation and I'm guessing that one with Edward at the centre, was one that she was not willing to get involved in.

"You don't understand." Jasper spoke up, breaking away from Alice and the rest of the family, and making his way over to me. "Bella is probably the only one in the world that is safe from Edward."

"What do you mean?" Tanya asked, her eyes flicking between Jasper, myself and the direction that Edward had disappeared in. Not even I had any idea of where he was going because he had closed off his mind just after the family appeared.

"Edward ... is Bella's mate." Jasper explained and five heads turned to look at me, four of which adorned grins and one that held the biggest, most murderous glare that I had ever seen. Three guesses who's expression that way.

"What is he talking about?" Tanya spat at me, and I turned to look at her.

"Exactly that." I shrugged. "Edward is my mate. It's as simple as that. Oh, and the fact that he made me." I crossed my arms over my chest, daring her to confront me now she had that little snippet of information. "Edward and I are mates, and as you know, Tanya, that's not something that can be broken. And as you've already seen, your efforts are worthless." She shivered slightly at the memory. "So, if all you've come here to do is try to split Edward and I up, you can, and I quote Emmett when I say this, you can make like a Tom and cruise."

Saying that, I broke out of the circle that they had formed around me, and walked to where my family was standing, turning to face the Denali clan.

"Now, what did you come down here for?" I asked them, looking at all five of them.

"We have some news." Eleazar said confidently, stepping away from the others slightly. "From Volterra."

Maybe this was what Edward had seen earlier in my bedroom.

What he wasn't planning on telling me.

What is it that Eleazar and the Denali's know from Volterra. Is it something that Edward already knows. Knowing him, most probably.

What did you think?

Did you like Edward's little game with Tanya? I found it fun to write actually :P

Just so you know, I'm not abandoning Alive Again. It's just come to a very emotional point in the story and I have to be in the right frame of mind to write it. It will be up soon, but it's just getting harder to write. I can't make a guarantee on when it will be up, as it depends on when I can get it flowing the way I want to. It should be up soon.

Remember: go vote for what story you want me to write next. All the stories will be written at some point. Each vote will let me know which order you want them to be posted in.

So, where's the quote. I've hidden it *really* well this time. Or at least I think so. Try to find it heehee.

Let me know what you think of this chapter by hitting the little green button. It'll make my day. If you don't, I'll have Edward play some games with you. Or maybe, that's something to look forward to. I don't know. Each to their own I guess.

***Daydreams* *drools* Okay, yeh, anyways, go review!**

Plagiarism? Maybe?

Sorry this isn't an update,

but there is something that's pissing me off.

I know that you all know that plagiarism is against the law, right?

Well, this might sound bitchy, but there is someone who doesn't.

First of all I want to thank rohan65 for initially bringing this to my attention,

because there is a story extremely like Eternally Damned.

It's called Vampire King by Team-Bedward-4eva

and while there are differences in the story, the similarities are too common to ignore.

The link to the story is: [http:// www . fanfiction . net/s/5166205/1/Vampire_King](http://www.fanfiction.net/s/5166205/1/Vampire_King)

There are even lines that are the same as those in Eternally Damned in some chapters.

Normally, I wouldn't say this, but I'm asking you to click on the link and tell me if you see the similarities I do. I was willing to let it go, but after reading some of the chapters she has, I feel that enough is enough. It's too similar for me to ignore now.

If it's just me being stupid and paranoid, let me know, but I'm not the only one that has seen these similarities.

I know it might seem pathetic, but I really can see similarities and I've worked really hard on Eternally Damned. No matter how

many times people say that writing a sadistic ancient vampire is easy, it's really not something that comes easily. It's quite hard actually. And reading her story, I feel that my hard work in creating such a complex character in Edward is all for nothing.

If you could read it and let me know if my paranoia is justified or if I'm being stupid, it would be much appreciated.

Thank you, and sorry, but I will be rewarding you with a real chapter soon.

Deleted

The author has apologised and taken down the story.

That's all I'm asking for from her.

A couple of you have been worried that I'm not going to continue with Eternally Damned, and I can tell you now that it will be written as planned.

Don't worry, I will be continuing to update on it.

You can expect an update either later tonight or tomorrow at some point.

I've got two chapters written. One is in Edward's POV and the other is in ?? POV. I'm not telling you whose because that will have to be a surprise.

Let me know which one you want.

They both continue from when Edward left the clearing.

Lemme know which one you want first as they will both be posted. ;P

Thank you for all your support. It's wonderful to know that I have such amazing readers.

Love you all x x

What's Going On?

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I know I promised this chapter to you yesterday, but what can I say, shit happened and it didn't get posted. Here it is now :)

The quote for the last chapter was "So make like a Tom and cruise." From Bring It On Again. I'm sad. Don't I know it.

I know most of you have been saying you want Edward POV but I'm feeling mean and giving you the other POV instead. I would like to think that you'd find this one incredibly entertaining. I know that I did, writing it. :D Enjoy.

Alice

"This has been fun." Edward smirked his tone absolutely dripping with sarcasm. "But I have some *errands* to run."

He looked at me for a split second before I hear his voice in my head. *Not a word, Alice. Not until Eleazar comes forward with the information.*

I watched Edward leave, knowing exactly why.

He wouldn't say to anyone, not even Bella, and I knew he wouldn't. Everyone probably knew that he was going to go hunt, that much was a given. But the other reason he had left would remain a mystery until he wanted us to know.

Obviously I knew.

I had seen it.

I would have pondered about his reasoning, but still, it wasn't my place to question him. I was quite attached to my limbs, so I wasn't about to risk losing them. Or Jasper. I knew that if I did anything to anger Edward, Jasper would get involved and I risked losing him. That wasn't something I wanted.

"So what did you do, Bella?" I heard Tanya ask and I turned my attention back to the scene unfolding in front of me. I wanted to be ready to intervene should I know how, but Bella seemed different to how she normally was when she was with Tanya. Normally, she would be reserved and shy, not really standing up to Tanya. She was different.

"What are you talking about, Tanya?" Bella asked, her voice filled with fake innocence. I got a brief flash of how this was going pan out and I had a hard time stifling the giggles that threatened to erupt. Yes, Bella was definitely different.

"Yes, what are you talking about, Tanya?" Carmen asked, clearly confused. As was the rest of her family.

"I'm talking about little *Isabella* here sucking face with the most powerful vampire in existence." The disgust in Tanya's tone was unmissable. As was the jealousy. It was clear that Tanya was seething about the fact that she couldn't get Edward. I had seen what had gone down between Edward, Bella and Tanya and let's just say, that's some pure gold entertainment. Edward obviously *let* me see that, wanting me to see Tanya's humiliation. He had seen how Tanya had treated Bella over the years and had not liked it one bit.

The Denali clan were staring at Tanya and I saw that my family was bored with what was happening. This was something that we already knew. We knew that Bella and Edward were mates and what would evidently happen.

I got a sudden flash of Rosalie and Bella talking, hugging and laughing. They must make up at some point. Rose must have come to some realisation about the situation between Bella and Edward,

because I knew that Bella would never relinquish what she had with Edward. She now knew what the rest of us had and I knew that giving that up wasn't an option for Bella. What I did see though, was Bella and Edward, alone in *England* ? What the hell? I was definitely going to have to ask her about that later.

"Is this true, Bella?" Eleazar asked as he moved to stand next to Tanya. I could hear the fear in his voice. He was scared about something. Maybe about the fact that Bella and Edward were together. About Edward's reputation. About his lack of patience, quick temper and even quicker hand. What he didn't realise was that Edward wouldn't hurt Bella. About the fact that Edward probably couldn't hurt Bella even if he wanted to. That's what the power of the bond between mates does. His need to protect Bella will overpower his wish to harm her at all.

"And if it is?" Bella answered the question with the age old deflection technique. Ask another question.

"You must know that he's incredibly dangerous." Even I was getting bored now, but it was laced with an undertone of amusement which I knew was coming from Jasper. He really did find this whole situation amusing. Especially seeing as he knew *exactly* how Edward and Bella felt about each other. "You need to be careful, Bella. He's unpredictable and-"

"You don't need to worry, Eleazar." Bella cut him off, jumping off the rock she was sitting on, walking over to him and trying to ease his worry by placing a hand on his shoulder. You didn't need Jasper's ability to know that it wasn't working. "Everything's fine."

"You don't know that, Bella." He was still scared, and I guess to anyone who didn't know any better about their relationship, it was probably worrying for them. At least for those who cared. Tanya seemed to be revelling in the fact that she thought Edward would tear Bella limb from limb. Tanya's jealousy over Bella was obvious, but unclear. Who would have thought that a succubus would be jealous? Not me, but hey, here it was.

"But I do." Bella was trying to alleviate Eleazar's fear, but I could tell that it wasn't working. I doubted that anything would.

"Bella. You have heard the legends of Edward, right?" This came from Irina, who stood behind Bella. She too sounded worried and the same look was plastered on Kate's face, although she said nothing.

"Of course I have, Irina." Bella remained calm, smiling at them all, her smile turning sickly sweet when she faced Tanya. Something or *someone* has affected Bella.

"Rosalie's feeling awfully smug." Jasper whispered to me, a small smile playing on his lips. "I wonder why."

"Maybe it's because Bella's finally standing up to Tanya after all these years." I whispered back, my lips unmoving. Nobody made any move to show that they had heard mine or Jasper's words.

"Maybe." He nodded, ever so slightly. "She is giving off an extreme amount of confidence. I've never felt something like that coming from Bella before."

"Maybe *someone* has taught her to believe in herself a bit more." I smiled up at my husband and he grinned back down at me.

"Maybe *someone* has." He looked up slightly. "You don't understand." He said a little louder, talking to the Denali's now and I realised that I had missed some of the conversation. He stepped away from me and walked over to where the group was surrounding Bella. "Bella is probably the only one in the world that is safe from Edward."

"What do you mean?" Tanya's eyes narrowed and her gaze began to flick between Bella, Jasper and the direction Edward had taken, or at least the direction he wanted people to believe he'd taken.

"Edward....." He smiled at Bella who smiled back. "Is Bella's mate."

I couldn't help but smile as the heads of the Denali's flicked towards Bella, who was still smiling. Four of them had huge shit-eating grins on their faces whereas the fifth, well, the term 'if looks could kill' sprang to mind.

"Tanya really needs to get over herself." Rosalie whispered and I turned to smile at her. I hadn't even realised she had moved up next to me. Well, we *are* all easily distracted, aren't we? And Jasper is as much of a distraction as anything else. Maybe more so. To me at least.

"Definitely." I nodded.

"What is he talking about?" Tanya spat as Bella lazily turned to look at her, her expression one of pure boredom.

"Do you think that Bella seems more ... confident?" I asked Rose quietly and she turned to look at Bella a smug smile on her face.

"Definitely." She replied, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Exactly that." Bella shrugged, seeming even more bored than a second ago. I could tell that she was revelling in this though. It wasn't every day she got one up on Tanya and she was going to make every second worth it. "Edward is my mate. It's as simple as that. Oh, and the fact that he made me." She crossed her arms over her chest, a silent dare for Tanya to confront her. "Edward and I are mates, and as you know, Tanya, that's not something that can be broken. And as you've already seen, your efforts are worthless." I noticed that Tanya shivered slightly at the memory and I couldn't help but smile. "So, if all you've come here to do is try to split Edward and I up, you can, and I quote Emmett when I say this, you can make like a Tom and cruise."

I had to physically stop myself from laughing, as did the rest of the family. Emmett had heard a girl say that at our last school before we had returned to Forks and had spent a year annoying us with it. It worked right now though.

Bella left the circle the Denali's had formed around her and walked over to us, standing in between Rosalie and Emmett, who looked exceedingly proud of his little sister. Well, I say little in size seeing as Bella was older than him.

"Now, what did you come down here for?" She asked, her gaze passing over the other family.

I had been dreading this. I knew why they were here, and I hadn't wanted them to say. This wasn't for us to sort out. It was for Edward to deal with. It was something above our heads. So why did I keep seeing Bella involved in the situation.

"We have some news." Eleazar stepped out of the line that his family had made. "From Volterra."

"What kind of news?" Carlisle asked, stepping away from our line.

"Maybe this isn't something that should be discussed out in the open." Eleazar looked around, as if there was something watching us, about to jump out and try to devour us, using the Denali's for information.

I scoffed slightly, attention now turning to me. "There's no one else out here." I told them confidently.

"What about *Edward*?" Tanya asked, her gaze lingering on Bella as she said his name.

"He already knows what it is Eleazar has to say. He's not almighty and powerful for nothing." I shrugged nonchalantly, as if this was an everyday occurrence for the Cullens'. It might not have been but there's no reason for them to know that.

"Even so, I would prefer if we took this back to the house." He looked at us all again and Carlisle nodded.

"If it would make you feel more at ease, my friend." He nodded, smiling gently. We all turned and darted back to the house, Bella, being the fastest in front.

"Bells!" I called and she slowed minutely. "I have to say, well done."

She turned and grinned at me. "Well, what can I say. Edward's rubbing off on me." I knew that there was more behind that statement, but I didn't get a chance to ask before she sped up again, bounding over the river that ran close to our home. We all made it back to the house in around about a minute, and waited for the Denali's to get themselves comfortable. What I found amusing was that Tanya was still glaring daggers at Bella. It seemed she really wanted to get her claws into Edward. What I don't think she realised what that her seduction techniques probably wouldn't work on him, even if Bella wasn't in the picture. Still, it was funny to watch her seethe.

Bella and Rose obviously found this amusing as well because they were both smiling smugly at the blonde vampire.

"What is it that you know, Eleazar?" Carlisle asked, gently, sitting on the sofa, facing the visiting family. Esme sat down next to him, her hand on his knee whilst the rest of us stood behind them. A united front, with our two 'leaders' as it were in front.

"We know that there is unrest in Italy." He sighed, sitting on one of the other sofas in the room. "It seems that Aro believes that you are a threat to-"

"That's why Edward's here." Bella cut in, earning a scowl from Tanya and nervous looks from the others.

"He's been here for a few days now. He said to us that Aro believes we've become too large of a group and that he thinks we're dangerous." Esme filled in.

"Though I do remember Edward stating that he believed Aro to be an insufferable idiot." Bella smiled, looking at Eleazar. "His words not mine."

"That is very true." Carlisle nodded. "Is there anything else you know, Eleazar? Maybe we should wait for Edward to return before you say anything more. I mean, if it's something to do with Italy, then he'll want to know."

"He already does." I interrupted their conversation.

"What do you mean?" Carmen asked, looking at me nervously.

"He already knows what you're about to tell us." I shrugged looking over them. "That's why he left."

"Does that mean that *you* know why?" Jasper asked, turning to face me.

I nodded. "I do."

"Well then?" They were all looking at me.

Not a word, Alice. Not until Eleazar comes forward with the information. Edward's voice echoed through my mind. Normally, I wouldn't be afraid, but seeing as the order kind of came from the number one, I'm keeping schtum. "Well, what?" I asked, playing the ignorance card.

"Why did he leave?" Rosalie asked, exasperation in her tone.

"Sorry," I shook my head. "Can't tell you."

"Why not?" Irina asked, sounding confused and a little pissed off.

"Because he told me not to." I shrugged, looking around at them. It was true. He *did* tell me not to tell them.

"Why?" I shrugged. "What does that mean?"

"It means, I don't know why." I rolled my eyes.

"I thought you were supposed to be miss 'all seeing psychic'." Tanya sneered at me. Someone really needs to knock her off her high horse.

"Actually, *Tanya* ." Anyone could play the 'sneer game', and I spat her name. Not something I normally do. "Edward knows my gift as well as I do. He can block me from seeing things. *That* is why I don't know. Okay? Only he knows his reasonings behind what he does. And unless he wants us to know, no one else will."

"Ali, calm down." Bella had placed a hand on my shoulder, telling that I was stressed. "Tanya, I think that if you don't have anything interesting to say, don't say anything at all."

Tanya stood there, her mouth opening and closing looking like a demented fish. If I wasn't so pissed with her at the moment, I would have laughed. But with the situation as it was, I was becoming more and more pissed with Tanya. The fact that I keep getting flashes of her attacking Bella isn't helping matters.

"Calm down, everyone." Carlisle stood up, ever the peacemaker. "Now, Eleazar, would you kindly tell us what you know. Maybe then we can work out some kind of contingency plan."

"What we know isn't going to please anyone." He looked at Jasper, who now had his arms around me, sort of comforting me, but also preparing to restrain me from launching myself at Tanya who was still picturing herself and deciding how she was going to attack Bella.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you, Tanya." I muttered, knowing that she, and the rest of the room, could hear me. "You harm her and you won't be seeing tomorrow." I smirked at her. "Edward will see to that."

That stopped those pesky little visions.

"With that out of the way, Eleazar, please, if there's something endangering my family, I think we have a right to know." Esme pleaded and Eleazar nodded.

"We've heard that Aro is planning on going against the laws Edward set in place." The others looked around confused. "He is planning on building an army of newborns, not too large, so that the guard lose control of them, but large enough so that they can wipe you out."

"Their guard is big enough so that they shouldn't worry." Emmett said, sounding and looking awfully confused. "I mean, there's more than enough of them. And they have their gifted little brats." Alec and Jane. I shivered remembering the effects of Jane's gifts. Thankfully, none of us had had to experience Alec's gift. Well, except Tanya, to a certain extent today.

"I hate to say it," Kate said quietly. "They could wipe us all out quite easily."

"No." A smooth, velvety voice said from the corner. "They can't."

We all turned and saw Edward leaning against the doorway, as he had done a few days ago when we had first met him. He was pissed. Anyone could tell that. His old and wisened eyes were filled with rage, and I knew that it wasn't directed at us. Even so, I knew that that wasn't enough insurance to feel safe.

His eyes were a bright red again, signalling that he had just fed and I was glad that I had closed my mind off to him when he left. I knew that was what he was going to do, but then again, I think we all knew. No one mentioned it though. We were all too smart for that.

"What do you mean?" Irina asked quietly, her voice small and timid.

"I mean," He pushed himself off of the door and walked towards us slowly, menacingly as he had when he first arrived. "That there is one of you in this room, that prevents them from attacking with their gifts."

Bella. I thought and his eyes flicked to me, confirming what I had thought with a small smirk. He looked over my family with the same expression, his eyes softening slightly when he looked at Bella. *He loves her.* His gaze flicked back to me, his eyes fierce and dangerous. *I won't say anything. I swear.*

No. His voice sounded in my head again, startling me slightly. *You won't.*

I looked at Bella who was smiling slightly at him. It was lucky that she was facing him, facing away from the Denali family, as one: they would be able to see her smiling at him and two: she would probably go insane at the flirting eyes Tanya was sending Edward. The looks he was clearly ignoring. *She loves you, too.* I thought, knowing he could hear me. *That much is clear.*

Maybe so. He thought, not breaking eye contact with Bella. *But that stays with you. No one will know of this. Understood!*

Jasper will know. I thought. *Empath, after all.*

True. He still didn't look away from Bella. *You will speak to him. After the departure of the Denali's. The more anyone knows, the more danger Isabella is in. And you don't want that, do you?*

No.

He was right. With anyone knowing that Bella was Edward's mate, she was in danger. She could be seen as Edward's one and only weakness and there was a huge chance that someone would think to use her as such.

Exactly.

I knew that he could hear was thinking, and that unnerved me. I didn't like the idea that someone could get into my head. The fact that he had Aro's power as well, meaning that he could know everything I've ever thought in my entire existence scared me a little.

Maybe he knew the things that I had forgotten from when I was human. Maybe he knew what had happened to me. Who I was, where I was from and everything when I was human. I looked up at him and saw him smiling slightly, his eyes now trained on me. It wasn't a smirk like I had become used to. It was a small sad smile.

I wondered what would cause him to give me that kind of smile. Maybe there was something that we didn't know.

Then it dawned on me. *He doesn't know what happened to him, either.* I looked at him and he nodded once. *Do you know what happened to me?* He shook his head and I felt my heart drop.

I can find out. I looked up at him and saw the sincerity in his eyes. He really would help me. *After we sort this mess out.*

"Who's that?" Tanya asked and I was brought out of the trance that Edward's eyes lulled me into. It seemed to me like an hour or so had gone past when really it was around a second or so. Goes to show how quickly words can be exchanged, even in the mind. I could see why Bella was so taken with him. He was entrancing once you got past the terrifying exterior. *If you got past the terrifying exterior that is.*

"Bella, you idiot." He snarled at her, his eyes narrowing in her direction. I glanced behind me and saw her physically retract into herself, along with the rest of her family. None of them had really experienced Edward before. We had, even if it was for such a short time, but it gave us a good grounding for what he was like. I hoped at least. "Her shielding ability stops their gifts from being effective. With her protection, their gifts are useless, and practically none of the Volturi guards are experienced fighters. A lot of them are relatively new. Two, maybe three years old. They need the newborns for their strength."

He said all of this with a bored tone, lazily looking around. Of course, he wouldn't think that any of this was a reason to panic. He was indestructible. Whilst all of us. Not so much.

"If that's true, then we're screwed." Rosalie sighed gently, her head dropping into her hands.

"You'd think so." Edward smirked. Now *that* was the normal smirk that I was used to. The all-knowing, confident smirk that set the hairs on the back of your neck standing straight up.

"When do we leave?" Bella asked and all eyes turned to her.

"We?" Esme's voice was full of worry and fear.

Bella was going to have a hell of a time explaining this one.

Bella

"We?" I heard Esme gasp from behind me.

"Yes, Esme." I nodded, not looking away from Edward. My chest had been aching the whole time he wasn't with me. Now he was here and it was taking all of my self control not to throw my arms around him, just so that I would be touching him. "Edward and I have already had this discussion. He's leaving for Italy, and I'm going with him." I didn't look at my family. I knew that Alice would already know what was going on. She would have known as soon as Edward made the decision to leave and I made my decision to go with him.

"Why, Bella, dear?" She was right behind me now, and I know she didn't want me to go. She put her hands on my shoulders, lovingly like a mother would. "Why would you want to leave us?"

"Because I can't be without him." I whispered, turning to face her. I saw her face soften and spread into a smile right in front of my eyes. She knew what I meant. She knew how I was feeling because she knew deep down that if Carlisle were to leave right now, she would follow him to the ends of the earth. Granted they had been together longer, but that didn't matter to me. The pull I had towards him was overpowering.

"But-"

"And I *want* to go, Esme." I told her quietly. "Besides, it'll be safer for me if I go. Being with Edward is the safest place for me."

"How do you figure that one?" Emmett asked, having heard what I had said.

"Because no one is going to attack me, are they?" He rolled his eyes and I couldn't help but giggle, moving towards him. I took his hand in mine, knowing that everyone knew they were mates. I didn't care anymore and he smiled down at me. It wasn't a cruel smile like everyone had become accustomed to, or even the small smile he had given Alice a moment ago. I don't know if anyone else caught that smile, but I certainly did. It was one that showed he truly cared about me, just like I cared about him. That I was the one who had his heart. He looked back up at the rest of them, his eyes hardening again. "The safest place for her is with me. The Volturi know about her. I've seen some things I don't want to happen."

I didn't want to imagine what he was talking about. He hadn't told me what he had seen, only that it was something that he didn't want to come to pass. I hoped that meant that he felt the same way about me that I did about him.

"He's not forcing you into this, is he, Bells?" Emmett asked and I turned to look at him.

"Of course not!" I stared at him as though he was insane. "Do you really think that anyone can make me do anything I don't want to. He didn't even *want* me to go."

"You didn't want her to go?" Rosalie asked, her tone surprised. I looked up at Rose to find a mixture of shock and surprise on her face. I looked back up at Edward to find a bored look on his face. As if I'd find anything else. "Bells. Can I talk to you?"

I looked between her and Edward. I looked her in the eye and nodded. We walked outside slowly, not talking until we were out of earshot, even Edward's.

"What did you want to talk about, Rose?" I asked her, my tone more impatient than I wanted it to come out.

I saw her visibly wince at my words and I wanted to apologise, before I remembered, I had nothing to apologise for. It wasn't my fault that Edward was my mate. But she was able to control her reaction to that news. Something she didn't do.

"I'm sorry, Bella." She said, stopping suddenly and looking at me, her golden eyes wide. "I'm sorry for the way I acted when I found out Edward was your mate."

"Really?" I asked, turning to face her, finding nothing but sincerity in her expression.

"Yes, Bella." She nodded, looking down at her feet. She was obviously feeling guilty about her actions. "I didn't handle the news well and I'm sorry."

"Why did you say and do all of that stuff?" I asked, stepping closer to her. She looked up at me, her eyes reproachful and I couldn't bring myself to feel angry at her anymore. She really was guilty. I didn't need Jasper's ability to know that. "Why did you act that way?"

"I was scared, I guess." She mumbled quietly. "I guess, knowing who Edward was, what he's capable of and everything and I just thought....."

"You thought that he'd hurt me." I finished and she nodded. "What's changed?"

"Even in the tiny amount of time I've seen the two of you together, I can see the way he looks at you." She said softly, and I could tell that if she could, she'd have tears rolling down her cheeks. "The way he

looks at you is the way that Emmett looks at me, the way Jasper looks at Alice and the way Carlisle looks at Esme. Even if he doesn't realise it yet, he's yours, Bells." She choked out a laugh. "Imagine that. Our little Bells has the heart of the most powerful creature in the world at her beck and call."

"He has mine as well." I mumbled softly, smiling slightly and she smiled back.

"I'm sorry I said all of those things. And that I acted the way I did." She shook her head gently. "I just wanted to keep my family safe. I know now, that I went about it the wrong way. I should have trusted you when you told us that he was alright. That it was okay, as long as we didn't piss him off." I chuckled slightly. "Really, Bells." She looked into my eyes, a small smile on her face. "I really am happy for you. I'm glad you have your special someone."

"Thank you, Rose." I hugged her, sighing. "I didn't know what I was missing until a few days ago. Now I feel like I won't be able to survive without him. It's stupid but..."

"That's the same way I felt about Emmett when I found him." She sighed, smiling as she thought about Emmett. "I knew that he was the one."

"Maybe Alice is right." I giggled. "When the one comes along, you just know." She nodded. "And besides, he's gorgeous, don't you think."

"I suppose some girls might find him good looking." She shrugged, trying not to smile. "If they have eyes. Okay he's a honey." She grinned at me and I nodded, victorious. "Come on, let's go." She held out her arm and I linked mine through it. "Bells?" I looked at her. "Are you really going to Italy?"

"I have to Rose." I sighed, hoping that she would understand. "He's going and I don't think I can be away from him. Even now, I want to

run back to the house and throw myself into his arms. Whether or not he wants that, I don't know, but still, I do."

"Who cares what he wants, eh?" She giggled and I smiled.

"Something like that." I looked back at the house, knowing that everyone in there was waiting for us. "Listen, Rose." I stopped before we were back in earshot. "Edward's right. The safest place for me *is* with him. He's told me that the Volturi know about me. If I'm left here when he goes, who knows what will happen. He'll protect me. I'll be safe with him that I am here."

"I know, Bells." She nodded. "I'm just going to miss you, that's all."

"I'll miss you, too, Rosie." I wrapped my arms around her, squeezing her tightly to me.

We walked back to the house, splitting off, Rose going to Emmett and me walking over to Edward. There was something in his eyes as he looked at me. I could only hope that he was feeling what I was. I didn't know what it was I was feeling, but it wasn't something I was used to. I wondered if this was anything close to what the other's felt.

"When do we leave?" I asked, smiling up at him.

"Whenever you're ready." He replied, his face passive and I knew that it was because there were people around us. I had the hope that he would kiss me when we were alone. It was a small hope, but one I was counting on.

"Let's go then." I smiled up at him before saying goodbye to my family.

Each goodbye was short and sweet, none of us being too full on. I knew that I would see them again sometime. For us, time had no meaning. It wasn't like we were bound to it. There was no reason to say a ull fledged goodbye. More of a 'see you later' type of thing.

After saying a quick goodbye to the Denali's, I found that I was out of the door and running east with Edward without even knowing how I got there. We were running because Edward wanted to work on developing my other abilities before we reached Italy. I hoped that we would be able to strengthen them slightly.

I just hoped I knew what I was getting into.

This chapter wasn't going to have Bella POV in it, but it sort of flowed into that. Next one is Edward POV from when he disappeared when the Denali's arrived. I will warn that it's a bit of a sadistic chapter, as Edward's POV normally is, but this is more so.

Weak stomach: don't read.

Anyways, tell me the quote and give me a review. You know how I love them so. :D

The Thing of Nightmares

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

The quote for the last chapter was said by Rosalie. It was "I suppose some girls might find him good looking. If they have eyes. Okay, he's a honey." Those who got it were: *Sadie1787, Vampire Phantom (aka Black Dawn), pietje (I'm going to find one she can't find! I will!), klaytie1577, Sumomo14 (Again, I will find one she can't find!).*

Which I think describes Edward very well, because he most definitely is a honey. Don't you agree?

With the new story, adding up the votes from the poll and the PMs that were sent through, it was actually a tie between Without A Trace and Under Your Spell. I'm going to put up another poll until tomorrow for you guys to decide which one you want. It's all up to you.

Anyways here's the much asked for EPOV. I warn you, it is a tad sadistic. Lets put it this way ... Edward's having some fun.

If you don't like anything like that, then skip this chapter.

Edward.

As I moved away from the gathering of vampires, I made sure to head towards Seattle.

The interaction with Tanya had tried my patience. You would have thought that for a creature that has been around for a millenia or so, give or take a decade, I'll admit, would have a higher thought process than that of a seventeen year old boy. Especially since said creature is female.

Obviously not.

Sometimes I wonder where all the intelligence of the Stone Age has disappeared to.

The others in the clan seem to have a decent intellect and I knew from experience that Eleazar was one of the most brilliant minds I had come across. He had a vat of knowledge that just kept expanding. That could be said for the rest of my kind, but then again, not every vampire in the world paid accute attention to their surroundings like Eleazar did. He drank everything in.

So why couldn't this intellect be transferred to the one vampire in that clan that seemed to take an interest in me.

Her jealousy towards Isabella was extreme, and I had had to control myself when it came to holding myself back. I'd almost lost control when I'd heard some of her thoughts directed at Isabella. It seems that her jealousy of Isabella is as old as Isabella herself.

Amusing, I must say.

I ran towards Seattle, my patience waning even further. I would have taken my car, but it that would have taken longer than running.

It wasn't as though I was going to smell after running the distance either, so there was really no reason to worry.

I slowed down as I reached the city limits, walking down the busy streets, thankful for the cloudy skies, because one: there was no chance of exposure and two: it kept the humans inside for fear of rain. No humans means no mindless chatter happening inside my head. No mindless chatter means that I don't go on a killing spree throughout downtown Seattle.

There were still humans about, but not as many as there would be if it was a sunny day. How the weather can work in my favour, isn't it? That's one of the reasons the Olympic Peninsula is one of the best

places for a vampire to live. I had to applaud the Cullens' for making that conscious decision. Well, in my head at least.

That thought turns my own thoughts back to Isabella. What she didn't realise was that by allowing her to read a select part of my mind, she was strengthening her own powers. If she was adamant about joining me, which I could see she was, I didn't want to fly to Italy. It wouldn't take long enough. I wanted to train her. Teach her how to tap into her power. And who better to practise on than the only indestructible one in the world, and the one who happens to have direct access to any power he wants. That was just a bonus if you ask me.

Enhancing Isabella's powers was an important step. She needed to know what she was capable of as well as I did. I knew exactly what she was capable of and it was something she needed to learn on her own. It wasn't something I could teach her.

As I walked down the streets of Seattle, the mindless chit-chat of the conclusive human mind swarmed in at me and I knew I needed to eat something soon or I was going to lose it. I walked into a bar, that was fairly full. Just so that no one would notice someone going missing in the middle of the night.

As I walked through, the self-preservation instinct that humans had in built made them move aside. I made my way to the bar, which was the perfect place to scope out any unsuspecting meals.

As it turned out, I didn't have to look far. Sitting at the end of the bar were two young girls, around twenty-two years of age and from what I could read in their drunken-stupored minds they had lost their boyfriends when they had gone to the restroom. But at the moment the thoughts *what boyfriend* ? seemed to be plastered on each of the girls faces as they stumbled their way towards me.

Of course, the fact that no human could resist me when I looked at them. If I told them to come to me then they bloody well came to me.

They stumbled their way over to me, trying their best to look 'sexy' as it was put in their deranged little drunken minds. Being honest, it looked as though they were trying to make their way through an obstacle course on stilts.

Now Isabella on the other hand.

She was beautiful.

That strange magnetic pull I'd had in my chest since meeting Isabella was back full force and I couldn't help but want to run back to Forks to be with her.

I needed to feed though. And it was better that I did so before I went back to meet with Dippy and her Looney Toon pals. I shook my head. Where the hell did *that* thought come from?

I rolled my eyes when I realised. Isabella's 'brother' Emmett. He was always running through stupid little quotes in his mind. It was a good thing that I could block out unwanted thoughts, but then again, his hadn't really bothered me that much. They were just an undercurrent of something strange running through my mind. Honestly, I was far more interested in Isabella's mind. When I negated her shield, the level of intelligence in that beautiful mind of hers was astonishing. She had the same thirst for knowledge that I had only seen in Carlisle and Eleazar before.

She wanted to learn, whereas other vampires only learned by default when they travelled.

She and her 'brothers and sisters' kept revisiting high school, even though Isabella herself had two medical degrees under her belt. They did it to 'blend in' as I'd gathered. Why they felt the need to blend in I didn't quite know. Well, at least to the extent that they did.

Maybe it was something to do with the whole animal blood drinking.

That would probably be the only thing to cause a riff between the two of us. I had seen that Isabella and I would argue about the diet choice of the other and no matter what the decision, that wasn't going to change. I guess I'm going to have to get used to being challenged by her then.

That was going to take some time.

I can tell you that now.

"Hello sweetheart." One of them slurred, leaning on the bar next to me. It took all I had not to snap her neck right then and there.

"You're cute." The other practically fell onto the bar on the other side of me, spilling most of her drink. Again with the control. These two are not going to be good for my patience.

Still, I was thirsty and these two were throwing themselves at me.

Who am I to pass up an easy meal?

I looked at the two of them suggestively and they both giggled, not even put off or fearful of the deep red of my eyes. Now if they had been sober, they probably would have gotten one look at my eyes and disappeared. Well, technically speaking, they probably wouldn't have approached me if they had been sober. I had done this many times. No words were needed. I'm the world's most dangerous predator. They were drawn in by everything about me. Just being so close to me set their hormones and adrenaline running. I brought out reactions in humans that they didn't understand or couldn't fight. No matter how much they wanted to.

I winked at the two of them, sliding off of the stool I was perched on, making my way out of the bar.

I walked outside of the bar and leaned against the wall.

"Three two one." I looked at the door and saw the two drunkard girls stumble out.

"There you ahre, darhling." The both of them giggled and I smirked. They walked towards me. Well, I say walked. It was more like watching Bambi take his first steps if I'm completely honest. Only, the deer was more graceful.

I walked towards them slowly, keeping up the human pretenses that I would have to until I got the two girls alone.

I waved them into a waiting cab, and they clambered in, trying not to lose their shoes, bags or fall head over heels as they did so. That was embarrassing to watch and I saw the two girls depicted in the cabbie's mind. Pretty much in the same way that they were in mine.

Drunk and good for only one thing.

But the similarities stopped there. The cabbie was thinking they were useful for something different than I was.

He was thinking sex. I on the other hand was thinking ... dinner.

I gracefully joined the two girls in the back of the cab, calmly ignoring the two girls pawing at me, whilst also trying to put the cabbie's thoughts out of my head. He was thinking that I was either going to have one of the best nights of my life, or that I was a pimp, making a lot of money.

If only he knew, that neither was the right conclusion.

I gave him the name of a hotel I had seen in many people's minds. It would be the best place. It was frequently used by drunkards coming back at all hours, but it was one of the nicer hotels in the city. How people could afford the price of these hotels after an expensive night out was beyond me, but whatever worked for them.

We stopped outside the apartment block I had chosen and I gave the cabbie a wad of cash. I knew that I had given him too much, but after accumulating as much as I had over the years, there wasn't much about money that bothered me. Except how obsessed with it humans were that is.

"Good evening." The receptionist greeted us, her thoughts turning seedy and disgusting as soon as she laid eyes on me. She didn't seem to register that I didn't actually live in this building and all she could think about was how good I would look covered in chocolate? Too bad Isabella's not here. That could have been amusing to share with her. Well, the outcome would have been amusing at least.

"Is it?" I asked her. Being honest, I hadn't even noticed that the sun had gone down. Humans were always drinking these days so you never know what the time was. There was always somewhere open these days.

"Well, it is now." She winked at me. Where do these humans pick up their different attempts at seduction. Some of them were downright pathetic. I seemed to find myself preferring the behaviours of women from a century ago. They may have been meek and annoying but at least they weren't brazen and embarrassing. To themselves that is. I bet you everything I owned – which was a hell of a lot, if I do say so myself – that if most of them saw how they looked on film then there was a very good chance they would become nuns.

I took the room key she gave me, giving her a smile that was intended to 'dazzle' as Isabella had put it in her mind more than once. She would forget that she'd even seen me at all in about five minutes.

I led the two inebriated girls into the elevator, where they immediately started pawing at me again, just as they had in the cab. I let them do it, allowing them one more minute of fun before they met their end.

I led them into the room and the two of them immediately stood there open mouthed at the suite.

"Wo-ow!" One of them stood there, swaying, propping the other up. I was sure that if I could get drunk, I would just off the fumes that the two of them were giving out.

I shook my head, doubting my choice, not for the first time.

Had to go for the easy meal, didn't you, Edward?

I nodded towards the bed and the two of them giggled, attempting at flicking off their shoes gracefully before they stumbled towards the bed. I allowed them to pull me down onto the bed with them, as they giggled and ran their hands up and down my back and chest, seeming unsure of where to start. That was fine with me.

I turned to the one laying on my left side leaning over her and breathing gently down onto her face, intoxicating her even more while I took the bars of the headboard in my hand, guiding her hands up above her head with my free hand. I bent the bars around her wrists, essentially trapping her there.

"Oooh, like to play, do we?" She giggled, grinning at me, as she pretended to try to wriggle free. I smirked at her, knowing that even if she was really trying to free herself she wouldn't be able to. I had bound her with the bars so tightly that she was going to lose the feeling to her fingers soon.

I would have some fun with her friend in the meantime.

I turned away from the girl I had bound to the bed and climbed on top of the second one who was giggling madly away to herself.

"Come to play, have we?" She smirked at me, narrowing her eyes at me, batting her eyes seductively.

She ran her hands up and down my thighs before she reached up and unbuttoned her shirt slowly. I nudged her hands away, popping open each and every button without sending a single one of them flying.

"Skilled at that, aren't we?" She giggled, placing a hand over her mouth and looking at her friend who was watching on with interest, giggling at her friend. I could smell the arousal coming from the two of them.

"He's had practise." The other whispered back, laughing.

Oh, if only you knew.

I ghosted my fingers up and down her sides and she twitched subconsciously at the cold feel of my fingers on her warm skin. I leaned down, placing my lips close to her ear as she sighed, contented and, yup, still drunk.

"Like that, do we?" I whispered and she sighed again.

"Oh, yeah." She whispered, her arousal growing and her eyes sliding shut.

I smirked to myself, slowly, dragging my thumb down her side, drawing a thick line of blood as I went. She twitched and moaned as my thumb made its way down her side.

She smiled at me, thinking it was a game, her eyes widening slightly as I pulled my thumb away from her skin and placed it to my lips, licking every drop off.

"Well..." She slurred, blinking a couple of times. "That's a bit weird."

"You think so?" I whispered, ghosting my lips down her jawline and throat, lingering a hairs breadth away from her pulsepoint.

She sighed again, and I saw out of the corner of my eye, her eyes flutter closed as she enjoyed the sensation of my breath on her

throat. Her friend had closed her eyes, enjoying the sounds that were coming out of her friend and picturing what I was going to do to her. If only she knew that she was about a thousand miles off base here. She'd be screaming and pleading for help.

Oh well. She'll be screaming and pleading soon enough.

I blew gently on the girls' throat and bit down, eliciting a small moan from her. She whimpered slightly as I began to draw her blood out of her body, but soon stopped after the effects of the alcohol and blood loss began to cloud her senses even more.

Her friend didn't stir as I drained the blood out of the girl she valued like a sister. That made me chuckle inside. You see someone as family and yet you can't tell when they're dying right next to you? Humans are such moronic creatures.

Once I had drained the girl completely I climbed off of the bed, heading into the bathroom. I looked at my reflection and saw that already my eyes had returned to a bright gleaming red. Not that it bothered me, but I knew it bothered Isabella that I fed off of humans. One reason I didn't feed in that pathetic little town she calls home.

It was then that I heard it.

The deafening scream as the one still alive looked into the cold, unblinking eyes of the one she used to call her best friend.

"You monster!" She screamed as I walked through the doorway and towards the bed. "You killed her! You bastard!"

"I wouldn't make that kind of noise, if I were you." I called quietly in a sing song voice as I approached her.

She started wriggling, beginning to panic as she realised that she couldn't actually get free. She seemed to have sobered up extremely quickly as soon as she realised that her friend was in fact dead. She

kept looking at her friends bloodied neck and then back to my lips as she registered what had happened.

"What the fuck are you?!" She screamed as I slid on top of her, straddling her hips.

I placed a hand over her lips and she screamed behind it. "Like I said, you shouldn't really be making that much noise." I smiled at her. "Now, if you're quiet, then I might let you go. But if you're not, then people are going to come and see what's going on, and if they do that well....." I turned her head to look at her friend. "Do you really want that to happen to more people?"

Her eyes widened at the prospect of more people getting hurt and she tried to shake her head. I smirked down at her and saw that her eyes widened even more when she took in the fierce red colour of my eyes. "I didn't think so."

I drew my hand away, ripping open her top to reveal a bright pink, lacy bra underneath. She whimpered in fear as my fingers ghosted over the soft flesh of her breasts. I dragged the tips of my index fingers in an identical pattern over her breasts, revelling in the sounds that she made as she felt my nails causing a divide in the soft flesh.

I brought my finger to my mouth and licked off the blood there. Her eyes widened as she realised that I had actually drunk the blood of her friend and not just made it look like I had.

"What are you?" She whimpered, shaking heavily through fear.

I couldn't help but smirk as I saw the immediate fear in her eyes. She knew that she was going to die. Even if she hadn't accepted it yet. I moved up so that my face was level with hers. "Your worst nightmare?" I whispered and she whimpered again, tears sliding down her cheeks.

I trailed the other finger over her body, making a trail with the blood that dripped from it. She whimpered and wriggled with fear as I licked my way along the cut over her left breast, trailing my tongue over to her right one, cleaning up the mess. I would have to act quickly now, seeing as the venom from my tongue would have seeped into the cut and would begin to change her soon.

I ran my nose to the curve of her breast, just above the wire and bit down, straight through the flimsy material, drawing blood.

She gasped in pain as I drank, her breaths becoming shorter, choppy and shallower.

I didn't stop drinking as her heart beat its last, knowing that her body hadn't been fully drained. That was the worst thing about my venom. It was so potent that it caused the heart to restart if there was any blood left in the system of my victim.

I drew away once I had drained her of every single drop of blood, leaving her and her friend on the bed, their faces contorted into identical masks of mixed fear and ecstasy.

I made my way into the bathroom, checking that I hadn't spilled any blood down me, because nothing draws attention like blood spots on your shirt. And that was something I couldn't be arsed with tonight. Especially going back to a group of vegetarian vampires.

As soon as I had checked I was clean of any blood, I made my way over to the window, and checking that there were ledges to jump onto, I nimbly launched myself out of the window. It wouldn't have mattered if there weren't any ledges, but dropping several hundred feet when you're made of living marble made one: a bit of a loud noise and two: a crater in the street. Not fun trying to explain that.

After making my way to the street below, I began my walk to the city limits on which I thought over the information I had gathered from Eleazar before I'd left. Aro was really pushing my patience lately.

As I began to run back to the dismal little town, I smirked to myself.

Back to the organised chaos that is my life I guess.

This was going to be one chapter, but I hadn't finished it and it was already too long. I know some of you prefer the longer chapters but the length of it was beyond stupid, so I split it into two.

The second part to this chapter should be up later on today, my internet connection willing.

Now: Where's the quote?!

Playing at Kindness

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

*A lot of you got the right quote, just the wrong film. Most of you guessed either Mulan or Rambo, but neither of them are correct. The quote was in fact "Your worst nightmare" from Android Apocalypse. *shrugs* I was watching it with a friend the other day and it seemed like a good line for Edward to say.*

Speaking of Edward, you'll want to read the AN at the bottom of the page. Anyways, on with the story.

Sorry to say, but this chapter will overlap with the previous one from Bella/Alice POV. Just so you know.

Edward

Running back to Forks, I thought about the one thing in my life I didn't think I would be able to let go anymore.

Isabella.

Normally, to me, everything, even living creatures were expendable. Easily replaced. But her?

I knew that there was not, never had been and never would be another Isabella Marie Cullen in the world. There might be someone with the same name, but another vampire like Isabella? Never.

There was something about her, I couldn't really put my finger on it, that made her special. It wasn't the fact that my chest ached when I was away from her, that magnetic pull that the two of us seemed to share, guiding us towards each other above everything else, or that jolt of electricity that passed through us when we touched. No, this was something else. I couldn't put my finger on it.

And that pissed me off.

So, I'm a control freak that needs to know what's going on all the time. I'm old. So sue me.

As I neared the house, I could hear everyone's minds going into a frenzy. Eleazar had delivered the message of Aro's treachery to them, and it had shocked them all. Even though Eleazar had told them of what was occurring (or about to occur) in Italy, Alice had kept to her promise and kept her mouth shut. *Good little pixie.*

They had heard the news and weren't taking it well. They were doing something I hated. They were doubting themselves. Leave it to Aro to bring out this kind of reaction from a very capable group of vampires. That little prick was going to get what was coming to him. What's been coming to him and his vile brothers since they were created. I questioned why they had been created in the first place. It was obvious what they were like when they were human. They would be worse as vampires.

"I hate to say it," I heard Kate say quietly as I entered the house. "They could wipe us all out quite easily."

"No." I disagreed with her and all eyes turned to where I was standing. "They can't."

I could see the flickers of fear run across the faces and through the minds of everyone present. Everyone except my Isabella that is. She knew that she wouldn't be harmed. I couldn't harm her, not even if I wanted to.

The others, well, they were scared. Just as they should be.

"What do you mean?" One of the Denali clan, Irina asked, her voice small, timid, quiet and afraid. She might be a thousand year old succubi, but she was no fool.

"I mean," I pushed myself off the door and made my way towards the group in front of me, enjoying the waves of fear and apprehension that rolled off of them. Jasper, the empath in the group could feel it too, and it was overwhelming him somewhat. "That there is one of you in this room, that prevents them from attacking with their gifts.

Bella .

The thought had come from Alice, the little pixie vampire and I looked at her with a smirk. I gazed over the group in front of me, looking over the Cullens, more than the Denalis, for they were essentially the ones in danger here. I looked at Bella and judging from the look on her face, if she could blush then she would be an incredible shade of pink by now.

He loves her. I looked back over to Alice, and I knew that she could feel the intensity of my gaze and what it meant because she quickly backtracked in her mind. *I won't say anything. I swear.*

No . I voiced my answers inside her head and her thoughts stopped for a moment, clearly slightly confused at another of my gifts. *You won't .*

I could see her looking at Isabella. I had to smirk at the thoughts running through her head. She was worried about what the succubus that had challenged me earlier was doing. She might have lured in many human men with that smile and her 'charms', but me, not so much. There was only one vampire that I was interested in. Now *that* wasn't something I was used to.

Seems Isabella is bringing out a side to me that I didn't know I had.

She loves you too. She thought, her gaze returning to me. *That much is clear.*

I didn't look away from Isabella. I couldn't bring myself to. One glance into that liquid gold and I was lost to her, as she seemed to

be with regards to me. *Maybe so. But that stays with you. No one else will know of this. Understood!*

Jasper will know. She replied, not in an all-knowing way, because I think she knew what would happen if she came the smart-arse with me. *Empath, after all.*

True . Even though I was having a conversation with Alice, my eyes were on Isabella. I didn't notice anything around me. *You will speak to him.* I told her, using my authority. *After the departure of the Denali's. The more anyone knows, the more danger Isabella is in. And you don't want that, do you?* I wasn't threatening her. Just illuminating something I knew she didn't want to happen.

No.

I could hear her going through everything in her mind. She was weighing up how much she wanted to squeal that Isabella had finally found someone and was in love, against the fact that the more people who knew about my relationship with Isabella and how I felt about her, the more people were a threat to her sister. She didn't want anything to happen to her.

Neither did I. *Exactly.*

She shivered minutely. Nobody other than myself noticed. She didn't like the fact that I was inside her head. She quickly went through the idea that seeing as I also had the power that Aro possessed, I could hear everything that someone has ever thought. *Well done.* I thought to myself dryly, but what caught my attention was the fact that her thoughts immediately went to the fact that I might know who she was, what happened to her. I couldn't help but turn to look at her, smiling slightly. She was confused by my smile seeing as it wasn't the smirk that she was used to. No, the smirk had no place in this moment in time.

He doesn't know what happened to him, either. She realised, her mind reeling from the sudden realisation as she looked up at me. I

noded once and her expression grew ever so slightly hopeful. *Do you know what happened to me?* I shook my head, minutely, such a tiny movement that nobody else in the room saw it. Her heart fell as did her expression.

But I can find out. I found myself actually *wanting* to help her. I knew how it was to live in this half-life for an eternity with no answers. The least I could do was provide Alice with some. Even if she didn't remember who she was before she was changed, the memories were still inside her mind somewhere, locked away, where she could not reach them. But I could. With a momentary touch of her hand, I would be able to see everything that had happened to her in her life. Both human and vampire. *After we sort this mess out.*

"Who's that?" I heard Tanya ask. Was she really that dense? It appeared so. The minds of everyone else in the room knew exactly who I was talking about, though none of them had realised so readily as Alice.

She was lulled out of the momentary trance that she had succumbed into whilst we had our internal conversation. Isabella was right. I did 'dazzle' people. Well, I already knew that, but then again, you would have thought Alice would see that coming. I wasn't messing with her gift at the moment. Her thoughts were interesting. She found me *entrancing* and yet terrifying at the same time. I wondered if Jasper knew what she was thinking. That could be interesting.

"Bella, you idiot." I turned to face her, my eyes narrowing, pleased when she recoiled into herself, not trusting that I wouldn't hurt her. The rest of the Denalis followed suit, but the Cullens were ever so slightly more at ease, having been around me for a little while longer. I wasn't sure what I was feeling when it came to that. "Her shielding ability stops their gifts from being effective. With her protection, their gifts are useless, and practically none of the Volturi guards are experienced fighters. A lot of them are relatively new. Two, maybe three years old. They need the newborns for their strength."

Having to tell all of them this was highly boring and I knew that it was coming across in my tone. Alice's thoughts were amusing. Of course I wouldn't panic. They were going to though, because in her view, whilst I was indestructible, giving me no reason to panic, they were not. Ensnare, panic.

"If that's true, then we're screwed." Rosalie sighed gently. I glanced over to her and saw that her posture showed she had completely given up, which from the memories of others, was not like her at all. From the memories I had ascertained from Isabella, she was always fiery and tenacious. What I saw in front of me was a vampire that had lost all hope. Something that only happened when they were faced with one of two threats: the Volturi and me.

You'd think that since I was on their side, she would have a bit more hope.

"You'd think so." I couldn't help but feel smug, smirking around the room. I knew that everyone would be fine, but they didn't know that.

"When do we leave?" Isabella turned and asked me. Everyone looked at her whilst she gazed into my flaming red eyes with her golden brown orbs.

"We?" Esme's voice was that of a worried mother. But then again, she saw all of the Cullens', other than Carlisle, as her children. She had a natural mother's instinct. Protect your children.

"Yes, Esme." Isabella nodded, keeping her eyes fixed upon mine. "Edward and I have already had this discussion. He's leaving for Italy, and I'm going with him." She didn't look around at her family, her mind betrayed that she didn't want to look at her family right now. She'd see their worry and fear. That wasn't something she was interested in right now.

I couldn't blame her.

When I was on your side – well, as close to being on anyone's side as I would get. Ultimately, I was on my own side – fear and worry had no place here. It was unwarranted.

"Why, Bella, dear?" Esme cautiously walked towards the two of us, probably worried at what I would do at her trying to convince Isabella to stay with them. Before I knew that Aro and his vile brothers knew about Isabella, I would have told Isabella to stay here with her family, but now that they knew, I couldn't risk that chance. "Why would you want to leave us?"

"Because I can't be without him." She said it with such certainty and conviction that I knew I felt the same way about her.

Could I dare to love someone?

Could I dare to love Isabella?

Told you so. Alice's thoughts came through loud and clear and I saw her standing there a slight smile on her face. She knew what she was talking about and she knew that I knew that she knew what she was talking about. Wow. I think for the first time in millennia, I just confused *myself*. Odd. *Now you just have to admit it to yourself.*

Watch it, shrimp . I warned her and she didn't know whether or not to be offended, amused or slightly stunned that I was being even somewhat tolerant, maybe even leaning towards playful. That was up to her to decide.

You're still going to help me, right? She asked with her mind, her mental voice smaller and slightly more timid than it had been a moment ago. I nodded slightly and I felt her relax a little. I wouldn't forego on a promise. That wasn't my style. Not knowing where she came from had a huge affect on Alice, not that she let anyone see it. Not even Jasper, who was now looking slightly apprehensive, glancing between Alice and myself every so often, obviously wanting to know what was going on between us. I just gave him a slightly smug yet bored look and he stared straight back, intimidated and

anxious about what was passing between myself and his wife. He had a right to be worried. I was inside his wife's mind after all.

"But-"

"And I *want* to go Esme." Isabella was talking to her mother quietly, not wanting to cause a scene, unaware that all eyes were on her anyway. "Besides, it'll be safer for me if I go. Being with Edward is the safest place for me."

"How do you figure that one?" Her obnoxious brother, Emmett asked, sounding infuriated and confused at the same time. I could feel the animosity towards me and I really didn't care. He could think what he liked about me. It didn't make any difference to me. It wasn't like I'm an elected official here.

"Because no one is going to attack me, are they?" I rolled my eyes, pointing out the obvious. I heard Isabella giggle slightly, and was a little taken aback at how much I liked the sound as I was aware of her moving towards me. I wanted to hear her make that sound more often. I felt her fingers lace through mine gently, and I looked down at her, a smile playing on my lips. She was right. Everyone here knew that we were mates, so it wasn't like anyone was finding out for the first time.

She was showing me how much she cared, and she knew from the smile that I gave her that I cared – I dare say, possibly loved – about her too. She was the one who held my unbeating heart in her hands and she knew it. I didn't care that she knew it. I wanted her to know. I looked back up at the rest of the vampires in the room, the moment between Isabella and I broken for now. "The safest place for her is with me." I told them all, my gaze raking over them one by one. They didn't argue. "The Volturi know about her. I've seen some things I don't want to happen."

I tried not to acknowledge Isabella's momentary and fleeting doubt about the way I felt about her. She had me. For now and forever.

"He's not forcing you into this, is he, Bells?" The large oaf, Emmett asked and Isabella whipped around, placing a hand on my arm as she did so, silently telling me that she had this one. I had to fight to keep my control. It was tough, but I managed it. I couldn't really say the same about Isabella though.

"Of course not!" She was pissed and she thought that her brother was insane. I was inclined to agree. "Do you really think that anyone can make me do anything I don't want to?" *I'd like to challenge you on that one* . "He didn't even want me to go."

"You didn't want her to go?" Rosalie's head popped up from where it had been resting on her hands. She looked surprised at that revelation. *He didn't want her to go. Maybe he really does care about her. What am I talking about? I can see them together in front of my goddamn eyes. Of course he cares about her.* I didn't react to her thoughts, plastering a bored look on my face. It seemed that not everyone in the Cullen family was as ready to admit that Isabella and I were together as Alice was. "Bells. Can I talk to you?"

Bella looked up at me, but I didn't really pay attention to what was going on as a vision flashed in front of my eyes.

Isabella and Rosalie walking at human pace through the woods. Stopping and talking for a few mintues. They would be out of everyone's earshot. Including mine. Rosalie apologising and Isabella being mildly surprised. Apparently, that wasn't something Rosalie did very often if ever. Rosalie accepting that I was Isabella's mate and that she was leaving. Accepting that maybe Alice was right about the mates theory. I felt a particular smugmess radiating from Alice. Apparently she was having the same vision I was. The two of them making their way back to the house, talking.

" And besides, he's gorgeous, don't you think?" Isabella asked Rosalie, looking at her sideways.

" I suppose some girls might find him good looking." Rosalie shrugged, attempting not to smile and failing miserably. "If they have

eyes. *Okay, he's a honey."*

The two of them returning to the house having settled their differences.

As the vision ended, Isabella looked at Rosalie and nodded, the two of them walking off in the direction I had seen them go.

Seems Rose thinks you're a honey . Alice raised an eyebrow at me, smirking slightly.

Who doesn't ?! I replied cockily. *You want to find out about your past?* She nodded once. Just a tiny movement on her head. *Do you want anyone else to know?* She thought for a moment.

Not at the moment. She decided finally, which was a little surprising. I would have thought she'd at least want her husband to know.

Then you need to walk past me, and brush my hand with your own. She looked apprehensive and confused. *It only works with skin on skin contact. If you want to find out where you came from, then that's what you need to do.* She confirmed what she needed to do in her head, and turned to peck Jasper on the treat, murmuring about something she needed to do quickly, before she walked cautiously towards me, moving around me but allowing her skin to come into contact with mine briefly.

Instantly, I saw everything.

And I mean *everything*.

Everything she'd said and done since she had woken up in the woods after enduring three days of burning on her own. Every thought, every whim, every movement was now inside my head. And not only that.

I knew who she was.

I knew where she'd come from.

Who she'd been before she was turned.

And I also knew who turned her, and lets just say that he was dispatched a little less than a century ago for a less than conspicuous killing spree through a mental hospital, leaving one abandoned to turn.

Enter Alice.

I knew that I didn't have enough time to tell her all of the things that I now knew about her, even through our minds. Writing it down was a lot faster. I left the main room of the house, moving into the kitchen, gaining a little privacy from the rest of the vampires in the house. I walked into the kitchen to see a piece of paper and a pad sitting on the island waiting for me. Alice had seen that I was going to ask for it and had gotten what I wanted for me, saving me the wait.

My hand flew across the paper and I was done writing down her history in around a minute or so. I knew that I had written down everything she had craved to know with her entire being on these little pieces of paper and some part of me wished that there was someone to write down my past for me. I wouldn't use my bitterness to take what Alice wanted, what Alice *needed* (because she did need it) away from her.

Alice . I thought, folding the paper up so that she couldn't read it without opening it. She appeared in less than a second. Take these and keep them out of sight. Do not open them until Isabella and I have left, Understood?

She nodded, taking the papers from me cautiously, not believing that what was happening was true or that the answers she had been looking for were right in front of her, in her hand.

Making our way back into the main room to wait for Isabella and Rosalie to make their way back in, the others hadn't moved an inch, probably wondering what I would do if they did. Honestly? I didn't

really care. It wasn't up to me, but then again, I knew why they were so tense.

Isabella and Rosalie walked into the house a moment later, having worked out their differences on their little walk, both looking happier than when they left. Their thoughts were happier as well, both more understanding of the others actions.

"When do we leave?" Isabella asked, smiling up at me, her eyes filled with emotion.

"Whenever you're ready." Fighting the urge to lean down and take her mouth with mine, I answered her swiftly. She was hoping that I would kiss her when we were alone. That was something I would be willing to oblige to. I had been planning it myself actually.

"Let's go then." She smiled saying a short goodbye to each family member.

They had been separate before, and they all knew that the family meant home. Even though they would be apart they knew that they were never really separated. Not when they were as closely knit as this family.

When we left, we headed in the direction of Seattle. We wouldn't be passing through the city, more like running around it, keeping a wide berth as we did so. The city would slow us down more than I wanted it to. We would stop at the stops I had 'seen' and none others, unless it really called for it. It wasn't like we needed the rest or anything.

When we were about two – human travel - hours away from Isabella's family. I stopped, not letting go her hand as I did so. Not expecting this she flew forwards and I swung her around, meeting her lips with my own as she flew back towards me.

She immediately relaxed after the shock of my sudden halt, smiling against smile lips as they met in perfect synchronicity with mine.

I flicked my tongue against Isabella's bottom lip and she opened her mouth, so that I could ease my tongue inside. She tasted incredible. Strawberries and freesias mixed in with something that was purely just *Bella* .

In that moment, I was so glad she had manoevered her way into coming with me.

Wouldn't have had it anyother way.

She just didn't know what she was getting into.

What do you think? I know it's basically what happened in the last BPOV but in Edward's view, but you needed to know his opinions on the whole situation and what happened with Alice and stuff, so it had to be done. If not you would all be asking me what happened between Edward and Alice.

Speaking of Edward, I have his high and mighty with me until this story is done. He'd read about it in one of your minds and has decided to take an interest in the one writing it: me. I'm not sure whether I should be happy or scared, even though he has promised me that I'm safe, seeing as he wants to see the how the rest of the story turns out.

He has asked me to tell you all that he is willing to take part in a little Q&A. You ask him anything you want to know and he'll answer your questions-

Edward: *growls impatiently* Within reason.

twiXlite: *gulps* Eeeep! Within reason. So send in your questions and I'll pass them on. This will be going on through the story, so if you ever have a question, ask Edward – haha! sounds like a chatshow doesn't it? *looks at Edward, who is not amused* O-kay. Moving on. So if you have any questions you'd like to ask Edward, send them in, I'll ask him and the answers will be posted at the end of the following chapter.

I will try and put them all up, but it probably won't be all at once. Each and every question will be answered – as long as its within reason, as Edward says (whatever that means). So anyways, leave me a review and let me know what you think. :D

On The Run

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I completely forgot. There is a quote in the previous chapter, and because I'm a spazz and got distracted by Edward...

*Edward: *smirks in triumph* It's not as though its my fault.*

twiXlite: Is too and you know it. Anyway, seeing as I forgot about it, I'm going to give you until the chapter after this one to work it out. And there'll be a new quote challenge in this chapter, but it's easier than the last one to find. 'Cause I'm nice like that.

Anyways, I wanted to let you know that Alive Again has been nominated for Best Incomplete All Human over on the Twilight All Human Fanfiction Awards. Voting started on the first, so if you could all head over there and gimme a vote then I'll love you all forever. Not that I don't already, but still.

Edward: Isn't that the me you-

twiXlite: Yes, it is! Let's not spoil it for those wishing to but haven't read it yet, shall we?

*Edward: *shrugs**

*twiXlite: Anyway moving on. I also want to say a huge thank you to everyone who voted for Saving Edward at the Golden Chocolate Awards. Because of you Saving Edward won Best Angst. So THANK YOU!! And don't you say anything. *points at Edward**

*Edward: *growls**

twiXlite: Eeep! Bella!

Bella: Yeah?

twiXlite: Help. *sighs gratefully as Bella's presence calms Edward down*. Let's hope he's a little calmer when it comes to the Q&A at the end of the chapter, yes?

Anyways *glances at Edward worryingly* on with the story. Yes?

Edward

Isabella and I had been running for about a day or so, at a fairly comfortable speed, neither rushing nor lagging. It suited us fine. We'd have moments where either one of us would surge ahead, wanting to outrun the other, but they never lasted for long.

At the moment we were on the edge of Montana and I had decided that we would stay here for a night before we set off across South Dakota on the way to New York where we would be meeting my private jet which, in turn, would be taking us to Glasgow in Scotland. I wanted to travel on foot through the separate countries, giving me more time to train Isabella, as it were, should she need to know how to fend off any unwanted attention in Volterra.

"I can't do it. I'm useless." She moaned, close to giving up on the training exercise I was giving her.

"Now, how do you expect to get anywhere with that attitude?" I asked her, crossing my arms over my chest, staring her down.

"What attitude?" She asked, sitting up straight and looking me straight in the eye. She may have only known me for a few days, but she had more courage than others that had known me for centuries. I'm guessing that the added cockiness of being my mate gave her that added confidence.

"That defeatist attitude." I told her, walking up to her. "Why do you think that all of the great empires fell? Hmm?"

"Because someone new and more powerful pushed them out of the way?" She made it sound like a question and I sighed, shaking my head as I walked over to her.

"No." I said shortly. "Because the leaders of said empires, you know, guys like Caesar, who by the way" She looked at me expectantly. "Was an asshole."

"Really?" She sounded shocked at my revelation.

"Yup." I nodded as I reached her. She reached forward and laced her fingers around the back of my neck, pulling me closer to her. "He was a complete and utter moron, if I do say so myself."

"Well, I'm guessing that everyone seems like a 'complete and utter moron' to you." She said, mocking the way I had just spoken, trying not to giggle. "You were already like, what eleven thousand years old by that point?"

"Thirteen." I replied shortly. "But who's counting?"

"Me." She sighed gently, turning to look at me. "You know so much more than I do." She brushed her fingers against my forehead, her eyes following the trail her fingers had made on my skin. "How does everything fit in that head of yours?"

"Infinite memory, remember?" I smirked at her and she narrowed her eyes at me.

"Oh, ha ha!" Her tone was dripping with sarcasm and I couldn't help but laugh. "I mean, there's so much that you've seen and done." She sighed again, looking at me. "How do you keep track of it all?"

I shrugged lightly, not really knowing how to answer. She was too inquisitive for her own good. "The fact that I don't have to remember

it all all of the time makes it easier." I explained and she relaced her fingers behind my neck. "And besides, it's not like I've got to worry about lack of space in there, do I?"

"True." She nodded, smiling slightly as she looked at me.

"What?" I asked her and she giggled slightly. "What's with the smile?"

"I was just thinking." She murmured cryptically.

"About?" I asked her narrowing my eyes at her as she leaned towards me slowly.

"You." She whispered, gently pressing her lips to mine in a sweet, soft kiss.

"What about me?" I asked her and she pouted at me for both ending the kiss and not letting that train of thought go.

"I was just thinking about how you were when I first met you – first met you the few days ago, first met you, not the whole century while I was human, first met you – and how much you've changed in just a few days. It's incredible." She smiled softly at me and I chuckled shaking my head.

"You are an impossible creature to understand." I murmured softly and she sat back from me.

"What do you mean?" She asked, confused, her brow crinkling slightly.

I chuckled and rested my forehead against hers gently, looking into her beautiful amber eyes, that were slightly darker than before. "I say that because when I cannot hear what is going through your mind, like right now, everything that comes out of that pretty little mouth of yours is unexpected. Nothing you'd ever think of comes out of it."

"Is that a good thing?" She asked, tilted her head, her nose crinkling slightly.

"It is." I sighed, closing my eyes for a moment. "It makes everything that much more interesting."

"Well, that's good to hear." She whispered, pressing her lips to mine again.

I leaned back and looked at her for a few moments. She really was something to behold. If she wasn't, in reality, a vampire, one could easily mistake her for some ethereal being, she was that beautiful. But then again, that was one of our many trappings. Our beauty.

I gently ran my thumb underneath her eyes, which were slightly duller than yesterday. I wasn't entirely sure what her feeding schedule was, but I could tell that it would be completely different to mine.

"I won't need to feed for another week or so." She whispered as though she had read my mind. "Don't look at me that way." She shrugged. "Something told me you were wondering, so I answered you."

"Something told you'?" I asked her and she nodded, wondering what she meant.

"Well, it's like there was this voice in my head, wondering what my feeding schedule was." She shrugged and I grinned at her. "What?"

"That was me, Bella." I whispered and she leaned back from me.

"What do you mean?" She sounded wary of what I was saying.

"Obviously what we've been working on has been working. You were partially able to disable my shield." I smiled at her and she grinned, still slightly unsure.

"You mean, you weren't letting me in at all?" She asked, looking into my eyes for any form of deceit. Not that she would find it, even if I was lying to her. I hadn't taken down my shield and from the sounds of it, she had managed to work her way through without even realising it. The fact that she herself was a shield, allowed her to do it undetected. Probably because I was concentrating on her lips on mine, rather than the task at hand, but there we go. "Not even a little bit?"

"Bella, what would that achieve?" I asked her, in a tone that sounded as though I was reprimanding a child for something, not my mate.

"I don't know." She shrugged, looking away from me.

"Look at me." She did, reluctantly. "It wouldn't achieve anything, therefore I wouldn't do it. Understand?" She nodded. "It doesn't help you in any way, if I just *let* you in. The point of these exercises is to help *you* improve your power."

"Which I don't even understand." She huffed, slightly angry. Her tone told me that much.

"I know you don't." I looked at her and she sighed gently. "Your power is a diluted form of mine. Whereas I gain a new power every time a vampire is born, you have the ability to absorb the powers of a vampire when they are within a certain range." She nodded. "Say, there was a vampire like Jasper, standing over on that ridge there, they would be in range for you to absorb their power."

"But I don't get why I have to practise on you." She murmured, resting her head on my shoulder. "I don't like it."

"Well, who better to practise on than the unlimited vault of vampiric gifts, who happens to be indestructible." I looked at her and she smiled.

"I still worry though." She sighed and I pressed my lips to the top of her forehead, just in her hairline.

"I know." I murmured against her hair. "I know." I *did* know. When we had set off, I had found myself worrying more and more about Isabella's safety. Granted, it had only been a day or so, but I still worried. I wondered if that was normal for someone to do. The constant worry.

"You're not used to worry about anyone, are you?" She asked and I shook my head. She'd known the answer to that before she'd even asked the question, yet she felt that it needed to be voiced rather than just assumed. "I am." She sighed gently, resting her head back on my chest. "I remember worrying about my father in my human life. I don't remember the exacts of it, but I remember the worry that I would feel whenever he or I would leave the house. Especially right before" She trailed off and I knew what she meant.

"You worried because of the Spanish Influenza epidemic that was spreading towards Chicago." I explained and she looked up at me, her eyes filled with questions.

"I thought that hit after I was changed." She whispered and I sat down, her in my lap. I had never had this type of connection with any creature before. Never been this close. And while it felt strange and alien to me, it also felt comforting and welcoming. Also something I have never experienced before.

"It did." I nodded and she looked even more confused.

"But you just said-"

"I said 'that was spreading towards' not spreading through." I clarified and her lips made an irresistible little 'oh' shape as she nodded. I couldn't help but press a chaste kiss on her lips, causing her to giggle slightly.

"See, that's what I mean, with the changes." She nudged my nose with hers. "You never would have done that when you first arrived in Forks. And you know what the best part is?" I shook my head,

deciding that it would be better to hear it from her lips rather than in her mind. "I'm the only one who gets to see this side of you."

"That is true." I nodded and she smiled, pressing her lips back to mine again.

"Now, what were you saying?" She pressed. She wanted to know about what had happened to her father. I knew what had happened to him, and I knew that she would be upset, to hear about his fate.

"It's true that the Influenza hit after you changed." I nodded at the same time she did. "And had you not changed or met me at all, the Influenza would most likely have killed you."

"Really?" She asked, sounding slightly breathless, even though that reality was impossible for a vampire. "So that's what all the worry I remember was about?" She asked, and I nodded. "I don't understand. Why would I worry about something that hadn't even hit yet?"

"Rumours, of course." I explained, yet she still looked slightly confused. "Humans are easily susceptible to rumours. They tend to believe what they are told, not reaching out and discovering the truth for themselves. Rumours of the deadliness of the Influenza had reached the people of Chicago, and many were beginning to panic, to leave the city. In all honesty, for me, it was a time of abundant let's just say food," she scowled at me and I could see that this was going to be a difference that we would always have. "Anyway, people were leaving the city as quickly as they could, causing those that either couldn't or wouldn't leave to worry and panic."

"And my father wouldn't leave." She whispered, not quite remembering but some resemblance of a memory flashing through her mind.

"He wouldn't leave, but he wanted to send you to your aunt's in the country." I informed her and she looked at me, her eyes narrowing.

"Were you spying on me?" She asked, a playful lilt in her tone.

"Maybe." I shrugged and she giggled, burying her head in my shoulder. I knew that could she blush, there was an enormous chance that she would be doing so right this moment. "You have to remember that your blood was the sweetest thing I had ever smelled."

"Ever?" She asked, sounding disbelieving.

"Ever." I clarified.

"And that's what first drew you to me?" She asked, her voice sounding a little disappointed.

"Yes." I nodded, watching her face fall slightly. "It called to me from halfway across the city, until I found you sitting there in the park. But there was something about you that made me stop. All I wanted to do was taste you, taste your blood, but something stopped me. Do you know what?"

"The fact that you couldn't hear my mind?" She whispered, looking up at me, her eyes wide.

"Well, that intrigued me at first, but that's not it."

"Then I don't know." She shook her head and I looked down at her, pressing my lips to hers gently.

"You." I whispered against her skin. "Pure, unadulterated ... you."

"Really?"

"Yes, Isabella." I whispered, pulling away slightly. "The way that you would sit there reading your beaten up old books without a care in the world, even as I sat mere inches away from you. The way you spoke about those you loved and those you didn't feel for, how your father's incessant stream of possible suitors annoyed you, and how you thought that the inane ramblings of the local gossip should be

served only as a way to murder off innocent brain cells. You were unlike any creature I have ever known. You still are." She smiled up at me and I couldn't help but smile back. "And the more time I spent with you, the more I knew one thing to be true."

"What?" She asked, her voice barely audible, even for our kind.

"That I was falling in love with you." Her mouth opened slightly as she sucked in a breath. "And I have been for the last century."

"Edward." She whispered, closing her eyes. "Ever since I changed, I've known that something wasn't the same with me. My family was all paired off and married and happy, and yet *I* was happy about the fact that I *wasn't* mated. It's like there was something inside of me, telling me that someone was out there. That I'd already found them, and I just needed to wait to find them again. And I know now, that it was you." She took a deep breath. "What I mean to say is that I'm falling for you too, Edward. So hard. For so long."

She pressed her lips to mine, more forcefully than before, her tongue edging its way into my mouth. I parted my lips and met her tongue with my own. She tasted so intense. Nothing else compared to it. Except maybe her blood when she was a human, but that's beside the point.

I pulled away, resting my head on her forehead. "You need to practise, love." I whispered and she moaned. "Now, now." I teased and she scowled at me. "Alright, why don't we try something else."

"Like?" Her eyes lit up with anticipation as a grin spread across her face.

"What would you like to try?" I asked her, standing up and setting her on her feet.

"Umm....." She thought about it for a moment. "What about the lightning you used on Felix and or Demetri." She grinned. "Are you

going to tell me which one it is you blew up." I shook my head.
"Damn."

"Why don't we go for something a little less dangerous or conspicuous." I suggested, chuckling when she huffed. Who knew that my girl liked destruction as much as I did. Must be something in the venom. "I didn't make the secrecy law for nothing."

"Why *did* you make that law?" She asked, stepping towards me, taking my hand.

"Let's walk." I could sense that this was going to become an interrogation of sorts, so I figured that if she wanted to ask questions, we could walk and talk as it were. "I made the law, because when I was created, humans were a lot more intuitive than they are now. They knew a lot more."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, when I was created, as you can imagine I was a bit of a bloodthirsty creature."

"A *bit*?" She mumbled and I chuckled. She ducked her head down and I knew that had she any blood in her system, she would be flushing right about now. "Sorry."

"No, you're right." I nodded and she looked up at me. "During my newborn stage, I killed more humans than some vampires have in hundreds of years. Humans knew of my existence. Wherever I went, rumours were growing. Whispers of a nameless fear. It followed me everywhere I went. But as I gained control over my instincts and was finally able to move amongst humans without feeling the need to devour each and every one of them, the threat of my existence dwindled. Of course there were others, but not nearly as feared as I was. Because of that, things that ideally should not have been forgotten, were lost. History became legend. Legend became myth. And the reality of our existence passed out of all knowledge, save for the stories and tales you hear about us. It was then that I decided to

implement the secrecy rule. If humans had rediscovered our presence in the world, it would have had devastating effects. Humans had become more advanced, and yet in their advancement, they had become more stupid and ignorant about the realities of the world."

"So, really, you did it to save the humans?" She made it sound like a question.

"In some way, I guess it could be seen that way." I sighed, looking out in front of me. It was dark and yet I could see every detail absolutely perfectly. How humans could survive being blind in the dark was beyond me. No wonder they, more often than not, got themselves killed when out at night. "In reality, I did it to keep the worlds separate. Its just easier that way."

"Why, because if humans knew about us then it would be easier for them to avoid us?" She joked and I nodded.

"Partially." She looked confused. "They may not be able to avoid us per say, but their awareness would make it more difficult for the species to live as we do. Or at least, how *you* do."

"What do you mean?" She asked, wondering what I was talking about.

"I mean, you wouldn't be able to blend in like you do. You wouldn't be able to attend school like you do. To live like you do." I explained and she nodded her head, understanding where I was coming from. "You wouldn't be able to settle. Humans would know that you're different."

"They already know that we're different." She mumbled, her voice filled with a slight disdain.

"Well, if they knew about us, then they would know *why* you're different. It was cause a pandemonium throughout the entire planet. And that is something I cannot afford."

"You make it sound like you've shaped the planet to your liking." She rolled her eyes at me.

"Who says that I haven't?" I challenged her and she looked at me, confused and wide-eyed. "I've had long enough to do it. Manipulating humans isn't that difficult. Put an idea into their heads and make them believe that it was theirs. It's as simple as that."

"Really?" I don't know whether or not she was impressed or a little afraid. Possibly both. "That's too creepy to even think about."

"You think so?" I asked her and she nodded.

"I have something else to ask you." She looked at me through her thick eyelashes, her eyes a little wary. I nodded slowly and she looked away from me, steadying herself. I was never more tempted to delve into her mind and find out what was going on in there – well, that was a lie. I was always curious what was happening in her mind, but still, you get the idea – but I decided to let her sort through her worries and curiosities. "Why now don't blow me up for this, but ... why don't you like anyone knowing your original name? Your *human* name."

"Because that's what it is." I replied, looking away from her and out across the landscape in front of us. "It's something that ties me to a humanity that I neither want to be tied to or remember. That's it."

"But why-"

"That's. It." I repeated through gritted teeth and she knew that the subject was closed. I knew that I'd upset her somewhat and I hated that I had, but the origins of my name and myself were not something I wanted to discuss with Isabella. Understanding them myself was a hard enough feat, but explaining them to others was something else entirely.

Having to explain that I didn't know why I was created when I found it confusing myself was not something I had ever anticipated before.

Other vampires had never had the courage to ask me what she had before. I still hadn't worked out how she knew my name.

"I'm thirsty." She mumbled quietly, slipping out of my grasp. "I'm going to go and hunt for a little while."

I got the impression that she wanted to be left alone for a little while so I nodded, pressing my lips to hers gently before she left.

I don't know why, but it was hard to let her go.

Stupid. It wasn't like she was leaving me. She was only going off to get something to eat.

Since when did I become insecure?

Since you fell in love.

Bella

As I walked away from him I wondered what made him react in that way. He really didn't want to talk about his original name. More than anything, it seemed to piss him off.

But there was something else in his eyes.

Something I couldn't place.

Even though I knew that he didn't want to at the moment, he and I *would* be talking about this. I would ensure it. Whether or not I would come out of the confrontation alive was another question. But we were still having it.

I knew that he didn't know why he was created and I wanted to try to help him to understand why. It wasn't fair that he didn't know. The theory was that it was because something was needed to thin out the human species because they were becoming too numerous, but something told me that that wasn't true. I mean, humans were far

more plentiful in modern times than they had been when Edward was human.

Was there something else behind it all?

I wanted to believe that there was, but could I spend the rest of eternity with Edward knowing that there was something else lurking behind his creation.

All it went to show was that he might be the most powerful creature on Earth, but he was not in the universe. There was something else, that had been manipulating him when he was nothing more than a mere human.

He had always been on top of the food chain. That was where he was meant to be. At the top. Knowing that something else had manipulated him and created him for some unknown reason was slightly discerning. It created the image that Edward, in fact, was not on top of the ladder as the world believed, but was being used, just like the many civilisations he had manipulated in his own way.

Taking a deep breath, I shook my head, clearing my mind and focused on what I was doing. I would have to run into Canada to get a meal that was more than rabbits or squirrels and I hoped that Edward would not worry that I was going too far away.

I smiled to myself as I ran, nearing the Canadian border, thinking about how Edward had changed, even over the last few days.

When he was around me at least, he was a completely different ... I wanted to say person, but that didn't fit. I'll just go with vampire. That worked. He was a completely different vampire.

In front of others, he was cold and dark, not giving an inch. Except with Alice just before we had set out. Something had happened between those two. Whether or not anyone else had noticed, I don't know, but I had and there had been something occurring between those two at the house. I wasn't too worried about it. Whatever it

was, it was private and between the two of them. If either of them decided to tell me then that was up to them.

Half an hour later, I had devoured three elks and knew that I should be making my way back to Edward now. No doubt he would be watching to see what my future was, making sure I was okay. At least now, if he was, then he would be able to see that I was coming back.

I began to run back towards where I knew Edward was, following that pull in my chest that had neither dissipated or been satiated through all of my constant contact with Edward. It appeared to have the opposite effect actually. Being around him simply made me yearn for him even more when we were apart.

I had begun to increase my speed in my impatience to see Edward again, to get back to his embrace as quickly as I could. I was whipped I know, but I really didn't care. It wasn't my fault.

All of a sudden, something slammed into my side, sending me flying and landing on top of me. In my concentrated state of running I hadn't noticed the three vampires that were following me. It appeared that they had gotten bored of simply following me and had decided to attack. *Shit! Where the fuck is Edward when I need him?* I knew that I was just on the Canadian side of the border, so I wasn't too far away from him. I knew that he would have seen their decision to attack and would be making his way here now.

I hoped anyway.

"Well well well, what do we have here?" A slimy, sleezy voice crooned from just outside my field of vision as the one on top of me slid off me and went to stand with them.

I climbed to me feet slowly, turning to face the three vampires that had stopped me.

"And where do you think you're going at such a speed?" The same vampire asked. I sure as hell didn't like the way he was looking at me or the way he started walking towards me. Creepy was not the only word I would use to describe him.

All I could do now was hold the three of them off until Edward got here.

If he was coming that is.

Of course he's coming . The argumentative, yet rational side of my brain argued. He pretty much admits that he loves you earlier. He can see the future. He would have seen this. He'll be here soon. He has to be.

The only question was, how long would he take?

Three guesses as to who they were?!

A couple of you have requested a meeting between the three of them and Edward, so I thought I'd throw them in. A bit of action next chapter methinks. That seems to have caught Edward's attention.

Now, onto the Q&A Edward promised at the end of the last chapter. You've all sent in an abundance of questions. I won't be using them all, but will be using them in later chapters. I think you can understand my reasoning behind that one.

Right. Edward, let's get started shall we? First question is one that a lot of people have been asking, so I'm going to let you clear this one up first. People have been asking that if you don't know where you came from, why don't you just touch Aro and read it through his mind?

Edward: Firstly, touching Aro is not really high on my things-to-do list. And secondly, I know where I came from and how I came

to be, but I do not know why . That is the question that plagued me before I realised that finding out is not likely to happen.

twiXlite: Okay. Hopefully, that cleared that up. Next question comes from Always-Here-Imani and she asks 'What vampire has the power to put ones thoughts into the mind of another, since Renesmee isn't in this story'?

*Edward: The vampire that could project thoughts into anothers mind was a cocky imbecile that live about two centuries ago. Let's just say, he pissed off the Aro and isn't around any longer. And who is Renesmee? *quirks eyebrow**

twiXlite: Oops! Um, you haven't read the books, have you?

*Edward: *shakes head with bored expression**

twiXlite: Of course you haven't. Um, let's just say, she's an additional character that appears in the last book. Anyway, moving on. The next question comes from a couple of people who were wondering in previous chapters, but this one was sent in from Myra. 'Why did you leave the two girls at the hotel? Wouldn't the humans be suspicious'?

*Edward: *shrugs* I was bored and couldn't be bothered to destroy them. They were drained anyway, so why bother?*

twiXlite: But what about the whole 'secrecy' thing? I mean, wouldn't the humans start to panic if word hit about something draining young girls of their blood and leaving them in hotel rooms.

*Edward: *grins wickedly at twiXlite* A little panic is fun sometimes.*

twiXlite: Okay! Moving on ... um ... This comes from With love

~supercalifragilisticexplalidocos . 'What is the weirdest/most absurd power that you have ever encountered? And have you ever used said absurd power?'

*Edward: There was a vampire created that could create an extra digit on each hand. *holds up hand and creates an extra finger next to pinky finger* That I thought was pretty weird.*

twiXlite: That is weird. Have you ever used it before?

Edward: Not until just now.

twiXlite: Creepy. Right, ummm..... next question . Are you planning at some point to make Bella your "official" mate? Again that one is from Myra.

*Edward: *growls**

*twiXlite: O-kay, guess he doesn't like that question. Um.... I think we'll leave it there for a now. That last ones pissed him off a little bit. *whispers quietly hoping he can't hear me* maybe we'll find out later in the story.*

Edward: I heard that, you know?

twiXlite: Shit. Um..... Anyway, send in some more questions for Edward and I'll see what I can do about getting him to answer them. Sorry if I didn't answer your question today, but what can I say? He's testy. Gotta run. Bye!

Oh! Don't forget to look for the quotes in the chapter. There's more than one so you know. Only those that can kind both the ones in this chapter and the one from the previous chapter will get a mention. Hehe. I'm feeling mean.

Gimme a review!!

Seeing Things Clearly

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Sorry it's taken me so long to update this story, but what can I say? Life's a bitch at the moment.

All right, pretty much all of you got the Lord of the Rings quote – well the adapted Lord of the Rings quote, which was: 'Whispers of a nameless fear. Things that ideally should not have been forgotten, were lost. History became legend. Legend became myth. And the reality of our existence passed out of all knowledge.' The actual quote is: 'And some things, that should not have been forgotten, were lost. History became legend. Legend became myth. Rumours grew of a shadow in the east, whispers of a nameless fear.'

The second quote that nobody got was actually from Charmed, spoken by Piper in the episode 'A Witch's Tail': 'That's too creepy to think about.'

Also, a reminder that Alive Again has been nominated for the Twilight All Human Fanfiction Awards. Voting ends on the 25th August, so go and vote for me please. :D

What's the quote? It's from a book this time. And I'm making it easy for you.

Edward

I knew that letting her go was a mistake and this just proved it.

As I raced to the Canadian border I wrestled with myself over what to do. Do I go in there and take her away from the imminent danger? Or do I hang back and let her know that I want *her* to dispatch the

three nomads. It would be a good lesson for her and a welcome 'practise' session, as it were.

I resolved to get close enough so that they wouldn't ascertain that I was there, but enough to communicate with Isabella. Even though she may be scared, I knew that I had to let her do this on her own.

She needed to do this on her own.

I stopped about a mile away from her current location. I could see through her mind's eye what they looked like, but then again I had seen them in the vision I had had as soon as they had made the fatal decision to attack her.

I could hear what they were thinking as well, which was not helping their campaign any.

One male was indifferent, not really bothered about what was happening in front of him. He wasn't too much of a bother for me. The woman in the trio wasn't happy about coming across Isabella. She was jealous. She wasn't happy about the detour. She was thirsty and wanted to make her way somewhere there were humans for her to eat.

But it was the last member of their little group.

His was the mind that was making the venom that ran through my essentially dead veins boil and it would be him that caused me to rush in there to Isabella's aid.

The thoughts travelling through his mind were nothing short of vile.

One thing was for certain. He wouldn't be existing to see the end of this hour. Whether it was by my hand or Isabella's, he would be destroyed.

Isabella . I called her name, connected in our minds. *Don't draw attention to my presence. They are unaware that I am here.*

Where are you? She replied, nearly frantic. I could have eased her panic using the empathic gift I possessed, but I wanted her to be able to do this on her own. As much as she could anyway.

About a mile away. I replied and she was not pleased.

What are you doing? Help!

I want you to do this on your own. This is a perfect time for some practise.

Are you insane?! Not inherently. I shrugged, knowing that she would respond this way. *I can't do this! They'll kill me!*

They're not interested in ending your life. I assured her, only just managing to silence the growl that threatened to surface. They would have known that I was there if I hadn't been able to. My control had won again. But then again, I never expected it not to. The blonde male in the group was really going to have to watch himself. Granted he didn't know that I was there, but still, there are some things you don't think about a lady.

Surprise!

I can be a gentleman.

Sometimes.

Then what do they want? She asked, still not completely convinced.

Find out for yourself. I answered smugly. I was pissing her off and I knew that, but then again, everyone knew that the key to accessing powers generally lay in the emotions of the beholder. I doubted that Isabella was any different. *I'm close enough for you to tap into my powers. You can do it.*

I hoped that the encouragement that I was giving her would pay off. I wasn't used to giving encouragement so I didn't know whether it would work or not. She seemed to pay attention to the confident tone of my mental voice and seemed to become more confident in herself and her abilities.

She's *my* girl.

Of course she can do it.

Bella

It was official.

Edward had gone insane,

He thought that I would be able to take care of these three by myself. He seemed so confident, but in turn, I felt myself becoming more confident in my own abilities. Was that coming from me or from him? I wasn't too sure, but wherever it was coming from, it was gladly welcomed.

"Aren't you the pretty little one, then?" The blonde male standing in front of me crooned. "What's your name, sweetheart?"

"My name?" I asked, feigning innocence. I couldn't let on that Edward was waiting for an opportunity to strike. Even though he had said that he wanted me to handle this on my own, I knew that he would be at my side in a heartbeat – or at least in the time that a heartbeat would take, had any of the present company had a beating heart – to defend me. He was my defender, but he believed I could do this, and I knew that it was a big deal to him. He hadn't had a reason to believe in anyone before. He had no one *to* believe in before.

I wasn't going to let him down.

I hoped.

"That is what he said." The woman in front of me sniped. I could still hear Edward in the back of my mind and he wasn't happy about the tone that the woman was using. I knew that it was taking all of his restraint to stay where he was, hidden from them.

That must have been new for him. He's never stayed out of a fight before. Or at least, from what I've heard and witnessed of his personality, he's never stayed out of one before. Unless it's given him some form of entertainment. That part of his personality was creepy and I would have to investigate that further. That is if he'd let me. I mean there was a large chance that he wouldn't open up and-

Focus, Isabella!! He scolded me and I shook my head, clearing my thoughts.

Focus. Right. Three vampires in front of me. Edward waiting in the wings. What could go wrong?

Everything.

I closed my eyes and took a deep, unnecessary breath, it serving to calm me down. *Now I know why so many humans turn to yoga and pilates for zen purposes.*

Isabella. I heard Edward's warning tone in my head and winced mentally.

I took another deep breath and opened my eyes. The whole process must have taken only a moment, but it felt like longer to me. I focused on Edward and his mind reading ability, focusing it on the blonde haired male in front of me.

I can sure have some fun with this little one.

I started when I heard his voice in my head. I was also assaulted with images that I really did not want to see. No wonder Edward was getting so riled up.

"Trust me, no fun can be had with you." I looked him up and down, raising my eyebrow at the same time. Thank god for the vampire brain meaning I can do multiple things at once.

"Excuse me." The woman in front of me marched over to me, her face turning even more furious with every step she took. "How dare you say that?!"

"Victoria." The blonde male warned her but she ignored him, glaring at me.

"What?" I shrugged. "He's the one who wants some fun with me. Not the other way around. And seriously, you really need to clean up your thoughts. Since she's obviously your mate from that little outburst, you would have thought that having thoughts about other vampires was strictly off limits, wouldn't you?" I turned to look at her, an innocent look on my face. That one earned a mental chuckle from Edward. Apparently, he approved of the way that I was handling these three. Thank whatever god there may be for that.

"You don't know what you're talking about." The woman, Victoria, sneered back and I frowned at her.

"I think I do." I smiled at her quickly, seemingly rubbing her nose in it. I didn't really care.

Now *that* opinion had come from Edward.

"Like hell you do." She snarled, beginning to crouch into an offensive pose, her lips curling back to reveal her teeth. Normally, I would have been wary at least, but now, I wasn't. I wasn't sure whether it was because I was channelling Edward in some way, or maybe it was because I knew that he was near, able to be at my side within a second, but I was filled with a new found confidence. One I hadn't had before.

"Well, seeing as I know that he's imagining what he could be doing to me right now – which is a *really* bad idea by the way – instead of

watching this fight, I think I kinda do." I nodded, folding my arms across my chest defiantly. I was pissing her off and I knew it.

She turned to look at the male, who was staring at me, with something that I could only describe as lust in his eyes. I shivered, for once thankful that my being a vampire made it impossible for me to throw up.

That wouldn't have been a pretty sight.

"James." Victoria almost screeched and he lazily turned to look at her. "What does she mean?"

"Do you really think that I could be thinking about anyone but you in that way, Victoria?" He walked over to her, placing his hands on her hips and pulling her to him. She grinned at him, obviously gaining the confirmation that she needed from him. She believed that he was thinking about her. Ha!

I looked at the other male, who was just standing there, watching them with a bored look on his face. He looked over at me and rolled his eyes, shaking his head and shrugging at the same time. I couldn't help but smile at him. He seemed to be the only one of the group that wasn't interested in doing anything to or with me. Victoria wanted to rip me to pieces and James wanted something that only Edward could have.

"I told you, you didn't know what you were talking about." She smiled smugly at me, and I rolled my eyes, shaking my head.

"Whatever." I mumbled, turning away from the disgusting duo and making my way towards where I knew Edward to be.

"Where do you think you're going?" I heard Victoria call a mere fraction of a second before she attacked me, knocking me to the ground and landing on top of me. "You really think that you can accuse my James of something like that and just walk away?"

She wasn't thinking about what she was doing, so I couldn't get a read on her thoughts. I saw nothing but pure red in her mind and I knew that she wanted to kill me for what I had said. Even if it was the truth.

Or maybe it was because she *knew* that it was the truth and wanted to remove any temptation out of James' way.

The next thing I knew, I was feeling the first pain that I had felt in eighty years as she ripped my arm out of its socket, tearing my skin and laughing as she threw it away from us.

She wasn't on top of me any longer and I looked up to see Edward standing there, his hand at her throat, his arm outstretched in front of him.

I sat up and took in the scene in front of me.

Edward was standing there, holding Victoria off the ground by her throat as she stared at him in shock, not anticipating his arrival. The other two were staring in the same dumbfounded way, not having taken in the fact that Edward was standing there in front of them.

If I hadn't been missing an arm at that point, I would have found their expressions comical.

"What the fuck?!" James cried a second later. "You better put her down or-"

"Or what?" Edward looked away from the squirming vampire in his grasp and looked towards James who was growing more and more pissed by the second. "Are you alright, love?"

I couldn't help but smile at the endearment. "Apart from the fact that I'm missing an arm, I'm fine."

"Nothing lasting then." He smirked, looking down at me.

"Not as such." I made to get up but he gave me a look that told me to stay where I was. Knowing that there would be hell to pay if I didn't, I stayed put.

"Let. Her. Go." James snarled, taking up an offensive position.

"Why?" Edward looked back at him, raising an eyebrow. He still had that smirk on his face. It was nothing like the crooked smile I was beginning to love, but then again, I had the feeling that that smile was reserved for me only. Not that I was complaining, mind you.

James didn't answer, standing there, snarling at Edward as though it would get him somewhere.

Edward chuckled darkly and I was reminded of the first time I saw him. How dark and dangerous he had seemed and still was to the rest of the world. That chuckle would always remind me of how powerful he was, and how dangerous he could be.

As if to prove his point, he looked at Victoria again, who was still wriggling, trying to break his iron vice grip and brought his free fist forward, slamming it into her stomach and releasing her throat with his other hand, sending her flying. She landed with a loud crash that made me wince with the impact. James stood there, gaping at Edward as though he had committed some heinous crime for doing that to his mate. The other guy just looked bored and not interested in what was going on. I had the feeling that Edward might let him go. If I persuaded him to, that is.

"You're going to pay for that!" James snarled, crouching down again, baring his teeth.

"Oooh, a challenge." Edward smirked, remaining calm and relaxed. "Not had one of those in a while."

"Well, you're not going to get another one." I couldn't help but giggle. This guy really was full of himself, wasn't he? Victoria had returned to his side, glaring at me. She was obviously still pissed about the

mind reading trick I had pulled with James and she started to make her way towards me. She was trying not to draw Edward's attention to herself.

Little did she know that Edward was already locked onto what she was doing. He knew exactly what her plan was and in a mere fraction of a second, he had formed a counter plan. He wouldn't allow any harm to come to me.

I couldn't help but smile at that thought.

She lunged at me but didn't get very far in her attack before Edward was there in front of her. He had moved so fast that he was a blur even to vampire eyes. I had known that he was faster than the rest of us, but I hadn't truly grasped how fast he could be. Something told me that that wasn't the extent of his speed.

As I watched him move, I saw Edward's mouth brush once across her neck, looking much like the way he touched his lips to mine. But I knew that this wasn't anything close to how he touched me. A sound much like the shredding of metal ripped through the air and I knew that even though the move Edward had performed looked so much like a caress, it was more of a kiss.

The kiss of death.

Moments later, her head overflowing with its incredible flame coloured hair rolled away from the group, a look of horror etched into it.

There were more ripping sounds and the next thing I knew, there were body parts flying in all directions, effectively separating them before Edward turned to face James and the other guy. He didn't pay the third member of the group any mind, focusing on James.

"You You" James couldn't even get a word out straight as Edward stalked towards him.

"I killed her." Edward cocked his head to the side as he walked, feigning interest in what the disorientated vampire had to say.

"You bastard." He snarled and Edward chuckled again.

"Ooh, strong words." He taunted, knowing that he had the upper hand. Hell, he was *Edward*. Of course he had the fucking upper hand.

James launched himself at Edward, seeking to avenge his mate's death, but not getting very far.

Edward stretched out his hand, catching James in much the same way that he had held Victoria before he sent her flying. James hung there, wide eyes and uncomprehending.

"You really need to learn who you're dealing with before you attack." Edward snarled and I didn't look at him for fear of what I would see. I didn't want to see Edward this way. In all honesty, it scared me when he was like this. I didn't know how he would be when he had destroyed James. I would persuade him not to attack the third member though, even though I didn't know what his name was.

"Right." James sneered, not realising the compromising position he was in. "And who are you then?"

I looked up at Edward and wished I hadn't. I saw what I really didn't want to see.

He was standing there, the side of his mouth turned up on one side in an evil smirk, the glint in his eye dangerous and deadly. In this moment, I saw what everyone feared. I saw what the fables and tales, the legends and myths were all about. I didn't see my Edward in there at all. He had the look of a true vampire and that wasn't what I wanted to see. I saw what everyone had been telling me he was.

I saw the monster.

"Edward." He whispered, still smirking and chuckling as James' eyes widened, just seconds before his throat started smoking.

Edward was going to burn him and he was going to do it slowly.

He was going to torture him.

And I knew that I wouldn't be able to watch.

Ultimately disobeying Edward, I looked around and saw my arm laying about twenty feet away from me. I glanced up at Edward quickly, seeing that he was still engaged in his torture of James, no doubt for the lucid thoughts he had had about me while Edward was watching. I quickly got to my feet and ran to my arm, grabbing it and running off to where I saw a gathering of trees about twenty miles away.

Placing my arm to the shoulder it had been ripped from, effectively reattaching it, gritting my teeth in pain as it began to meld itself back together, I ran as fast as I could towards the trees. I didn't know if Edward was behind me, but then again, he would have caught up to me by now if he had been.

I made it to the trees in a minute or two but I didn't stop running. I wanted to get as far away from that scene and admittedly, Edward, as I could. I knew it wouldn't be long before he found me, but I needed a minute to banish the look in his eye and the smile on his face to the back of my mind.

I now saw what everyone had warned me about. I now knew why they had feared for me when they had learned that Edward was my mate. I saw what everyone else did.

He was dangerous.

I stopped, leaning against a large fallen tree and gritting my teeth together as I felt my arm reattach itself. I looked down and saw that it was healed; nothing there to implicate that it had ever been

removed. I sighed, looking out for and listening for any signs that Edward was approaching.

I didn't have to wait long and I sat on the fallen tree, knowing in my heart what was coming.

"Isabella!" He sounded furious and I closed my eyes, not wanting to see him that way. "What on earth was that about?" I didn't answer and that seemed to aggravate him even more. "Answer me!"

"I don't know." I whispered, my eyes still closed.

"What do you mean, you don't know?" He asked, his tone amused and pissed at the same time. He was not happy.

"I don't know." I shook my head, looking at him and again, wishing I hadn't. He didn't have that evil glint in his scarlet eyes anymore. It had been replaced by anger and frustration. He wasn't allowing me into his mind, so I had no clue what he was thinking. "It was just seeing you like that ... I don't know. I freaked, I guess."

Something in his gaze and stance changed in that moment. I wasn't sure of what it was, but something in him seemed to ease off, possibly dissipating what anger at me there was.

At least, I hoped.

Edward

When Isabella had run off, I had dispatched the creature in my hand as quickly. I didn't even bother to watch him disintegrate as I would have normally. I looked at the third member who put his hands up in defeat. Well, he had just watched the members of his coven die, and I detected nothing in his thoughts about anything other than getting the hell away from me.

I was considerate.

I let him go.

I wasn't going to be so considerate with Victoria though.

I made my way around, gathering up her pieces and throwing them onto the smouldering pile that was her mate.

Having done that, I raced after Isabella, following her scent and the pull in my chest.

It led me straight to her.

"Isabella!" It came out harsher than I wanted it to, and I knew that I looked pissed. "What on earth was that about?" I didn't get an answer, which didn't help my mood. "Answer me!"

"I don't know." She whispered, her eyes closed, and her head bowed.

"What do you mean you don't know?" The idea of Isabella not knowing or having an opinion about something was slightly amusing. It seemed that she always had an opinion. When it came to me, at least.

"I don't know." She looked up at me and I saw her flinch for a fraction of a second. Through her mind I saw what I looked like to her. To her I was intimidating, angry and frustrated, the very essence of what she had heard in the legends. She knew the legends about me to be true, I had confirmed them myself, but seeing it in front of her, had solidified it in her mind. "It was just seeing you like that ... I don't know. I freaked, I guess."

Realisation hit me in a way that humans would say resembled a ton of bricks.

She had run for one simple reason.

She was scared of me.

That was something I never wanted to know. I never wanted her to be afraid of me. But it seemed that I was too late in that respect.

I closed my eyes, and took a deep, unnecessary breath, steadying myself.

I opened my eyes to find her still staring at me, wide eyed and fearful.

I stepped towards her and she recoiled slightly, folding in on herself. I paused for a second before bridging the gap between us and sitting on the fallen tree that she was perched on. I placed my hand on the back of her neck, something she usually found comforting. But this time, she tensed and I hated it. It hurt for me to know that she feared me, but something in me knew that it was inevitable really.

What we'd had couldn't last without her discovering the monster within me. He had reared his ugly head on this day and there was nothing I could do to erase that memory from her mind. Had she been human, the memory would have eventually faded and she wouldn't have remembered that moment. But her vampiric memory was infinite and she would forever remember what had occurred today.

"Bella." I whispered and she looked at me, her eyes still wide. "I'm sorry if I frightened you. That wasn't my intention."

"But it was your intention to torture James, wasn't it?" She shot back, her eyes wide and accusing. I couldn't dispute that fact. She was right. I *had* planned on bringing James to his demise slowly and surely, not in the quick, easy way that Isabella had obviously envisioned. "I saw *something* in your eyes, Edward. Something I didn't want to see. I know that everyone has been telling me from the beginning about what you're capable of, but seeing it with my own eyes ... it was worse than I could have imagined."

I had scared her more than I thought.

"You saw the monster everyone else was aware of." I put it bluntly and she nodded slowly.

"I saw the monster that I didn't want to see." She whispered, looking at me sadly. "I'm sorry." She climbed off of the tree and took a few steps away from me. "Is that how you're going to be in Italy?" She turned to face me, her arms hugging her torso tightly. "Are you going to be that monster?"

I didn't have an answer for her. I couldn't see what would happen in Italy, because no one there was aware of my impending arrival. But then again, I couldn't die, they could. Not really much of a contest, is it?

"I guess that's the answer I was expecting." She sighed, looking at her feet. When she looked back up at me, and I knew that, could she cry, she would have tears running down her face. She was effectively blocking me from her mind, using an age old technique of thought diversion. She was running through some boring and incorrect facts she had gone through in a history class from a few weeks ago. "I'm sorry, Edward." She shook her head at me. "If that's who you're going to be in Italy, then I can't go with you." She her eyes were filled with sadness and pain. "I can't witness something like that again. I just ... can't."

"You knew how I was before we even left." I replied, keeping my voice calm and collected, not allowing whatever emotion it was building in my chest to seep to the surface. "You knew and yet you still came."

"I know." She looked down again, obviously finding the forest floor incredibly intriguing. "But that was before I'd seen it with my own eyes. Now I know what the murmurs and whispers are about. I've seen that with my own eyes. I've seen the monster within you in your eyes and your behaviour. And I hate him." She sniffed and I was glad she couldn't cry. I don't know what I would have done if she had been able to cry. Not exactly something I was used to.

But then again, this was a little out of my comfort zone as well.

"I love you, Edward, I do. And I think I always have." She looked back up at me, her expression pained as she wrestled with herself. "But I hate that monster. And while he's around I can't be. I'm sorry."

She stepped towards me, pressing her lips to mine for a moment before she sped off into the forest and away from me, leaving me stunned and dazed.

What the fuck just happened?

Don't hate me!

This was the natural way for things to go. You can't expect Edward to dismember two sentient beings and for Bella to be okay with it. Hello! She eats animals instead of people. She's just scared of him at the moment. Hell, wouldn't you be?

Edward's not happy with the way the story's going at the moment (as you can probably tell) so Bella's had to take him out of the way.

Hopefully, he'll be willing to answer some questions for you as soon as he gets back. You got any to ask? Let me hear 'em.

Again, I'm sorry about the wait, but real life stuff got in the way. Sucky excuse I know, but meh, it's the truth.

Go vote for Alive Again! Link is on my profile. I'll love you lots if you do.

Also, I have a new blog that I'm going to be posting tasters for all of my stories on. I'm thinking about moving the Edward Q&A over there as well. Will be putting the link on my profile.

Anyways, I'm going to say push the little green button and toodles!

Love ya!

Easing Her Fears

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

*Firstly, I know I promised this to one of you earlier than now, but I've just started a new job that has to be **THE MOST BORING PILE OF SHIT IN BOTH THIS AND THE TWILIGHT UNIVERSE COMBINED**. Which means that I've been coming home and my brain is actually turning to mush. I've been so exhausted that I've just flaked out so again I'm sorry.*

*Secondly, I'm very very very **VERY** disappointed in you all. Nobody and I mean **NOBODY** got the quote from the last chapter.*

What I'd written was: ' As I watched him move, I saw Edward's mouth brush once across her neck, looking much like the way he touched his lips to mine. But I knew that this wasn't anything close to how he touched me. A sound much like the shredding of metal ripped through the air and I knew that even though the move Edward had performed looked so much like a caress, it was more of a kiss.'

The actual written piece from the book was: 'Edward's mouth brushed once across her neck, like a caress. The squealing clamour coming from Seth's efforts covered every other noise, so there was no discernible sound to make the image one of violence. He could have been kissing her.'

*Where's it from? **ECLIPSE!!!!***

Shakes head in disappointment* And you call yourselves **Twilighters (or some rendition of that sentiment). Tutt tutt.*

Edward

What the hell just happened here?

I had scared Isabella. I knew that, but then again, she knew how I was before she decided that she was going to come with me to Italy.

She had seen me kill before. The lightning bolt incident springs to mind. And not to mention that she knows I kill humans on a regular basis.

So what could have sparked this reaction from her?

Why did she get so worked up over the fact that I had killed James and Victoria? I let the third one go. Does that count for anything? It should seeing as I've never let anyone go before.

It just makes me wonder what she wants from me.

She knows what I am and what I do. She knows that I kill other creatures that walk on this planet, including vampires. It's my job to keep them in check. She knows that I kill humans to sustain myself. She knows all of this and yet when she sees it, she doesn't seem able to comprehend what's going on in front of her. She knows all about me because Carlisle had explained some of my history and I had filled in a little more. Not enough but still, it was more than others knew.

Most of all, she knew that I love her.

Did she expect me to change? I couldn't change. Even if I was capable of it, I wouldn't want to.

This is who and what I am. I might not know where I come from, but this creature is who I am.

She said that she couldn't live without me but she couldn't live with the monster that called me its home.

Well, she was going to have to get used to doing one or the other.

Because the monster isn't just inside of me.

The monster *is* me.

I wrestled with myself on following her. Judging by what has just happened when I left her alone, that leaving her to wander on her own wasn't the best idea. Sure she could defend herself from the regular threats, wild animals, hormonal humans and such, but it seemed that she was still not as well versed in confronting our kind as I wished her to be.

I ran my hands through my hair, a habit I seemed to have developed since being around Isabella. She was making me worry, and that was something I had never done.

What is going on with me?

I couldn't answer my own question as I had no clue.

I may be so old that I could recount any date in history asked of me. I could tell you the exact date that Caesar's rule and power in the world began to wane. I could tell you when the first cough of the Black Death was ... well, coughed – but then again that one may have been down to me, as with the Caesar thing, but that's beside the point. But I could not tell you what I was feeling right now.

I had never felt like this, in all my years. Isabella brought things out in me that I had never felt before. I had never been one for emotions to begin with, keeping them locked away and buried beneath the surface where they belonged. Isabella was bringing them out in me and I wasn't sure that I liked it.

Actually, that wasn't strictly true.

Some of the feelings she brought out in me I loved. But some of them needed to be squashed back where they belonged.

But the real question was, did I want to?

I wasn't so sure.

What I was sure about was that I didn't want Isabella out there on her own. Yeah, okay, she'd been on her own before. During her 'rebellious stage' as her family called it. Seriously, just because she's frozen at seventeen forever doesn't mean that she's always going to behave as such.

But now it was so much more dangerous for her.

The Volturi knew about her. They knew that she was my mate and that was dangerous for her. No physical harm could come to her, but when I thought about losing her to them, because she was my 'weak link' as it were, made my chest ache in a foreign way.

Just like it did when she had walked away from me.

I quickly flitted through her future, trying to ascertain where she was going, but she hadn't made a real decision yet. Though she had decided on making a decision when she reached the edge of the woods. That told me she hadn't gotten very far, but then again, the pulling, tugging sensation in my chest told me that much.

Why had she run from me?

Aside from the obvious, of course.

She knew what I was like. Or at least, she thought she did.

From the fear running through her, she hadn't really believed what people had been saying about me. She didn't believe the legends then.

She did now.

I ran my hands through my hair again, sighing in frustration, neither action easing the stress running through me at the moment. I turned in the direction that she had travelled in, seeing nothing but red. Why couldn't Aro follow some bloody instructions? Why did he have to be

the 'big man' and defy me? If he had done what he was told and kept his nose out, Bella wouldn't have run off and he would have gotten to keep the sorry excuse for a life he leads.

Then again, maybe I was doing him a favour.

I needed to get to Italy, before he dispatched members of the guard to investigate the Cullens and we hadn't even reached the east coast yet. This was not going to plan.

Just then the cell phone in my pocket rang. I picked it up without even looking at it, knowing who it was exactly.

"Alice."

"First off, I want to say thank you." I could hear the gratitude in her little voice.

"You read the letter then." It wasn't a question.

"Yes." She sighed. Now she knew where she had come from, she had some closure. See, I can be nice sometimes. *Sometimes* .

"Secondly, you need to let Bella calm down."

"What?" I quirked an eyebrow at the phone.

"She doesn't take death and related things well, and judging from your little show earlier, she's trying to deal with your true nature." She sighed and I rolled my eyes. "Don't roll your eyes at me."

"You're very lucky we're talking on the phone." I growled trying to control my grip so I wouldn't crush the small silver rectangle.

"I know." She giggled, and I heard a sigh of exasperation come from somewhere in the room with her. She must have been with Jasper. "I'll be the first to admit she should have expected it, but she's really not taking seeing you like that well. She's an idiot, plain and simple."

"She should listen to what people tell her." I sighed, running my hand through my hair again. *Seriously! What is up with that?!* "She thinks I'm a monster."

"You *are* a monster." Alice agreed and I quirked an eyebrow again, wondering when the hell she got so bold. "But that's who you are and you can't change that. That's something that Bella needs to realise." She paused for a moment, and I knew why. She, like me, was watching Isabella's future. And she had made a decision. "Well, she made the right one." Alice laughed on the other end of the phone. "If she hadn't, she would have gotten a smack upside the head and turned straight back around and out the door again."

"You wouldn't do that to her, would you?" I asked her, faintly amused at the imagery.

" / wouldn't." She laughed as I heard another sigh from somewhere in the room. "But Rosalie and Esme would have done."

It was hard picturing Esme being forceful in any kind of way. She was so timid and shy, hating confrontation of any kind, always the peacemaker between her 'children' – I still had to snort at the terminology the 'family' used. I couldn't imagine her being forceful with Isabella, turning her around and making her come back to me.

Rosalie, I could *definitely* imagine doing that to her. She wasn't exactly subtle in her demeanour. Or her thoughts. It was clear from the way she viewed me that she feared, respected and was undecided about me. She feared and respected me because of the same reason others did, but she couldn't bring herself to hate me as she had done when I'd first arrived at her home due to Isabella. She knew that the two of us were linked forever. Just as she was with her mate. So she knew that the bond between the two of us was everlasting, and if pushed, Isabella wouldn't be choosing her family. Because she wouldn't have either.

"Sounds about right." I *had* to get to her. Now. I could tell Alice was on the other end of the line, wrestling with herself to say something.

It could have been the fact that Jasper was in the room with her that was stopping her, or it could have been the fact that it was me that she was talking to. Didn't matter to me. "Spit it out, Alice." I growled, becoming more impatient by the second.

"Um..." I heard the slight tremble in her voice and someone started in the room with her. It wasn't Jasper. The footsteps were lighter, more feminine. From the weight difference I knew that it was Rosalie, being ever so slightly heavier than Esme and it was definitely not Alice who was a waif. If she hadn't been made out of living stone, one strong breeze would have blown her away by now. As I recalled in her memories, that nearly happened once. "I'd be prepared for the Spanish Inquisition." She told me quietly, her voice hesitant. "Bella doesn't fully understand your nature. Some part of her still doesn't fully believe the legends, but I think you knew that." And I did. "When you find her, which isn't going to be long from now-" Well, *duh*, Alice. "-she's going to be confused and full of questions and she won't do anything until she gets all of them out and answered."

"Oh, won't she." It wasn't a question as it rose up from my throat in the form of a growl.

"Can you bring yourself to hurt her?" *Well, she has me there.* I knew that I couldn't. "I didn't think so." There was no hint of smugness that I would have expected from Alice, learning about her nature as both a human and a vampire through both her long forgotten memories and those that had been filed away inside her expansive mind for future reference. I had noticed that Alice had had the same extensive visions that I had had since she was reborn. They almost ran parallel, with the few exceptions being the weather and things concerning their personal lives. The ones involving the rest of the world, which were fairly often, had being almost identical to mine, only a few minor differences here and there over the expanse of her eighty years in this life. She knew that I wouldn't hurt Isabella. That I could never bring myself to, because she had, like me, seen my future with Isabella.

At least the future *before* she ran into the nomads.

Now it all rested on Isabella.

Either way –whether she came with me or not - I would go to Italy. I *had* to. Aro had lived in his silly delusional world for long enough, and now was the time to assert my authority in a way I had never done before. The vampire world as a whole was going to know that it wasn't the Volturi in charge.

It was me.

Whether Isabella was by my side when I swept the rug of control out from under the brothers' feet didn't matter to me. All I needed to know was that she was safe. That she was waiting for me to return from wherever she was.

She didn't seem to realise that I *needed* her. That I *needed* her to be safe.

That I wasn't always a monster.

Only when the time called for it.

I snapped the phone closed, knowing that Alice was finished before sighing again and facing the direction Isabella had run off it. She had stopped. I knew that much. But I couldn't be one hundred per cent sure that she was safe.

I closed my eyes and let my ears roam as freely and wildly as they dared, taking in every minute detail they could pick up. The flutter of a butterfly's wings a mile away, gentle swaying of the breeze through the tree tops across the entire canopy of the forest. I could hear Isabella's breathing, her attempting to steady herself as she paced, mumbling to herself. I didn't linger on her, but kept her position in check as I branched my senses out further, hearing the crackle and pop of the fires that I'd left behind and the cars on the freeway, sixteen miles away.

But nothing other than the vegetation and the essence of nature that inhabited the forest. Not that you could tell that anything lived here by looking around me. Everything had disappeared because they knew that I was a predator. They knew I was dangerous.

I made my way towards Isabella, keeping my pace to a human walk, giving her time to realise that I was coming and to prepare herself. I could tell that she was still scared. It was rolling off her in waves and her mind was frantically sorting through scenarios. Things that might happen and things, that I knew, would never happen. She didn't have that certainty though.

She was afraid of me and rightly so.

She stopped pacing when she sensed that I was standing behind her and when she turned her eyes were wide with fear and she held herself in a way that no vampire should. Especially when there was nothing to worry about.

"Edward." She whispered, wrapping her arms around herself as she gazed at me.

"You don't have to be afraid of me." I told her as I leaned on the trunk of a large tree, not breaking her gaze.

"How do I know that?" She asked. Her voice would have been barely audible to even vampire ears, but mine being so much more advance heard her question as though it had been shouted at me.

"You know why." I told her honestly. She *did* know why but her fear at the moment was making her doubt herself.

"Do I?" She raised a shoulder slightly in a half shrug. "I mean, like everybody's been telling me, I don't know if I'm safe with you, or if I'm safer on my own or with my family. I knew that you didn't have any qualms about killing other vampires because you killed Felix – or Demetri – whichever one it was! I should have known back then that the life of another vampire didn't mean anything to you, and I should

have questioned it then and there, but I didn't. But seeing you in that clearing, with James and Victoria, it it scared me, Edward. It scared me because I saw a small portion of what you're really capable of and I didn't know whether or not that you would-"

About half way through her little rant, me being me and easily distracted by the little things about her, pushed myself off of the trunk I was leaning on and walked slowly over to her. I don't think she realised, even though she was still looking at me as I moved. I knew where she was going with this, and I knew that she felt scared because she didn't know whether or not I would turn on her. I needed her to shut up for a moment, so I pressed my lips to hers and it was effective immediately.

Her tensed body relaxed as I cupped her face with my hands and she sighed into my mouth allowing me to taste the beauty of her.

Another sigh escaped her lips as I pulled away from her. But this one was different. The other had been a sigh of contentment; this one was a sigh of disappointment.

" *That* is why you never have to be afraid of me." I whispered. "You think I'd do that with just anyone?"

"I...um..." She shook her head gently – well, as much as she could in my grasp. "Um..."

"I love you, Isabella Swan." I whispered to her and she looked at me with her wide golden eyes. "And there is nothing in this or any other universe that is going to change that or take you away from me."

"You love me?" She asked in a whisper, her eyes glistening slightly and I knew that, had she ability, she would be crying at this instant.

"I do." I pressed my lips to hers again gently. She increased the pressure, wrapping her arms around my neck and easing one of her hands into my hair, pulling at it gently. I was surprised at how good that felt.

"I love you, too." She whispered as we broke apart for the second time.

"That's good to know." I smirked at her and she frowned slightly, as if trying to work something out. "What is it?"

"You got my name wrong." Her brow furrowed at me and I chuckled. "My name is Cullen. Not Swan."

"Actually, since you never married when human *or* vampire, and you never underwent any legal documentation to change your name after meeting Carlisle, your name is still Swan." I explained and she shook her head slightly, as if trying to rid herself of some pestering thought.

"You put way too much thought into some things, you know that, right?" She eyed me suspiciously as I laughed at her statement. I shrugged and she smiled.

Before she could register what was happening, I bent down and knocked her knees out from underneath her, wrapping one arm around her back, supporting her with the other under her knees, holding her bridal style. She gasped as her brain registered the lack of ground underneath her for the sixty-fourth of a second that there was nothing underneath her.

I sat down on the forest floor and settled her in my lap as she wrapped her arms around me. I wrapped my arms around her waist, pulling her closer to me.

"Can I ask you something?" She asked in a small voice, resting her head on my shoulder.

"Of course, love." I could feel a warmth swell from inside her as I used the term 'love' to address her. Funnily enough, it was present in my own chest as well. Still so confusing.

"Why did you do that to James?" Her voice had dropped to nothing more than a whisper and I could feel her watching me as my jaw

tensed, remembering what he had thought about her. The vile things that he had imagined doing to her. "I mean, you killed Victoria quickly, but not James. Why?"

"Because." I replied and she looked up at me, her head lifting slightly.

"Because what?" She pressed. I expected this. Even without Alice saying so, I would have expected the third degree from Isabella anyway. It was in her nature. She was curious about everything, and one day, I knew that it would get her in trouble.

"You didn't hear what he was thinking about you." I tightened my grip on her, feeling oddly possessive even though the dismantled corpse of James had long since burned and was now being scattered into the winds by the breeze that travelled across the open lands.

"Yes, I did." She argued and I felt her gaze intensify.

"No." I shook my head, looking down at her. "Not everything." I looked away from her again, not wanting to meet her burning gaze.

"What do you mean?" She asked, placing a hand on my jaw, gently rubbing it with her thumb, trying to ease the tension in the muscles that she could see. If they had been any use, I knew that there would be a vein popping out of my jaw line.

"You didn't hear what he was thinking *before* you realised you could look into their minds." I replied and her thumb stopped but her hand remained in place.

"What was he thinking?" She asked and I closed my eyes and sighed.

"It's not something I want to repeat." I stated simply and from the corner of my eye I saw her nod as her mouth formed a small 'oh' shape.

"I see." She whispered. "That doesn't explain why you-"

"Because you're mine." I cut her off and she stiffened in my arms. "You are mine as I am yours. It's as simple as that. And don't come out with all that 'I'm not an object so I don't belong to anyone' spiel that's running through your head right now, because in your heart, you know it's true."

"Get out of my head." She mumbled, her argument blown away before she even had a chance to make it.

"I wasn't in your head." I smirked at her and she raised an eyebrow at me. "I just knew what your answer was going to be, so I beat you to it."

"Huh." She blinked and looked away from me. "Maybe you know me better than I thought you did."

"Maybe so." I nodded, sighing gently. "But you don't know nearly enough about me."

"No." She agreed. "I don't." She was silent for a moment longer before she twisted in my arms. Well, as much as she could in my tight embrace. "I want to find out though."

"Really?" I asked her, raising an eyebrow and she nodded. "There's a lot of the monster in there."

"I think I can handle him." She gave me a small smile. "At least I hope I can."

"Alright." I sighed, and she grinned at me. "What do you want to know?"

"One thing I've been wondering about for a while – and I know that you said never to mention it again but I'm curious so please don't hurt me." She said in one breath, looking at me with wide eyes. I raised an eyebrow at her and she gave me a sheepish smile.

"I'm sorry." I shook my head, slightly. "What?" I couldn't help but chuckle at her.

"Okay." She took a breath and started over. "I know that you said never to mention it again, but I'm curious so please don't hurt me." She looked up at me with wide eyes and I wondered what she could be angling towards. I nodded for her to carry on and she took another deep breath. "I was wondering, if you were born in a time that predates language how did you have a name?" The end of her question was merely a whisper and I wondered why she would be scared to ask me that. It was just the name said out loud that I didn't like. It gave outsiders a link to my humanity that I didn't like. She hadn't said the name so it didn't matter. I don't think I could have gotten angry with her for it anyway. Like I said, she was too curious for her own good. "Don't hate me."

"I could never hate you." I pressed a kiss to her forehead. "And in answer to your question, yes I predate language-"

"Which I might add, is kind of creepy." She cut in and I raised my eyebrows at her. "Sorry. I'll shut up now."

"Anyway ... even though there was no actual language, we needed ways to identify and call each other and eventually they turned into name like creations."

"Kind of ... adapted from like ... grunts and mumbles." She asked, her eyes expectant.

"Exactly." I smiled at her. "Not the most civilised of times, people, places, well you get the idea, but they got the jobs they needed to done and everyone was happy."

"Sounds nice." She sighed.

I shrugged slightly. "It was simpler. Not exactly *nicer* , but there wasn't all the politics and domination that happens nowadays."

"Which is mostly your fault." She smirked up at me.

"Touché."

"Do you remember it?" She asked, looking up at me from where her head rested on her shoulder.

"Clear as anything." I looked down at her. "Whereas other vampires, as you know, tend to lose their human memories unless they focus on them exclusively, I have retained all of my human memories as clearly as the vampire ones. I don't know why. There are things about my existence that not even *I'm* aware of."

"Weird." She mumbled and I nodded.

"It is." I sighed, grasping one of her hands in my own. It was so small compared to my hand, fitting inside of it so perfectly. She smiled and looked up at me.

"Will you tell me what you were like?" Her eyes were wide and expectant, looking for answers. Alice was right, but then again, Alice knew Isabella probably better than the little vampire sitting in my lap knew herself.

"When?" I knew what she was talking about, but I wanted her to say it.

"When you were human." She whispered, taking her bottom lip in between her teeth as she had done many times when she was human.

I ran my thumb over her lip, gently pulling it out from in between her sharp teeth. "Why do you want to know?"

"Because you know about me when I was human. Hell, you *knew* me when I was human. For a while at least. I don't know anything about when you were human." Her voice had lowered to a whisper as she turned her body to face me, still positioned on my lap. "I know

about Edward." She reached up and placed a hand on either side of my face, running her thumbs over my cheekbones. "I want to know about *Edaar* ."

I scowled at the use of my human name and she shrugged, a sheepish smile on her face. She knew that I would react that way but the desire to know had overpowered her survival instinct.

"Well, he's not a very interesting character." I shrugged and she frowned, a slight crease appearing in her regularly immaculately smooth forehead.

"What do you mean?" She asked, clearly confused. "I think you're interesting."

I chuckled once, shaking my head slightly. "You might find *me* interesting, but you're forgetting there's fifteen thousand years between who I was as a human and who I am now." I looked away from her, through the trees. "I wasn't always a monster."

"Edward." She whispered, taking my face between her hands again and gently pulling me around to look at her. I could have resisted. Overpowered her and refused to look at her. "I know that inside of you is a monster, but it doesn't rule who you are."

"That's just it." I sighed, taking her hands in mine. "The monster *is* me. The thing that you saw out in the open today, with James and Victoria-" she cringed at the memory, "-that was the real me. That was who I really am. *That* is one of the reasons I am who I am."

"I don't believe that." She shook her head.

"Then you're a naïve fool." I wrapped my arms around her and she rested her head on my shoulder again.

"So, why do you say you weren't interesting as a human?" She asked, her voice filled to the brim with curiosity.

"Because I wasn't." I shrugged. "Humans weren't too interesting back then. Got up at dawn, hunted, made fires, fought a little bit, ran away when something more dangerous than us was around and went to sleep. That was pretty much it."

"Sounds easy." She mumbled and if she were human, I would say that she was getting sleepy. I just knew that she was relaxed instead.

"It was." I nodded, resting my cheek on her head gently. "Simple at least."

"Then what happened?" She asked, her voice quiet and wary. She wanted to know about my transition from mortal to immortal, from human to vampire, from weak and breakable to the most powerful creature on the planet.

"I was stupid." I stated simply. "I went off to hunt on my own when I shouldn't have done. The tribe I lived with knew that something was going to happen, though we didn't know what. And since communication was pretty much nonexistent then, we had no way of throwing around ideas of what it might have been as humans do now. I didn't think about what would happen. All I knew was that I was hungry and wanted some meat. So I went out and didn't come back human."

"What happened?" She looked up at me, her eyes wide and I knew she wanted me to tell her.

"No." I stated simply and her face fell. She opened her mouth to say something but I cut her off. "I said no."

"All right." She conceded, sighing and settling back down onto my shoulder. "What happened after?"

"You mean when I was a newborn?" I clarified, and she nodded. "The first newborn. Well, let's just say, there's never been another newborn to create as much devastation as I did."

"What do you mean?" She asked, looking worried.

"I took out entire tribes and groupings of people in the places that now range from the entire expanse of Russia down to Thailand and across to Poland." I explained and she stiffened in my arms. "I decimated the population in my first year, Bella. I was more destructive than some vampires are after a millennium. All in a year. And you tell me I'm not a monster."

"But it doesn't rule you." She argued quickly and I shook my head.

"But I am." I told her, my tone harsher down as I remembered my first crazed year. I could see, smell, hear, taste and feel the destruction I caused. I could feel the human bodies breaking as I drained them all of their life force, drinking it all down. I was the epitome of a crazed newborn.

"I don't believe that." She repeated her earlier sentence.

"And you're still a fool." She chuckled a little at my reply, evidently not really seeing what I was telling her. "Isabella." I shifted her where she sat in my arms. "I killed – drained, tortured and maimed – over ten thousand people in my first year."

Her eyes widened at my admission. "So many." She whispered and I nodded, not breaking eye contact.

I turned away from her, not able to see the look of shock and pain in her eyes.

"And you say I'm not a monster."

I've known all along that I was. I've never thought anything different. I've been what I needed to be to keep the peace throughout the world over the years. I've needed to be that monstrous force from legends and myths to keep my species as such. We needed to *stay* mythological creatures or else the world that I have been behind the scenes creating, shaping and moulding is lost. Everything I've

worked for could be compromised by one reckless vampire, and I needed my reputation as that monster to precede me. To have them fear me as they should.

Yes.

I was a monster.

And I had to stay that way.

I don't know if there are any woods or forests in Montana, but for the sake of the story, there are.

Also, a couple of you are worried that Edward will be becoming a softie as the story progresses and the answer is no he will not. He will remain the undisputed monster of legends. The only time his demeanour will change is when he and Bella are alone.

Also, I don't know about the population sizes in the Stone Age, but I needed an impressive number for Edward to tell Bella so she'd be more shocked that way.

Right, Edward is still pissed at me for the last chapter and it's safe to say that he's not talking to me for now. Hopefully he'll get over it. So this time it's going to be 'Bella Question Time.' Send me in some questions for our dear lovely Isabella and they'll be posted on my blog – link on profile – within the next couple of days. She's really looking forward to it :D

There isn't a quote in this chapter. I've been so exhausted over this last week that I really couldn't be arsed to put one in. I'll put two in the next chapter though, to make up for it.

Support Stacie

Not an update. Sorry about that.

But I want to let you all know to start saving and counting any pennies you have left over

because the Support Stacie Auction will be on from the 11th Sept - 14th Sept

and you guessed it, if you want me to, I can write you your very own imaginings.

You all know its for a good cause, so head on over and check out what I'm offering at

[http://majiksfanfic\(dot\)com/phpbb/viewtopic\(dot\)php?f=115&t=2641&p=52196&hilit=twiXlite#p52196](http://majiksfanfic(dot)com/phpbb/viewtopic(dot)php?f=115&t=2641&p=52196&hilit=twiXlite#p52196)

There are loads of authors on auction so click on the icon at the top labelled 'Twilight Auctions' and it'll lead you through to them

You know you want to help out.

And you get a story at the end of it, so it's win win.

^_^

Author's Note

I know, I know.

It's another Author's Note.

I know that you guys probably really hate these things but hey, how else am I going to get my messages across to you guys?

Just a reminder that the Support Stacie Auction starts tonight, so go and bid.

Am offering anything you want.

New stories, outtakes, continuations. Anything.

Seriously, whatever you want.

Just go and bid. It's for a good cause - one of the best in my book.

That said, I'm now going to tell you that the link to my page is on my profile. Go bid.

I'll have an actual chappie up soon. Probably tomorrow or Sunday.

GO BID!!!!

Love you guys.

Shedding A Little Light

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Krissy, in response to your review, I don't think Edward has a nationality. I don't think nations were formed back then. Though, if he had been born in modern times he would be classed as Russian, as that's where I want his people to have lived before he killed them all.

Bella

Hearing about Edward in his first year as a vampire was more daunting than I had thought it would be. I hadn't thought that even he could cause as much devastation as he had.

Ten thousand.

Ten thousand people in a year.

If I hadn't heard it from his own lips, I wouldn't have believed it was true. But it was. And even though I knew that there was nothing I could do about it, I still felt somewhat responsible for the expansive loss of life. I knew that was just a branch off of being Edward's mate, but still, I couldn't help it.

I knew that Edward knew something was wrong as we ran. We didn't speak as we sped across America, drawing ever closer to Newark where we would take Edward's private jet out of Newark airport in to Glasgow, Scotland.

Even though I'd travelled a little in my century on the planet, I hadn't been to the UK, which I found strange because ever since Edward appeared, I've been remembering small things from my human life and I remember, visiting England and the rest of the British Isles was one of my dreams. I'd always wanted to go there. To see the country

that had ruled over a good portion of the world for such an expansive space of time. It was one of my dreams.

Dreams that would have been vaporized whether Edward had made an appearance or not. Or so I'm told.

I knew that the Spanish Influenza had been approaching Chicago, but the way Edward told it, made me believe that I would not have been able to escape the dangerous infection before it hit the city, killing most of the population.

It's because of Edward that I wasn't lying six foot deep in the ground, or in a communal burial plot that was marked with a stone engraved with all the names of the deceased. Because of Edward, I had been able to live a century in the arms of the most loving family I had ever known, with no disrespect to my father at all. And, possibly the best thing I could have ever hoped for. I had found love. Esme had always said to me that to those who find it, feel as though they have slipped in and out of heaven. And I had to agree with her.

I looked down at the deer I had just finished, wanting Edward to come back. I knew that he would be back soon, but being away from him made me antsy. Even though I knew I shouldn't, I worried about him. Whether he was okay, which, in all honesty, was just laughable. Maybe it wasn't actually Edward I was worried about. Maybe it was just the rest of the population.

I had told him a couple of times that I worried about him, but all he did was laugh for a moment or two, then look me in the eye and try to persuade me that any fears I had were unfounded. Unnecessary. He didn't push too hard with it, because he knew that I wouldn't ever stop worrying about him. It was something that was innate in me. He knew that because he felt the same way.

We had been working on improving and branching out the power I had. And I had managed to gain basic control over it. I still contracted parts of Edward's personality without meaning to, but Edward didn't mind. I had also learned how to negate his shield to a

certain extent. *That* on the other hand was not something he was too impressed with. He liked his privacy and so did I. We had a silent understanding to leave the other's shields alone unless the time came for it. We still practised with it, due to the fact that there was a good chance we would need to communicate mentally in Volterra.

Edward's plan for Italy was to take the Volturi out. Completely. As in no more Volturi. It worked for me, but it meant that Edward was either going to have to replace them or he was going to have to take up the responsibility he passed onto them almost six millennia ago.

He didn't want me involved in what would happen at all. I knew that the only two reasons I was with him was because one: we couldn't stand to be apart from each other and two: Aro, Marcus and Caius knew about me, meaning I was in danger. Edward could not and would not stand to see me in danger.

I knew that anyone who tried would have the life expectancy of a fly in a spiders' web.

I felt safe when I was with Edward. Or even when I wasn't with him, but knew he was close. Like when I had flipped out over what had happened at the Canadian border. I knew that I had overreacted. A little bit. Okay, a lot. But still, it was a lot to take it. People and legends had told me to expect violence of the worst kind when Edward was around. They had told me that he was unforgiving of those that had wronged him or those he cared about. But then again, seeing as I was the only one he had ever cared about put paid to that theory. Kind of confirmed it too.

Just the fact that I knew Edward was faster and stronger than any other vampire in existence, and he would be able to tell when I was in danger before the creature – meaning vampire – could even think it kind of helped a little.

As I waited for Edward to return from his . . . hunt, I sat and waited for him. We were in New Jersey. Probably an hour or two's steady run from Newark, depending on how fast we ran and any possible

distractions that could come between us and our destination. We would be in Scotland by tomorrow, depending on how fast Edward's jet could go. Knowing Edward it was probably the most advanced piece of machinery to grace the skies. Being who he was – even though most of the world didn't know it – gave him a lot of shove where he needed it. Humans didn't know who he was or why they should listen to him, give him what he wanted. All they knew was that when he asked for something, you gave it to him. If not the person in contact with him was never seen again and he'd just take it. Sounds about right. He had managed to remain undetected by the humans. I'd never thought to ask why, I mean, it just seems so . . . *Edward* , really. No explanation to any of the things he had told me about his meddling in history needed explaining. They all just made sense.

Those were the small snippets of information I had obtained when practising with my mind reading. Edward had told me that it would come in very useful when in Volterra. It would let me know if the position I was in in the city was compromised. It would let me know if I was in trouble or not. I couldn't get it out as far as Edward could, but then again he could hear every mind within a twenty mile radius, should he want to.

I couldn't help but wonder, would I be able to sit there, knowing what Edward was doing in the castle, without doing anything? No, I wouldn't. I wouldn't be able to do that. Could I help him? Maybe. I don't know. I knew that I couldn't wait outside for him. He was indestructible, yes, but still, I worried, and I wouldn't be able to sit safely outside in the city, waiting for him. I *would* be going in with him when we got to Volterra.

"Isabella." I heard a low growl come from behind me. I turned to see Edward standing there, a less than pleased look on his face and I knew that he had seen my decision.

"You're not going to change my mind." I told him, stubbornly. "You can try all you want, but we both know how stubborn I am, and besides, if I'm sat outside, you're going to be wondering if I'm okay, and that will split your concentration."

"Be that as it may, my concentration can take being split, as you call it." He sighed, sounding pissed off. In the few days that we had been travelling together across the states, he had come to hate my stubborn streak. Just as I hated his. We were both as bad as each other. The fact that I was feeding off of his without realising it as well didn't help. "And if you're forgetting, which I am fully aware is impossible for a vampire to do, *I* am the indestructible one here. Someone in there lights a match and . . ." I could see that he couldn't bring himself to say it. For all the indestructibility and strength for others, he was incredibly unsure when it came to me. I knew that this was because he had never felt like this before and it was incredibly sweet – not something I'd say out loud to him, of course. I think that might be pushing it a little . . . okay, a lot – but it was unfounded.

"I know." I nodded, standing up and walking over to him. I wrapped my arms around his waist and settled my head where, had he been alive, his heart would be thumping away, loud and clear. "I know you worry, but don't you think that I'm safer with you?"

"No." He shook his head, his arms making their way around my body, pulling me closer to him. If we could get any closer, that is. "I think that you'd be safer away from the castle. In the city, so I know where you are, but away from the castle."

"Why?" I asked, looking up at him. Sure he was being protective, but there was such a thing as being *too* protective. What's someone going to do to *me*?

"That's something you don't seem to understand." He sighed, sitting down on the rock so quickly it took me a moment to register that we'd actually moved. I was now sitting on his lap and he was staring past me, out in front of him. "You think 'what's someone going to do with me'? But what you don't seem to realise is that to Aro, you're more valuable than anything else right now. I mean, at this very moment, he's assembling a group of trackers to find you."

"Doesn't he realise that even if they do find me, they've got to get through you first?" I looked at him as his eyes drifted up to my face.

They were an incredible ruby colour, which only served to show me the difference between us. He survived on human blood. I didn't. I think that was the only real thing we knocked heads on. Not that it's come up in conversation yet. I knew that he'd had a stint of vegetarianism over the millennia when he'd had to, but he'd never do it through choice. And I'd never go back to human blood. It was just something we'd have to agree to disagree on. It would kind of be like a vegetarian human living with or married to a meat eater. Same principle, I guess. I wouldn't let myself think of it too much. Maybe I would broach it with him on the plane over to Britain.

"Oh yeah, he realises that." He nodded, an amused glimmer in his eyes. "Which is why he's sent out two squads. One to 'keep me busy' while the second goes after you." It didn't escape my notice the way he said 'keep me busy'.

"Does Aro really think that'll work?" I almost laughed and he nodded against my shoulder.

"Amusing, isn't it?" He smirked at me. He was enjoying watching the actions of the Volturi play out through his visions.

"I guess he's forgotten about a little something that you and Alice share." He nodded, an evil smirk on his face. "Apart from, he doesn't know about Alice . . . does he?" He shook his head and I let out a breath. Well that's a good thing.

I had learned to tell Edward's smiles apart from one another over the days that we'd been travelling. He had many different smiles and smirks.

Each and every one of them enhanced him in the way only a smile can. He was gorgeous anyway, but when he smiled, he was . . . there are no words.

My favourite of them all was when he was completely relaxed. Just the two of us and he'd find something I'd done or had seen I was going to do or whatever, or a story that I'd told amusing. His lips

would pull up in a crooked grin. A smile that was slightly higher on one side than it was the other. And it reminded me that I was sat here with my own personal Adonis. It made his face radiate with life and beauty. I had a feeling that it was a smile reserved only for me. It was *my* smile. A smile that wouldn't appear if I wasn't there. That made me feel special. To think that I had my own smile. It reminded me that he was mine. *All* mine. . . .

Anyway, moving on.

"It seems that he has." He agreed lightly, as though Aro sending out two squads of vampires to mess with his plans was nothing. "It *is* nothing." He replied to my thoughts and I slapped him gently on the shoulder. "What? It's not my fault your shield is down."

"It's not, is it?" I felt around for the edges of my shield and sure enough, it was down. "What the-?"

"You had it down to see how far you could stretch out the mind reading." He answered my unspoken, unthought question. I snapped my shield back into place, happy that I could feel it there again. "And by the way."

"Hmm?" I hummed in response, looking down into his ruby eyes.

"You're the one with the beautiful smile." The way he looked when he told me things like that made my unbeating heart melt. I knew that whenever he said something like that, he was always sincere. He didn't know any other way to be with our kind. With humans, even Edward had to be sneaky to a certain extent. If he didn't then they wouldn't be so ignorant. But with vampires, he told it to them straight and if they didn't like it, he didn't care.

No qualms with ripping them apart if they didn't obey his rule.

"Edward." I mumbled, my lips, along with my hand, in his hair as he rested his head on my shoulder. He hummed in response and I had to take the chance while I had it. I wouldn't be able to ask this again,

not while on this trip and after then, I don't think I'd have the nerve to do so. He was relaxed now but after we got into Europe he wouldn't be. "I have a question."

"When do you not?" He sighed and I knew that he wasn't being serious. I think that some part of him liked the fact that I asked questions. It must have been a huge change from the vampires that were always 'run now, ask questions never'. "What is it?"

"Um . . ." I sighed, gently running my fingers through his hair. "Well, I was thinking about the rule, you know, and I had a thought-"

"Uh-oh."

"What's that supposed to mean?" I pretended to be offended which made him chuckle slightly.

"Nothing, love." I felt my insides melt a little more when he called me love. It happened every time and I knew that I could spend an eternity hearing that, without ever hearing it enough. "What was your thought about?"

"Well, I was wondering . . . about the Immortal Children." Something changed. I wasn't sure what it was, but something changed. "I was wondering, was that really the Volturi's decision to destroy them, or was it yours?" I think I already had my answer from his reaction. Or lack thereof.

"It was mine." He replied flatly. "Why do you always ask about the most awkward or infuriating things?" He asked, looking up at me. I could tell he wasn't angry at me, because if he was he would have put a stop to that with the 'it was mine' comment and not said anything else. Obviously the Immortal Children were not as sore a subject as his humanity was. But then again, that's to be expected.

"Talent, I guess." I shrugged and he shook his head whilst rolling his eyes. "You're not mad at me, are you?"

"Why would I be mad at you?" He asked, looking up at me, a slight confusion in his eyes.

"Because I asked about the Immortal Children?" It came out as more of a question than the statement I was after.

"So?" He shrugged, shaking his head but not breaking eye contact with me. "You're curious, Bella. You're not the first vampire to ask about the Immortal Children."

"Has anyone ever asked *you* about the Immortal Children before?" I asked, narrowing my eyes at him.

"Well, no, but still." He shrugged, a small smile on his face. "What did you want to know?"

"Were they really as dangerous as everybody says they were?"

"And then some." He sighed, running a hand through his hair. "The Immortal Children . . . they were a phenomenon unlike anything else in the world. They were more dangerous than anyone ever dreamed they would be." *More dangerous than you?* I thought dryly and he gave me a look that said 'duh. No one is more dangerous than me.' *Get out of my head.* He gave a little chuckle but didn't say anything. "They didn't develop beyond the age of which they were turned, which meant that they never left the newborn stage."

"I can never help wondering why someone would do that, though." I sighed, resting my cheek on his beautiful bronze hair. "Why would you turn a child into a vampire?"

"The first one to create an immortal child was a Russian vampire called Dana, and before you ask, no that wasn't Tanya, Irina and Kate's mother." He clarified and I nodded, closing my eyes, loving the velvety sounds of his voice more and more as the minutes passed. "She had been turned, much for the same reason that Esme was. Stuck in a desolate marriage, lost a child, thoroughly depressed, tried to commit suicide but was found by a vampire that

felt sorry for her, so he changed her. Decades later, she still hadn't adjusted to the reality that she would never again have a child, so, foregoing trying for one of her own – which even she realised was impossible for her now – she discovered a young boy, no more than four years old, who had lost his parents. She didn't know whether the child was just lost or was an orphan and she didn't care. She was enamoured with the child and wasted no time in making sure she had him forever." He shook his head, sighing gently. "She wanted an angel to love and care for, for eternity. What she created . . . was a demon."

"What happened?" I asked in no more than a whisper, not wanting to ruin the slight atmosphere that had built up with Edward's tale. Sounds silly, but hey, we vampires live so long that we don't really find any entertainment in much. Unless your name's Emmett and you find everything entertaining.

"The child had no control." He stated matter of factly.

"Like a newborn?" I asked, trying to connect it with something I knew.

"No." He shook his head and I felt slightly confused. "He was worse than a newborn. As time goes by, a newborn develops a sense of control over their thirst, learning to last longer and longer between feeds, learning to move amongst humans without devouring each and every one of them. It takes time, yes, but it is something that every vampire needs to do if they want to survive. Moving amongst humans is necessary sometimes, even for the nomads that try to stay away from human life other than when feeding. But the child . . ." He paused momentarily. "He had no control at all. He didn't show any signs of development beyond the four human years he had experienced. He could learn no more than he already had because his mind function hadn't developed. His speech patterns remained that of a four year old at that time – which was very different from a four year old in this time. Four year olds are a lot more advanced than they used to be."

"Really?" I smiled down at him and he nodded.

"Oh, yeah. Remember, the majority of the population didn't have any education at all. Education was a very new thing and the masses didn't have access to it. The only ones who did really were those in the churches."

"Wow." I breathed gently, resuming running my hands through his hair. I had been to school so many times it seemed strange that they didn't have the educational institutions back then that we do now. I mean, I know that they didn't, but I guess being removed from it makes it seem different. Now that I was sitting on the lap of the creature that's been there through everything kind of makes it more real.

"They wouldn't have really done anything with it if they *did* have the education. They didn't have jobs like they do now. There wasn't really a need for it, only to separate the nobles from the commoners." He snorted at the terms the humans had given themselves. Then again, him being him, I wouldn't expect anything else. Would you?

"Anyway, back to the boy." I urged and he chuckled once at my enthusiasm for the subject. I yearned to know everything and anything that he did. I knew there was one way I could do that, but I wouldn't ever do that without his permission. If he wanted me to know, then he would tell me. It's not like we have forever or anything, is it?

"Like I said, the boy had no developmental skills." He continued as though the short tangent had never occurred. "But the worst thing about his existence was his beauty. Everyone who laid eyes on this boy would do anything to protect and care for him. He decimated villages in days. And of course being a vampire, no human could hide from him. And the woman who made him, allowed him to carry on doing it."

"Because she couldn't say no to him?" I asked, clarifying the point.

"Yes." He nodded, moving his hands so that the one wrapped around my front rested on my thigh and the one travelling around my back rested on my hip. It was oddly comforting to have his hands there. It was intimate without being pushy. I knew Edward wasn't a virgin. Hell, if he had been I would have been extremely worried. But I was glad that he wasn't pushing me. "She couldn't say no to him, she couldn't stop him and she wouldn't stop trying to protect him when I decided it was time to intervene."

"Can I see?" I asked, and he knew that I wanted to see his memory of what had happened that day.

"What?" He asked, taking his head off of my shoulder and looking up at me incredulously. "Are you-"

"I'm sure that I want to see it, yes." I clarified, not breaking eye contact with him. "I know that I didn't react so well to the little display with James-" He snorted slightly when I said that. I made a point to ignore him at that point in time. "But I want to know everything about you. And contradicting what I said before in Montana, I know that includes the monster. I want to know, Edward. And besides, it's an important time in vampiric history. I want to know as much as I can."

"You're serious, aren't you?" He asked, a slightly surprised tone to his voice and I nodded. "Alright, if you're sure. I'm warning you now, it's not pretty."

"I don't care." I whispered, pressing my lips to his gently. I lifted my head up and smiled down at him, hoping that he would take me seriously.

I could honestly say that I wasn't prepared to be pulled into the memory like I was. It was as though I was standing there watching the whole scene play out in front of me, like I was actually there in person. The fact that I was in modern clothing and everyone else was in clothes that were in fashion almost a thousand years ago told me that I wasn't.

As I looked out onto the scene, I could see the shadow of a woman walking towards me. In her arms was a small boy, no older than four years old. As I watched, the closer they got to me, and I could see the look of fear on the woman's face and the look of contentment on the boys'.

The boy looked like a tiny angel, sitting in the woman's arms. He was small, even for his age. He had pale skin, visibly hard like stone, and a mop of beautiful blonde hair. I couldn't take my eyes off of him. Or more accurately, his eyes. Where you would have expected there to be eyes of a beautiful blue or clear green, they were blood red, indicating that this child – for all his looks and enthrallments – was not human.

The colour and brightness of his eyes told me that he had just fed and I wondered how many human lives had been ended to satiate his hunger. Though he looked like an angel, the tiny monster within him came through loud and clear in those eyes.

Though for all these thoughts, I could not look away from the child. It was as though I was hypnotised and frozen to the spot. How this could be possible, I wasn't too sure about, but still, I felt the overwhelming desire to protect this boy from whatever it was the woman holding him was so fearful of.

She came to a sudden stop right next to where I was standing, allowing me to take in every feature the boy possessed. The closeness to him made me want to hold him. I reached out to touch him gently, but got a mild surprise when my hand travelled straight through him and the terrified woman. Interesting . I thought, remembering that I was in fact in Edward's memory.

I looked to where the woman's intense gaze never moved from and saw that making their way towards us were six figures. I held my breath as I watched them approach where we were standing, moving slowly, as though to build up to something.

I instantly recognised the one at the front as Edward, knowing his gait and liking the fact that his hair was as wild and out of control in this time as it was in mine.

I could see in his eyes that he was furious as he approached the terrified woman and the boy at a human pace, allowing them to stew in panic while they waited for him to approach.

He stopped a mere foot away from me, looking absolutely glorious and powerful as he stared at the woman in front of him, standing tall as he always did.

" My Lord Edward." The woman whispered softly. From the way her lips were moving and the sounds being made by her, I knew she wasn't speaking in English, but I could understand every single word that came out of her mouth. Being in Edward's memory must have given me the skill of knowing Russian. Whether it would last when I was drawn back into the real world was another question. It was interesting to know that Edward hadn't moved onto a new name in the last millennia. Edward suited him. Maybe this would be the one that stuck. I hoped so. He was definitely my Edward. "To what do we owe the pleasure?"

" You know exactly why I am here, Dana." He replied in a cold, clipped tone that I knew meant he was not playing around. Something or someone (or both) would die here today and I knew exactly who it would be. The knowledge that Edward had given me wouldn't have mattered, as it was obvious whose life would be ending.

" My Lord. Pray tell, I-"

" Do not try me, Dana." Edward cut her off and smartly, she shut up. "I am at the end of my patience. With you and this child. Are you aware that because of your actions in turning this child, you have spurred on others around the globe to do the same? Because of your actions, our secrecy is in more jeopardy than ever before." He

was livid and I was glad that I wasn't real in this memory. "And it must stop. Now."

" I apologise, my Lord." She bowed her head, showing her respect for Edward. "He is still learning, my Lord. I can assure you that-"

" Your assurance means nothing." He cut her off again. "The fact that you do not know what this child is and is not capable of is failure enough. He will not develop and therefore he will not learn. If allowed to continue existing, he will remain at the same level of development he is in now for eternity. He will always continue this level of destruction and that is something I cannot allow."

" What do you mean?" She asked her eyes growing wide as she met with Edward's cold, hard rubies.

" The child must be destroyed." He replied calmly and coldly.

" No!" She wailed, clutching onto the child in her arms. "You cannot! He is but a child. He does not understand-"

" Exactly." Edward snapped and the vampires surrounding him took a step back, sensing the danger. "He does not understand nor will he ever understand the need for secrecy. Neither he, nor the other Immortal Children spread throughout the lands are aware of the law. No matter how long they live or how many times the law is explained to them, they will never understand nor will they uphold it. They are too dangerous to be allowed to continue in their existence."

" I can't let you kill him, my Lord." She was dry sobbing, and I was sure that were she able to cry, there would be tears flowing down her cheeks and onto the shoulder of the boy in her arms. He on the other hand looked calm and was staring intently at Edward, who stared calmly back. I had the feeling that the boy was attempting to win Edward over in the same way he did the rest of the population, but was finding it impossible to do so. "I won't let you."

Edward's eyes flicked back to Dana as she stood defiantly holding the boy. "You forget where you come from." Edward growled in a manner that frightened even me. And I wasn't even really there.

"Excuse me." A small, delicate, tinkling voice breached the air, causing Edward to growl low in his chest. I realised then that the voice had come from the boy and Edward was frustrated at the interruption. Even though I did not technically exist yet, I was still able to read him as clearly as I could read his modern counterpart. "Why are you frightening my mother? She hasn't done anything wrong? And neither have I." Edward's eyes narrowed as the boy smiled a dazzling smile at him.

"Do not try to win me over, boy." Edward growled at the child. Standing there, I was torn. I didn't know whether to protect the boy or stand with Edward, who seemed to have the same hold over me as he did in my time. "Others, such as your mother and the pathetic humans you prey upon may be susceptible to your angelic looks but do not expect the same reaction from me. Trust me, boy, when I say, you will not live to see the sunrise."

I watched as the child's face scrunched up at the blatant refusal Edward had given him. He was clearly not used to being rejected. "My mother doesn't have to listen to what you say. And neither do I." I could feel Edward's smugness at the boy's reaction. He was throwing a tantrum, just like the child he was. "Who do you think you are?"

"I created this race." Edward replied in a low whisper and the boy visibly shrank into the woman, Dana's side, clearly not liking Edward's reactions to him. Edward's gaze snapped up to the woman holding him with a fierceness I hadn't seen before and I would never forget. "This child cannot exist any longer." He raised a hand and snapped his fingers. "Destroy him."

I couldn't help the intake of breath as I watched the vampires, that I had no doubt came from the Volturi swiftly made their way around

Edward and surrounded the woman. She screamed in defiance, trying to protect the child.

" My Lord." One of the vampires surrounding her stepped away, addressing Edward. "She will not surrender the child."

Edward looked at him with a glare of annoyance that caused him to visibly flinch. As I looked at him, I knew that I hadn't seen a vampire that looked more terrifying or predatory in the time I had been alive. He was the epitome of deadly.

" Then kill her." He replied in a smooth, cold, hard command, his eyes never leaving the vampire who bowed and made his way back into the frenzy.

I couldn't watch as the vampires grabbed the woman's limbs, removing the child from her grasp, and ripping her to pieces. A shrill keening, like metal being ripped apart filled the air and I had to turn away. At least she was not suffering in her death.

The child was screaming, trying to reach for her as those destroying her began to strike up a fire, setting sparks in mere seconds.

Within less than a minute, the remains of the woman were being set ablaze, and the air was filling with thick, purple, sweet-scented smoke as she burned. The child was still dry sobbing and reaching out for the remains of the woman he believed to be his mother.

Edward walked silently towards him, smirking as the child noticed him and started hissing and screaming at him. Edward seemed to be drawing amusement from the child's insults and raging. But then again, Edward would.

He reached out and grabbed the child by the throat, removing him from the grasp of the vampire that was restraining him. The boy kicked and screamed at him as he walked towards the fire, clawing at him skin with his nails, not realising he was doing no damage to Edward's perfect skin at all. His kicking and screaming became more

fierce and loud the closer Edward got to the fire that was consuming the remains of the female vampire.

Stopping in front of it, the child attempted to bite at Edward's hand, wincing when his teeth came into contact with Edward's smoother than marble, harder than reinforced steel skin, harder than that of any vampire in existence.

With one last smirk, Edward held the boy out over the fire and released his grip on his throat, watching the boy fall into and be devoured by the flames, screaming as he burned. Though it was a horrible sight, especially as Edward looked even more deadly by firelight, I couldn't tear my eyes away from the scene. Eventually, the boys' cries stopped and were replaced by silence as the vampires surrounding Edward again – not that he needed protection, mind you – watched the burning without making a sound.

The whole exchange had taken less than three minutes.

I blinked suddenly as the scene around me shifted once again and I was back where I had been before. Sitting on Edward's lap, one hand on his chest and the other tangled in his beautiful bronze locks. He looked up at me, an unreadable expression on his face, his eyes closed and dark.

"I told you it wasn't pretty." He stated without putting any emotion into it. He *had* said that it wouldn't be pretty. He *had* warned me and I knew roughly what had happened. But seeing it with my own eyes made it that much more real.

"I guess I didn't really thinking you were being *that* serious." I mumbled and he nodded.

"Truthfully, though, do you really think that I would joke around about something like that?" He looked up at me and I shook my head.
"There we go then."

"I don't know, I . . ." I was stumped, to say the least.

"It's a lot to take in." He nodded, increasing the pressure on my hip ever so slightly, comfortingly.

"It is." I agreed, nodding slightly as I ran my hand through his hair again. "It's just . . . seeing you like that. Enjoying killing that boy – I mean, I know that it had to be done, he was dangerous and would have exposed us if you hadn't, but . . . it kind of, opened my eyes a little more." He tilted his head to the side, urging me to go on without actually saying anything. "It reinforced the fact that the monster is always there inside of you and there's nothing I can do about it." I sighed, pressing my lips to his forehead. "But even though the monster is there, it doesn't stop me loving you. You did what you had to do with that boy, and although I wish that you hadn't enjoyed it quite so much, I know that you had to destroy him, to preserve our way of life."

"You've certainly changed your tune." He smirked up at me and I smiled. "I was half expecting you to freak out and run again."

"I wouldn't do that again-" I looked down at him to see him smirking with a mischievous glint in his eye. He knew that I wouldn't have run again and he was playing me. Mean sod. "Oh you . . . you . . ."

"Who're you calling a you you?" He asked, mocking offense and I had to giggle. I loved it when he was like this, but what made it all the better was that he was only like this around me. If there was anyone present, he was all business. It made me wonder how many people knew the real him.

"Daft." I chuckled, pressing a kiss to his forehead.

"Come on." He quickly stood up, deftly placing me on my feet as he did so. "We need to get going."

"Are you okay?" I asked, concerned about his sudden behaviour change.

"You remember the two squads I told you Aro sent out?" He asked and I nodded as we started making our way in the direction of New York City. "One squad will be passing this way in a little over twenty-four hour's time."

"How do you-" I stopped, realising what a stupid question I was about to ask. "Never mind. You're not scared, are you?" I joked. The glare I received in return told me he was not amused and I shut up knowing that it was better not to antagonise him. Especially when I'd just watched his memory of ripping a woman and child to pieces. "How long did it take to destroy *all* of the Immortal Children?" I asked, changing the subject back to the previous one.

"Little under a decade." He replied, pulling out his phone.

"Wow." I breathed and he looked at me, quirking an eyebrow. "Not as long as I would have thought."

"We had Demetri." He shrugged before saying something quickly into the phone and hanging up. I could only assume he was preparing the jet.

"That'll help." I surrendered that one. "So, how long are we spending in the UK?"

"It's just a pit stop." He shrugged as we moved quickly, but not quite running.

"Why do you want to move so quickly?" I asked, stopping which caused him to stop and turn to face me. I was irritating him a little, but hell, if he wanted me to do something, he'd better explain why. Father of vampires be damned.

"These squads have direct communications with Aro. They'll be passing through here in a little over twenty-four hours. As soon as they realise that our scents get fainter the closer to Washington they get, they're going to be in touch with Volterra, which means, I lose the element of surprise with those idiots."

"Does it really make a difference if they're caught off guard or not?" I asked, feeling extremely confused.

"No, but it's more fun that way." He shrugged, pulling me into his arms, wrapping them around my waist.

"Of course." I moaned, rolling my eyes. "It has to be fun when you're planning a mass execution."

He shrugged nonchalantly. "Gotta do something to make it interesting." He turned and started walking again, taking me with him.

"You make it sound as though you do this frequently." I rolled my eyes again, looking up at him as we walked.

"Who says I don't." It wasn't a question. And I knew that he was deadly serious. No pun intended. "Now, are you going to run with me or do I have to carry you?" He tilted his head to the side, a smirk playing on his face. I didn't trust that face. He might have reverted back to silly Edward for the moment, but he was still serious when he suggested something. I would have to get him to loosen up a little more after this whole Volturi ordeal is over. Maybe Emmett could help me out.

"I'll run." I smiled up at him, before stopping, stopping him with me, turning him around, pressing a soft kiss to his lips and running away from him as fast as I could. It didn't take him long to catch up with me, grabbing me around the waist before swinging me around and attacking my lips with his own. I couldn't help but giggle and be amazed at how quickly his attitude could change. "Dammit." I mocked disappointment. "You caught me."

"Uh-huh." He nodded, not convinced at all. "Come on." He grabbed my hand and started moving again. He ran quickly, but slowly enough for me to keep up with him easily. It felt amazing, just like the last few days had. Running with Edward was so free and

invigorating, which I would have thought impossible considering I'm dead and all.

But just being with Edward made me feel more alive than ever. How had I lived without him for a century?

Please. Will someone tell me?

We arrived in Newark forty-five minutes later, walking up to a side door of the airport.

"Um, Edward, is it okay if we're in here?" I asked, not entirely sure. He just looked down at me and gave me a look that said 'WTF?!' Not that Edward would ever speak IM, but hey, you never know, do you? "Point taken."

I didn't pay attention to what happened at the airport. Edward did all of the talking, what talking there was anyway and within minutes we were both sitting aboard a comfortable jet, watching the clouds go by.

"How did you get this thing to take off so quickly?" I asked, narrowing my eyes at him.

"When you know people. . ." He shrugged looking out the window.

"Or threaten them nicely." I finished and he smirked at me. I was doing it again. Absorbing aspects of his personality without meaning to. "I was wondering." He looked over at me, a small smile on his lips as I made my way over to him. "When we get to Volterra . . . who are you going to get rid of first? Aro, Caius or Marcus?"

"It doesn't matter, they're interchangeable." He replied and I couldn't help but laugh.

"They certainly do seem that way." I agreed. From my experience, Aro was definitely the one in charge of the three. Caius seemed to

be the antagonist and Marcus just seemed bored with . . . well, everything really.

"What's going through your mind?" He asked quietly, running his fingers up and down my arm gently.

I sighed, leaning my head back on his shoulder, closing my eyes. "Can't you just pick it out of my head?"

"I could do, but I don't want to." He shrugged with his other shoulder and I smiled at him. I opened my eyes to see him watching me.

"Honestly?" I looked up and he nodded. "I don't really know." He frowned at me and I smiled inside at how a small crease appeared in his immaculate forehead as his eyebrow raised by an infinitesimal amount. "I don't know. I guess there's so much going on at the moment that I don't really know what's going on."

"That doesn't really make sense." He sighed and I giggled.

"I know it doesn't." I replied, lacing my fingers with his in my lap. "I never claimed that it did."

"Touché." He chuckled, pressing his lips to my head, sighing into my hair. "Won't be long before we get to Glasgow."

"Hmmm." Was my eloquent answer. "How long are we spending in the United Kingdom then?"

"As long as it takes for the jet to refuel." He replied, gazing out of the window.

"I thought we were flying to Glasgow and then making the rest of the journey on foot." I looked up at him, curious as to the change of plans.

"That was the original plan, but Aro's little defiance means that we've had to speed up our plans." He explained, looking down at me as he

gently ran his fingers through my hair gently. "We'll be flying into Venice, picking up one of my cars and driving to Volterra."

Before I was aware of it, we were losing height and I looked up at Edward, expectantly.

"We're just coming into Glasgow now." He mumbled against my hair before pressing his lips to my forehead. "We should be on our way in a little while."

I nodded, resting my head on his shoulder, sighing gently. I closed my eyes and we passed the rest of the journey in silence. We didn't need to talk to pass the time. All I needed to feel at peace was to be with Edward. Nothing more. It amazed me to think that the Edward I was sitting, enjoying a peaceful flight with was the same Edward that was feared and appeared as the ultimate monster in legends. I knew that it was true, and having seen from his own memory what he had done with the Immortal Child, I knew that there was nothing short of a monster lurking underneath. But that didn't put a cork in the way I felt about him. It didn't stop the overwhelming rush I felt when I saw him, the warmth that swelled in my chest when he smiled at me, the electricity that passed through our skin when we touched. I loved him more than I ever thought I possibly could.

I opened my eyes and lifted my head to look up at him. He had his eyes closed and his head was resting back on the seat behind him.

I shifted, turning to look up at him properly. He didn't move as I did. He looked so relaxed. More relaxed than I had seen him yet. I hoped that I could get him this relaxed more often.

I leaned up and pressed my lips softly to his jaw. I gently ran kisses up and down his jaw, causing him to chuckle. He turned his head and caught my lips with his. I couldn't help but giggle as his tongue flicked against my bottom lip. I parted my lips and caught his tongue in between my teeth, making him chuckle again.

I turned to face him properly, never taking my lips off of his. He gently wrapped his hands around my waist, his fingers slipping underneath my shirt, his touch featherlight and gentle. His hand slid down my waist, over my hip, coming to rest just above my knee. He gently pushed me back against the seat until he was hovering right above me. He hitched my leg onto the seat and I wrapped it around his waist, pulling him closer to me. As close as I probably could.

He moaned deep in his throat and it seemed to turn into a growl deep in his chest. His lips left mine as his pressed kisses to my jaw and down my throat, licking and gently biting his way down. I knew that he was being careful not to break my skin. Carlisle had mentioned that Edward's venom was actually poisonous to vampires. I didn't want to be the one to test that theory.

I felt the jet start to descend as the pilot called that we were going to be landing in Venice in ten minutes time. I looked down at him and he looked as though he was ready to bleed the pilot to death extremely slowly.

"I sure as hell am." He mumbled and I giggled, placing a hand either side of his face and pressing my lips to his gently.

"Well . . . we can't blame him." I told him and he sighed, looking him the eye. "It's not his fault that it took this amount of time to get to Venice."

"Uh-huh." He rolled his eyes, wrapping his arms underneath me before sitting up, taking me with him. "Crappy timing." I couldn't help but grin at him. "What?"

"I never thought I'd hear you use the word 'crappy'." I giggled as he rolled his eyes at me.

"Been around you too long." He smirked and I feigned offense, slapping him gently on the shoulder.

We straightened ourselves out as the plane set down in Venice. I didn't really have time to see the city that many poets had written about, that many plays and films were set in before Edward was speeding towards a beautiful Porsche. It was the same model as Alice's but whereas hers was a bright canary yellow, Edward's was a sleek black. I wasn't a car buff, hell I didn't like cars for the most part but even I thought this was gorgeous.

Edward opened my door for me, smiling and waiting for me as I slid in, inhaling the sleek, soft leather of the seats as he slid in the other side.

I watched the scenery fly past as we sped through Italy on the way to Volterra. Edward's irritation was building higher as the distance between us and the city full of vampires quickly decreased.

"Calm down, love." I whispered, placing a hand on his arm. He turned to look at me, sighing gently. "It's not going to do any good if you go in there with your head about to fly off, even though I think that is something Aro would like to see."

"Well, he won't be seeing much else after today." He muttered, shaking his head and sighing again. "I'm sorry. I know that I'm not the best guy to be around at the moment, and just so you know, I'm going to get a lot worse before I get better."

"I know." I nodded, part of me wishing that it wasn't true. "And I'm going to be there every minute."

"No you are not." He shot back as the city came into view. "There is no way you are entering that castle."

"Are you going to stop me?" I challenged, feeling a little pissed, putting it lightly.

"Bella." He sighed, lacing his fingers through mine. "You are the first and only person I have ever, and I mean *ever*, cared about. You mean more to me than anything else in this sorry world. You are my

life. Without you, I have nothing. I don't want you to be in any danger."

"I know you don't." I squeezed his hand although I know that it did nothing to ease his worry. "But I also know that there's no way you'd let anything happen to me. I think that in the same way I couldn't allow anything to happen to you. And yes, I know you're indestructible so there's no need for me to worry, but I still do. You say that I'm your life? The same goes for me. There's a rational part of my brain that's telling me to let you go in and deal with everything on your own, that all I'd be able to do is get in the way and be a burden. But then there's another, a larger part of my brain, that's telling me to screw the rational part. That it doesn't mean anything. That being with you is the most important thing. It overpowers the rational side and I don't care what you say, do or think, I'm listening to the big, stupid side. So you're stuck with me until you tell me to leave."

A small smile graced his lips and I knew that he was folding. Hopefully, I wouldn't have to resort to the pout that had won him over before. "You know I'd never do that."

"What?" I asked, confused.

"Ask you to leave." He looked over at me again, placing a hand on my cheek and boring into my eyes with his deep scarlet orbs. I'd never liked the red of the eyes of a human blood drinking vampire before, but on Edward, I didn't think I could see them any other colour. The red of his eyes was symbolic of who he was. There were things about him I was never going to be able to change. And his diet was one of them.

I looked out the window as the enormous entrance to the city loomed over us, seeming to swallow us as we passed through it.

He parked the car in the shadows, and I walked over beside him, taking his hand in mine, out of sight.

Keep close behind me. I heard his voice in my head, filled with care, a slight hint of worry and anger. Which hopefully was not directed at me. He shook his head, indicating that it wasn't and I was glad about that, but ever so slightly peeved that he had negated my shield. He chuckled silently as we made our way towards an alley, which I guessed held an entrance to the castle.

He pushed on some bricks in the wall and a mass of bricks large enough for someone the size of Emmett to walk through slid back a couple of inches before he slid it to the side.

He ushered me through before he walked through the door himself, pushing it back into place and taking my hand again. The irritation coming off of him was palpable and I hoped that he didn't tap into something destructive while we were down here. I know that the physical damage to anyone inside the castle was impossible but how the hell were we going to explain the centuries old castle collapsing to the thriving city of humans outside.

He strode confidently through the tunnels that led us through the castle depths, obviously knowing where he was going. I walked behind him, keeping as close as I could, noticing that the vampires lurking around down here either hid in the shadows or disappeared rather quickly as soon as they registered his presence.

Walking through an elaborate lobby, I noticed a human sitting at a desk, her hands frozen in mid air as she straightened up some papers, her mouth open as she stared at Edward making his way towards a pair of enormous oak doors. I didn't need to be told what was behind them. I knew immediately. The Brothers Grimm.

Edward didn't slow as he approached the door, instead, pushing them wide open, to the confusion of the vampires gathered inside.

Here we go.

I hope this was worth the wait. Now we're getting down to the nitty, gritty action stuff. I'm sorry it took so long for this to go

up.

A little notice to let you know that I will NOT be posting Without A Trace as I have most of it finished and I'm actually looking to have it published. Wish me luck with it.

There are two quotes in this chapter, just as I promised you. Find them both and I'll give you a cookie.

Press the little green button and let me know what you think.

Again, sorry for not updating. I suck. I know.

Histories

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Okay, so this chapter isn't going to be what everyone was expecting, and some of you are going to be a little pissed at me, but it'll answer some questions you guys have been asking me since the beginning.

I just hope I don't get assassinated for this.

One person: Playing Edwards Piano, got the first quote, which was: 'They that find it have slipped in and out of heaven'. From the latest Peter Pan film starring Jeremy Sumpter and Jason Isaacs (just in case people get confused because I know I do).

*Nobody got the second quote, but to be perfectly honest, I wasn't really expecting anyone to. It was 'It doesn't matter, they're interchangeable', which is from an episode of the television show M*A*S*H called 'The Trial of Henry Blake.'*

I want to say thank you for the support everyone has shown me with 'Without A Trace'. It means a lot and I hope that something will come of it. I'm not expecting it to, but you never know.

Okay, on with the story. Just don't kill me.

3rd Person POV

3992BC

The three figures that appeared in the darkness knew that their presence there would be frowned upon. They knew that the punishment would be severe should they be discovered. But this knowledge did not deter them from their mission that could only be accomplished in the dead of night.

"Aro!" One of them hissed quietly to the young man in the front of the triangle as they crept through the ancient streets, muttering to himself in a language that was lost and forgotten in modern times.
"Aro!"

"Hush, Caius." Aro shushed him gently, turning minutely to wave him off before turning back and quickly darting through the streets that led to the outskirts of the small city the three of them inhabited, not waiting for the other two that accompanied him.

The two followed without question. The dynamic of the group was clear. Aro, the young dark haired member of the trio was no doubtedly the unofficial leader and the other two were merely his followers. Though this may be true, the bond between the three was strong. Though Marcus was the eldest, he had no interest in taking control over the small group, merely content to watch the two he considered his younger siblings to do as they pleased, offering an opinion and guidance where it was needed, but not really offering much in the way of decision making. Caius, the youngest of the group, was always eager to prove his worth among the three of them. Constantly looking for some form of fight, it was hard to keep him in check and out of the hands of the officers that patrolled around, looking for young vagabonds such as himself. He wanted the people he shared the city with to notice him and know that he was of worth, that he was there. All he really ended up doing was getting in more trouble than either Aro or Marcus could handle and the both of them knew that, sooner or later, he was going to end up with a punishment that the two of them could not get him out of.

"We are clear of the city. Relax, Caius. No need to fret." Aro told his anxious brother in a hushed voice as they sped through the trees that surrounded their city, not straightening and running at their top speeds until they were certain that they were out of sight of the city.

"Aro, I don't like it. Something is going to happen tonight. I can feel it." Caius would never admit it, but he was scared. He had a feeling and a thought in the back of his mind, placed there by his mother, who had been known to predict the future on occasion, telling him

that there was a terrible danger lurking about the city tonight. That they were wrong to carry on their endeavour tonight of all nights.

"Don't be a fool, Caius." Marcus stepped up beside him as they stopped, knowing they were safe from whatever watchful eyes may have seen them moving about as they neared their hiding place in the woods. "Just because your mother believes that there is something in the woods, doesn't mean that there actually is."

"Are you calling my mother a liar?" Caius snapped back, baiting Marcus into a confrontation. He had never been able to achieve a rise out of Marcus, but then again, the only rising Marcus ever did was rising from his slumber every dawn.

"Not at all." He replied in his trademark bored tone. "I am merely stating that not everything your mother 'sees' comes to pass. She may have been right once or twice when it comes to predictions, but the majority of the time, she is not."

"That does not matter." Aro held his hands up, halting the bickering happening between the two he considered brothers and had done his whole life. "What matters is that we complete the business at hand. We do not have very long to finish it, meaning that we must hurry before we are discovered."

"You are right, of course, brother." Caius sighed, resigning the attempt at a feud with Marcus a failure.

They began slowly making their way to a large tree, one much larger than the others, quietly talking between themselves, separating out the remaining problems that they would need to overcome to complete their work.

What none of them realised was that Caius had been right in his warnings of a creature stalking the woods.

As they made their way through the darkness that swelled around them, all three sensed something or someone watching them from

behind and instinctively turned to face the threat that hadn't been there moments before. Not one of the three could keep his eyes from widening or halt the short intake of air that accompanied what they saw.

They had been expecting some sort of creature, rabid and feral, but instead, they were met with a man. The trio knew immediately that this was no ordinary man and that this man was the danger foreseen by Caius's mother. If they had been delusional enough to believe that they would see the sunrise, they knew that they would never doubt Caius's mother again. But as it was, they knew that they would not survive this night.

The man stared at the three 'brothers' as they stood there quivering with fear. He was leaning against a tree, his eyes not moving from the three 'brothers' standing in front of him, a smirk appearing on his face. The man had decided on taking a course of action, but needed some willing pawns to carry it out.

There was no doubt that he'd found them.

Two and a half days had passed since the three had disappeared from the depths of the city. The mother of Caius wailed about how she knew there would be tragedy on that night. Everybody that had not believed her before, would never doubt her again.

The three young men that had wandered into the woods, despite the knowledge that it was not allowed hadn't been seen again, save by that strange man in the woods and his accomplice that had been hiding mere meters away from the three.

While the law enforcement team of the city these young men had once lived in searched fruitlessly for them, the missing persons' in question were in fact underground, in a hollowed out cavern, miles away from their original homeland.

They had been laid out in a row, the three of them side by side, though unaware of the others' presence as they burned, the pain unlike anything they had ever felt or would ever feel again.

They did not burn without supervision, though. The same young man that had ambushed them in the woods watched over them as they drew ever nearer to the life that was awaiting them once they overcame the burning.

"My Lord." Another young man with eyes as bright as the one watching the burning brothers' said softly, approaching the young male. "My Lord, Eddumar."

"Yes." The lord, Eddumar did not look at the young man quivering by his side, instead focusing on the three figures tossing, turning and screaming out in pain as liquid venom passed through their veins, transforming them into something higher than what they had been before, watching as they glowed by the firelight that was not necessary, but more of a habit passed on from the days when both were human, as it is clear that neither were such anymore. If there was another use for the fire, it was only clear to one of them.

"They near the end, my Lord." The young man bowed to the man who was undoubtedly his master.

"Then you have outlived your purpose." Eddumar replied softly, not taking his eyes away from the convulsing figures that lay before him.

"My Lord?" The young man sounded nervous, slowly backing away from Eddumar, fear evident in his scarlet eyes.

He did not make it far, as before he could even take a single step backwards, Eddumar's hand shot out and his long, slim fingers wrapped deftly around the young man's throat. He turned to look at him, a dangerous smile on his face.

"All I needed you for was to bite these three. The powers you've inherited from my venom are too dangerous and honestly, too much

work to keep in check. I really can't be bothered." He shrugged, shaking his head. "I have no use for you anymore."

Before the young man had the slightest chance to protest, Eddumar's hand shot out, launching him into the fire that blazed in the centre of the room, smiling as the man's screams drowned out those of the 'brothers' as he attempted to escape the fire. The thick purple smoke that the fire gave off escaped through a small hole in the roof of the underground cavern that Eddumar had had the young man insert before they moved the 'brothers' in. He had known that he would be destroying his young pawn as soon as his assistance with the three wasn't required anymore. All Eddumar really needed was his venom as his own would not have the desired effect.

The hearts of the three on the floor began speeding up, signalling that the end of their transformation was near. The screams of the burning man faded into silence as the beating hearts of those transforming reached a speed that could only be rivalled by the beating heart of a humming bird.

And then . . . silence.

The sounds of racing hearts and screams of agony had died and were replaced by silence as the three on the floor slowly opened their eyes, adjusting to everything around them.

Eddumar smirked as he knew that two of the 'brothers' were not as the ordinary creatures under his command were. Two of them had brought 'gifts' into their new lives. Mind reading, which was nothing interesting to Eddumar, as this was his own personal gift only on a different scale. And a more interesting one. He could sense the bond that the three of them had, stronger between two of them than the third, but they were all linked. It was though he could taste the strength of their bond as they sat before him. The bond was stronger than those of other humans he had come across, but it was not unbreakable.

The three sat up and stared at the young man standing in front of them, smirking, looking no older than the seventeen years he had lived as a human, but his eyes showing the millennia he had truly existed.

The three on the floor looked around at the surroundings, clearly confused with where they were. After taking in the underground cavern, they stood up, eliciting the speed and grace of what they were now.

"Excuse me." Aro ventured a step towards the man watching their every movement. He froze at the sound of his own voice, clearly astounded at the sound coming from him, for it sounded bell-like and beautiful. It sounded like something he'd never heard before. "Where are we?"

"That is not important." Eddumar replied, smirking at them as they watched him with wide, fearful eyes.

"Then, if I may ask, *what* are we?" Caius held the same bemused expression as Aro upon hearing his new voice. Though, unlike Aro, he didn't seem to dwell on it for the same length of time as his friend.

"The three of you have obviously identified that you are not human anymore." They nodded in sequence as he spoke to them, unsure that a vocal response was what he was looking for. "Which is correct. You are no longer human. Your people are well versed in the legends of the blood drinkers. I know this for a fact." At the mention of humans and blood, the three brothers were brought to the deep realisation of the incredible burning that existed in their throats, though they were unsure of what that meant. "You're thirsty. You will feed and then . . . I shall put you to work."

Though they did not trust this nameless stranger, they knew that he could lead them to the relief that they so desperately wanted, needed to satiate the burning that was now clouding over their entire thought processes.

They would trust him, no matter what he did with them.

1087AD

"You know that he will be coming, Aro." Caius repeated for the fifth time that morning. Though it did not happen often since he had been born into the immortal life of a vampire, he was afraid. The only one that he had ever feared would no doubt be approaching their haven, aggravated and annoyed at their lack of response to the current crisis wreaking havoc on their world. "This is too large for him to ignore. And he will be wondering why we have."

"I realise that, brother." Aro replied, calm and controlled, just as he always was.

"He's going to want to know why we haven't answered the threat of the Immortal Children, Aro." Marcus spoke up for the first time, his tones bored and, if it were possible, tired.

"And we have no answer to give him." Caius stared diligently at Aro, awaiting an answer from the one that was still considered the leader of the three.

"We shall work out something to tell him." Aro replied, confidently. To Caius it seemed as though, Aro was not taking the situation seriously. The three of them knew, even from their safe haven in the Italian castle they inhabited, that the Immortal Children being created around the world were a threat. What Caius wondered was how Aro could sit idly by and allow them to continue being created when it was clear that Edward would hear about their lack of response and decide to pay them a less than friendly visit.

"Then we'd better do it quickly." Caius grumbled, sitting back in the throne that was placed to the left of Aro's.

"There is nothing to fear, my brother." Aro held up his hand, trying to placate Caius who scoffed at his response.

"We do not know that, brother." He fired back, becoming more worked up by the moment. "We have no idea how he will react, other than the fact that he will be incredibly angry with our lack of response. I told you that we should not have left it to get to this level of hysteria over these children before acting. Now he will be coming here. It is not even as though we can guess his thought processes through your gift, as he has never let you touch him. And hoping that that day will come is futile. Edward is unpredictable. You know that as well as I, and aggravating him is not something we should be aiming for."

"I know you're feeling anxious, Caius." Aro sighed, not looking at the agitated vampire. "But your fears are unfounded. There is no reason for Edward to turn on us. We have done nothing."

"That is my point, Aro. We have done *nothing*, even when the proof of the dangerous nature of these children came pouring in, we have sat here and done nothing."

"My Lords." Another large vampire approached them, bowing as he stopped in front of the three brothers.

"Yes?" Aro gave him a smile that told him he only had a limited amount of time to give his message before he was beheaded and burned.

"Lord Edward has just entered the castle." He nodded once, showing his respect for the three. "And I might add my lords, he is in one of his less than gracious moods."

"Thank you." Aro waved him off and giving another bow, the vampire retreated, leaving the brothers alone once again.

They did not have long to deliberate their excuses as to why the crisis in the vampire world was going unchecked before the doors to their grand hall were thrown open and the vampire who surpassed even their rule entered the room.

"Ah, my Lord, Edward." Aro beamed as he approached the three brothers, all of whom stood up abruptly making their way down the few steps that led up to their individual thrones. No one stood higher than Edward. It didn't do well to look down on him, for whatever reason. "What a pleasure for you to come and visit us, my Lord."

"Enough of the pleasantries, Aro." He replied, a growl rising in his chest, causing the three of them to freeze. "You know exactly why I am here and it is not for a recreational visit. Tell me, why is it these Immortal Children are being allowed to run free, even when the danger they present to my world is paramount. When something threatens the secrecy of my kind, I expect something to be done about it. That is why you are here after all."

"Yes, my Lord." Aro nodded once, his eyes not meeting that of the vampire of legend. "You see, my Lord-"

"I do not want excuses, Aro." Edward snarled. "I want these children destroyed. It is easily done, for the less susceptible to their *talents* that is. The next time I hear of them, it had better be in the past tense."

With that silent, unspoken threat he was gone. So fast was his exit that none of the brothers registered his movement. He was merely gone.

Aro snarled quietly under his breath, earning the confusion of his two companions. The other two feared the vampire who now called himself Edward but had gone through many names since he had created them. But Aro, Aro hated him.

What his brothers did not know was that he was trying to discover a weakness of Edward's. Trying to figure out a way to destroy the supposedly indestructible vampire.

And he would find it.

2008AD

After Edward's departure, there was an almighty ruckus in the castle. No one knew why he would be visiting the gentle vampire Carlisle Cullen and his family. They were rather large, but they had never given the Volturi any trouble. The only way anyone could think they had ruffled a few of the Volturi's feathers would be when their eldest 'daughter' Isabella had refused – rather politely, as they understood it – to join the Volturi guard.

"This is perfect." Aro smiled, sensing that something bigger than anything he could have dreamed would be taking place not far in the future. "We'll get rid of the Cullen's and have the time to build the newborn army."

"I still say you're mad, Aro." Caius interrupted, sighing and running his fingers across his perfect forehead.

"This is new." Aro chuckled, turning to face the white haired vampire he had called his brother for millennia. "It appears that you are losing your will for battle, Caius. I never thought that day would come."

"No, Aro. I just know when it is futile to fight." Caius argued, standing up to face Aro. "Edward is indestructible. The only one of our kind to be so. And you know this. He cannot be destroyed."

"Everyone and everything can be destroyed, Caius." Aro smiled smugly. "It is just a matter of finding their weakness."

"It won't work." Caius argued in a warning tone. "Not this time, Aro."

Just then, the doors to the hall opened and a fearful looking vampire made his way towards the three, bowing as he stopped in front of them.

"Ah, Felix." Aro smiled back at Caius. "Pray tell. Where is Demetri?"

"My Lords." Felix bowed again, looking slightly drained from his excursions across the Atlantic. "He was destroyed. By Lord Edward, sir."

"What?" Caius stood up abruptly, glaring at Felix. "What do you mean he was destroyed by Edward?"

"He told us to deliver a message, sir." Felix dipped his head again, showing respect to the ancient vampire in front of him.

He held out his hand to Aro, letting the ancient vampire take his palm, allowing him to see the recent memories that Felix had acquired, from the receiving of the order to follow Edward and offer support to him – which ignited confused feelings in both vampires sent, as neither of them had ever known Edward to need any form of support – up to Edward's ambush of them in the forest near to the Cullens' home. Aro found it particularly interesting when he witnessed Edward's reactions to Demetri's thoughts about Isabella. Maybe there was something there. He quickly skimmed through the threat that Edward had issued the two vampires, knowing that they would have to keep their plans to themselves if they were to succeed in any way. If they were going to attempt at ridding the world of Edward, having him know their plans would not be conducive to their campaign.

"What is it, Aro?" Caius asked upon seeing the small smile playing on Aro's lips. "What did he witness?"

"It appears the weakness of our great leader we have been waiting for has finally made an appearance." He replied, his tone smug and conniving.

"Impossible." Caius scoffed, turning back to his throne and sitting down again. "Edward has no weaknesses. He is indestructible."

"He may be so." Aro mused, running his fingers across his chin as he thought. "But his *mate* is not."

"Edward has no mate." Caius scoffed at his brother's attempts at reason.

"Oh, but he does." Aro waved a finger at Caius, knowingly.

"Someone who has been under our nose and in our grasp several times over the last century."

"Who?" Marcus asked, his tone bored, as per usual.

"A miss Isabella Cullen." Aro smirked at his two brothers as Marcus provided a reaction that resembled more of a lack of reaction and Caius stood up, his expression fearful again.

"You are sure?" He asked his brother, who nodded in confirmation.

"Yes, dear brother." He sighed, smiling in triumph. "It appears that in going to visit the Cullens and investigate for their treachery, he has found his partner in one. Poetic in a way, don't you think?"

"So you are thinking of sending scouts after Isabella, distracting Edward and leaving him vulnerable to an attack?" Caius ran through, trying to find some semblance of logic in his brother's reasoning.

"Yes, that is the plan." Aro seemed confident and Caius and Marcus knew that no matter how much they tried to dissuade him, he would not be deterred from his current plan of action. The two of them knew that for whatever reason, Aro despised Edward. Maybe it was because he was the one vampire in the world that possessed a larger respect following and more power than him. It was all about politics with Aro. It was clear that Edward wanted nothing to do with politics. He only made himself known when he felt there was a need, such as the crisis with the Immortal Children, some thousand years before, or the wars in the Southern states of America, whilst the human battled their own civil war in the late nineteenth century. Other than something of that scale, Edward remained incognito, other than his surprise visits once a decade.

Why Aro was so bothered by him was a mystery to everyone who wasn't Aro.

Caius knew that aggravating Edward and forming a plan against him was as good as signing their own death certificates. Well, if any of them required death certificates. Especially seeing as Edward would be able to see any plans that even passed through Aro's mind. Surprising Edward was impossible. It had never been done before and it wasn't going to work this time.

Caius couldn't help but stew internally about what Aro had done. Sending out scouts to locate Edward and Isabella at the Cullens home. His plan was to capture Isabella and bring her back to Volterra, keep her in the dungeons and torment Edward with the knowledge that she was harmed. Aro seemed to be the only one that could not see the failings of this plan.

One: Edward could see any plan that Aro even thought about before he even made a concrete decision. Two: If Isabella was, in fact, Edward's mate, she would not be left alone for any amount of time, let alone, long enough for someone to apprehend her. Three: There would be no way they would be able to get her out of America before Edward caught up with them. He was just too quick. Four: Even if they were able to get her back to Volterra without being apprehended by Edward first, he would not wait up in the main castle for her to be brought to him. He would simply march down to the dungeons, destroying any vampire he met on the way before burning the castle to the ground as he left. The only one he wouldn't harm, would be Isabella.

No matter how many times someone told him these simple facts, he would not listen. Caius and Marcus were beginning to think that his age was beginning to fry Aro's brain. Could vampires go senile? They were starting to think so.

They did not have long to dwell on it, for they all heard the murmurings and pattering footsteps of fearing vampires as they dodged out of the way of some unknown enemy.

They all knew what was happening.

Edward was here.

Aro smiled brightly, obviously not realising, as his brother's did, the danger that they were all in. They all stood as the murmurings became louder as the unseen threat approached the door.

The doors flew open, splintering and crashing into the walls behind them through the force of the creature behind them.

The three of them watched, two with fearful and the other oddly jovial eyes as the dust settled and the debris stopped falling from the top of the once glorious doors.

Edward stood there, as they knew he would, his face a mask of rage that none of them had ever seen before. Though they had done some things that had angered him over the millennia, failing to respond to calls from the vampiric world, persecuting innocent vampires, this latest blatant disregard for orders given directly from Edward himself had angered him beyond all others.

Caius and Marcus glanced at each other, for the first time, knowing something for certain when it came to Edward. Something that Aro didn't seem to understand as of yet.

They would not make it through the night.

I hope people aren't too upset by this chapter. I know I promised you the action of the Volturi confrontation in the next update, but this idea hit me just as I was starting to write and it seemed like a good idea at the time. I suck at writing in the 3rd person, and I don't think it will be happening again, so don't worry about it. Next POV will be Edward's so strap yourselves in.

I hope that this chapter answered some of those questions you've been asking me. Like where the Volturi came from and which one died? Felix or Demetri?

Oh, and there's no quote this chapter. I couldn't find one that fit with the tone of the chapter.

Reviews are love. We're sooooo close to 2000 reviews. I know that you guys can do it. Pretty please. Only 29 to go and we're there. Let me know what you think.

Reviews get quicker updates :D Nothing wrong with a bit of bribery is there? No? Good. :D

The End and The Beginning

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I know I'm epic fail. I'm sorry I haven't posted in like a month and it took me so long to get this up, but I really couldn't help it. Again, thank Shelby for her arse-kickery skills in me getting this up. Without her, it would still be a half finished document on my computer.

Also, Eternally Damned has been nominated for a Silent Tear award, so whoever that was, thank you. It has been nominated for 'Ending Worth Waiting For' and I am not ashamed to tell you that it made me squee when I received the message. If you want to go and vote, the link will be up on my profile soon :D

Thank you.

I hope this chapter was worth waiting for and I am sorry to say that this story is coming to an end soon. I'm not sure how many chapters are left or if there will be a continuation. There might be, there might not. I still have to decide.

There is a quote in this chapter, so try and find it. :D

Edward

In the back of my mind, I had thought that Isabella would resent me when I showed her the memories I had of the Immortal Child. Of destroying him. But as always, her reaction blew me away. I knew that when she had been in the memory, she had felt the desire to protect him, to take him away from the impending danger that could not be escaped – even though she knew that she couldn't do anything to stop what had happened, considering it had happened in

the past, not that that would stop me anyway – but she knew that it had to happen.

She surprised me by coming out with the fact that she knew that there was a monster inside of me, just as there is one inside of her – though hers is satiable by blood, mine takes a lot more to calm down – but it didn't stop her from loving me. I knew that it was ridiculous to feel the way I did when she said she loved me.

It was ridiculous for someone who has been around for the length of time that I have, has seen and done things that most would never see in their nightmares or movies, to feel anything at being told that Isabella was in love with me.

Instead of hearing that, she told me that there was no way she would be running again and she had no idea how much it pleased me to hear that. Not that I would ever lose track of her if she did run from me. Though she felt intensely about me, she didn't realise the depth of the feelings I had for her. I didn't think that she ever really would. Sounds bad, I know, but she was the only one that I could be different around.

I wasn't even sure what that meant.

And that annoyed me somewhat.

Just being with this one tiny creature could make me forget that I was an immortal creature, whom had lived literally forever. She made me feel like I didn't have a chance with her, you know, like human males do when they approach a female that they dream and fantasize about but know they don't have a single iota's chance of having her. *That* is how she made me feel.

And I didn't like it.

I'm sure you understand why.

She may have been sweet and innocent a lot of the time, but there were also times that she brought out another side in me, and it seemed I brought out the same side in her.

The side that, had we not been interrupted by the goddamn pilot who was now *very* lucky to still be alive – I might be remedying that soon – would have been a lot of fun.

I didn't really know how to react when Isabella told me, forcefully, I might add that she was not being left outside while I went into the castle. I don't know what it was about, but I felt some sort of fear coming from her. At least I didn't know what it was until she explained to me, that just like I worried about her, she worried about me and even though she knew it was completely irrational, she couldn't help it. It was like some in built reaction to my proximity.

I would just have to keep a watch on her then. I knew that she probably thought she was going to get in the way, but her need to be near me outweighed that fear.

So here we were, walking through the dark, dank underground caverns beneath the vampire filled castle that the inhabitants of Volterra thought was empty on our way to make some Volturi assholes – definitely spending too much time with Isabella – pay for their defiance. I would kill the three brothers myself, making them pay with my own two hands. I'd probably just burn the rest of them, making it impossible for them to escape. I'd get to that. Maybe Isabella would be willing to oblige. I knew that she had a strict dislike for the Volturi and I had the inkling that if she was around me when everything went down, she would be feeding off of my personality. Not that she would be doing it consciously.

As the doors in front of me splintered and crashed into the wall behind me, several of the vampires in the room dodged the wood – not that it would have made a difference had it hit them – and skittered away from me, trying to get as far away from the danger as possible.

Isabella was behind me and I could feel some form of . . . excitement coming off of her. That was new. She was never one for confrontation, always taking up a purely defensive position with the family. At least, that's what I'd seen in her family's memories.

Bella. I spoke to her using my mind, knowing that it would be safer for her if I did so. *Put your shield up. We will still be able to communicate but you'll be safer from the more vicious little ones in here* . I knew that she knew I was talking about Alec and Jane.

Will I still be able to talk to you?

Yes. I felt her shield push itself around her mind, blocking everything and everyone, except for me out. That made me feel marginally better, but it did not shield her from physical attack. I just hoped that she would be able to feed of the other vampires powers and strengths in here as she had done from me.

I turned my attention back onto Aro, who was standing there smiling at me like the inane idiot that he was.

God, how I hated him.

Caius and Marcus were standing behind him, mixtures of fear about the fact that I was here and anger at what Aro had brought down upon them written on their faces. I could see in their minds that they had nothing to do with Aro's little power trip. If anything, they had tried to dispel his notions of defeating me. Well, Caius had. Marcus just hadn't done anything at all. Just like he never did.

I made my way across the room full of cowering vampires, Isabella walking closely behind me. I wanted her near me, knowing that she was safe allowed me to focus on the lunatic in front of me.

"Edward." Aro greeted me, bowing slightly as I approached. "To what do we owe this pleasure?"

I couldn't help but let a laugh escape. Was he fucking kidding me? Was he seriously trying out for comedian of the year or something, because if he was he had a good chance of winning.

I sighed, chuckling and shaking my head before my gaze snapped to his.

Before he knew what was happening, I was there, in front of him, my hand around his throat, at arm's length, him dangling in my grasp. It was a good thing for him that he didn't need to breathe really, wasn't it?

"You know why I'm here, Aro." I snarled at him, causing Marcus and Caius to flinch a little at the venom in my tone. "I've told you, time and time again, for six thousand years, Aro. Yet you *never* seem to listen." I was speaking in nothing more than a whisper, though the rest of the room was so silent, I knew that even with human hearing, they would be able to hear me. "And now . . . right now, I'm just wondering if vampires can go senile, because you seem to be."

"Well, that would be a black mark on you then, wouldn't it, my Lord?" He was mocking me, or at least trying to from his position, even though it was not one of power. No. All of the power in this situation was mine.

"And why is that?" I asked, playing along, even though I knew what direction this was taking.

"Because you made me." There it was. The line I'd been waiting for.

I laughed again, finally looking away from Aro and shaking my head, turning to look at Isabella who was smirking at Aro. She was *enjoying* this, which is something I never thought that I'd see. "He thinks I made him."

"Funny." She remarked, winking at me. *Who are you and what have you done with my Bella?* I joked mentally and she smirked a little wider.

Innocent Bella's gone on vacation. Edward's Bella has come out to play. So this Bella was *my* Bella. Interesting. I think I'll have to get her to come out to play more often, won't I?

I turned my attention back to Aro, sighing and smirking at him. "See, here's the thing." I pretended to think about what I was saying. "I didn't make you."

"What?" Caius's eyes shot up to my face, looking for some kind of deception, but knowing that he would find none. "My Lord?"

"I didn't make you." I repeated, looking Aro in the eye. His face was purely comical. He didn't believe what I was telling him and his brothers, well, basically the entire Volturi guard as they were all here, minus Demetri, but hey, that was to be expecting since he's tiny little dust particles floating somewhere around the USA right now. "Nope." I popped the 'p' smirking at Aro. "The three of you were made by a vampire that I *had* made, but didn't actually get rid of until the job was completed. You see, if I *had* made you, well, that's kind of a moot point, isn't it?" It was a rhetorical question, so nobody answered me, just as they knew they shouldn't.

"I don't believe you." Aro whispered and I increased my grip on his throat, drawing him to me.

"Well, isn't that a shame?" I snarled at him, my poisonous teeth, even to him, on display. He looked warily at me for a moment, not able to judge whether I would kill him or not. He knew that I meant business this time. There was no way that any of them were getting out of this alive. "The only one made from *my* venom in the world, is the young lady standing behind me." I moved him to look at Isabella, as the rest of the guard did and she wiggled her fingers at him, winking. Yeah, she was definitely harnessing some of my personality right now.

At that moment, I felt something putting pressure onto Isabella's shield and I knew that it was the little She-Witch Jane. I turned to

look at her, but she wasn't paying attention to me. She had everything she had fixated on Isabella.

Edward, wait. She looked at me, her golden eyes imploring, wanting to take this chance for herself. She had been attacked by Jane too many times. It was as though she had taken it upon herself to test whether Isabella's shield was up or not each time she saw her. *I'll take care of her. You just deal with the Icky Brothers.* I couldn't help but smirk at her name for them, because it was oddly fitting.

Isabella turned to face Jane, who had a look of extreme concentration on her face.

"When are you going to learn that it doesn't work?" She crossed her arms over her chest, looking bored with the blonde girl, who sneered at her and increased her concentration. I chuckled to myself. My girl could take care of herself.

"Not as all powerful as you thought, are you, Aro?" I said to him, smirking at his obvious discomfort and hatred of the fact that he was not made directly from me as he was led to believe.

"My Lord." Caius stepped forward, bowing slightly as he moved.
"Why, pray tell, did you allow us to believe that we were made by you, when we were not?"

"I had my reasons." I said shortly. "You think I want my world in the hands of three vampires that the world thinks are weak? There would be chaos and I would be the one having to sort out the mess. I really couldn't be bothered to deal with that, so I had you three made."

"My Lord, I don't understand." He shook his head slightly, looking at me again.

"Of course you don't." I snapped back, taking my eyes off of his demented brother to look at the confused vampire in front of me.
"Because you have spent entirely too long in this dank, disgusting

castle. You do not understand because you are not trying to understand. You are not made by me. The only one left in the world created by *my* venom, is Isabella over there."

"So why didn't you kill her?" Aro asked, a smugness to his voice. One I didn't like. "Why didn't you destroy her like you did all the others you created?" I didn't answer him vocally. I just raised my eyebrows and shook my head, not giving him anything. "There must be a reason for your actions. The Edward that the world knows would never do anything without a reason."

Just then, a scream erupted from behind me and I turned to see Jane crippled on the floor, clutching at her head as I had seen many of her victims do. I looked up at Isabella, who was staring intently at Jane, watching her writhing around on the stone floor, crying out for help from anyone.

Isabella's gaze flicked to me, though her concentration was clearly still fixated on Jane as she was still screaming on the floor. There was a gleam in Isabella's eyes and a smile on her face.

She was *enjoying* herself. Just as I was.

"*That* is why I haven't gotten rid of her." I turned to look at Aro, who had a look of fear on his face. He was scared for Jane. She and her brother were his prized possessions in his little collection of powers. "You think I would give up a creature so magnificent? You're out of your mind."

"I think there's something more." Aro said, sounding incredibly sure of himself.

"And I think that with every word you say, you're making your death even more lengthy and painful." I replied, my voice light and airy and everyone in the hall, including Isabella – well, except Jane who was still screaming and writhing on the floor, being assaulted by her own gift – tensed up. Everyone knew that it was dangerous when I used that tone. And no one knew what would happen when I did.

I could see the fear in Aro's eyes and I could sense the fear coming from the rest of the vampires in the room – well, except Isabella who was having a whale of a time.

I smirked at Aro, marvelling in the confusion that was his mind at the time. There was some small part of his mind that hoped I was just here to warn them to quit what they were doing while they were still alive. Another part – equally as idiotic – was trying to plot ways of getting Isabella away from me. I tutted at him, shaking my head and in doing so, I had concreted the knowledge that Isabella was mine in his mind. Not that it made any difference to his fate. In his eyes, he still didn't believe that he was going to die. He thought that by apprehending Isabella in some way, he would be able to beat me down. I wanted to laugh out loud from that thought. It was utterly hilarious.

Marcus and Caius on the other hand, knew and had accepted that their time on this earth was over. That they would not be seeing another night as they were. Or at all.

Aro was still smirking, thinking that he would be able to use Isabella as leverage to get rid of me, but what he didn't realise was that Isabella had not only incapacitated Jane – who was still writhing in pain on the floor – but she had also turned Alec's gift around on him at the same time. My girl was learning. She had accessed Alec's gift at the same time as Jane's and now she was using Aro's best powers against their owners. No one had seemed to notice that Alec hadn't moved at all in a while, but then again, we vampire tend to sit still for unlimited time on end anyway, so I don't think anyone thought any differently.

At least, not until Jane knocked into him in her blinding pain and knocked him over. Now *that* was funny. And it caused a stir with the other vampires in the room. I couldn't help but smirk at Aro as the light in his eyes as he thought of the two of them, dimmed.

"Not so confident now that your little devils are otherwise occupied, are we?" I teased him and his lip curled in a snarl, though no noise

escaped. Come on, piss me off even more. You know you want to.

"I don't need them." He sounded so sure of himself and I was pretty sure that to anyone that wasn't a mind reader, he would have sounded confident, but the fact that the tenor of his thoughts and his actual thoughts themselves rang of nothing but panic, it kind of told me he had no contingency plan in place. He was now entertaining the idea that he might be seeing his last moments on this earth.

Not quite, Aro. I'm not done playing with you yet.

Here's where you find out what happens to those who *really* piss me off.

Without any warning, I pulled him to me, repositioned my hand on his neck and sank my teeth into his paper-like skin. He cried out, obviously looking for help from anyone as my venom poured into his body, working quickly to paralyse him.

There is nothing quick and simple about the death of a vampire through my venom.

He knew that there was no escape for him now. Nothing but the long, slow burning of death through the very secretion he thought had created him as it moved through the long dead veins of its own accord, puncturing his long dead heart.

It was painful, so much more so than the initial burning. Because the venom flowing through their veins was not meant to heal and reshape as it was with humans. It was not supposed to renew and give new life.

Its purpose was to destroy. It's as simple as that.

And that's what it did.

It paralysed the vampire within minutes, keeping them from moving at all while it poisoned them, slowly, the burning even more intense

than the burning of the change.

He screamed as I dropped him, the eyes of the other vampires in the room on me as I stood over Aro who was now staring up at me, his eyes wide and pleading.

"You should have listened to me." I stated and I could tell that he wanted to say something, but my venom had frozen his vocal chords not allowing him to make any noise at all. He was unable to move, the only movements coming from him being the shuddering vibrations as my venom destroyed the cells of living dead flesh.

I looked over at Caius and Marcus, who were backing away from me as I looked at them. They knew what was coming. They knew that death was coming for them and I also knew that they hoped it wouldn't be as painful or slow as Aro's was.

No. This time, the two of them had been the ones talking sense. They knew that it was a ridiculous idea to challenge me and they both knew that it would get them nowhere other than very very dead.

I would make their deaths quick and painless. Well, as painless as a vampire's death could be.

Before anyone could react Caius and Marcus were in pieces at my feet, the sound of shrieking metal still ringing in the air as the rest of the vampires in the room stared at me, shocked and terrified. Most of them didn't know what fear was, not remembering having felt it as a human and not ever feeling it as a vampire, so the emotions they were feeling at the moment were overwhelming.

And what could I say?

I loved it.

I loved the fear of the others in the room. I loved the uneasy expressions and the terrified body language. *This* was the kind of thing that I lived for.

Well, it used to be.

What I lived for now, was standing there right next to Aro as he slowly crumbled into nothing – well not literally - smirking up at me. Was it possible that she was having the same feelings as me? Well, she did come from me, so it's possible.

I raised a finger, indicating for her to come closer to me. And she did, slowly sauntering over to me, which reminded me more of the way Rosalie walked than Isabella. She was confident and I was now wondering why I had ever worried about bringing her here with me. It was obvious she could take care of herself. I mean, Alec still hadn't move and Jane was still letting out silent shrieks, writhing and panting on the ground. I guess she didn't like having her own little trick used against her.

When Isabella reached me, I grabbed her hips, pulling her close to me, running my nose up and down her jaw. Now you may think that I was being a possessive bastard and showcasing what was mine and yes that might have been part of it, but the rest was purely because she was so beautiful, I couldn't take not touching her anymore. What with her jeans that hugged her like a second skin or that low cut sweater and the boots that I hadn't really even noticed her wearing. She was irresistible.

I pulled her flush against my body, crashing my lips to hers as her hands gripped my biceps. I forced my tongue into her mouth causing a low growl to emanate from her. Now *she* was the possessive one. I could hear the thoughts of the vampires around us and some of them were not what you would expect from those who had just seen two of their masters ripped to pieces and one who was being slowly poisoned in front of them.

I pulled away from her, running my nose up and down her jawline, causing her to moan slightly and I was thankful for the control I had mastered over the millennia, even though that was hanging tenuously by a thread. It meant that I didn't claim her as mine here in front of the audience we had.

"Love?" I whispered into her ear and she hummed in response, tilting her head back slightly. "The lighter you stole from Emmett before we left?"

"Back left pocket." She whispered and my hand immediately slid over her waist, down the swell of her hip and I slipped my fingers into the pocket of her jeans. It shouldn't have been *that* erotic, but according to the emotions of the crowd watching us, it clearly was.

Emmett had bought this lighter purely because he thought it was cool, obviously not realising that it created the one thing that was most lethal to him. After me, of course. I had to admit, it fit Emmett well. Though I don't think he'd realised that Isabella had taken it. It seemed that she had known we would have use of it at some point and I knew that had come from when she was thinking like I do. Sometimes, I think he mind just strays that way, anyway.

Looking down at it, Isabella winked at me, knowing what I was going to do with it. It was silver – solid silver, mind you – with an ace of spades on it. I could see why Emmett would go for something like this. What I had gotten from the stories Isabella and Alice had told me through their minds, he was always a gambling man. Even when he was human, he said he could remember gambling, so it fit. I was sure that Isabella would buy him a new one. If Alice hadn't already.

I flipped the lighter open, my eyes never straying from Isabella's as she bit her lip in anticipation. I lit the lighter, seeing the glow of the flame in her golden eyes as she watched the reactions in my eyes.

I threw the lighter behind me, hearing the immediate whoosh of it coming into contact with cloth and dead flesh. The smoke immediately started filling the room, leaving it clouded and smelling sweetly. I turned back to Aro, who even though he knew that he was dying anyway, had a panicked look in his eyes.

"Bet you wished you'd listened to me now, don't you?" I sighed, as Isabella walked up behind me, slipping her hands around my arm,

resting her head on my bicep. "Too late now. You should have realised what would happen if you'd fucked with me."

Grabbing the lighter that I had thrown at the Marcus and Caius, seeing that it was undamaged, I turned to leave, Isabella walking along beside me.

Are you letting the rest go? She asked and I practically burst out into laughter.

Not a chance . I smirked down at her as she tilted her head at my words. She was confused.

As we reached the door, I stopped, as did the rest of the room. Bella's eyes grew wide as she took in the frozen vampires around her.

"What did you do?" She asked in a whisper, awe in her voice.

"I froze them." I shrugged, looking down at her. "As I did the entire castle. Not one of them is leaving this castle. I don't want any remnants of this band of failures left. At all."

"What about the members of the guard that are out of the city?" She asked, watching as I spread the fire from the brothers across to the heavy drapes that lined the walls. They wouldn't be able to escape now, as the fire spread quickly, sparks catching onto individuals clothes, jarring them out of the freeze I had placed them in as they thrashed and hit out at the flames trying to quell them, unable to before they spread too far.

"The smell is too strong." Isabella complained and I nodded and we walked out of the room as the wood from the shattered doors caught. Turning around, I closed the doors, not bothered about the raging flames licking at my skin and I turned back to Isabella as we walked down the hallway to the screams of agony coming from the hall behind us.

"Where are we going?" Isabella asked as I made my way below the castle.

"There's an oil line that runs under the castle. It's in the deepest chamber. The area used as prisons for the humans." I explained and Isabella stopped abruptly.

"We can't leave them here." She sounded panicked but I shook my head, trying to soothe her.

"There aren't any here." I told her, placing a hand on her arm. "They needed to replenish their stock in the next day or so, so there are no humans here. Live ones anyway." She grimaced slightly and I shrugged.

"Why do you need the oil line?" She asked, sounding confused.

"Because, the oil line runs through the underground of the castle and actually runs through the castle floors. I don't know why or how they even had them installed but they did. Maybe it was to keep the food warm in the winter. I don't know. But conveniently for me, this oil doesn't explode when it comes into contact with flame in small amounts." I looked at her and she seemed to catch on.

"So it'll spread throughout the castle." She finished and I nodded.

"Exactly." I smirked at her. "But they have a larger pooling of it in the centre of the castle, which *will* go bang."

"It's like they set this up for you themselves." She chuckled putting her hands on her hips.

Yes, my dear. It is.

I lit the lighter again, knowing that there was enough residue oil on the outside of the pipe to light it. And I was right. As soon as the flame from the lighter touched the pipe, it flew to life, the flame travelling both ways along the pipe. One leading outside towards the

oil tanker a few miles outside of the city - which would make a nice bang in itself – and the other rushing its way up through the castle.

I took Isabella's hand in my own, pulling her out of the castle and into the street below. There was enough smoke clouding the air from the vampires burning inside, that it blocked out a good portion of the sun. We could hear the screams of pain coming from the burning vampires as they tried to escape, but found their once impenetrable fortress of guards and powers burning to the ground.

The humans couldn't hear them, but Isabella and I could. The humans thought that there was something else going on. Arson or something like that happening with their beloved castle. Police reports would conclude that there was something wrong with the oil piping, though nothing would be conclusive.

I heard the bang as the flame reached the gathering of oil in the centre of the castle, along with more screams as they tried to free themselves from the burning. Not going to happen.

"The smell is burning my nose." Isabella said softly beside me. "Shall we go?"

I looked down at her, smirking as I turned her around and through the crowd of appalled, terrified and disgusted onlookers as their beloved castle burned. I couldn't feel for any of the vampires in there though. They had brought it all on themselves. Placing themselves on a pedestal above everyone else. And that was only their *first* mistake. Thinking that just because I had trusted them with the caretaking of my world, that it was theirs to govern as they wanted. That could not be farther from the truth.

"What are we going to do now?" She asked quietly as we climbed into my Porsche and I started the engine.

"About what?" I asked, making my way to the city entrance, which was filled with the hubbub of people as they fretted about their fucking castle. Though, when they saw that it was a car trying to get

past them, they did move. Well, what can I say, Italians had more sense than Americans did.

"About the rule of our world." She said as though it was the most obvious thing in the world.

"I don't know." I shrugged smirking to myself as the fire trucks made their way past, trying to get to the emergency. I had seen this all playing out. There were no survivors. Not that any of the humans knew that. All they would find is that stupid ring that Aro used to wear, buried in a pile of ash, not knowing that said pile of ash used to be one of the most looked to vampires in the world. "Word will spread quickly, so we can expect some form of rebellious behaviour."

"Will they know it was you?" She asked and I raised an eyebrow at her.

"*Just* me?" I smirked at her and she bit her lip, playing coy with me. She knew that I loved it when she did that.

"Fine then," She sighed dramatically. "Us? Will they know it was us?"

"Yes." I smirked at her and she laughed, shaking her head. "There would be no one else who could destroy the Volturi. That power was always in my hands and my hands only. Well, now it's in yours as well."

"Is that a good thing?" She asked as I rolled the car to a stop. She looked at me confused, smiling as she leaned over the console.

"It's a very good thing." I muttered as her lips met mine eagerly. Somehow, complete and utter destruction always brought out the horny bastard in me. Yup, been around Isabella too much.

She giggled, pulling away from me and flinging the car door open. "You gotta catch me first." She giggled and with that she was gone. I growled slightly, shoving my own door open and chasing after her.

She didn't get very far and I knew that she knew she wouldn't, but she didn't stop.

I flung my arms around her waist and we both went crashing to the ground, on purpose of course.

She landed on top of me, giggling slightly before she crashed her lips to mine eagerly, her tongue pushing its way into my mouth. And there was no way that I was going to argue. She growled slightly, deep and low in her chest before she pulled away and smirked at me, her hand reaching between us as she ran her fingers up and down the erection that I didn't bother controlling this time. There was no need. We weren't around other people and I wanted her to know that she did this to me.

I let out a growl, pulling her down to me, before flipping the two of us over so that I was now in control of the situation. She giggled before scraping her nails over the denim of my jeans, making me hiss.

"You really want to start this?" I growled in her ear and she giggled again.

"More than anything." She whispered, taking my earlobe into her mouth and biting down on it. "And screw the foreplay. I want you, Edward. Just. You." She looked into my eyes and I saw that they had turned black with lust where they were a rich golden colour a few moments before.

"As you wish." I growled, capturing her lips with my own as the hands that was in between us, flicked the button on my jeans open and sliding down the zipper, her hand slipping inside and grasping at my dick. I couldn't hold back the groan that escaped me causing her to smirk against my lips.

"Commando?" She asked, raising her eyebrows and I shrugged.

"Who needs underwear?" I murmured as I made my way down her throat ripping her sweater to reveal a bright pink bra with black lace

running along the swell of her breast. Normally, I wouldn't notice underwear, but these made her look even more fucking tempting than she was. It wasn't enough though, so off it went.

"Hey." She whined, looking down at me. "That was expensive."

"I'll buy you some more." I appeased her, my lips immediately attaching themselves to one of her nipples as one of my hands teased the other. She let out a moan and her hands flew to my hair as her back arched towards me, forcing her chest deeper into my mouth. I had to be careful, because I didn't want to break her skin. I couldn't harm Isabella. So I had to reign myself in.

My hand slid down, popping open the button on her jeans as she hooked her legs around my waist managing to slide mine down as she lifted her hips off of the ground, meaning I could discard her jeans. Not that I couldn't have done if she hadn't but hey, I figured she'd like at least some clothes on. At least she was multi-talented. And fuck me, if she wasn't wearing matching panties to her bra. Like I said, normally I wouldn't notice, but with Isabella, she just blew my mind away.

I looked up at her and saw her eyes boring into mine as I positioned myself at her entrance. I knew that she was a virgin, so this was going to be painful for her, even if she was a vampire. It just meant that her hymen was reinforced. Like the rest of her.

She pulled me up to meet her lips, before she pulled away, gently nipping at my neck. "Do it." She whispered, pulling me back to her, letting out a small moan as I slid inside her, forcing myself through her barrier once I came to it.

She wrapped her legs around me, forcing me deeper into her with each thrust I made. She continued her assault on my throat, gently biting down every few seconds. I swear, this woman was going to make me lose my mind.

She was obviously feeling the post destructive hormones just as I was. I wondered if that was something she had gotten from me, or if it had been within her the whole time, but she had never realised it before. Either way, now was not the time to be thinking about that. And my head knew that as well, because it immediately focused back on Bella. On her bodies reactions to my movements, to the magnetic force that always seemed to surround the two of us, at its peak and driving me insane with want and need because I did. I did need her. More than anything else I've ever had in my long life.

If I never had anything else, I would have Isabella Marie Swan Cullen, or whatever she wanted to be called.

I felt her walls fluttering around me and I knew that she was close. I brushed my knuckles against her nipple and she groaned loudly, making me smirk against the skin of her neck.

Her walls clamped down around me as her teeth forced their way through the skin of my neck, causing the most incredible pain versus pleasure mixture I had ever felt as I exploded inside of her. She stayed latched onto my neck as we both rode out our highs.

When she detached her teeth from my neck, she looked down at me, smirking and I couldn't help but chuckle and press my lips to her.

I slid out of her slowly, not wanting to lose the contact, the magnetic pull that was constantly pulling us together, seeming slightly satiated and less intense than it had been before and maybe this was what we needed to keep it from driving the two of us mad.

"I guess we really are mates now." She whispered against my lips, attacking them again before we sat up. She pouted at me and I chuckled softly.

"Now, love, I don't know about you, but I don't really want any humans going past and seeing my bare, sparkly ass." She bit her lip, grinning as I sat back, pulling my jeans on. "But that does not mean I'm adverse to doing *that* again."

"Well, I hope not." She smiled, as she pulled up her own jeans, thankful that I hadn't destroyed *them* as well. "I look forward to doing that again and again."

"And we will." I smirked at her. Like I was going to let her get away after that. I ran my fingers over my neck as we stood up. "You managed to break the skin." She smirked and winked at me. "I'm impressed."

"Good." She pressed her lips to mine again before she clutched her sweater closed and darted off back to the car.

Oh, yes, I could spend eternity living like this.

Quite easily.

I hope that that was enough to appease you guys. I mean, it might not be as long as some of my other chapters but you got the destruction of the Volturi and the long anticipated lemon you've all been requesting. There may be another one coming up soon, so hang on. It won't take as long for me to update next time, but like I said, I had to really get my arse in gear for this chapter. Maybe because the story's coming to an end, I don't want to update because it'll be over sooner. Might be part of it. Meh. I don't know.

But what I do know is that I'd love it very much if you could head over to the Silent Tear Awards and vote for Eternally Damned. You know you want to.

Link is on my profile as is the link to the lighter used to destroy the Volturi.

Please review and let me know what you think. Love the destruction/lemon or hate them, let me know.

When In Venice

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Too long. Too fucking long, I know.

But on the upside, Eternally Damned won 'Ending Worth Waiting For' over at the Silent Tear Awards, so I'd like to thank all of you who voted for my story.

Edward

Today had been a good day.

Definitely a good day.

Everything on my immediate list of things to do – don't judge me, there were only two things on it – had been done.

One: Destroy Volturi.

Done.

Two: Isabella.

Done, done and done.

The sun had long since set and we were strolling through Venice, something Isabella had wanted to do for a long time, apparently. I was discovering that I enjoyed finding out these little titbits about her and what she wanted to do. I still found it unnerving.

It seemed that the entire country was in an uproar about the 'catastrophe' that had happened in Volterra. We had had an old couple – well, they *looked* old, it didn't matter that both Isabella and I were older than the both of them – rush up to us and tell us what had

happened, panicked looks on their faces before they ran on to tell others.

We had both laughed.

According to the humans, the pipe that ran underneath the castle had burst unexpectedly, sparking and starting the fire. I couldn't help but roll my eyes at the dim-witted fables humans came up with nowadays.

Isabella just found it amusing that it just so happened to be St Marcus Day. Holiday in Volterra.

I've said it before and I don't think I'll ever stop saying it: Stupid humans.

"Question." Isabella sidestepped a little next to me, causing me to look down at her as she raised an eyebrow at me. I smirked at her, silently telling her to proceed and she giggled. Normally, that was a sound I absolutely abhorred, but I couldn't seem to hate anything she did. "The Saint Marcus that they were celebrating or whatever it was they were doing in Volterra."

"That's not a question, but yes . . ." I raised an eyebrow and she pouted at me, her expression letting me know she was not amused.

"I was getting to my question." She shot back, grinning at me. "Is that the – or really was that the Marcus of the Volturi?"

"It was indeed." I nodded.

"How did that happen?" She looked and sounded confused.

"Well, the story goes that he banished all the vampires from Volterra on this day thousands of years ago." I put on an eerie voice and she giggled again. "Just goes to show that no matter where you go in the world, if there's one person that can convince you he's better than everyone else, they'll believe it, whether *he's* human or not."

She hummed in response and fell silent, her brow furrowing slightly, causing a line to appear on her forehead.

"What's the matter?"

"Nothing." She sighed, resting her head on my shoulder as we wandered aimlessly around the city.

"You miss your family." It wasn't a question.

"How did you know?" She looked up at me and I stopped, turning to face her and pulling her into me.

"Bella." I sighed gently, wrapping my arms around her. "I feel what you feel, remember?" She looked away from me, slightly sheepish and I knew that had she the ability, she would be blushing. Though she had started to gain the ability to surprise me – which I hated – there were certain things that she was predictable on. Being embarrassed was one of them.

I pressed my lips to hers gently and she sighed, parting her lips and allowing my tongue into her mouth. Apparently, my venom was not poisonous to those created directly from it. Well, not having tested the theory before, it hadn't ever crossed my mind. But apparently, she did retain the ability to mark me, as I now had a crescent shaped reminder of our first time together completely at the base of my neck. Not that I minded, it coming from Isabella.

A rogue thought from one that wasn't human strayed into my mind and I broke the kiss, my head snapping towards where it was coming from. It wasn't as though I was oblivious to the fact that there were vampires in Venice. What with the city being so close to Volterra, it was only natural that vampires would congregate here to feed before taking the last leg of the journey to the castle.

But this thought . . . this thought was reckless.

It was gleeful that the Volturi were no longer around to stop it from doing as it pleases. The vampire – male, just under five years old and completely ignorant of my presence in the city – had hated the Volturi and their 'oppressive ways'. He wanted to be free to do as he pleased and now, in his mind, he was.

"Wait here." I whispered quietly to Isabella, making my way away from her.

"Why?" She asked, her voice just as quiet. I turned to look at her and she gave me a look as if to say 'I just helped you destroy the Volturi. You really think I'm waiting here for you?' I sighed gently and shook my head, turning back towards the vampire. I knew she was following me. She wouldn't get involved, or let herself be known but she was there.

The vampire was about half a mile away and we quickly made up the ground. The streets were fairly empty now and what with our built in radars, we were able to manoeuvre our way quickly through the streets without being spotted.

Wait. Isabella's voice resounded in my head. She was getting better at controlling her gift, able to access the power bank I had at my disposal and using the one she needed. *I have an idea.*

And what would that be?

Instead of you going in there and destroying him there and then-

I'm not talking to him.

I'm not saying you should . . .

I turned to look at her as I realised what her plan was. That was another thing that was getting frustrating with Isabella's development. She was getting better at hiding her thoughts from me. *You're not talking to him either.*

Come on. She practically pleaded with me and I scowled at her. If he won't listen to me, then you can rip him apart. I don't want to be seen as a weakness of yours, Edward. I don't ever want to be a burden to you in that way.

I walked over to her, still listening to the vampire's mind as I did so. "You're never a burden to me."

"But other's will see me as your weak spot." She sighed gently, leaning into my touch as I cupped her face in my hands. "I don't even want to give others the chance to think that about me. Please."

I closed my eyes for a moment, taking a deep, unnecessary breath, before looking down at her again. "I must be going soft."

"Yay." She grinned at me before wrapping her arms around my neck and pressing her lips to mine in a chaste kiss.

She released her hold on me, glancing back once with an evil glint in her eye. The same glint I was used to seeing in the minds of my victims just after they realised that their time had come, and that they weren't going to be meeting their end warm and safe in their beds as they wished they would.

Even though I had been cautious of letting her bargain with this vampire on her own, I couldn't help but wonder if there really was something out there that had made this girl specifically for me. Maybe they had decided that I had been through enough time on my own and made a female counterpart for me. Not that I minded one tiny bit.

Following Isabella through the darkness, I couldn't help but smirk to myself.

Things certainly had been more interesting since she entered my existence.

Bella

I knew that in Edward allowing me to go on before him, he was trusting me. He was trusting me not to screw this up, but then again, I also knew that he was trusting me to leave him the vampire so he could destroy it. Because . . . well, he was Edward and he liked destroying things.

But I think we all already knew that, don't you?

As I rounded the corner, I found the vampire Edward and I had locked on to. I had heard it only moments after he had and knew why he was interested in him.

He was feeding on a girl and from what I could gather, she was his fourth of the evening. He hadn't even disposed of the bodies properly, leaving them in the street for anyone to find. Thankfully, none of them were changing. He had drained them all.

He noticed my approach and grinned at me as I walked over to him.

"Hello, beautiful." He had a thick accent. Not Italian. It sounded Baltic, maybe Eastern European. "Come to join my feast?"

"No." I shook my head, stopping in front of him, hooking my thumbs through my front belt loops. "And if I were you, I'd stop right now."

"Why?" He laughed, dropping the now dead girl. You could tell that she was pretty. Long, dark hair splaying across her face and fanning out underneath her. Slender figure accentuated by her tight jeans, high boots and flowing top. Her features were soft, cheekbones high, leading down into a sleek and slender jaw and throat. Not that you could tell about her throat anymore. All that was left of it was haggard muscle and sinew. I could see a trace of white, indicating that he had bitten all the way through to her spine, most likely enjoying her screams of terror and pain. "Haven't you heard? The Volturi is gone. We have no reason to hide anymore. Now that they are gone, we can finally take our place at the top of the food chain, above these wretched humans."

"Just because the Volturi is gone, it doesn't mean we can automatically do what we want." I told him, my voice light and airy as though this wasn't a conversation that might lead to his death.

"There's no one to stop us." He retorted, looking mighty pleased with himself. He stepped over the girl and started walking towards me slowly as though I was one of the human girls he seemed to delight in feeding off of. "There's no one to stop *me* ."

"Wanna bet?" I cocked my head to the side and he stopped, his brow furrowing in confusion. "You must not be aware of the fact that the one who made the Volturi is the one that made the law. And that he is still very much alive, as it were."

"Who? Edward?" He scoffed, chuckling slightly. He walked up to me, stopping directly in front of me. I could smell the reek of human blood on his breath and his clothes. It emanated from him. I know Edward fed off of human blood, but he didn't gorge himself as this vampire had done tonight. He only took as much as was necessary and he never came back to me smelling of it. This was just gross. "Now, you need to realise that he is just a bad story made up to scare newborn vampires. And it looks like you fell for it."

I tilted my head to the side and smiled sweetly up at him, opening my eyes wide, loving the fact that his were zoning in on the pale amber of my irises. "Listen, dickwad. I'm over a hundred years old." I looked around and lowered my voice to a stage whisper even though I knew exactly where Edward was. This guy didn't and that was the whole point. "And between us. Edward *is* real. *Believe* me, he is real." I managed to add a seductive tone to my voice and the vampire's eyes shot up, almost disappearing into his hairline as he saw my smirk, portraying exactly what I wanted it to. "And, um . . . you, unfortunately are going to be finding that out . . . the hard way."

I turned around so I was no longer facing the vampire, but sideways to him as we both heard the slow footsteps – louder than necessary, but hey, what can I say? my man loves the dramatics – approaching

us. I couldn't hold in the smile as he stepped out of the alleyway a mere twenty feet away from us.

Though the vampire still didn't believe that Edward was real, thinking that he was only something the Volturi had cooked up to keep the race in line, he knew that Edward was something to fear. He knew he was powerful.

Edward's smirk was dangerous and dark as he approached, slipping an arm around my waist as he stopped, tilting his head as he examined the now quaking vampire in front of us.

"Did you hear what he said?" I asked Edward, keeping up my innocent act – which he loved, by the way – interlinking my fingers as my arms wrapped around his waist as I looked up him. "He thinks you're not real."

"Well . . . we'll have to rectify that . . . won't we?" The growl that rumbled through his chest was deep, guttural and feral. And I loved it. He looked down at me and I grinned up at him. "I know there's something you've been wondering for a while now, love." He looked back up at the vampire, grabbing him around the throat and pulling him towards us again, his deep ruby eyes radiating age and power. "Can vampires go insane?" He whispered evilly, more to the doomed vampire than to me. He was right. I had been wondering that, because it seemed that Aro had been close to going insane.

Seems that Edward was going to provide the answer now.

"Let's see, shall we?" He smirked down at me and I grinned up at him, turning to look back at the vampire.

I felt Edward doing something with his mind, so I let down the shields around my own, gently expanding my own consciousness and intertwining it with his. Edward said I had been learning fast, and I knew that it was surprising him. He was proud of me, though. As I felt my mind connecting with Edward's, I was hit with a cacophony of images that nearly knocked me flat.

As I stood there, I was getting glimpses of Edward through other people's eyes. Through the eyes of other vampires, through the eyes of humans and I dare say it, I was getting glimpses of the world through *Edward's* eyes. What was he doing?

After a minute or so, he dropped the vampire, who crumbled to the ground. Now I had never seen that happen before. Even with James and Victoria, they had at least gone down fighting. This guy was sat on the floor, his head twitching all over the place, his eyes completely void of anything whatsoever.

"What did you *do* ?" I asked Edward and he smirked.

"Just bombarded him with the consciousness of every creature I've ever touched." He smirked and I couldn't help but smile and shake my head. Trust him. "Seems he's reacted in the same way as a human with information overload. He's gone into shock. Guess the vampire mind isn't as infinite as we've been led to believe."

"Except for yours, that is." I corrected him and he nodded slowly, still smirking at the dazed vampire.

"Except for me."

"I think we've found the answer." I looked up at him and his smirk grew. "It seems vampires *can* reach a certain level of insanity. Too bad we won't be able to study him, huh?"

"Meh." Well that was a noise I had never heard him make before. Maybe this whole feeding off personalities thing wasn't just one way. Maybe he was absorbing parts of mine as I was from him. I wonder. "Well, he's shown that he has no respect for authority or the law. Now with the Volturi gone, I can't afford to be lax in my rule."

"So he has to go bye-bye." I nodded, stepping away from Edward while he did his thing. I made my way over to the girl, kneeling down beside her. I noticed that she had an engagement ring on her finger, the diamond glinting in the faint light of the back alley we were

currently located in and I couldn't help but feel for the poor man she was leaving behind.

I picked up her purse, opening it as I heard the metallic shredding of vampire flesh coming from behind me, knowing Edward was in his element yet again. But I couldn't find it in myself to care about the vampire Edward was making an example of as I pulled out a small booklet and opening it. I knew that if I still had the ability I would have burst into tears at what I was holding in my hand.

It was a scan picture of a baby.

"What's the matter, love?" Edward came up behind me, kneeling down beside me and the dead girl, wrapping an arm around my shoulders. He smelled of the sweet smoke that was the telltale sign of a burning vampire and I knew that there would be humans around soon, investigating what caused the fire.

"She was pregnant." I whispered, showing him the photograph. "Not that it really matters to you, but-"

"Hey." He pressed a finger to my lips. "I might be a monster, but I don't believe in killing those with child."

"Really?" I couldn't help but be a little shocked at this admission. He shrugged, shaking his head and looked back at the girl, placing a hand on her belly, which I could see now that the top had been tautened by Edward's hand.

"I don't what it was, but . . ." The way he looked at the woman made me think that there was something more beneath the surface here. Something deep in his past. Maybe even way back when he was human. "If you're in the right mind, it's easy to tell when a woman is pregnant. She smells different. Other than my crazed newborn year, when I just didn't know what the hell was going on, I have never fed on a pregnant woman."

"Do you think it could be that we're unable to have children?" I asked him, leaning into his side. "Maybe there's something inside your head allowing the human race to carry on, not letting you hinder it in any way."

"Maybe." He sighed, still looking at the woman. "I don't know."

"I hate to leave her here." I sighed, looking at the scan picture again. "Is there any way we can give her back to her family? I mean, so they're not worried about her?"

He looked down at me, a small smile on his face as he looked back at the woman, taking his hand off of her stomach and brushing the hair on her neck aside. I hadn't noticed that the vampire hadn't only mauled her neck, but her shoulder and the top of her arm as well.

"Monster." I breathed, as Edward sighed.

"We're everywhere." He looked around, listening, just as I was. Humans were starting to notice the smoke coming from back here and I knew that if we didn't move now, we would be seen.

"Please, Edward." I whispered again, placing the picture back in her purse. "I don't want to leave her here."

"Alright." He pressed his lips to my hair, standing up, lifting up the woman at the same time. "You really are turning me soft."

We left the back street quickly and silently, leaving the woman in a darkened area of a main street where we knew she would be found sooner rather than later.

"What do you think will happen to her?" I asked as we walked away, slowly.

"She'll be found." He wrapped an arm around my waist, pulling me to him, closely. "It doesn't look like she was attacked by anything other

than an animal, so it'll most likely be put down to a rapid dog or something like that."

"Okay." I mumbled to myself. "Edward?" He hummed in response, looking down at me. "Thank you."

"That's alright, love."

"No." I shook my head, stopping the both of us before I wrapped my arms around his neck. "You didn't have to do something like that. I know it was probably silly to you to do that, but you did it anyway and well . . ."

"Love, if it's important to you, then it's important to me." He said softly, pressing his lips into my hair.

It was in that moment that I truly understood that he would do anything for me, just as I would do anything for him.

Edward

Isabella hadn't been far off when she said that it must have seemed silly to put that woman in a more noticeable place, but there was something different about it.

I had been telling the truth when I had said that I had never fed off of a woman with child. Yes, I was a monster, but I valued the life I no longer had. If a woman was with child, that meant that it wasn't just her she was nurturing and that had always sparked something in me.

I knew that Isabella had caught on, but she didn't know the reason behind my preservation of pregnant women. I would tell her at some point. But seeing her reaction towards the dead woman, I wasn't sure it was a good idea.

"What's up?" Isabella's gentle voice broke me out of my musings as we crossed the Atlantic back to America. I had some business to take care of and she missed her family, so we would get both things

done at the same time. Considering the man I needed to see – or rather threaten – was in Seattle. It wouldn't take long, but it would give Isabella the much needed time she desired.

It had been three months since we'd left Forks and though they had probably had a blow by blow account from Alice, she wanted to tell them about where we had been, what we had been doing. Yes, I had indulged the seventeen year old in Isabella and taken her to all the tourist spots she wanted to go to.

"What do you mean?" I looked over at her and she gave me a 'don't try it' look. She had gotten extremely adept at reading me while we had been away and though I knew how to read her better than anyone else on the planet, it unnerved me.

"You've been acting odd for a while now." She made her way over to me, planting herself in her lap, which was pretty much her permanent residence right now. "And I keep getting flashes of the woman in Italy." She looked down at me with her deep golden eyes. Neither of us had changed our diets and I knew that we would be together for an eternity and neither of us would relent. "That hit you pretty hard, didn't it?"

"It just brought back some memories that I didn't want to relive, that's all."

"Back you were human." It wasn't a question and I nodded. "Tell me."

"Bella, I don't think that-"

"That I can handle it?" She finished, raising her eyebrows at me. "I've seen you maim and destroy vampires, set buildings on fire and I know what you've done in previous centuries. Let me in. I don't know about when you were human. You *knew me* when I was human. Trade a little." I couldn't help but chuckle at her logic. "What was it that got to you, huh? What was it that got to the invincible Edward?"

"First off, stop it." She sat up slightly, pouting at me and I chuckled lightly. "It's a mix of things that happened back then."

"Alright." I sighed gently, "but you can't interrupt me." She nodded quickly, her arms settling around my neck again as she rested her head on my shoulder. "You're right, it was when I was human. You say that I 'knew you' when you were human and you want to know me, but you have to remember, things were very different when in my time. There wasn't anything fancy. Hell, we didn't even have time or language. All we had was a basic point and grunt thing going on, the most eloquent of sounds being those used for names. Other than that, you wanted something, you pointed at it and that was about it. Hunting with weapons was as luxurious as it got back then. None of this readymade food stuff humans have now. You wanted a meal you had to work for it."

"Sounds hard." She whispered against my chest gently.

"It was at times. I remember winter being the hardest. But then again, it is, even now. I remember, it was the year I turned seventeen, though like I said we didn't measure time at all. It was in seasons, generally going through winters. My mother had fallen pregnant again with her second child. After having me she hadn't been able to and everyone was ecstatic at the conception. Except one member of the tribe."

"You mean you actually had tribes?" Isabella asked, her head coming off of my shoulder slightly, her golden eyes wide. I raised my eyebrows at her and she smiled sheepishly. "I'll shut up now. What happened with your mother?"

"Well, a lot of other women in the tribe were pregnant at the same time. There was never one on her own, which was good for them, I guess. But one member wasn't happy about my mother's pregnancy. Because he wasn't the father. I remember his obsession with my mother, so when she became pregnant with another man's child, as with this day and age, jealousy and rage ensued."

"How did he know it wasn't his?" She asked, looking confused at my words. "I mean, don't take this the wrong way, but from what I've heard, people in the Stone Age were kind of . . ."

I could see her struggling to come up with a word that she thought wouldn't upset me and although it was amusing, I decided to help her out a little. "Promiscuous?" She nodded, biting her lip. "It's true, we were, but . . . I don't know, somehow we always knew whose baby was whose. It's weird but we always knew. Besides, my mother always shot this particular guy down." She nodded in understanding. "Just think of the situation between you and this Mike Newton guy that always bugged you in Forks."

"How do you know about him?" She asked, leaning away from me and narrowing her eyes at me slightly. I raised an eyebrow and understanding dawned on her face. "Fair enough. Carry on."

"Like I was saying, this guy wasn't happy. Little weedy thing he was. Neyaar, his name was. He was always trying to be one of the big boys yet he could never do it. Could never quite get there, you know what I mean?" I looked at her, and flashes of the wimpy boys at Forks and previous schools she'd been to flashed through her mind. "Exactly. He knew that he'd never be able to get back at the one who got my mother pregnant . . . so he took his jealousy and rage out on her instead."

"He hurt her?"

"He killed her." I sighed, hearing her gasp in shock. "He didn't care that she was dead. She shouldn't have been pregnant with another male's child, in his eyes. Completely forgetting that she already had me. But then again, I was big enough to fight back, so he didn't want to bother with me."

"What if he'd been bigger?" She asked, looking worried.

"Then he probably would have come after me, not my mother, knowing that it would kill her to lose me. We might have been

classed as savages by you people, but there was nothing more important to us than family." She giggled lightly when I said 'you people' knowing that I meant modern people viewed the Stone Age as savages, without really knowing the dynamics of the time. "But he wasn't. He was unimpressive and small. He knew that I would best him in a fight and I would have done if I'd been allowed to. But he disappeared that night."

"I guess that kind of thing happened all the time, huh?" She sounded said and looked confused when I shook my head.

"No, it didn't. Surprising I know, but it didn't. Taking the life of a member of the tribe was punishable by death, naturally, but the taking of a life of a pregnant woman. You lost your soul."

"It must have been really hard for you." She ran her fingers through my hair gently, comforting a hurt I never had a chance to feel. "Being without your mother."

"No." I shook my head and I knew that I had her confused. "It was the night she died that I went out and got turned into this." I gestured to myself. "I was just . . . so full of emotions I didn't understand. They warned me not to leave the safety of the camp, but I didn't listen. I went off on my own and didn't come back human."

"How did they warn you?"

"How do you think?" I looked up at her and she giggled lightly with the oddly accurate images running through her mind.

"What happened to the guy who killed your mother?" Her tone was wistful as though she would have loved to meet my mother someday and was only now realising that she never would. Apart from the fact that my mother would have been dead for millennia even if she had had the baby.

"I ate him." I shrugged and she chuckled lightly. "I ate everyone."

"I know that." She sighed, looking into my eyes, making me feel the way only she could. "What I mean was did they find him before you did?"

"I know you meant that." I grinned at her and she slapped my arm. "Yes, they did. They found him when I was still burning and he was to be put on some form of trial in front of what would be known nowadays as the high priestess."

"You didn't have a name for her?" She raised an eyebrow.

"Oh, we did." Her other eyebrow raised as she waited to hear it. Not wanting to disappoint I pointed aimlessly and told her. "Unnhh." Now *that* got a laugh out of her. "Seriously."

"I believe you." She giggled, sighing wistfully at me. "Let me guess: no trial?"

"No." I shook my head. "One trial in front of the entire tribe plus one crazed newborn vampire, who had no clue what was going on and you're not going to have a happy ending."

"Massacre?"

"Think natural disaster meets terrorist attack." Her nose crinkled at the imagery and I couldn't help but place a kiss on the end of it, watching as it smoothed out with her smile. "I know you don't like to think about it, but that's the best way I can think of to explain it, without showing you and I really don't want to do that."

"Why?"

"Because it's not really a place I like going back to. Do you like thinking back to when you were a newborn?" She shook her head quickly, grimacing at some of the things she must have done or seen. I knew that she had killed a fair few humans whilst in her first year, but it was nothing compared to the devastation I caused and she knew this. "It wasn't until I had ended the life of the last person

of the tribe, that I realised that chaos I had caused. When I looked down at the woman in my arms I knew that I was a monster."

"She was pregnant."

I nodded, taking a deep breath, wondering how Bella was going to take the next part to the story. "Yeah, she was."

"That's why you don't feed off of pregnant women?" I shook my head, not meeting her gaze, feeling slightly ashamed of what I was about to admit. Shame was never something I had ever had to deal with before. It just wasn't me. "What then?"

"The baby was mine." I whispered and she stiffened slightly.

"Oh, Edward." She pressed her lips to my throat, lovingly, wanting to take away pain I had never let myself feel. I wasn't going to start now.

We spent the remainder of the flight over the US in silence, holding each other. I closed my eyes, clearing my head of everything I had told her and I wondered what was going on through her head. I wouldn't pry, because I knew that she needed her privacy.

Would she be able to stick by me now that she knew I had murdered my own child?

Only time will tell, I guess.

Lots of info this chapter. It was difficult for me to write this chapter, because I know what's happening in the next few, but I had no idea how to get there.

For those of you asking, this story is not yet finished nor will it be going on hiatus any time soon. Just a bit of writers' block, that's all.

Here it is. Hope you enjoy.

Leave me a review.

Alice

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I know, it's been too long.

Blame Edward. I do.

Alice

As Edward and Bella disappeared through the front door to the house, I had to physically stop myself from doing a disappearing act myself.

In my pocket – burning a hole with the knowledge of its presence – was everything I had ever wanted to know about my past. I knew Edward had seen everything that had ever happened to me. That was how Aro's power worked, ergo Edward's worked the same. That meant he knew who I was and where I had come from.

And something deep in the crevices of my mind, I knew and trusted that he wouldn't keep anything from me.

I *had* to trust that he wouldn't.

He was the only link I had to my past.

Jasper raised an eyebrow at me, clearly sensing the excitement and agitation running through me at the moment. I shook my head, signalling I didn't want his aid in dampening my emotions. He looked, for a moment, as though he was going to disregard my request, but thought better of it, turning back to face the Denali clan as they stood in the wake of Edward.

It occurred to me then that only a few seconds had passed since the two of them disappeared through the door. It felt like hours had

passed to me. But then again, being living marble, that amount of time *could* have passed without us realising or moving.

I quickly bid the Denali's farewell, letting them know that I had something I had to take care of. It was true. I had my past to rediscover.

I slipped out of the backdoor, shaking my head at Jasper. He knew that I needed some space for a little while even though he was unsure what the reasons behind that were. I just hoped that he didn't think I was hurting in any way. Jasper, though the quieter one in the family, made himself known when I was in physical, mental or emotional danger.

And I loved him for it.

But this was something I needed to do on my own.

I ran in the woods for roughly two minutes, making sure that I was far enough away that my family would get the hint. I scanned their futures briefly and didn't see any of them coming after me, which worked well in my favour.

Perching on a fallen log and tucking my legs underneath me I slowly pulled the papers out of my pocket and opened them, revealing the most elegant handwriting I had ever seen. *Well, he's had a while to practise.* I thought dryly.

Closing my eyes and taking a deep breath, which I wished actually served *some* purpose at this point, I looked down at the papers, my eyes scanning the words slowly, drinking them in.

Alice,

You asked me to take a glimpse into your forgotten past and provide you with the answers you have been searching for for your entire immortal existence. Others believe you are content in your perpetual state of oblivion, but upon seeing your demeanour change whenever

the human memories one possesses are brought to light, I am aware that this is far from the truth.

I am also aware of the things that are said about me, as well as the fact that most whispers happening about me are most likely true. This being said, you are feeling confused as to why I am agreeing to help you, even though you grasped why when standing in the Cullen home.

I am unaware of why I became what I became, as are you. But as much as we are alike in that regard, my memories are as clear as my immortal memories. It would seem, as similar as our circumstances, as it were, we are the exact opposites in that way.

Having to deal with constant, clear reminders of your behaviour as a human is something I would be rid of at a moment's notice, but not having those memories, not even flashes, can be even tougher. Not knowing where you come from, what happened to you. Why you were chosen above all others around you. It can lead to more questions than answers.

But it is not the vampire life you are questioning. It is your human life. Your human family and friends. I have seen it all, Mary Alice Brandon, for that is in fact your full name.

The information I can provide for you may seem to be vague, though you must remember, I only know what has been locked inside your mind. Nothing more, nothing less.

You were born in Biloxi, Mississippi in 1901 to Mary and Jonathon Brandon. You were also given a younger sister, Cynthia, a short while after you were born. I hope that can give you a starting point to finding out more about her – as you no doubtedly will. There were no other relatives in your young life, as both sets of your grandparents had passed away shortly before you were born. The reasons behind their death were never mentioned to you, nor to anyone you knew, so unfortunately, I am unable to give you the details you may crave

on that particular subject. Both of your parents were single children, leaving you with a small family of four.

From what I could gather through your memories, your precognitive powers were not solely focused on your vampiric nature. You've been psychic for longer than anyone thought. And therein lies the reason for the darkness in your past.

I am unaware of how much you know about how people, children included, were treated in psychiatric wards in the early nineteenth century, but I can tell you, even by my standards, it is unpleasant. I know what is travelling through your mind in this instant. You know that I 'play with my food' as you've so slyly mentioned to Jasper on more than one occasion, but not even I would treat humans like they treat each other.

I am assuming you have already guessed where I am going with this and yes, you were placed in a psychiatric 'asylum' as they were called then. And the reason for the darkness in your past lies within that small snippet of information. For in the asylums of the past, there were no windows in the cells of the patients. They were not given any room to breathe, to experience what 'normal' human beings were allowed to experience. They were not deemed worthy.

You were placed in the asylum at a young age, it is unclear from your memories exactly how young, but hazarding a guess, I would have put you at around five or six years of age.

The first vision you experienced was of a girl, around your age named Jennifer. She was the daughter of your mother's best friend. You hadn't seen her that day, nor did you have plans to. The vision consisted of her falling out of the large oak tree that lay at the bottom of her garden. Her father had expressly forbidden her to climb it, but of course, being a child, she disobeyed him. Your mother believed you were being silly and sent you outside to play, but it was clear from her behaviour around you later on that same day, that the vision you had experienced of Jennifer, came true.

From what your memories have given me, that first time, she brushed it off as a coincidence and that you simply knew Jennifer was planning on climbing the tree.

Until it began happening more and more often. You being so young and naïve, didn't realise that it would have been better for you to not have said anything to anyone, but the constant visions you were having, even if they were only flashes or murky glimpses, as was the case the majority of the time, worried your mother. She believed that you had been possessed by some spirit and took you to the local priest.

It was then that they sent you to the asylum, realising that no amount of praying to their god was going to help control or banish these visions of yours.

The days that turned into months and then years in that place did not show much of your life, only that it was filled with darkness, pain and loneliness. But there was also hope.

I am aware that you believe you had your first vision of Jasper when you awoke from your burning change, but that is in fact not true. All throughout your time in the asylum, you saw Jasper. He was there, with you, even if the two of you were unaware of it. And at that time Jasper was already making his way from the western borders of Texas towards you. I know this because I had been keeping a close eye on Maria since the first bout of war in the South and she was particularly irate about his departure.

He was the hope you held on to. He was the one you were relying on to break you from your prison, even if you did not know why, how or if he was even real.

But your freedom was not of Jasper's doing.

It was the work of another vampire. A vampire, who took on a role much like Carlisle's in fact. Instead of becoming a doctor in a

hospital, he took up a position in the asylum that held you captive for all those years.

From what I can read from his actions, he felt a particular attraction to you. And by that I do not mean that he wanted you for anything physical. Maybe a connection, would be the more appropriate way of putting it. It was as though he knew that you were meant for greater things than remaining in that place as a lowly human.

But through your eyes I see that he had resolved not to turn you.

That is until he was forced to, to save your existence.

Through the dimmed light of your memories as a human, I have caught glimpses of wrenched metal, blurring sights and sounds and pain. It is clear that these are the only memories you possess of the night you were stolen away for your own protection, to save you from the threat that was unknown to you.

Unfortunately, I am unable to give you the identity of your vampiric assailant or saviour, as you knew neither. The facial features of your saviour were present in your mind, though unfortunately, I cannot tell you who he is or was as I have never encountered him before. That might be hard to believe but there are vampires in the world I have yet to threaten personally. I am working on it.

I am aware that this letter might not fill in all of the blanks, but I do hope it answers at least some of your questions. I sense it might have created more questions than answers, but I am afraid I can give you nothing more than that.

Edward

P.S. Jasper will be waiting for you in the doorway to the conservatory once you return. Let him know what's going on. He will understand.

I smiled to myself, wondering how the vampire that so many feared could be so heartfelt and in tune with what I needed at the moment.

Placing the letter in my lap, the smile on my face grew slightly wider as I looked up at the clouded sky.

Though the ending to the letter in front of me was correct, and I had a million more questions running through my mind:

What about my parents?

What happened to my sister?

Did she have any children?

If she did, were they still alive?

Why did they send me away so young?

Where was this asylum they'd sent me to?

How long was I in there?

What happened to me in there?

Who was the vampire that had coveted me?

Who was the vampire that had save me?

And where was he now?

There was so much running through my mind, that it was beginning to spin slightly. A strange sensation for a vampire, but it was happening nonetheless.

Slowly climbing off the log, I made my way at a human pace back towards the house, noting that Jasper was exactly where Edward had stated he would be in his letter. He was pacing back and forth in front of the conservatory door, waiting for my return.

He smiled as soon as he spotted me, not coming to meet me, knowing I had to take this at my own pace. His golden eyes glittered

lightly as he wrapped his arms around me, pulling him to me. I inhaled his beautiful scent, taking in everything I could about him. Edward had stated that he had started looking for me before he even knew what he was looking for. Meaning that he was meant for me above all others. Of course, I already knew that, but hey, it helps to have backup knowledge of that fact.

"Is everything okay?" He asked, his southern accent, too faint for humans to really acknowledge, washing over me. "When you disappeared, you were extremely excited and now . . . now you're oddly calm and peaceful."

"Here." I pressed the letter into his palm and he looked at me, slightly confused. "Read it."

He unfolded the letter carefully, cautiously, his eyes fixed on me before he glanced down, taking in Edward's elegant script. He looked back up at me, confused as he obviously didn't recognise the writing decorating the page in front of him. I nodded, indicating for him to read it.

I could see his eyes zipping across the page, a small smile appearing as he read on. Probably not at what was written on the paper, but at the fact I now had knowledge of who I was before my change.

"When did he give you this?" He asked, folding the letter once he'd finished reading it.

"Before he had Bella left." I sighed, taking the paper back off of him. I couldn't help the breathy laugh.

"Who would've thought . . ." He trailed off, obviously lost in thought. What I wouldn't have given at that moment to have Edward's gift. It would have made living with everyone here so much easier.

"What?" I asked, looking at him as he gazed at the elegant script on the page again. I knew that he wasn't rereading it. There was no

point. But there was something on his mind nonetheless.

"Who would've thought that the great Edward had a heart?" He chuckled, pulling me to him and pressing his lips to my forehead.

"Well . . . he's given it to Bella." I looked up at him and he smiled, nodding.

"That he has." He agreed.

"What's that?" I had been so wrapped up in Jasper that I hadn't noticed the others approach us. It was usually impossible for us to catch each other off guard, especially me, considering, but they had managed to do it. They were all looking at the paper in Jasper's hand as though it would catch fire and burn them all.

"My memories." I answered quietly and they all looked at me in confusion. "Edward helped me."

"How?" Esme shook her head, taking the paper from Jasper and reading it.

"Well, you all know how he has every power known to vampires?" They all nodded, Carlisle's face breaking out into a large grin. "Well, he used Aro's gift to help me. He recovered my long forgotten memories and wrote them down for me. I don't remember them personally, but at least I now know what happened to me."

"Wow." Emmett breathed gently, wrapping an arm around Rosalie, who gave me a slight smile.

"That's what I thought." Jasper nodded and I rolled my eyes at the two of them.

"Whatever you two may think of Edward," Rose began looking between them, a scowl on her face. "It obvious that he cares about Bella. Maybe even loves her-"

"Don't let *him* hear you say that." Jasper chuckled and she rolled her eyes at him.

"As I was saying . . ." This was accompanied by a growl and the two of them immediately shut up. "He's Bella's . . . and he wouldn't have been chosen for her if he was evil. I know that for sure."

"Since when did you become all Team Edward?" Emmett joked, playing with the ends of her hair. He knew she hated her hair being touched, but at the same time, the intimate movement softened her immensely.

"Since I saw the way he looked at her. It was she was the only thing in his world. He's her mate. And he's going to be around from time to time, so if I were you, I'd play nice." She jabbed her finger into Emmett's chest and he flinched away from her.

"I hope it's more than time to time." Esme sighed, leaning into Carlisle slightly, resting her head on his shoulder. I knew what she meant. If Edward were only around 'from time to time' as Rose put it, that meant that Bella wouldn't be with us. We wouldn't ask her to choose us over her mate, as that bond was too strong for us – even as her family – to compete with.

"It won't be, my love." Carlisle whispered in her ear and she looked up at him, her topaz eyes wide and glassy. "Bella is tied to Edward now. She won't be able to leave him. And he has duties to consider. He has never lingered in a place before. The few days he spent here were a stretch and now that she's found him, Bella won't be able to let him go. I'm sure that they'll visit us, dear."

"It won't be the same, though." She said softly, looking down at the ground.

My still heart ached for Esme in this moment. It was clear that she'd been hoping she had gained another surrogate child in Edward, but realistically, we all knew that would never happen. But the mother in her couldn't help but hope. Instead, she'd lost a child. Bella wouldn't

be anywhere without Edward anymore. She wouldn't be separate from him for too long now that they had found each other. Something told me that he wouldn't physically allow it. Bella would be travelling around the world with Edward, possibly for eternity.

And not even I could see when they'd be making an appearance in our lives again.

I know, not what you were expecting, but people have been asking about what was in the letter Edward left for Alice and what happened in the Cullen house after the two of them left.

Edward and Bella will be back next chapter.

One of the author's on this site has set up a petition, asking readers and authors alike to sign to stop FanFiction from deleting mature stories and set up an NC-17 rating.

I think that this is a good idea, considering that most of the stories on here are of a mature rating and I would hate to see any of them pulled. What FF is doing by doing this is stifling the freedom of speech that we all have.

So click on this link (I'm also putting it on my profile) and sign her petition.

[http://www . fanfiction . net/s/5734048/1/Petition](http://www.fanfiction.net/s/5734048/1/Petition)

Also, really quickly I have a couple of stories I want to get out there. Go read them all!

Clipped Wings & Inked Armor by HunterHunting. Haunted by her past Bella is broken and alone. Starting over, can she let go of the guilt that consumes her when she meets a beautiful tattoo artist or will his own personal demons destroy them first? Rated M for language and lemons. AH/OOC ***This story owns me!! Seriously!***

How To Save A Life by unholy . obsession (remove spaces either side of dot)– Bella, Edward, Alice & crew. What's going on with Bella's new best friend's older brother, Edward? What exactly happen in his past that has turned the former golden boy into a shadow of himself? This story is one of the only ones that makes me bawl my eyes out on a regular basis. It's unbelievable. Go read. Now! Oh, and have some tissues nearby. You're gonna need 'em.

edwardandbellabelong2gether. I know it's not a story, but the work this woman posts is incredible. I can't just give you one of her stories because I love them all. Go read them all.

Geekward's up next. His chapter's nearly done.

Returning

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

I know it's been like, two months since I updated but here's another chapter for you. There isn't too much of this story left to go, so we're definitely coming to the end.

You can also blame Mrs. Meyer for the lack of updates as well. Who the hell needs 33, 170 balloons anyway? Being a bit greedy, don't you think?

Bella

Things went quiet after Edward's admission on the plane. Not that I could blame him. It was clear that not another soul knew about the child Edward might have had back then, had he not been turned.

I felt bad for him and for his unborn child, but I knew that was a gut reaction. The same reaction everyone has when they hear of something catastrophic happening to the one they love.

But another part – the part that felt ashamed at myself – didn't feel bad. I didn't feel bad because if he hadn't been turned by whatever force it was that decided to take his life and mould it into what he was now, I wouldn't have him. He would have died all those thousands of years ago and the vampire race wouldn't have been created.

And I wouldn't have been able to spend eternity with the man I love.

Does that make me a horrible creature?

Quite possibly.

But it wasn't as though I had to worry about going to Hell anymore, as I'd always done. Nothing would ever get near enough to me to threaten me in that way.

Not with Edward around.

I knew that we were flying to Seattle, but that would be where we parted. Edward had some things to take care of in the city. A couple of 'loose ends' – as he put it – he had to tie up. Having seen what I had in Italy, I knew what that meant. Or most likely meant. But I didn't push for details, knowing that he would give them to me, should he want me to know.

It was clear that he didn't.

I think maybe he was afraid I still viewed him as a monster. I did, but I also knew now that it was who he was and there was nothing I could do to change that. Even if I could, I wouldn't. The monster in him made him *my* Edward and I wouldn't change him for the world.

He had tried convincing me to take a car back to Forks to see my family but I had reasoned that a) I could get to Forks faster running than a car could and b) if anything was going to come after me, a car wouldn't be able to stop them. He hadn't been pleased about the latter example but had conceded and given up on trying to convince me.

It was pointless to use a machine that would take four hours to travel somewhere than run and take only half the time.

Saying goodbye to him in Seattle was hard for me to do. I knew I was being irrational and that we would only be apart for a few hours but that deep instinct within me told me not to let him go. He had chuckled at my behaviour - something I wasn't too happy with - and told me that he would be right behind me. That I wouldn't be able to miss him.

I had told him that wasn't possible because I always missed him. Even when we were together yet not touching – which was rare lately – I missed him.

When he had admitted he felt the same way, I could have sworn that my dead heart started beating again.

Walking out of the airport, I made my way through the city, feeling Edward walking in the other direction. I hated that he was so close, yet I couldn't go with him. I knew that there were secrets in every relationship but I couldn't help but hope we'd be different.

Maybe not.

As soon as I got far away enough from the city I started to run, aiming for a perfect straight shot to Forks. It had taken Edward and I an hour or so to reach Seattle from Forks and that wasn't at full speed. To say that Edward had been surprised at my speed would be an understatement. It was clear that he hadn't expected me to be able to keep up with him and was mildly shocked when I had the entire way there. The fact that we hadn't even approached Seattle, but given the city a wide berth also let me know that I could shave off a good ten minutes of the time it would take me to get back to Forks.

Ah, there's nothing like running without getting tired.

I slowed slightly as I neared Forks, about five minutes away by the calculations I had made, as my phone started to ring. Pulling it out of my pocket, I saw Alice's name on the display. Wondering why she would be calling me when I was so close to home was confusing. Unless they'd moved in the time Edward and I had been away. Which was unlikely considering how short the trip was.

"Alice, is everything okay?" I asked, not stopping as I answered the phone.

"You need to be careful, Bells." Her tone was agitated and worried.

"What have you seen?" I asked, sensing a vision was the reason for her phone call.

"You disappear in about a minute." She said quietly. I wondered why she was speaking in hushed tones. It wasn't as though you could hide anything in that house.

"You're thinking the wolves?" I asked her, my mind instantly flicking to Edward. *Shit!* He always kept a close eye on the future, especially mine. If he'd seen me disappear then who knows what the hell he'll do.

"I'm guessing so, seeing as there's no other reason you'd vanish." I could hear movement and I could have sworn I heard a growl come from the end of the line.

"What about Edward?" I asked, my pace slowing slightly. If Alice was right, then I would be encountering the wolves any moment now, which I guessed fit seeing as I was now in the woodland area that surrounded Forks and La Push. This also happened to be the woods that separated the wolves land from Cullen land. "Has he seen this?"

"I would think so." She sighed, going quiet for a moment. "Yes, he has. And he's not happy about it."

"Shit." I stopped as the curse left me, running a hand through my hair. "He's going to apeshit."

"Tell me about it." I could picture her eyes rolling as she smirked into the phone. "Bella? They're there."

"I'll talk to you later." I said quickly, snapping my phone closed and placing it in my pocket. As I turned, I was hit with the vile scent of the wolves coming from my left.

Turning, I saw Jacob Black standing in the trees. He was in his human form, wearing nothing but a pair of cut-off denim jeans. He was taller than I'd remembered him to be, but that might be because

of the wolf gene sparking in his system. All of the Quileute wolves seemed to be remarkably tall when in their human form.

"Can I help you?" I asked as he stared at me. I realised that he hadn't come any closer because of the boundary line that stood between us, meaning that I was safe from any attacks, unless he wanted to start a war. One they would effectively lose, considering Edward was now on the scene.

"Where is he?" He asked, his voice low as his eyes darted from side to side, clearly searching for someone.

"Who?" I crossed my arms over my chest, tilting my head to the side, pretending to be clueless to the fact that he was searching for Edward.

"The other bloodsucker that was here." He growled at me, his patience thinning by the moment. "The cocky one."

"Who? Edward?" His eyes narrowed at the name, probably recognising it. "Clearly, he's not here."

"We don't trust him-"

"Do you trust any of us?" I shot back, knowing what the answer was.

"He's not like you. He feeds from humans. We don't want him anywhere near here again." He growled, beginning to shake. Even with my knowledge of the wolves, I couldn't bring myself to be afraid of the course his body was taking. Jacob might like to think he's a big dog, but in this game, he's nothing but a newbie puppy. "You can pass that message along."

"I don't think I will." I shook my head, smirking internally as his eyes snapped to mine. "Please. If Edward wants to do something, he's going to do it. And there's no chance that an order from you guys is going to stop him from coming here. You can take him on if you want, but let me tell you one thing first: you will all die. Others call

vampires, werewolves, whatever immortals, right? But that's not technically true, considering we can all die. Edward is the only true immortal to walk this planet. And he's my mate, so he will be coming here. You were asked to pass on a message? Well, you can do the same for me, but this time, it's for your own safety. Stay away from Edward. Not a joke."

I turned around and made my way towards the house, hearing Jacob huffing, annoyed that this little meeting hadn't turned out the way he wanted it to. Clearly the wolves didn't want Edward anywhere near here. But then again, why would they? They hated us and we didn't even feed off humans. It didn't take a genius to work out that the wolves would despise Edward on a practicality.

My phone rang as I was making my way back to the house. I knew that it was either Alice or Edward, seeing that I'd come out of the meeting alive and unscathed.

"Hello?" I answered, unsure about which one I would be getting. *This is why you check the caller ID before you pick up the phone, dumbass.*

"Mind explaining?" I bit my lip slightly, slowing to a walk as I reached the woods that surrounded the house. Even though his tones were cool, calm and collected, sometimes, that meant that the danger was even higher than if he was about to lose it.

"It was just one of them." I sighed, running my hand through my hair again. "He just wanted to talk for a moment."

"What did he say?" I raised an eyebrow before I remembered that like Alice, Edward couldn't see the wolves. That had to be unnerving for him, not that I'd bring it up, mind you.

"That the pack isn't happy with you being around." I bit my lip, wondering what his reaction to that would be, relaxing when I heard the chuckle on the other end of the line. "He said that they don't want you around here anymore. So, I pointed out that if you want to do

something, you're going to do it." He chuckled again and I hoped that was a good thing. "You're not mad?"

"No, I'm not mad." He sighed, sounding slightly amused. "I just don't like it when you disappear."

"Well, hurry up in Seattle then." I smirked, hearing a small growl come from him.

"I'll be approximately two hours." I could hear the impatience in his voice and began to feel it myself. What on Earth was he doing in Seattle? "That is if these humans ever figure out how something is done."

"And you're not going to tell me what that something is, are you?" I shook my head, rolling my eyes as he chuckled.

"All in due time, my love. All in due time." Well, that was better than nothing, right? "Go and see your family. I'll be there soon."

"Okay." I whispered, not wanting to lose the connection to him. "I love you."

"I love you, as well." I didn't doubt him for a second as I hung up the phone, resting the cool plastic and metal combination to my lips for a moment, wanting nothing more than to turn around and run straight back to Seattle.

My phone vibrated in my hand as I stood there and I flicked it open, seeing that I had a new text message.

Don't even think about it.

I laughed, shaking my head at either, how well he knew me or the fact that he was checking my future moments after we'd hung up the phone.

I slowly jogged towards the house, smiling to myself as it came into view. I could hear the movements of everyone inside, including

Alice's bouncing, Jasper chuckling to himself and everyone else bustling around doing as they'd normally do.

Opening the door, I glanced around, not making it a foot inside the house before being thrown outside again, being assaulted by the impish vampire I called a sister.

"You have a lot of explaining to do, missy." She grinned down at me and I felt my brow furrow in confusion.

"What do you mean?" I pushed her off of me, sitting up as I did so. She scowled at me, shaking her head as she crossed her arms over her chest, waiting for me to figure it out. "Seriously, Alice, what are you talking about?"

"Italy." She raised an eyebrow and I finally understood. Of course Alice would have seen that. There was no reason for her not to have seen it. She obviously knew what Edward's decision was going to be and once we'd gotten in the castle, everything else probably clicked into place.

"Speaking of . . ." Emmett made his way over to me, standing in front of me, grinning down as he watched me get up. "Can I have my lighter back?"

"Oh." I thought for a moment before shaking my head. His face fell slightly and I realised how much he liked that lighter. Personally, I had tuned him out after the five hundredth demonstration of how it worked. "Edward has it."

"Oh." His face fell and the others laughed. I couldn't help but feel slightly amused as well. It wasn't as though it was worth a lot. But then again, with Emmett, things like that lighter held a lot of sentimental value.

"Hey, he's still got it." *I think* . "I'm sure he'll give it back." *I hope*.

"Alright, then." Esme appeared, clapping her hands and everyone turned around to look at her. "Let's get inside, because I think it's going to rain."

"Rain in Forks." Rosalie grumbled lightly. "Now *there's* a surprise."

"Hey, Rose." I wrapped my arms around her as she squeezed me tightly to her. "How've you been?" Everyone else made their way back inside, leaving the two of us to it. They knew that Rosalie had taken my leaving with Edward harder than everyone else had. Why, I'm not quite sure. There had been times when we'd been close to ripping each other's throats out and our relationship was precarious at best.

"Not as good as you, apparently." She raised an eyebrow at me, smirking in a way that only Rosalie knew how. "I hear tell that you and Edward are mates in more than just the term."

"I'm gonna kill Alice."

"Honestly, Bells." She giggled, flipping her hair over her shoulder. "Even if Alice hadn't been squealing like a little girl on crack, it's obvious. Just looking at you, you can see how happy he's making you."

"I am happy." I nodded, unable to stop the grin that appeared. "There have been times when he's been testy, but it not ever been with me. I have no doubt that there'll be some point in the future where we want to rip the other to pieces, but I guess we'll deal with that when the time comes."

"Aw, little Bells is growing up." She ruffled my hair gently and I smacked her hand away, letting a small growl loose as I did so. "Oh, what was that?"

"I guess Edward really does have an effect on me." I shrugged, smirking at her and she raised an eyebrow.

"No kidding." She wrapped an arm around my shoulder, leading the way towards the house. "Now, are you going to tell us, what the hell happened in Volterra? Carlisle's had calls from seventeen other vampires about how the castle practically exploded."

"Yeah." Jasper sat on the arm of the sofa Alice had perched on, and I couldn't help but glance around at the people I called my family.

"Well, let's just say, the Volturi won't be making any more threats." I nodded and they all looked slightly stunned. "Edward said he was going to destroy the Volturi and that's what he did."

"Word says he had a little helper, though." Carlisle's tone was a cross between teasing and knowing. I nodded slowly, wondering how he would take the news that his eldest daughter had been involved in the destruction of our leaders. "I'm not surprised."

"Huh?" Well *that* wasn't what I was expecting.

"Even without your power to absorb, you were bound to take on a few of Edward's characteristics. The same is true for others as well, not just you." He gestured to the others in the room. "You've noticed how we all offset each other, making sure that we're not going to go completely insane." He chuckled, glancing at the others as though that wasn't something that could be avoided. "It's the same for you and Edward. But with your power being what it is, it's clear that you take on some of Edward's more . . . prominent characteristics."

"He's right." A velvet voice from behind me startled me slightly. I had felt the pull in my chest increasing, but had determined that it was because I was away from him. Not because he was getting closer to me.

I turned around, wrapping my arms around his neck, pulling him down to me. He pressed his lips to my forehead, not seeming to care about the fact my family was standing right there. He inhaled deeply, his nose in my hair and I smiled, leaning my head on his shoulder and closing my eyes.

"So what are you gonna do now?" Alice asked quietly, tentatively.

"About what?" He asked, and it was as though I could feel his voice reverberating through his chest. Maybe it was just me being weird. Most likely.

"Well, the Volturi are gone." She said softly and I could practically see her shrugging, not knowing how to finish her statement.

"Emmett." Edward let go of me, reaching into his pocket and throwing something to Emmett. I smiled, knowing that it was the lighter he had used to burn the castle down.

"Thanks." I opened my eyes and looked up at Edward to see he was watching me carefully, a small smile on his lips.

"How long are the two of you staying for?" Esme asked, her eyes hopeful.

How long can we stay?

His brow creased slightly, as if wondering why I was using the plural. *You can stay as long as you like. I, on the other hand, have some things to clear up across the globe, as you can very well imagine.* I giggled lightly, knowing what he meant. *So I need to leave in three to four days.*

I wrapped my arms around his neck again, pulling him down so that our lips connected lightly. "You're not going anywhere without me." I whispered, so quietly that no one, other than Edward would hear it.

I don't know when you'll have the chance to come back. He was putting me and my needs first, which had to be something new for him.

It doesn't matter. He closed his eyes, a sign that he didn't really believe me. Sure I loved my family and I would miss them when I went with Edward – which, come on, was going to happen – but

being without Edward would hurt even more. I couldn't be without him. I just couldn't. He opened his eyes again, his deep red staring into my amber and he knew that he wouldn't find an iota of doubt in my mind.

"Four days." He said softly, looking around at the others.

"We're going to steal Bella for a little while, if that's not a problem." Alice sung, as she and Rose grabbed my arms, pulling me away from Edward. I looked at him as they dragged me upstairs, at least hoping to get a little assistance, but none of that happened. If anything he looked amused. Fucking *amused* !

They dragged me into my room, shoved some music on, turning it up loud so that the boys wouldn't hear, before sitting down on my bed. Alright, girl talk time, I'm guessing. I was mildly surprised when Esme appeared in the doorway, closing the door with a soft click.

"So . . ." Alice grinned, laying on her stomach, her hands under her chin.

"So what?" I shrugged, not really understanding what they were after.

"You know what we want to hear." Rosalie giggled, resting her chin in the middle of Alice's back as Esme settled herself next to me.

"Details, girl."

"I'm not so sure that's a good idea." I bit my lip, shaking my head as they stared at me. "He's right downstairs."

"So." The three of them shook their heads, clearly not understanding my trepidation over telling them. "What's he gonna do?"

"You really want the answer to that question?" I raised an eyebrow at the three of them and they all shut up.

"I guess you're right." Rose sighed, seeming extremely put out. I wonder the hell why.

"Well, if you're not going to talk, then we're going shopping." Alice launched herself up without any warning, sending Rosalie flying, which caused us all to laugh. Surprisingly enough, even Rose let out a chuckle. "Sorry, Rose."

"Why are we going shopping?" I asked, afraid to know the answer.

"Because none of the shoes you have in your vast collection are going to be suitable for world travel." She said this as though it was the most obvious thing in the world. I, myself, was lost. "You need something sturdy and weatherproof." She explained and I nodded.

"So you mean, walking boots?" She nodded quickly, her golden eyes flashing slightly.

"Okay." I nodded slowly, wondering what the hell was going through her mind. "And where do you expect we go to get them. By the time we get to Port Angeles everything will be closed."

"Why go to Port Angeles when we have Newton's Outfitters here in Forks?" Rosalie huffed, standing up and resting her hands on her hips. These two just *love* to torture me, don't they? "I know it's not the best of places, but it's better than nothing."

"Hey, some of the stuff we've gotten from Newton's has been alright, thank you very much." Alice defended her choice of purchase with her nose in the air. I couldn't stop the giggle that escaped as the two of them bickered. "What are you laughing about?" *Busted!* "Come on." They each grabbed one of my hands and yanked me off of the bed.

We made our way downstairs and were greeted by the boys. Jasper and Emmett were sitting on the bottom of the stairs, arguing about something or other, as usual. Edward and Carlisle were talking

quietly about some of the things that had transpired between the two of them whilst they had been at Volterra together.

As we made our way down, all noise stopped as they turned to look at us. It wasn't as though we'd been up there for hours and had completely restyled ourselves. Though looking at the four of them in front of us, you'd think that's exactly what we'd been doing.

As the others gravitated towards their mates, I made my way over to Edward, who wrapped his arms around me instantly.

"What were the two of you talking about?" I asked, glancing at Carlisle as he embraced Esme. He shook his head, smirking at me and I knew it was useless trying to get anything out of him. Damned . . . *him* ! "Not gonna tell me?" He shook his head again as I scowled at him. "Cat got your tongue?"

"Wouldn't you like to know?" He whispered, pressing his lips to mine gently.

"Clearly, it doesn't." I whispered as we broke apart.

"Clearly not." He smirked back and I rolled my eyes, chuckling lightly. He pressed his nose deep into my hair, inhaling my scent as he stood there. Could it be that my scent had the same effect on him that his truly intoxicating scent had on me?

I doubted it.

"Come on, Bella." Alice sung, skipping past me lightly.

Edward raised an eyebrow at me and I shook my head, resting it on his shoulder. "She wants to get me some walking boots, because apparently none of the shoes I have are suitable. Lord knows, I have enough of them to last an eternity without wearing them all."

"She might be right." He shrugged and I scowled up at him. He laughed quietly, knowing that this was the wrong answer to give me.

"I guess I have to go." I sighed, pressing my lips to his jaw. "Don't kill anything."

"I'll try." He smirked down at me and I knew it was useless.

"Liar."

"I know." I rolled my eyes at his smirk before gently kissing him goodbye and being yanked out the door by my sisters.

Climbing into Alice's Porsche, I couldn't help but wonder what Edward would be doing while I was gone. The last few weeks, we had been so consumed by each other, never really being out of the others sight, unless we were hunting – and personally, I didn't like to think about that – so I couldn't help but wonder what he would fill his time with.

Maybe the others would convince him to spend some time with him or maybe he would because they were important to me. Honestly, as long as we went home to them all in one piece, it didn't really matter to me what they did.

I felt the scowl overcoming my features as we pulled into the parking lot of Newton's Outfitters. It wasn't that I didn't like the store. I just didn't like the son of the people who owned it. He was like a persistent puppy that didn't understand the meaning of the word 'no'.

It was infuriating to say the least.

I could almost feel the smugness and glee coming out of Alice and Rosalie as we got out of the car and walked towards the entrance.

"Tell me why we're here again." I grumbled as the doors closed behind us.

"Because if you're going with Edward, which I think we all know you are, right Alice?" Alice nodded in agreement, smirking at me as her

eyes flicked around the store. "Then you need some decent walking boots. Somehow I don't think he likes to drive."

"You'd be surprised." I mumbled and she turned to look at me, one of her perfect eyebrows raised, questioning.

"What's that mean?" She asked, curiosity clear in her voice.

"Well, from the car he had in Italy, it wouldn't surprise me if he had many cars all over the world." I smirked, biting my lip as she stepped towards me. If there was one thing that had Rose's attention – other than Emmett, that is – from the word 'go', it's the mention of cars. "He had a Porsche 911 Turbo, just like Alice's. Apart from his is black rather than *bright yellow* ." I aimed the last words at Alice, letting her know how ridiculous I thought the colour of her car was. But then again, she knew that and didn't care.

"Wow." Rose shook her head lightly. "Maybe he does like to drive."

The two of them separated, looking around the store. Personally, I thought they were just doing it to drive me mad. We bought so much from this store, we knew where everything was. Why not just get what we needed and go?

"Bella?" *Oh, that's why.* "Hey, Bella. I haven't seen you around school lately. Where've you been?"

I turned around to see Mike Newton standing there, grinning at me like an idiot, his blonde hair flopping all over his head. I just hoped he hadn't spent any time styling it like that because it looked like crap.

"I'm gonna kill you guys." I muttered lowly and I heard their giggles in response. They'd always found Mike's infatuation with me amusing. "Hi, Mike." Well, I'm in his store. Gotta play nice, don't I?

He seemed delighted in the fact that I was actually acknowledging him for once, which I did have to admit was a rare occurrence.

"So where've you been?" He repeated, leaning forward on the counter in front of him. The way he was looking at me made me believe he was trying to be sexy or whatever, but after having been with and seen Edward in his entirety, nothing could ever compare. Of course, his slightly sadistic mind only made things more interesting. Yes, I get it, I'm crazy. I know this. Don't judge me on it, alright!

"I went to Italy." I answered evasively and his expression became confused.

"How come?" *Do you really want to know that?* "I mean, the rest of your family was in school and my dad says your dad was at work. Who'd you go with?"

"My . . . boyfriend." I answered, unsure. Edward was so much more than my 'boyfriend' but then again, I couldn't really call him my mate to Mike, could I? He'd probably think that the whole thing was completely fucked up.

His smile dropped and his fingers curled, creating fists on the countertop as he stared at me. "You . . . you have a boyfriend?" His voice was shaky as he stood there, trying to be nonchalant. He kind of reminded me of Ross from a couple of *Friends* episodes Alice had made me watch when we were bored. That whole fidgety, twitchy thing. Amusing.

Is that all you see me as?

I stared slightly as I heard Edward's voice inside my head. The intensity of it told me that he was close. At least I knew what he was doing with his day.

What the hell are you doing here? I searched around for him with my mind, wondering where he was. *And where are you?*

Don't worry, love. This was the whole plan. Alice and I both saw what would happen between this human and yourself when you arrived, so we decided to play with him a little. He's quite jealous, you know?

You don't say. We're you going to tell me about this little plan of yours?

Nope.

Alrighty, then.

"Yeah, Mike." I gave him a smile that others usually found intimidating. "I have a boyfriend."

"Do I know him?" His gaze was turning into a glare now as he looked at something over my shoulder. I could feel the pull in my chest becoming more and more intense, so I knew that Edward was getting closer. It was most likely him behind me.

I shook my head, pretending for Mike's sake, that I was oblivious to his demeanour. "No, you don't. He's from out of town."

"You can say that again." A velvet voice murmured in my ear as two strong arms wrapped around my waist. Edward rested his chin on my shoulder and I leaned my forehead against his temple.

I glanced over at Mike and saw that he was actually changing colours. It appeared that he wasn't breathing at all and I suddenly feared for him. If he didn't take a breath soon, he was going to pass out.

"Are you okay?" I asked him quietly, while Edward chuckled into my shoulder. *Stop it.* I tried to scold him, but even in my head, it came out half hearted.

Amusing, isn't it?

I shook my head slowly, letting out a breath. I unwound Edward's arms from my waist – which was a feat in itself – and made my way over to Mike.

"Mike?" I asked softly, wondering if he could hear me. "Are you okay?"

"Yeah." He croaked out and behind me I could hear the others trying to stifle their laughter. I turned to see them all smiling smugly, biting their lips and even Edward was smirking, no doubt hearing what was going on inside Mike's head. I wasn't sure I wanted to know.

"Are you sure?" I asked, really worrying about him at the moment.

"I-I'm fine." He looked at me, his eyes flicking over Edward before he leaned over closely. "Are *you* okay?" I took a deep breath, realising that Mike most probably thought Edward was an abusive boyfriend. He probably thought that Edward was capable of some damage if he really wanted to be. You have no idea, Mike. He also thought that the others couldn't hear him.

"Why wouldn't I be?" I asked, my voice quiet, as though I had no idea what he was talking about. Edward was right, this *was* kind of amusing.

"I mean . . . he's not, um . . . he's not . . ."

"No, Mike." I giggled, shaking my head. "No."

I made my way back over to Edward, wrapping my arms around his neck and resting my head on his shoulder. I looked up to see his deep ruby eyes pouring into Mike's and I could see the fear in Mike's eyes. He might have been intimidated of the Cullen's but it was clear that he was shit scared of Edward.

As he should be .

Rose sauntered up to the counter, placing a box, that I was guessing held a pair of walking boots inside. Whether or not that had been the real plan for this outing, or whether it was to just scare the crap out of Mike, I wasn't sure. Either way, both got done.

After she paid for the boots, we made our way out of the store, Edward throwing one last smirk at Mike.

"What was that about?" I asked as we walked out of the store. "Not jealous, were you?"

"Of a human?" He looked down at me and I let the giggle that was building escape. "Are you laughing at me?"

"No." I shook my head. "Just at the fact you followed us here to scare the crap out of Mike."

"Well, the others were thinking about all the times he's been after you, so I decided to put a stop to it. And to have a little fun while I was at it." His eyes met mine and yet again I was glad he was holding me the way he was or vampire legs or not, I would have tumbled to the ground. "Not a problem, was it?"

"No, it was . . . amusing." I used his phrase from earlier and he grinned, shaking his head. I looked over to where the cars were parked and noticed that they weren't there anymore. It seems that they'd realised we wanted to be alone, therefore, had given us that space we desired.

Who cared that we'd been alone constantly for the last couple of weeks. I could never get enough of Edward.

"I think he might have pissed himself, though." I muttered lightly and he chuckled, pressing a kiss to my hair.

Neither of us were in a rush to get back to the house, so we walked slowly through the woods that surrounded most of the town. We knew where we were going and didn't really care if we got lost. Well, what vampire gets lost?

Exactly.

"Edward?"

"Hmm?" He looked down at me as I pondered the question that had been running through my mind for a while now.

"Can I ask a question?"

"You just did." He grinned down at me, as I lightly smacked his chest.
"What is it?"

"Do you have a last name?" I bit my lip, wondering what his reaction to that question would be. I remembered his reaction to my knowing his true name all too clearly and I didn't want a repeat.

"Random." I shrugged, giving him a look that suggested he should be used to this by now. "No. I don't. I only have a first name because I fashioned it for myself."

"Hmm . . ." I smiled, thinking to myself about Edward having a surname.

"What's going through that head of yours?" He asked, stopping and pulling me to him, curiosity lacing his tone. I loved that he respected my privacy now, not delving into my mind as he would with others to retrieve any piece of information he wanted.

"Edward Cullen." I mused and he laughed lightly.

"Not a chance." I scowled up at him. "No."

"Sounds good though, don't you think?" I asked and he shook his head, letting out a breath before pressing his lips into my hair.

"It's not happening." He said softly, though the message to let it go was clear.

"Just musings, that's all." I wrapped my arms around his neck, pulling him down as his arms squeezing me tightly to him.

Finding his lips with my own, I sighed into his mouth, relishing the taste of him on my tongue. I was so glad that we didn't have to be careful in that respect, because I didn't know if I could ever go a day without tasting Edward. He was like a drug to me. One I couldn't ever live without.

He was my own personal brand of heroin.

And I planned to keep him that way, no matter what happened between us.

He was mine.

Loose Ends

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

** Blows dust bunnies off of this story before coughing violently*
Hello? Hello? Is there anyone there still interested in this story?
I know it's been . . . three months? Wow, I've been such an epic failure at the updating side of things, but RL has been kicking my arse recently. I won't bore you with the details and I wouldn't be surprised if half of you had buggered off.*

Anyway, sad times. There is only one more chapter and then the Epilogue to follow after this chapter. Like I said, sad times.

There wasn't a quote in the last chapter, but there are two in here, if you can find them. If you do, you'll get a sneak peak of the next chapter.

Edward

Although we were back with the Cullens for the next few days, both Isabella and I knew that we would be leaving them again. She had known before we were on the plane back here that I could not stick around with her family for long. She knew and understood that.

She didn't contest it but she had made it perfectly clear that she was coming with me wherever I went.

Who was I to argue?

It was clear her family was thrilled to have her back, even for a short time. They were upset that she wasn't staying longer and although I had hinted that she could stay with them as long as she wanted to; she wasn't budging on her plan of sticking with me.

No matter what I suggested, it went in one ear and out the other with her.

She said she didn't want to be parted from me.

I knew how she was feeling.

Upon returning in Forks, Alice, Rosalie and Esme had decided that because Isabella wasn't staying with them for a prolonged period of time, they were going to take her shopping. Something the three of them enjoyed. Carlisle stated that with the wages he made at the hospital and Alice's eye for stocks, they could afford to maintain the girls' obsession with clothes. Although it did become a problem when it came to space.

Normally, it seemed, they went to Seattle, though this time they were sticking in Forks. Alice, it seemed, had a sneaky streak to her. She was planning on taking Isabella to some little store called 'Newton's Outfitters'. In her mind, she showed me images of a teenage human boy that had had his eye on Isabella ever since they arrived in Forks. According to Alice's memories, he had latched onto Isabella and had followed her around like some miserable puppy ever since.

He was clearly 'getting it on' – Alice's words, not mine – with Jessica Stanley at the same time, but he still lusted after Isabella.

It seems that the old adage about always wanting what you can't have is still true, even in modern times.

Playing with the human had been amusing, although hearing his thoughts upon seeing Isabella . . . was not.

Alice and Rosalie had not filled her in on their little plan, knowing that she would be completely adverse to the idea of playing with him. Who knew she would actually play along?

Well, Alice and I, but let's not be picky.

After we had sufficiently 'wound up' the Newton boy and Rosalie had purchased some sturdy walking boots for Isabella, we left the store. The others disappeared in their cars, leaving the two of us alone. Not something I was opposed to and from the way she was smiling slightly as we walked.

"Edward?" Her voice was quiet and unsure. When did that happen? Where had the confident Isabella that had no problem opposing me go?

"Hmm?" She was biting her lip gently, her eyes filled with wondering.

"Can I ask you a question?"

"You just did." I know it was a silly human response, but it made her smile as she smacked my chest lightly with the back of her hand.

"What is it?"

"Do you have a last name?" And we were back to biting our bottom lip, weren't we? She was clearly remembering my reaction to her discovery of my human name.

I hated that she was still so unsure around me.

"Random." She shrugged and I knew I should have expected the look she gave me. She was random at times. I would have to get used to the incessant questions that seemed to pop out of nowhere.

"No. I don't. I only have a first name because I fashioned it for myself."

Other than my human name, I had created my own names through the millennia. Each of the changes were made by me for various different reasons.

"Hmm . . ." I knew the smile that was playing on her lips. It was one I had come to be wary of, purely because it meant she was planning something.

"What's going through that head of yours?" I stopped, taking her by surprise. She smiled up at me, clearly happy that I wasn't invading her mind. I had done that a couple of times, without even realising it and she had given me a look that even I was slightly wary of. She had learned it from me so I only had myself to blame.

"Edward Cullen." Of course that's what she'd be thinking about.

"Not a chance." I shook my head, receiving a scowl. She obviously liked our two names combined. "No."

"Sounds good though, don't you think?" I shook my head, refusing to answer her. It didn't matter what I thought about it, because it wasn't going to happen. I pressed my lips into her hair, inhaling her intoxicating aroma of strawberries and freesia. She still smelled absolutely incredible and edible to me. I hoped that never changed.

"It's not happening." I reiterated softly and she nodded.

"Just musings, that's all." Like I believe that. She wrapped her arms around my neck, pulling me to her as my arms wound their way around her waist.

As soon as our lips met, her tongue was in my mouth and she sighed gently upon the contact. I loved that we didn't have to adhere to any boundaries. She was able to withstand my venom and she took advantage of that knowledge whenever she deemed possible. Which was absolutely fine by me.

Needing to know what was fuelling this little possession thing she had going, I pushed at the barrier surrounding her mind minutely.

- *mine* .

Clearly, this was a possession thing for her. Not that I could really say anything against that, because I think everyone knew I was the most possessive creature out there. It didn't mean I couldn't tease her about it though.

"Feeling a bit possessive, are we, love?" I asked her, pulling away. She gave me a sheepish smile and were she human, I knew that ridiculous blush would have made an appearance.

"Well, it's true, right?" She shrugged, her small smile turning into more of a smirk, resembling mine greatly. "You are mine."

"Absolutely." I whispered, my lips finding hers again.

We stayed where we were the entire night, only moving away from each other when Alice called stating that Isabella had to go into the school to 'officially withdraw'. She took one glance at my raised eyebrow before shrugging and stating that because in the eyes of the educational system she was eighteen, she had to do it. She couldn't rely on Carlisle and Esme to do that for her anymore.

"If it was closer to the end of the year, then I might have considered staying and finishing out high school for the millionth time." She rolled her eyes and I couldn't even begin to wonder why they would go through high school more than once if they didn't have to. It still bewildered me, the way they wanted to fit in with human life.

Humans were nothing more than a food source. Nothing more than sustenance for our kind. We viewed them in the same way they viewed their food. To the majority of the vampire species, they were cattle, plain and simple. It seemed to be only the Cullens and the coven from Denali that viewed things in a different way.

"Want to come with me?" She asked, biting her lip whilst trying to suppress a smile. "Please."

"That sounds like a great idea." I replied, sarcasm clear in my tone. "Me in a building with hundreds of irritating school children."

"I just think it'd be interesting to see." She shrugged and I rolled my eyes at her, letting out a sigh. She knew this was my reaction when I'd resigned myself to something she'd thought up, so in Isabella fashion, she grinned and wrapped her arms around my neck.

Instinct told me to go with it.

We walked towards the main town and I was under the strict instruction not to eat anyone. Of course, she would be the only one that would ever get away with telling me to do something. I'd get her back for it later.

When we approached the school, there were several students sitting on the walls outside, talking and watching what was going on with the other students around them.

All eyes turned to Isabella and I as we turned the corner.

Did I forget to mention, it's like being in a zoo? And you're the exhibit.

I chuckled at her remark and she grinned at me. She led me past all those sitting outside, gaping at the two of us. Their minds were all running rampant with questions. Where had Isabella been? What was she doing back now? How long was she here for? Who the hell was I? Was I joining the school? Was I Isabella's boyfriend?

"Bella?" She turned as a middle-aged looking man walked out of a classroom and grinned at her. His thoughts told me that she had been his favourite student in all his years of teaching and he had missed her input in his classes. Apparently, she was the only student who showed any enthusiasm in his class.

"Hi, Mr. Berty." *He was my favourite teacher here. Be nice* . I resisted the urge to roll my eyes at her remark as she approached him.

"Bella, where on Earth have you been?" He sounded genuinely pleased to have her back before he looked at me, his thoughts stalling and his smile faltering for a moment before he plastered it back onto his face. "And who is this?"

"Mr. Berty this is Edward . . . Masen. My boyfriend." I raised an eyebrow at her and she shrugged. *I panicked. I don't know. You didn't give me any warning, did you?*

You never asked.

Wise-ass.

Always. But . . . Masen? Really?

What? It fits. And it's not like I gave you a weird last name, is it? Stop complaining.

"Hello." I nodded in response, not really wanting to get caught up in conversation with the human any time soon. "So where have you been?"

"Actually, I've been in Italy." She replied honestly. "I got the chance to go and considering college next year, I didn't see any other opportunity, so I thought 'carpe diem' and went."

"Alone?" He sounded shocked that she would consider travelling half way across the world on her own.

"No." She wrapped her arm around my waist, leaning into me. "Edward came with me. He has family and friends out there, so we were with them most of the time."

"And where are you from, Edward?" His eyed me warily, probably thinking that I was going to pounce on him or Isabella. The thought of pouncing on Isabella was tempting.

"I'm from all over." I replied, keeping a close eye on his thoughts, ready to dispel them should they become too inquisitive. He seemed confused. "I have friends and acquaintances all over the world, so I travel as much as I want." The part about 'friends' might not have been accurate. The general population of the world feared me too much to befriend me in any way.

"How old are you?" He looked me up and down, as if evaluating where I should stand in the grand scheme of things. In actual fact, that is what he was doing. He was estimating that I couldn't have a

job if I travelled so much and that I couldn't really have been to too many places, considering how young I was – in his mind – and he was weighing up in his mind that Isabella could probably do better than me. I had a hard time suppressing a growl at that moment in time. This human was trying my patience.

If only he knew that it was I that had shaped the world as he knew it. Without my influence, there wouldn't be a lot of the luxuries he was accustomed to.

Calm down .

Isabella could sense my anger rising and somehow managed to slip her hand underneath my shirt, her fingers, running up and down my waist gently, slowly.

Flicking into the immediate future, I saw that if I answered with anything lower than the age of nineteen it would cause an endless amount of questions. Something I couldn't be bothered with right now. But then again, he was human and didn't like things he didn't understand. I often wondered what would happen if the idiotic and naïve humans the Cullen's went to school and work with realised that they were actually interacting with vampires.

Now *that* could be interesting.

Only problem was, I was limited in my own rule meaning I couldn't test it out.

"I'm nineteen." I answered, feeling the calming effect that Isabella always managed to bring. Whenever she was with me, I got agitated and aggravated a lot less and when she was touching me, I was almost always eerily calm. I had put it down to feeding off of Jasper, but dismissed that notion when it happened in Europe.

Nineteen?

It raises less suspicion. If I'd said seventeen or eighteen, he would have questioned why I wasn't in school like yourself. Not something I want to go through with this man.

I see your point.

Humans had always been perpetually annoying in their curiousness for the unknown and confusing. If they didn't understand something, then they'd always ask the question dreaded by parents of toddlers:

'Why'?

And I hated it.

He studied me for a moment, glancing once at my eyes, his own widening for a split second before he looked at the rest of my face. He had seen the colour of my eyes – which were now a deep dark red rather than the usual bright ruby – and it had made him nervous. Getting straight to the point, it had scared him.

"I have to get to the office, Mr. Berty." Isabella smiled at him and he tore his eyes away from me, nodding once before scuttling back into his classroom. "Do you have to scare the shit out of *everyone* ?"

"It's what I do." I shrugged and she shook her head as we walked down the corridor.

"I've noticed." I could tell she was trying to sound put out in her sigh, but it had a trace of a giggle in there, causing it to lose its effect. "I will warn you that there will be several girls hanging around the office. A guy taking a gap year from college now works in the office and they seem to think he's hot."

"Do you?" I raised an eyebrow.

"Please." She rolled her eyes at me, smirking slightly. "Who needs Pinocchio when I have Adonis?" She stopped walking, one of her hands still on my waist, the other curling around the back of my

neck, pulling me down to her level. Knowing what was coming, I allowed her to manoeuvre my body as she saw fit.

My lips crashed to hers and she let out a sigh, her fingers twining in my hair. She gripped onto my waist harder, pressing herself into me. I pulled away slowly and she pouted at me, clearly wanting to carry on as I raised an eyebrow at her.

"As adverse as I am to putting a halt to whatever that was, but I don't think you want the group of students about to walk around the corner to see what it is I have planned for you, hmm?" I smirked at her and she bit her lip as she shook her head. Her eyes flicked to the students that walked around the corner, just as I said they would, pausing slightly when they saw the two of us. "Come on. Let's go see Pinocchio."

She giggled softly as we continued our walk towards the office. She rested her head on my shoulder as we walked, sighing softly to herself.

Everything okay? She looked up at me, a smile on her face.

Everything's perfect.

Okay, then.

"Why don't you wait out here for me?" She suggested as she stopped outside the office door. "I don't want anyone to die for looking at me the wrong way. Stop it." She smacked my chest lightly, knowing what was going through my head. I didn't want *anyone* looking at her in the wrong way whatsoever. Human males were incredible crude in their comments, even in their minds. They believed that the ruder you were to a woman, the more 'into you' she'd be. Where they got that idea from, I have no idea. Certainly wasn't from when I was human, that's for sure.

When I was human, you gave a girl a carcass and she knew you liked her.

Simple.

I nodded towards the office, indicating that Isabella should head inside to do whatever it was she needed to.

I tuned out what was happening in the office. I didn't need to hear yet another human male mind running over my Isabella's attributes. I was pretty well versed with them if I do say so myself. But that didn't mean I wanted all males looking at her like she was a piece of meat. But then again, that's all they were to each other in this day and age. All that mattered was who was having sex and who wasn't. If you were, you were called a 'slut' or a 'whore' and if you weren't you were a 'prude' or 'frigid'. You couldn't win in this world.

"Hi, there." I looked up to see a small blonde girl standing in front of me. She was wearing attire that was incredibly ill fitting for Washington in the middle of February. A thin cashmere sweater over the smallest skirt known to man. I think the only thing that might have been suitable for the weather were the boots she was wearing. She was standing there, her arm sticking out as a tiny bag hung from her elbow. I was half expecting a tiny dog to appear out of it, you like that girl everyone talks about . . . Paris someone. Who cares, really? "And who are you?"

I didn't answer her but bit back a growl as she ran a finger down my arm. Her voice was high and sugary and it did not agree with my ears. It was nothing like the low, sultry tones that came out of Isabella's mouth. I could listen to her all day. Whereas this blonde – which completely stank of ammonia, peroxide and bleach – was annoying the hell out of me and she'd only been standing there thirty seconds and said a total of six words. Well, out loud anyway.

O.M.G ! Yes, I believe she just abbreviated the words 'oh my god'. Sad but true. Who gives a fuck about Ralf in the office? Who is this fuckawesome hottie out here? I hope he's a senior. God knows I can't be seen dating anyone in a lower class than me. No matter how hot he is. Well . . . maybe I can make an exception.

On the other hand, why not have some fun.

I pushed myself off the wall I had been leaning on and stepped towards her. She smirked, thinking that her 'techniques' had improved since the last time she'd had to rely on them. What the hell was this girl on? Stepping up close to her, I flicked a lock of her drained and dry hair over her shoulder and leaned down. She even smelled artificial, whatever scent she was using burning my nose slightly.

"And why do you want to know, little girl?" I pulled away from her, looking down at her bewildered face.

"Not so little." She replied, trying to sound as though she knew what she was doing. Her thumping heartbeat and raised adrenaline levels were giving her away. Her 'experience' hadn't prepared her for someone like me. Not at all. "So . . . you new here? Maybe we could . . . get to know each other a little better."

I tilted my head to the side, watching the pulse point in her throat. "And what makes you think you can handle me? I'm not like your little high school brats."

"Believe me, he's not." I smirked, hearing Isabella's voice behind me. The girls' eyes widened as she took in Isabella's arm that was now wrapped around my waist, or her lips that were making their way along my jaw. "Beat it, Lauren. Go find Tyler or one of your other little boys to go and play with. Leave my *man* alone."

She girl shook her head briefly before scampering away as though Isabella had bared her teeth and chased after her.

"Feeling possessive, are we, love?" I chuckled and she scowled up at me.

"I can't stand that girl." She sighed and I laughed again. "She's such a whore." I rolled my eyes and she whacked my chest. She was really going to have to stop doing that. She opened up her mind to

me and a stream of faces flicked through her mind, all males that went to this school. "All people she's slept with."

"And you thought we were promiscuous in *my* day." I laughed, wrapping an arm around her shoulders. She grinned up at me as we made our way out of the school. "Get everything squared away?"

"Yup," she nodded, sounding incredibly pleased with herself. "But there's just one more thing on the agenda for today. Fortunately, it's something we have to go back to the house for."

"And what's that?"

"You'll have to find out, won't you?" She grinned before crashing her lips to mine. "No checking the future either. You'll ruin it if you do."

"Alright." I conceded, letting her have her fun. After all, I had to spend an eternity with the little imp of a vampire.

And plus, I was kind of curious as to what she had to do.

Bella

Could I really do this?

I ran back to the house, Edward at my side, second guessing myself. He was always the leader, in no matter what it was we were doing. Could I really get him to relinquish the reins a little? I hoped I could.

I had been thinking about it all day, yet not really knowing what to do about it. Was this something I could actually do? Thankfully, I could concentrate on more than one thing at a time, otherwise I would have seriously screwed up in the office a few minutes ago.

Actually, I think I would have stormed out into the corridor and decapitated Lauren, but whatever.

The way she had flaunted herself at Edward made me want to laugh out loud. But that would have made me look insane in front of Ms.

Cope and Ralf. Not something I wanted. The way he was looking at me reminded me way too much of the creep James that Edward had destroyed on our way to Italy. It was kind of leery and I was glad I had told Edward to stay outside. Who knew what he was thinking – because I sure as hell wasn't going in there – and if Edward could see the looks he was giving me . . . let's just say, there'd be no Ralf left.

All the girls here thought he was amazingly cute and because he was taking a year out from college, he must be that much cooler than everyone else in the building. Just because he was a year or so older than the students here. So what? I was a century older and you don't see me kicking up a fuss, do you?

I guess he was attractive, for a human.

But after having seen and been with Edward in the ways that I had, he was nothing more than a blip. Like I had said to Edward, when I have Adonis, who needs Pinocchio? Not me, that's for sure.

Laurens' face when I had appeared in the hall behind Edward had been comical to say the least and she had scampered off like a wounded puppy. No doubt she would go and find Tyler or Eric. Someone to fuck or blow. As long as she stayed away from Edward, I was happy. I didn't want him to end up attracting her scent or something like that. Lord knows, I didn't want to be smelling Lauren on him as I had my way with him later.

I walked through the front door to the house, Edward following closely behind me.

I knew that we were alone, considering the others were at school, Carlisle was at work and Esme was out doing whatever it was she did during the hours she wasn't at the house. Probably out doing the groceries that she would then drop off wherever she took them in Port Angeles. We had to keep up the appearances of being human now, didn't we? We had all offered at one point or another to go with her, but she always brushed us off, stating that she liked doing it on

her own. It gave her some time to herself and let her run through things in her mind.

Oh well, what did I care?

She was out of the house now and that was the most important thing.

Edward and I were alone.

I looked over my shoulder, finding him watching me as I made my way towards the stairs. I winked at him, indicating for him to follow me with a finger as I started climbing the stairs, feeling his eyes on me. Or should I say, feeling his eyes on my ass.

Not that I was complaining, mind you.

He followed me upstairs and I turned around as he entered my room, a small smirk on his face. If he had seen my plan and wasn't happy with it, then he gave no indication. But then again, what male would turn what I had planned down.

I closed the door behind him, wrapping my arms around him from behind and removing his jacket. He turned around, his lips coming into contact with mine and I applied a little pressure to my hands which were now on his chest, silently letting him know I wanted him to move backwards. He walked backwards until the backs of his legs hit the bed and I had to push him down so he was sitting on it.

Placing my legs either side of him, I straddled his lap, running my lips up and down his jaw. "This time," I whispered, gently nipping at his skin. "I'm taking control." His eyes opened, black with lust, matching my own pitch black eyes. He watched me as I reached up and ran my hands through his hair. "You've always been in control, always ruled, always been under pressure. Now . . . I want you to relax and just . . . let me rule you."

A small rumble floated out from his chest and I felt it through my hands, reverberating through my entire body.

"Just let me love you." I whispered in his ear, gently running my tongue around the shell, relishing the taste of him on my tongue. "Let me love you like you deserve to be loved."

I captured his lips with mine again and I gently pushed him back into the mattress. I took this as the all clear to carry on as I urged him to move up the bed. Surprisingly, he did with no complaints. Who knew it would be this easy to get Edward to surrender his control?

Probably because he knows he's going to get sex from it.

True.

I was getting sex from it as well, so what did I care?

I pressed a soft kiss to his lips, as my hands ran up his waist, across his chest to come around the back of his neck. I ran my thumbs over his jaw line, marvelling at the bone structure.

"Just relax and stay still." I whispered softly and he chuckled lightly.

"That sounds kind of ominous."

"Trust me . . ." I smirked down at him, kind of liking this position of power. "There's nothing but good to feel from this, my love."

Moving my hands down his neck to his shirt, I started slowly opening the buttons on his button down, gently easing each one through the hole as I nipped, kissed, licked and sucked my way down his throat. I moved it away from his right shoulder, running my lips over the crescent scar I had left. An eternal reminder of the first time we made love in Italy. Well, you couldn't really call it making love. More like a frenzied fuck. But I wouldn't change it for the world.

I placed a soft kiss to the one and only mark on Edward's body. He had been impressed that I had been able to break the skin and as a

matter of fact, so had I. I didn't think he'd appreciate it again, though.

I didn't want this to be brutal in any way, so I pushed his shirt off of his shoulders and down his arms. He gave me an amused smirk as I pulled it off his hands before I ran my fingers up his arms, focusing on the small spot on the inside of his elbow that drove him crazy.

I slowly ran my lips across his chest, applying a little pressure here and there, but mostly just slowly moving them backwards and forwards. I didn't know how I got so lucky as to have this magnificent creature below me, but it was real and he was here. If I could sleep, I would want someone to pinch me, just to prove to me I wasn't dreaming.

He sucked in a breath through his teeth as I took one of his nipples into my mouth. I gently rolled it in between my teeth, swirling my tongue around it before biting down gently. I smirked at the low moan that came from above me. I repeated the action with the other one, showing it the same attention as the first, mildly smug as his breathing started to pick up underneath me.

I kissed my way down his stomach, following the line that led down to his belly button. I dipped my tongue into his belly button a couple of times, relishing the taste of his skin on my tongue. He was pure heaven in my book as he hissed again, his body starting to tremble ever so slightly under my fingers. I rested my hands on his hips, indicating that I wanted him to stay where he was. Hopefully he would pay attention.

I ran my nose down the perfect 'v' muscles that disappeared under the waistband of the dark jeans he was wearing. I ran my nose along the waistband before trailing my tongue up the other side, biting down on his hip bone gently.

"Fuck, Bella." I smiled to myself as I made my way back up his body hovering over him as I pressed my cheek to his, my lips by his ear.

"Turn over." I whispered and he opened his eyes, giving me a confused look. "I want to inspect every . . . single . . . inch of this glorious body and I can't do that if I can't *get* to every single inch of it, can I? So go on. Turn over."

I lifted up off of him and he rolled over, allowing me to have my fun. I was sure he was enjoying this as much as I was, considering the noises that were coming from him and the fact that he hadn't taken the control back. He was leaving it in my hands. I knew how hard that must be for him, to relinquish that power, even if it was over our bedroom escapades. To him, power was power and he had to maintain it at all times.

Maybe he would see now that handing over a little power wasn't so bad.

Especially if it ended in a good fuck.

I pulled my shirt over my head, discarding it and my bra somewhere in the room before I leaned down and pressed my lips to the back of his neck. I laid my upper body against his and he moaned at the contact my chest made with his back. I gently nipped at his neck, my fingers running over his broad shoulders and sides as I placed an open mouthed kiss on each of his vertebrae. I thought they each needed a little bit of love.

Running my fingers down his back, I let my thumbs rest in the little dimples at the base of his spine, right above his ass. They were so cute so I ran my nose over each one, pressing a light kiss to them both. I worked my hands around his waist, finding the button on his jeans and popping it open. I tucked my fingers into the sides of his jeans, pulling them down ever so slowly, admiring the beautiful ass that came into view.

What did you expect?

Really?

Did you think I was going to ignore it?

I pulled his jeans down to his knees before pushing them off with my feet and straddling him again, running my palms over his ass as I did so. I silently urged him to roll over onto his back and he did so, his black eyes watching me carefully.

I slid down against him again, smirking up at him as he watched me, his eyes as black as the deepest pits and caves. I pressed a light kiss to his pubic bone, my eyes not leaving his as I ran my nose up his long shaft. This was something I'd never done before, so I wasn't sure if I was doing it right. Though, the look on his face and the hisses and moans escaping him helped to prompt me in the right direction.

I flicked out my tongue, allowing it to follow the same path as my nose and the moan I was rewarded with sounded glorious to my ears.

Wrapping my lips around the head, I slowly took him into my mouth, the skin the shaft seeming a lot softer than that of the rest of his body. Like steel wrapped in satin. Who knew, huh?

Looking up at Edward through my lashes, I saw that he was no longer looking at me as I sucked and gently scraped the sensitive skin with my teeth. His eyes were closed and his head was resting back on the pillows behind him. He had his fists clenched in the sheets on the bed around him and his entire body was tensing up. He was getting closer by the second and there was only one thing that was going through my mind.

He was *mine* .

This glorious creature, who took pride in having an entire species fearful of him, was mine. He was at my mercy at this point in time and there was no other way I'd have him.

Sensing how close he was, I pulled away from him, releasing him with a pop. He opened his eyes slowly, watching me as I moved back up his body, my lips never leaving his skin.

"How does it feel?" I whispered, my lips millimetres away from his as I held myself suspended above him. "To be completely at *my* mercy."

"Fan-fucking-tastic." He whispered back, closing the distance between us, his tongue sliding between my lips.

Apparently, a horny Edward also creates a foul mouthed Edward.

Interesting.

"You want to come, don't you?" I reached between us, grasping his length in my hand and giving it a squeeze. He let out a moan, his eyes drifting closed as I applied a little more pressure. "Well, you're not going to." His eyes opened again, watching me in a disbelieving fashion. "Not until I say, anyway. I'm in control here for once, not you. So you're going to sit back, and enjoy."

I could see it was becoming harder and harder for him to stay in control – pun most definitely intended – as I slid off him, making sure to run my denim covered leg down his length. He stiffened, his eyes closing again before opening and focusing on me as I slowly removed my boots. I stood up, pushing the button of my jeans through the hole and pulling the zipper down at an excruciating speed.

Once they were off, I hooked my thumbs into the sides of my panties, pulling them down, keeping my eyes locked on Edward's. I swear I saw him twitch as he watched me. Hmmm . . . that was new.

I straddled him again, his hard length pressed into the apex of my thigh and he moaned at the contact. I grabbed his hair with one hand, crashing my lips to his as I positioned him at my entrance before slowly sliding down onto him.

The moan that escaped him sounded like music to my ears. He was perfect as he lay there, his hands on my thighs, not controlling or manipulating but as though he was trying to ensure I was really there.

My body was still pressed to his as I started moving on top of him, feeling incredibly proud as he started to tremble at the slow speed and intensity of the moment.

"What is it that you want?" I asked innocently, brushing a lock of hair away from his forehead. "What do you want? Because whatever it is, you'll have to ask for it nicely." I clenched my muscles around him and his grip on my thighs increased at the action. "What do you want?"

The answer came out as a moan, but it was an unmistakeable 'please' that escaped his lips. I pressed my lips to his and his hands ran up my sides, pulling me closer to him as he met my thrusts perfectly.

Within moments, we were both teetering on the edge, eyes locked as his fingers scraped along my back, his nails biting into my skin as we lay there.

"Come for me, Edward." I whispered as I pressed my lips to his throat. "Come for me." I bit down into his throat and he moaned again and I could feel him twitching and pulsing inside me, taking me to my own release. He held me to him as he rode out his high as though he never wanted to let me go. I pressed small kisses to his jaw before resting my arms either side of his head, watching him closely. "How did it feel, not being in control?"

"If it ends like that every time, you can have the control, love." He whispered and I giggled, shaking my head. I pressed my lips to his and he rolled on his side, pulling me with him. I rested my head on his chest, glad that there was no one else to interrupt us.

"I love you, Edward." I whispered, my fingers running gentle patterns over his ribcage.

"As I love you, my Isabella." His words were so soft and tender that at that moment in time, it didn't matter that he was the most powerful creature in the world. Because he wasn't.

He was just Edward.

He was a vampire that had been alone for so many years and was now finding some love. Well, he wouldn't be alone ever again. I would see to that.

We had to leave in a few days, but it was enough time for me to see my family. They wouldn't be staying in Forks for much longer anyway. It had been too long since we'd settled here and people were going to start noticing Carlisle's lack of aging at the hospital soon.

Technology these days also meant that we were able to stay in contact no matter where in the world we were, because I knew Edward and I were going to be doing a fair amount of travelling, that's for sure.

I'd see them again, there was no doubt in my mind about that. I could leave them and still be alright. I'd miss them, of course, but I could be without them, whereas I couldn't be without Edward.

He was my world now. Everything he was created everything that I am.

I couldn't let him leave.

Not without me.

Wherever he went, I went. That was the simple fact.

And if he didn't like it . . . well tough.

He was mine.

And I wasn't letting him go.

Old Habits Die Hard

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Nobody got the quotes from last chapter. I wasn't really surprised because I was sneaky and hid them really well. Also, they weren't really ones that jump out at you like the others have been.

*Quote 1: 'When I have Adonis, who needs Pinocchio?' Spoken by Margaret Houlihan in M*A*S*H.*

Quote 2: 'He's attractive, for a human' Spoken by Erika in Underworld.

There's only one quote in this chapter. Again it's well hidden. It's from a song this time. Those who get it get a preview of the Epilogue.

Sniff sniff, only the epilogue left now guys.

Edward

"So when are we leaving?" Isabella looked at me from where she was walking towards me, having just finished her hunt. "Just so I know I'm going to be able to say goodbye, that's all."

"Do you really think that your family would allow you to leave without a goodbye?" She shook her head, giggling as she wrapped her arms around my neck. "We leave in two days."

"Okay," She nodded, pressing her lips to mine.

As we sat there, getting lost in each other, I could help my mind wandering back to her little dominant display in the bedroom. Clearly

she had wanted to be in control for that one and when it was going to have results like that, I sure as hell wasn't going to say no.

Isabella's phone began to vibrate in her pocket and seeing the various images skittering in front of my eyes I knew what it was pertaining to. She raised an eyebrow, knowing that I knew as she opened the phone. "Alice?"

"I'm guessing Edward already knows this, but the two of you need to come back to the house." Her voice seemed tired and drained. If she was physically capable of it, the best thing for her would be sleep. Unfortunately, she, like the rest of us didn't suffer from physical exhaustion so there was no way for her to expel her tired feelings.

"Why?" I shook my head, standing up, taking her with me. "Okay, never mind. We'll be back soon." She hung up and looked at me, her eyebrow inching up ever so slightly. "Care to explain?"

"Visitors." I mumble and she rolled her eyes, muttering something that wasn't entirely wrong. She knew that it was the Denali coven back again, but she wasn't one hundred per cent sure why.

I hated to say that I hadn't been one hundred per cent honest with Isabella. She knew that I had gone into Seattle when we first arrived back in the States, but she didn't know the reason behind it. Not that she hadn't tried to weasel it out of me or try to convince me to let her stay and then run back to Forks with her.

She had known it wouldn't work but had given it a shot anyway.

Now it seemed that it was coming out in the open anyway.

I knew exactly why the Denali coven was here. They had come here because they knew it would be a good starting point for their search for me. Having Bella as my mate gave the both of us a kind of 'home base' as they call it. I'd never had one of those before and I wasn't so sure I wanted one now. It tied me down in a way I wasn't too happy with.

As I had known would happen, word of the Volturi's demise had spread and those with ambition bigger than they could comprehend had seized the opportunity to try and make the world theirs.

Not on my watch.

There had been trouble starting in the southern states, Texas being the main focus. An annoying little gnat in my side by the name of Maria had decided she was going to make another attempt at building an army of newborns. The Denali's had caught wind and wanted to find out what I was planning on doing about it. I had already made up my mind a long time ago to destroy Maria.

Or maybe I should let Jasper do that, considering the shit she put him through.

Nah, that was too much fun to pass up.

We made it back to the house in approximately a minute, Isabella feeding off my increased speed, matching my own step for step. In the short time she had been aware of her power, she had learned to harness it incredibly. To say I was impressed was an understatement.

"Alright, what's going on?" Isabella clearly wasn't happy about our time alone being cut short as she stared at Alice who was waiting for us on the front porch.

We have eternity, love.

I know. But that doesn't mean I don't want to spend every moment possible with you.

Can't argue with that one, can I?

"The Denali's are here." She sighed, running her hands through her hair, messing up the perfect spikes. The visiting coven had already divulged why they were here and Alice was beginning to stress about

what that could mean for her relationship with Jasper. She wasn't entirely sure about what would happen now that he knew the one who had made him was resurfacing.

"Why don't you go inside, love?" I whispered so softly in her ear, Alice wouldn't be able to pick it up. "Let me have a word with Alice." She raised an eyebrow, confusion visible in her bright golden eyes. I nodded in the direction of the house and she knew not to argue with me.

I walked up to where Alice was sitting on the steps as the door closed behind Isabella and held out my hand for her to take. She looked at it, her eyes flicking up to my face, unsure of what was going on. She couldn't see my future as I was an expert at hiding it and it was making her nervous.

After a moment's hesitation, she slipped her hand into mine, starting slightly at the temperature as I pulled her up and away from the house. It was clear she didn't want Jasper to know about her insecurities, although he could most likely feel what she was going through. Empaths were as bad as telepaths when it came to that. It was hard to hide anything from them.

"I guess this is what it's like for a human to come in contact with vampire skin." She mumbled and I nodded, leading her into the woods until I knew we were far enough away from prying vampiric ears. "What's going on, Edward?" She asked, her eyes wide and imploring, wondering why I had led her out here.

"I could ask you the same thing." I shot back and she knew that there was no getting out of it. "Yes, Maria is back. Yes, she wants to try her hand at domination again and yes, I am going to rip her to shreds this time. But I can tell you that you have nothing to worry about when it comes to Jasper." She looked up at me, her eyes shining with venom and I nodded. "You have nothing to worry about. She might have made him but he, his heart and his entire being, belong to *you*."

"I just can't help but think 'what if he misses how he used to live?' I mean, he's so much older than me. I mean, he's got around a century on me-"

"I've got fifteen *millennia* on Bella, what's your point?" I shot her a look and she smiled sheepishly. I knew that she would be blushing now, had she the ability.

"I guess I just . . . I don't know." She sighed, her shoulders moving with the action. "I guess I'm just feeling insecure about what's going to happen now that she's back in the picture. I guess, ever since I heard about how he came to be a vampire, I've known that she was out there, but considering she was hidden away – from you, I'm guessing?" I shook my head and she looked confused.

"The Volturi." Did nothing to aid the confusion. "The Volturi actually managed to use their brains for once and put a stop to the wars in the south before I needed to get involved. It seemed that they'd learned from the incident with the Immortal Children." She nodded, taking that in. "Maria has always been one of those little gnats I've kept my eye on, but until now she's not done anything worthy of my hand. Now, on the other hand I will be more than happy to take her out of the picture."

"That's what's making me nervous, though." She sighed, looking around at the dense trees surrounding us. "I mean, Jasper knows that she's surfaced and I can't even see what's going to happen because he hasn't made up his mind about whether he wants to face her again. What if he does and he realises that he wants that life back. What if he realises that he wants . . . her?" She whispered the last part, her voice a mere trembling whisper.

"He won't." She looked up, confused by the conviction in my voice.

"How do you know?" The tiny creature in front of me did not resemble a vampire. She was nothing more than a girl in love, worried that her husband was going to realise what he used to have

was better than she was. She didn't see how far of the mark she was.

"Because like Jasper I have the power to know what people are feeling." She nodded, understanding that. "I'm sure Jasper's had times where he's had an emotional overload, right?"

"It normally focuses around Rose and Emmett, but . . . recently he's been overwhelmed by the feelings coming from . . ." She stopped, looking up at me, searching my face for something. *You* .

"Do you want to know what I feel whenever Jasper is with you?" She sniffed gently, thinking it over before nodding slightly. "Love. Devotion. Adoration. Awe. Though sometimes he is a little afraid of you." I held up a hand as she opened her mouth to speak. "I don't *want* to know. There are some things that stay between mates." I pushed myself off the tree I had been leaning against and walked over to where she was sitting on a small rock. I knelt down in front of her, putting a finger under her chin, making her look at me. "He worships the ground you walk on, Alice. Maria might have been the one to find and turn him, but all he feels for her is resentment and pain. She caused him pain and you took it all away. You complete him, Alice. You're his other half. Now stop worrying and get your ass back to that house. There are some newborns to get rid of and I think you need to blow off some steam."

She smiled brightly at me before wrapping her arms around me. "Who knew you could be so thoughtful and good at giving advice?"

"I blame Bella." I mumbled returning her hug and she giggled, pulling away from me.

"Thank you, Edward." I stood up, pulling her up after me. "I needed that."

"I thought so." I looked back in the direction of the house, before nodding towards it once. "Come on."

We made it back to the house a couple of minutes later, finding everyone gathered in the main living room. It was the only place in the house that everyone would fit, even then, it was a tight squeeze.

"Everything alright? Isabella asked, wrapping her arms around my waist. I nodded, glancing at Alice as she sat down on Jasper's knee, looking a lot more relaxed. He looked between the two of us, surprised before focusing back on her.

"Everything's fine." I whispered, running my nose up and down her jaw. She giggled gently, her hand coming to tangle in my hair.

We have to pay attention. She tried to scold me silently, it coming out half-heartedly, even in her mind. *Everyone is in front of us, no doubt watching or at least aware. We can't do this now .*

Even though I might not be adverse to a little exhibitionism, I didn't think Isabella would be too fond of it, especially since it was her family in the room.

Pulling my nose away from her skin, I looked around to find that the only one actually paying attention to what we were doing was the irritating blonde from the last time I was here. Tanya. She was glaring at Isabella in a way I had never seen before.

Tanya had never been denied anything she wanted before, especially when it came to men. She got what and who she wanted and no one could tell her otherwise. Being denied access to me – even though without Isabella there, I would have destroyed her for being a pain in my ass for so long – she felt put out and blamed Isabella solely for the denial. At least she wasn't trying to imagine ways of taking Isabella out of the picture as so many human girls had tried doing as we travelled around Europe.

For some reasons, to modern humans, even if the one they're lusting after is taken by someone else, they always try to divert their attention. In the vampiric world, once you found your mate that was it. You were set for eternity. There was no other way around it. There

was no denial of the bond; others knew not to even attempt to come between a mated pair.

Humans were so ridiculous.

No wonder so many of them ended up committing suicide or developing addictions. If that was how they viewed their partners, what more could they expect.

It didn't stop Tanya from hating Isabella, though.

She really doesn't like you, does she? Isabella smirked at me, shaking her head.

She fucking hates me. And I love it. Who would have thought that my little Isabella would derive so much pleasure out of watching another vampire squirm? Strange but true.

"Jasper, what do you think is the best plan of action?" Eleazar was trying to formulate a plan to take out Maria and her newfound newborn army. I flicked into what I could see of Maria, trying to discern through what I knew of her actions prior to this moment in time how many she had amassed. At the moment it seemed like she had close to a hundred under her control. I couldn't see how she was controlling them, what she had in place, but it had to be something extreme. My guess was a gifted vampire. Something along the lines of Alec or Jasper. After all, Jasper was how she had managed to control them the last time.

There were many newborns with gifts in her horde and that gave her an advantage in those she wanted to conquer. As she was still making plans about when she wanted to strike, she hadn't factored me into her plans and that was her weak spot. She didn't even begin to comprehend that I would be on her tail.

"We don't know how many she has under her belt. I mean, it could be a couple or it could be a couple of dozen." He sighed, grasping

Alice close to him as he spoke. She rested her head on his shoulder, her previous fears forgotten.

"Almost a hundred." They all turned to look at me, questioningly and I raised an eyebrow. "There are ones with various gifts in there as well. It's most likely that's how she's controlling them."

"A hundred." Irina whispered, sinking back in the chair she was sitting on. "There's no way we can take on that many."

"Maybe *you* can't." I smirked smugly at them as they watched me. "But *I* can."

You're not serious, Edward. Isabella was not happy about my decision regarding the problem with Maria. She realised that there was going to be nothing she could do about it, but that didn't mean she was happy about it. She stood there, staring up at me, an expression of shock and fear of her face.

Don't worry.

But I can't help it.

I knew she couldn't help it and that wasn't her fault, but still. She really needed to realise who she was mated with here.

"I will be flying down to San Antonio tonight. It's the closest city to her refuge and where she plans to hit first. She wants to kill or turn as many humans as she can. She's not thinking about her own safety or what will happen to the newborns, but only of striking fear into those who would wish to oppose her. I plan on cutting her off before she even leaves her little lair. Anyone who wants to, can come with me. Those of you who don't, stay here."

Isabella latched herself onto my side, giving me a look that said quite clearly that she was not being left behind. The others quickly followed me out of the house as Isabella and I began to run, quickly outrunning the others.

It was faster to run to Seattle rather than take the cars and we made it there in just over an hour. I might have cheated and sped everyone else up a little the closer we got to Seattle, but it was clear they wanted to come with us.

I called the airport and told them to make sure that my personal jet was cleared for take-off as soon as we arrived. I had no doubt that it would be. The staff there were absolutely shit scared of me. As they should be.

Arriving at the airport, none of us bothered to go through the usual checking in or customs stage. The other passengers looked on, confused at the congregation of pale, beautiful people waltzing through the airport with no security to stop them.

It was all rather amusing.

I blocked everyone out as we sat there on the plane, the land of the USA moving slowly underneath us.

"So what's the plan when we get there?" Jasper asked, looking at me. The others were focused on me as well and I shrugged.

"Find her and take her out. Along with her little horde." I could tell that Jasper, ever the tactician wasn't happy with that plan. I watched him, almost daring him to say something. It wasn't him that spoke up though. It was Esme Cullen, the quietest out of all the vampires here that challenged my words.

"That's it?" She looked around at everyone, scared about all the faces in front of her that she could lose. She cared about all of the people on this plane and it pained her to think about losing anyone. "Just waltz in there and take her out?"

"It worked with the Volturi." I shot back and everyone went quiet, remembering what happened there. I looked down at Isabella who was biting her lip anxiously. "What?"

"I don't know." She sighed, her head resting on my chest lightly. She smiled up at me, her ear laying just above where my dead heart lay. She was the only one with the power to touch it, to make it want to work again. She was the only one who had access to it.

We landed in Texas approximately four hours later and everyone was clearly following my lead. Good they knew whose direction to follow.

"Jasper." I called him up and he fell into step beside me. He was watching me and trying to get a read on my emotions. I branched out my mind, showing him an image of where Maria was currently hiding. He looked at me stunned, shaking his head, getting his thoughts focused as he analysed the various images he had just received. "You know Maria and how she works. If the others want to, take them around with you to cut the exits off. I don't want any of them escaping. I know it's a lot for you to hold in, but with your gift, you can do that. Bella will be able to help you, there." He nodded, aware of Bella's talents now. "If Maria comes your way first, you can have her. But *don't* seek her out."

"Thank you." He nodded, keeping his eyes forward as we walked through the city. It was dark, perfect for us to me manoeuvring the streets in such a sunny state.

Jasper needed to take on Maria. He had held onto the part of his past that tied him to Texas for longer than was necessary and it had caused Alice to doubt herself. She wasn't completely sure of how he would react to seeing Maria again. Hell, *he* wasn't completely sure how he would react to seeing Maria again. But he needed the closure her demise would bring.

Whether it was at his or my hands, she would not see the sunrise.

We closed it on where she was hiding. It was clever. She had taken an old coal mine and expanded it, making room for all those she had turned. Something quite ingenious really. It was illegal for humans to

approach it, so they had very little chance of being discovered. Unless there were some underage teens looking for a scare.

They didn't come back.

"Bella, I want you to stay with Jasper." She looked up at me, a challenge brewing behind her eyes. "The both of you together can calm the newborns. You need to be up here to control the ones that try to escape."

"What are you going to do?" She asked, sounding worried.

"Find her." I answered simply, freezing as another set of images struck me.

They were those of an abandoned house. It appeared to be in the middle of nowhere, yet looking across the land just to the right of the house, the sign indicating the mine we were currently standing at was visible. It was an old two storey house, the floors creaking underfoot, windows having been blown out of just disintegrated with time.

But it wasn't the fact that I was getting images of a house running through my head that pissed me off. It was the fact that the entire menagerie was accompanied by the sound of a child's laughter, squealing, tantrums and speaking.

She had created an immortal child!

"The imbecile!" I spat and everyone turned to look at me, abandoning what tasks they had doled out between themselves.

"What?" Isabella looked up at me, worried, her thin, nimble fingers grasping onto the front of my shirt as she tried to focus my attention. "What is it?" I closed my eyes, taking in a deep breath, trying to temper down my actions. I couldn't lose it now. Not with Isabella in such close range. "Edward! Edward, you're hurting me! Ow!"

The sound of her pained voice pulled me out of my visions and I noticed that she was squirming in my grasp. My fingers were creating deep craters in the flesh of her back.

I pulled her close to me, wrapping my arms around her, my nose diving into her hair as I held her there gently. "I'm sorry, love." I whispered into her hair, soaking in her delicious scent. The scent that still kept me captivated. "I never meant to hurt you. I'm sorry."

"It's okay." She whispered, her hands coming up to run through my hair. "What's going on? What have you realised other than Maria's not here."

I looked in the direction I knew the house would be and sure enough, there was a tiny dot on the horizon that signalled Maria's hiding place. It was around ten miles away and would take me less than two minutes to reach.

"Maria has done the unthinkable." I said softly, knowing the others could hear me. They all froze, Tanya, Kate and Irina instantly understanding what I meant. Violent hisses escaped them as they turned in the direction I was facing, crouching into a defensive pose. "She has created an Immortal Child."

The Cullens, Carmen and Eleazar all sucked in a breath, all now understanding the reason behind the sisters actions. They turned to face the house, their expressions darkening as they understood what lay before them there. Jasper's thoughts were on Maria, of destroying her slowly and painfully, making up for each and every newborn she had him slay.

"Jasper." He looked at me and I shook my head. He would not have the satisfaction now of destroying his creator. Before my realisation, I would have gladly given her to him for the final blow, but she had taken that small reprieve and thrown it away without even realising it by creating that child. "I will be destroying Maria."

His jaw tensed but after a second, he nodded, looking down at Alice. I looked at Isabella, whom was watching me with a curious expression on her face.

"I need you to stay here." I whispered to her softly. "The newborns are unpredictable and having both you and Jasper here will cause less chaos." She nodded and I pressed my lips to her forehead before giving her a soft kiss.

Breaking away from her I turned towards the house and raced towards it, feeling the others watching me. Their thoughts were quieter, becoming vague and distant with every step I took. All apart from Isabella. Hers were always with me, strong and clear as though she were speaking them next to me.

As I approached the house, I could hear the thoughts of Maria and the heinous creation she had in there. They didn't realise I was coming for them, as she was fawning over the little girl who was clearly not happy with the way the night was turning out.

I didn't stop at the door, rather I shoved my fist through it, causing the entire thing to fly across the room. I heard Maria let out a tiny squeak while the girl screamed bloody murder.

"Mama!" She squealed, her bright red eyes glaring at me through the dust and debris floating around her. *Mama? Really, kid?* "Who is he? I don't like him! Make him go away!"

"I'd like to see you try." I sneered and the little girl stood up, making her way over to me.

She looked up at me with a smile on her face that on a human child would be sweet and innocent. On this little brunette demon the smile was evil, her eyes calculating as she watched me. "You have to do what I say."

"Is that so?" I tilted my head to the side, baiting the child. Maria was standing there, a false confidence playing in her mind. Why is it

people always underestimated me. "What's your name?" I rested my hands on my knees, so I was eye level with her. Maria was still confident that the child would best me, still not realising who I was. Stupid woman.

"Madeleine." She replied sweetly, clasping her hands in front of her. "What's yours?"

Perfect . I couldn't help the smirk that appeared on my face, knowing that if the child resembled a demon, I would have looked like the spawn of Satan. She innocent smile on her face disappeared as she took in my expression, her eyes filling with the intense anger of an Immortal Child.

"I asked you a question!" She snapped, clearly not so sweet anymore. "Tell me your name!"

"Edward." I whispered, my gaze flicking to Maria who froze, her eyes snapping from the child to me. I straightened, looking at her as she tried to think of a way to get the little demon away from me. She was the key to controlling the newborns. I saw it now. She was the one responsible for their calmed state. Her power created a wall around each of them, cutting them off from everything around them. As if they were all in some kind of bubble. They could still move as normal but they were unable to touch each other, always separated by a few inches. They could not converse, smell or hear each other. Their eyesight was unhindered or else they would be destroying each other through blindness.

"I don't like that name." She pouted, her eyes narrowing at me and I laughed, crossing my arms over my chest.

"I don't care." I snarled and she looked up at me, her eyes wide. "And do you know why?" She shook her head as though her opinion really mattered. "Because *I* am the one in charge here. This world . . . the world of the vampires, is *my* world. And you're not welcome."

"I can stop you." She stomped her foot like the petulant child she was, showing no signs of fear or any self preservation. A child of her age wouldn't know to stop before they got hurt. To someone of her age, everything was a game, everything new was something to explore. And something such as myself would be interesting and dangerous. A new game to play. "I can stop you getting to me and mama." *Again with the mama.*

I lowered myself to her level once again, my smirk still on my face. "Just try it."

I felt something pushing at me, trying to wrap itself around me and I knew she was trying to work her gift. I smirked as I stood up again, seeing her little face wrapped in concentration.

Before she knew what was happening, I had her by the throat, lifting her off the ground. She squealed and tried to tear at my hand with her fingers, trying to get at me with her teeth. I had a flashback of the little boy I had destroyed trying to harm me in the same way. It seemed that no matter what the times were like, all children tried to strike out in the same way. Scratching, biting and kicking. I squeezed her throat tighter and she responded by lashing out even more. I kept an eye on Maria as she watched, her face fearful, not even trying to defend the child. Her thoughts weren't even focused on the child in my hand, rather on how she was going to get away from me without getting caught.

I looked at her and shook my head. She wasn't going anywhere. I kept my eyes on her as I squeezed again and the child's screaming silenced as her throat crumbled under my grip. Her body tumbled to the floor, still kicking and lashing out as her head remained in my grip. I threw her head out of the destroyed door behind me, my eyes still on Maria.

Pushing the body out of my way with my foot, I moved over to Maria stopping inches in front of her. Her fear was palpable, so thick I could literally taste it in the air surrounding us. She looked from the body of

the child on the floor and back to me as if wondering how I could have done that to her.

"You know," I tilted my head as though I was thinking hard about something. "It seems to me that you don't actually understand how to follow the rules. You were a big enough pain in my ass during the civil war. I really should have intervened myself rather than leaving it up to the Volturi, don't you think? If I had, then I wouldn't be here right now, would I?" She didn't answer other than to shake uncontrollably in front of me. This is what I lived for. This is what I loved. "It seems to me that you heard about the demise of the Volturi and thought you'd attempt to create another army. It doesn't work like that, sweetheart."

She had her hands up by her mouth, her fingers clutching at her lips as I towered over her. She was not a large vampire, by any means. Probably a little shorter than Isabella, and a little curvier. She was clearly of Hispanic descent and it appeared she lived up to the meaning of her name well.

I grabbed her wrists and yanked them away from her face, effectively removing her hands as well. She screamed out in pain, trying to pull her arms away from me. I didn't relent in my grip as she hurled insults at me in Spanish. Apparently I was a 'asesino hijo de puta'. Well, I've been called worse.

I continued my dismemberment of Maria slowly, something that Isabella clearly wouldn't approve of. Oh well. I'm having fun. We'll get to that bridge when we get there.

She screamed as I tore her apart, the slew of insults never ceasing until I ripped her head off, throwing it outside along with the other body parts and head of the child.

Carrying the rest of the pair outside, I knelt down, placing my hands on the sand below me, using the power over the elements, creating a small fire out of nothing. I kept it burning as I threw the parts onto the flames, watching as the thick purple smoke permeated the air.

Satisfied that the remains of the two had been sufficiently destroyed, I turned away from the house and made my way back to the waiting group.

When I rejoined them, they were all standing on guard, waiting outside the main entrance to the mine. Isabella raised an eyebrow at me as I approached, a smirk appearing on her face.

Have fun, did we?

I shrugged and she giggled softly, wrapping her arms around me.

Turning towards the entrance, I heard the squealing and scraping of vampires being destroyed within. Every single member of the group that had accompanied me on this trip was still standing, waiting in the cool Texan night, so I surmised that they were destroying each other.

"It started about ten minutes ago." Jasper said quietly, watching for any sign of emerging newborns. "All of a sudden they just started attacking each other. It was as though they'd finally realised they were all there."

"It seems that the child was the one responsible for the control Maria had over them." I explained and their attention diverted to me. "It was a unique gift. She had the power to cut off their senses and limit their distance from each other. In a way, it was like Alec's gift was, but rather than trapping them within a fog in the mind, the substance keeping them from one another was real. Trapping each of them in their own individual bubble, as it were. They could still move but were unable to make contact with each other. Their senses of smell, hearing and such were cut off but their sight was kept intact."

"Strange." Carlisle mumbled and I glanced at him. His thoughts were giving him away. He longed to know how such a gift was possible. He would have liked the opportunity to study her and learn more about her gift.

"If she had been older, Carlisle then you may have had the chance to." He looked up at me sheepishly before nodding. "Immortal Children cannot be allowed to exist, no matter how intriguing their gift."

The sisters growled gently at the mention of the child and I understood their reaction. I didn't call them out on it as it was still a sore subject for the three of them. It may have been a thousand years ago, but wounds that deep do not heal for our kind. They were infinite.

The three of them were still confused as to the reasons their mother had for creating and keeping the boy she created. They couldn't understand it. It was only because of their ignorance to their mother's actions they were still alive. Had they known, they would have met the same fate.

"This could go on for a while." Jasper mumbled, his mind flicking back to how it had been when he had been under Maria's wing.

I could sense Isabella's sympathy for Jasper as he dwelled on his memories. Since becoming one with the Cullens, he had not thought about his former life in great detail, not having had the need to. Being back here brought all of those memories to the surface. He was usually so good at reading the emotions of others and manipulating them to how he saw best to influence the situation, calming large crowds, enthusing an audience or merely settling an argument. Right now, though, even *he* was at a loss of how to feel.

"Then, we wait." I decided and nobody dared to oppose me.

Everyone was lost in their own little worlds.

The three sisters were lingering on thoughts of Maria, the child and their own mother. They still couldn't understand why anyone could do that to a child. To freeze them in time, never giving them the chance to grow up, taking away everything that they'd owned and loved and

throwing them into a world not meant for children to ever see other than on cartoon television shows.

They still hated their mother for her decisions, yet they loved her because she was their mother.

Ultimately, they were confused.

Jasper was lost in his memories. How he had come across Maria and her two companions, thinking that they were merely lost in the desert and in need of assistance. He was thinking that if he had had more wits about him, he would have just ridden on and left them there. But the southern gentleman in him, the man he had been taught to be by his mother and father told him otherwise. He couldn't leave three helpless women out there on their own. If only he'd known.

But then his thoughts would flick to how if he hadn't come across Maria, he would never have walked into the diner that gave him Alice. He too hated his maker for her decisions and yet he was grateful to her for giving him the chance at an eternity full of love.

He too, was confused.

Emmett and Rosalie were thinking about the pain of the humans in the situation. He was thinking of those who had lost their loved ones to Maria's plans, never knowing what had happened to them. Their bodies would never be found, their stories never told. No one would know of the pain they had suffered before meeting their demise. Rosalie was thinking of the mother of the child Maria had turned into her own. She thought about how she must be suffering, not knowing if her baby was alive or dead. She couldn't help but wonder what it was like to be in that position. Those thoughts ultimately led her to wonder what her own parents had been like when she had disappeared. Whether they had grieved in the way a parent should grieve for a child. Whether they had tried to exact revenge on her husband-to-be for the disappearance of their daughter. Or whether she had been forgotten.

They were lost in the world of the humans, thankful that their world was now simpler than those complicated messes the living ended up in, yet the both of them longed for life, the ability to grow old and have children, grandchildren. They would not trade their eternity for anything, but maybe if they could have that happily ever after they'd both wanted when they were human. Their thoughts were muddled with what they wanted and knew they could never have and what they wanted to do with their eternity.

Again, they were confused.

The others were all flicking between thoughts of the loved ones like Emmett and Rosalie were and those ripping each other to shreds a mere hundred feet from where we were standing. None from inside had noticed our presence, waiting to pounce should they find freedom. The thoughts milling around were not focused on themselves, yet those that were suffering. Who would have thought that so many vampires, that were selfish by nature, would be able to put aside their own wants and needs to make sure that the humans were protected?

You did the same thing, you know?

I looked down to see Isabella watching me from where she was tucked into my side. She was the only mind that was quiet in the midst of the inner monologues happening around me. Well, up until now that is.

What?

You put aside what you wanted to protect the humans.

No. I shook my head infinitesimally and she frowned. I came here to protect the secret and to destroy the child. My reasons were not the same as your families.

She looked back at the entrance which had become suspiciously quiet in the last few moments and everyone tensed, on guard,

wondering what kind of vampire would be emerging.

There were slow and steady footsteps approaching the entrance. A few pairs. Apparently, the last surviving newborns were able to rally together to get out.

They slowed as they realised that they were not the only ones there. I moved in front of the others, making sure that I was the first one they saw. If they survived, they would never forget who I was.

"What's going on?" It was a deep, male voice that called out from the entrance to the tunnel.

"Don't be afraid." I glanced at Esme, who was walking forward. I threw my arm in front of her, stopping her from approaching. She looked up at me, displeased and I had to bite back a growl. Just because she was the mother figure to my mate did not mean she was the same to me. I had a mother. A mother who was long gone and rotted in the ground. I did not need another one. "We're not going to hurt you."

"Speak for yourself." I growled out and the footsteps stopped.

They were all within visual range now, no longer hidden behind the bend that started almost at the entrance of the tunnel. There were four of them, all looking worse for wear.

"How many were there." I asked and the four of them flinched at my tone. "How many did she create?"

"Um . . . I don't know." The smallest one shook his head, glancing around nervously as he crept forward, looking at the sky above him. It was as though he had never seen the sky before. He probably hadn't. "But a lot."

"And you're the ones that survived." They nodded, all following the first's lead. "The rest are dead." They nodded again and I focused on the central point of the mine, allowing a flow of fire to trickle through,

igniting each and every body part, still squirming, trying to get back to the others. The flames caught immediately, the smoke filling the air of the mine quickly, the scent striking all of us out here.

"Again with the fire?" Isabella raised an eyebrow and I shrugged, not taking my eyes off of the newborn.

"Where . . . where is Maria?" The first one to appear asked, glancing around nervously, as though waiting for her to appear and cause some form of pain.

"She's dead." I answered simply and the four of them sagged, relieved at the news. "As is the child."

"Good." One who had yet to speak called out and I raised an eyebrow. He seemed to realise my position of power among the group in front of him and immediately shrank back. "She was evil. Not right."

"They never are." I turned back to Isabella, wrapping my arm around her waist. "Carlisle." He turned to face me, wondering what I could possibly want him to do. "I want your family and Eleazar's coven to *educate* these four in how vampires are supposed to live. I do not see them as a threat to the secret and as long as they do not pose one, they do not need to be exterminated."

Hold the phone . . . are you being merciful ? I caught Isabella's playful tone in her thoughts and rolled my eyes at her.

Shut it, you.

"You need to relocate soon. The people in Forks are beginning to question why you're not looking as old as you say you are." He nodded, turning back to Esme. "Accompany them back to Denali and make sure they understand."

"Yes, Edward." He nodded, not really sure of how to answer me.

"The four of you need to understand the need for vigilance when hunting." I looked at them as I spoke. They never took their eyes off mine, knowing that if they were to be destroyed, it would be at my hand. "There is but one rule when you enter this life and one rule only: keep the secret. Humans must not find out about our existence. We must remain a myth and the thing of horror stories. Do you understand?" They nodded, mumbling that they did. "Good. Don't give me a reason to regret allowing you to live." I looked back at the others. "Make sure they know *everything* about this life."

I turned, taking Isabella with me as I moved. I broke out into a run, letting go of Isabella's waist and grasping her hand. She kept up her pace with mine, glancing at me every so often. We didn't slow until we reached the city limits and made our way to the airport.

"So, where are we going now?" She asked, wrapping her arms around me.

"Anywhere." I whispered, capturing her lips in mine. "Absolutely anywhere."

It wasn't like we were going to run out of time to do whatever we wanted, so I would indulge her. I would go anywhere for her.

She was now my reason for being.

And I wouldn't have it any other goddamn way.

Epilogue

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT OWN ANY OF THE CHARACTERS FROM TWILIGHT. THEY ALL BELONG TO STEPHENIE MEYER.

Yes, this is the Epilogue. So sad.

The quote from the last chapter was 'She fucking hates me and I love it' from Eminem feat. Rihanna's 'Love the Way You Lie'. There's no quote in this chapter.

I have a number of people I want to give a shout out to.

First of all, my dear Shelby. Where do I start with you, honey? I want to say a HUMUNGOUS thanks for giving me the swift kick up the arse when I needed it when it came to this story and for making me giggle. No one has made me laugh as much as you have when it comes to my Edward's and I don't know what I'd do without you there to take the edge off a bad day. Thank you, girl!

I also want to shout to those of you who have been with me from the beginning of this story and reviewed every single chapter. Bleachblonde2244, Nicoconsd, glo4twilight, babylopez2008, proudmom21, mugglemom08. I'm sure there are many more of you that have been there, but these ones have been there through all my stories. I'm sorry if I missed anyone but there are so many of you and I appreciate you all.

IMPORTANT: This year, I am participating in Fandom for Preemies. As a preemie baby myself – 30 weeks gestation – it is a cause very close to my heart. And what am I offering, I hear you ask? Well, it's the one question I've been getting from nearly all of you all throughout this story.

I am offering an outtake of Edward's change.

Yup, you heard me. For a donation of a mere \$5 you get to find out how Edward became the original vampire along with many other incredible one shots. I will not be posting this one shot anywhere else.

EVER!

So if you want to see it and find out the answer to that all important question, head over to the Fandom for Preemies homepage – link is on my profile – and donate and help some innocent babies get a head start in life.

It is with a heavy heart I press the 'Complete' button on this story and I want to thank you all again for the support you've shown me through this story, even if my posting hasn't always been reliable and I have left you waiting months for an update.

Enjoy.

Edward

Eternity.

That is what I am bound to.

Nothing more. Nothing less.

Never changing. Everything the same.

Of course the world around me changes. But I never do.

Mortals dream of immortality, and how "cool" it would be never to age. To stay the same forever. Take it from someone who has been the same forever, it's not all its cracked up to be.

For nearly fifteen millennia I have wandered the vast expanse of this earth, never changing, watching everything around me change and alter with regards to the planets needs. Let me tell you something, the planet isn't as big as people like to believe it is.

Everything that has come and gone in this world I have seen.

I have been there for everything.

But unlike before, eternity didn't seem so bleak. Because now, I wasn't facing it alone as I had always believed I would.

I had *Isabella Cullen* with me.

And she made everything worthwhile.

Before I had found her, I had found entertainment in very little. Nothing would hold my interest for long and I grew irritated or bored with most things other would find fascinating or appealing. I had always been a fickle creature and I knew that would never change.

But Isabella was the only thing in this world that still held my interest. Even one hundred years after we'd first met. Well, not counting the actual first meeting. I had spent a century with the most glorious creature on the planet and I knew I would never want to be away from her for any length of time.

We rarely left each other's sides as it was. The only time we were away from each other was when we needed to hunt. Well, more specifically, when *I* needed to hunt. I usually went with her when she hunted, purely because she was a magnificent creature when in her instinctual predatory state and it always made me see her for the dangerous creature she could be when she put her mind to it.

It was as though nothing else but her prey existed. I had looked into her mind when she had been hunting before and she hadn't even registered my presence. Behind her or inside her head. She was focused and it was as though I could feel each and every one of her muscles moving as she ducked and sprung at her prey, her teeth meeting their mark before the animal could even register what was happening.

She didn't come with me when I hunted, for obvious reasons. Through the years, she had come across the memories locked away inside my head of previous hunting trips and I knew they upset her. She had seen the memory I held of the two girls I had fed off of just after we had been reunited and I could see that it bothered her.

"Edward?" I turned to see Isabella standing there, looking slightly sheepish and upset. Not wanting her to feel any kind of pain, whether it be physical or emotional, I pulled her to me as I sat down. She sat in my lap, slightly curled in on herself.

"What is it, love?" She let out a breath, looking away from me. I hated it when she did that. I loved seeing her brilliant golden eyes as she spoke to me. They spoke volumes, conveying emotions that her words and her tone of voice did not.

"Look at me, love." Her eyes flicked up to mine and I saw a large amount of uncertainty floating in their amber depths. "What's the matter, love?"

She took a deep breath, closing her eyes – which I didn't like – before she let down her shield and a barrage of images flew at me.

Two girls in a bar making their way towards me.

The same girls in a cab pawing at me as though I was an object.

In the hotel room.

Lying on the bed.

Both of them drained and lifeless.

She opened her eyes and I could see the venom that had pooled in them as she showed me the images she had somehow managed to find inside my mind. I could see that if she were able to cry, she would be right now. I could feel the betrayal pouring out of her and

she wondered what had happened beforehand. Why I felt the need to feed in such a way.

"Where did you see those?" I asked quietly and she looked away from me again. I placed a finger underneath her chin and pulled her around to look at me. "Bella?"

"I don't know." She whispered, shaking her head quickly. "I don't know why but I think you must have let your guard down for a little while and I just had that night thrown at me. I knew it was when the Denali coven were visiting and I . . . I know it's stupid but . . . you don't feed like that anymore . . . do you?"

I shook my head, resting my forehead against hers. She had said she thought I had let my guard down. I did that an awful lot around Isabella and it wasn't a good thing. There was no telling what information she could come across.

This just proves my point.

"No, I don't." I whispered softly, not breaking eye contact with her. I knew I couldn't lie to her. Not because she'd be able to tell I was lying, but purely because I was incapable of doing so. There was something that physically stopped me from doing so.

There was no way for me to explain it.

"I haven't fed like that since that time." I knew she didn't really want to hear this, but there was part of her that knew she needed to know. She was too curious for her own good and she wouldn't be able to let it go until she knew the whole story.

"You sound like you used to all the time." She whispered and I inhaled deeply.

"I did." She closed her eyes, turning away from me. "Some part of you knew this already." She nodded, still not looking at me. She was feeling hurt and betrayed and I hated it. Before I'd met her, I wouldn't

have given a damn about what someone else was feeling. But she had opened up a new part of me and although there were times when it was trying to be around her, I would be away from her for anything in the world. I still remembered when I had let her go hunting by herself when we'd first left for Volterra. I had nearly lost her that day and I wasn't eager for a repeat. "I know it's hard to hear, but I was a completely different creature before I met you. Before you came along, I didn't care what happened to others around me. I could care less about them. Especially humans. They were nothing more than cattle to me."

" Are they really anything more now?"

I had to think about that for a moment. Were they? "Well, not really, no. But knowing that you care for them, it's kind of adjusted how I hunt, if that makes any sense."

" It does." She nodded, biting down on her bottom lip. "I know that it's who you are and you're never going to change. But . . . I often wonder what you'd look like with golden eyes." She smiled up at me, her eyes wistful and full of things I'd never understand. Purely because she was female. Even though I might be able to access whatever crevice of her mind I could think of, I would never be able to fully understand what went on in there.

It was confusing to say the least.

That day hadn't been brought up by either of us since. I knew that she thought about it from time to time and that it still bothered her to think that I'd used and abused humans in that way but she also acknowledged that that was who I used to be. Not who I am now.

Though I would never admit it in front of anyone else, I had changed and it was all because of her.

She would never make a vegetarian out of me, though. That shit was not happening.

It had been a few years since she had seen her family and she missed them, so we had travelled back to the States to see them. They were now living in Boulder, Colorado. I wasn't one hundred per cent sure that this would work out for them and seeing how humans could sometimes be smart enough to see things they weren't supposed to but Alice and the rest of them were certain they would be fine.

They had been there for two years already and had gotten away with it so far, so maybe they were right.

Maybe.

"Did you know that this is where that little girl was murdered?" Isabella mused, perching on a rock and looking out over the city. She sat there, glistening, her marble skin gleaming in the sun. We were above the clouds that hung over the city at this point and no humans were able to come this way. It was off their paths and far too dangerous for them to attempt.

Which meant we were out of the way and that to me was perfect.

"Lots of little girls are lost, love." I whispered, wrapping my arms around her as she looked out onto the scenery below us.

She sighed, shaking her head before turning and placing a kiss to my jaw. "I mean the little girl. The little pageant queen. JonBenet Ramsey her name was." She looked back across the town in front of us. "I don't understand how people can do that to a child."

"Humans are cruel." I answered easily and she turned to look at me again. "They're cruel to the animals that walk the planet, they use its resources for their own needs but most of all they're cruel to each other. Humans do things to each other that are unexplainable. There's generally nothing anyone can say to explain it and so it goes unnoticed until something like that happens. Think of all the murders that happen right under their noses and the human trafficking rings. There's no sense to it. And there's nothing we can do about it."

"I guess so." She sighed, resting her head back on my shoulder.

"Come on," I buried my nose in her hair for a moment. "Let's go and see your hyperactive family."

She grinned at me as she stood, taking my hand in her own as we turned and made our way down the mountainside. It was twilight, so we didn't have to worry about sticking to the shadows, which made things easier for us.

Alice was waiting for us on the front porch, no doubt having seen our decision to come to see them. She stood there, her hands clasped in front of her as she bounced lightly on the balls of her feet. The grin on her face was bright enough to light up the night sky and I knew she was happy to have her 'sister' back, even if it was for a short time.

"Everyone's waiting for you." She practically squealed as she wrapped her arms around Isabella. She glanced at me as the two of them hugged as though they would never see each other again. *Both of you*. I shook my head at the little pixie's insistence that I was included in the 'family' they held dear. She pulled away from Isabella and pulled her into the house. Isabella glanced back at me, a look begging me to help her etched on her face. I chuckled, shaking my head and she scowled at me before she was pulled into the building.

I followed the two of them inside to find Emmett was the one that now had hold of Isabella, twirling her around as she laughed. "I missed you, Bellsy." He laughed before placing her back on her feet. The giggle that escaped her was unlike anything I'd heard from her before. It was a little girl's giggle and it seemed completely out of character coming from my sultry goddess.

"I missed you too, Emmett." She pushed him away, barely having time to move before Esme had wrapped her arms around her in a motherly hug. I could feel the overwhelming emotions coming from her. She had missed Isabella more than she would openly show but

the smile that graced her lips and the light that shone in her eyes as she looked upon her eldest 'daughter' said it all. Well, to me, at least.

"It's so good to have you back." She whispered before her eyes fell on me, much like Alice's had. "To have the both of you back."

"It's good to be back, Esme." Isabella whispered in return, looking upon Esme in such a way that proved to me that Esme was the mother she had missed in her human years.

Isabella had confided in me that she didn't remember her mother at all. She remembered bits about her father, the love and protectiveness that she had felt when he was around. She remembered what he looked like and the sound of his voice but the majority of the individual memories she would have had during her human years escaped her. The sadness that lingered in her voice and expression made my dead heart ache for her and that in itself threw me. I hadn't ever felt something like that. Not even for myself, let alone another being.

"She's been missed, you know." Jasper had made his way over to me and, like me, was watching the interaction that was playing out between the women in the room. They were laughing and chatting amongst each other, clearly happy to be back in each other's presence.

"I know." I nodded once, realising that no matter how long they had in this world, whenever she wasn't with them, she would be missed. "I don't force her to come with me, you know."

"No." He shook his head, his eyes lingering on Alice. She, for him, was the light in his world. His reason for existing and I knew how he felt. If Isabella wasn't in this world, I wouldn't want to be either. But, unlike Jasper, or any of the others in this room, there was no way out for me. I was destined to linger for eternity and long after that. "But the bond the two of you share does. It doesn't matter where you go, she'll follow."

"As I would her." I didn't need to hide the fact that Isabella was my world within these walls. They all knew what she meant to me. It was only when we were on our own, that the intensity of my feelings for her had to be dialled down slightly. If the wrong creature gathered the information of her worth when it came to me, the one trying to find a way to best me – which had happened in the past – then there was a risk to her. One that I was not prepared to take. She understood my reasons, even if she didn't like them. "As you would Alice."

"I would." He looked at me as I watched Isabella. "I would follow Alice to the ends of the earth."

"And beyond."

No more words were needed with Jasper. He, like me, didn't find the need to dwell on a conversation that had been finished. He was content to stay in a silence that could say more than words ever could.

"So," Emmett had joined us, a huge grin on his face. I couldn't recall a time when – other than our first meeting – Emmett *hadn't* had some form of a smile on his face. He was a generally happy and exuberant being and I saw why Isabella enjoyed being around him so. He brought light and comedy to a situation, diffused arguments without even trying and alleviated boredom when it regularly occurred. He could also put up with Rosalie and her ever changing moods and to me that took a lot of guts.

Be nice.

I smirked inwardly at Isabella's silent reprimand. She knew that she was the only one that could get away with such an action and she utilised it whenever she felt the need. Clearly, she was now poking around in my head.

Invade people's thoughts and you're bound to find things you don't like.

Speaking from experience?

Don't I always?

Touché.

"Got any problems that could make a guy's life more interesting?" I knew what Emmett was hedging at. For someone that was always finding the humorous side to any situation, he was always banking on their being some kind of confrontation. I knew that he could be useful should it turn violent – hell, he had been scrapping with a bear less than half an hour before Rosalie found him – but the need hadn't arisen as of yet. I knew it was only a matter of time and I was still debating on whether or not I would let Emmett play or just save the fun for myself.

"Nope." I shook my head and his shoulders fell slightly, disappointed. "Everyone is behaving themselves of late. It's only a matter of time, though." I turned to face Carlisle, who had stepped through the door moments before and had already shed his coat and tie. "Any word from the coven in Denali?"

"Nothing." He said with a small smile. This, to him, was good news. I knew that nothing had happened on the western side of the country and he knew that I would know had they been contacted. It was merely a formality that I asked.

After Isabella and I had taken out the Volturi, as the largest coven in the world, the Cullen's had become the go to for vampires. It had become widespread that they were in contact with me and they had been cautious about what this meant for them. Overall, it didn't really have any impact on their lifestyle. Over the years they had had a few visitors wondering about certain things and several newborns had sought them out, seeking their help.

When the first newborn arrived on their doorstep, looking for help, they had still been living in Forks, keeping up appearances, as it were. They hadn't known what to do, so they had contacted Isabella

and me. We had made our way back to Forks to assess the situation. Well, I had been there to assess while Isabella wanted to see her family again.

There was a flurry of activity happening in the house as Isabella and I climbed out of the car and quickly made our way through the front door.

I could hear the thoughts of the newborn, frantic, scared, thirsty. He didn't want to be a monster. He didn't want to take life and yet he couldn't control himself. It was the story of all newborns. The lack of control that didn't even begin to wane until the end of the first year.

He didn't want to live the life of a killer.

"Edward." Carlisle sighed, his relief at my presence visible. That was something I had never really encountered before. Normally, creatures feared my presence. They kept as far away from me as possible, not wanting anything to do with me.

And that was fine by me. If they wanted to keep me off their tails all they had to do was behave. And the majority of them knew that.

The newborn had been told that I was coming here and he had caught my scent as I followed Carlisle up the stairs into his office.

"Garrett?" He called quietly as he opened the door. Obviously the warning was unnecessary but Carlisle being Carlisle was the ever the considerate creature.

I'll never understand why.

I moved around Carlisle, inspecting the newborn for myself. Of course, I had seen him in the minds of the others but each mind came with its own personal view of him. Seeing him for myself made it more possible for me to assess the situation with this creature.

He was sat on the couch Carlisle had situated along one of the walls of his office. He had curled himself up into a ball in the corner of the leather. There was no doubt he was tall, approximately the same height as Jasper. His hair was a mousy brown and, like all of us, he was pale. He was having a hard time adjusting to what he had become, like so many before him, he didn't understand. He had thought he was going to die and didn't understand how he had become a vampire.

Through his blurred memories, I saw that he had been the victim of a simple mugging that had turned into something more. He hadn't anticipated the muggers to pull out a gun and shoot him point blank. He should have died, bled out in minutes, but it would appear that one of our kind was in the area and had caught the scent of his blood, figuring it was an easy meal.

And it would have been. Easy meal, easy to disguise.

His memories didn't reveal who it was, only that it was a female. He could hear her voice echoing in his mind and it sent chills down him to recall the sound of her tinkling voice. It would appear that she had been interrupted by something and hadn't killed him.

He had woken on the same street three days later, wondering what had happened and feeling a burn unlike anything else.

It was after he had made his first kill that he knew he didn't want to do it. He didn't want to live that way.

He was no more than a few weeks old. He had some strength to him to have discovered Carlisle's coven and sought them out as he had done.

"What do you suggest?" Carlisle asked quietly as I surveyed the newborn. "He has told us that he wants to learn to live as we do. He doesn't want to take the lives of humans."

" That may be," I said and the newborn looked up at me, his eyes black with thirst. I knew in that moment that should he be left alone, he would take off in search of food.

In search of humans.

What with the Cullens' being so close to the main town, it would not do well for that to happen.

" You're too close to humans." I didn't take my eyes off him as I spoke. He saw the colour of my eyes, wincing slightly as he took in the red as opposed to the amber of the others around him. "Yes, I feed from humans. But unlike you I have mastered my control unlike any other."

" What do you propose we do?" Carlisle asked, watching the newborn closely.

" You're certain you wish to live as the Cullens do?" The newborn nodded, opening his mouth to speak before his hand came to his throat, the burn overpowering him. To not have moved from that spot for two days after his arrival, he had remarkable control already. He was doing better than I was, at least. "Call Eleazar."

" Eleazar?" Carlisle sounded confused and the newborn looked up at me, panicked.

" Yes, they have as much experience with this lifestyle as you do but they have the advantage of living out in the wilderness. They have better . . . facilities, as it were, to cater to what he needs. In Alaska, he can roam freely without the risk of running into humans. Here, even in the forests, he may run into a hiker and I'm assuming – I use that term loosely, of course – that that is not what he wants?" He shook his head fiercely and I nodded. "Call Eleazar. Get him and his coven here."

Carlisle nodded and crossed the room to the large oak desk, picking up the phone. I kept my eyes on the newborn, who was watching

Carlisle with a look of fear on his face. His mind was racing, wondering what was going on. He thought that Carlisle was abandoning him when he had asked for his help.

" He is doing no such thing." His head snapped around and he looked at me. His mind turned angry and confused, wondering who the hell I was. "I would calm yourself if I were you. I'm the one who decides whether you live or die." He inhaled a sharp breath, clearly not having anticipated my importance. He was new, he didn't know.

Jeez, Isabella's really rubbing off on me.

Carlisle wasn't long on the phone to Eleazar who informed him that they would be down later the same day. It would be a few hours until they arrived, so there was time to kill. They would be running there and back, giving them and the newborn a chance to feed while on the move.

" Hey," Isabella wrapped her arms around my waist as we waited for the arrival of the Denali coven. She rested her head on my chest as she watched Emmett with the newborn. Emmett had taken it upon himself to take him hunting, which all in all wasn't a bad idea. "I never would have thought that you'd go to so much trouble for a newborn." She said softly as Emmett guided the newborn through the taking down of a deer. Not that there was much to it, really.

" Normally, I wouldn't." I sighed and she looked up at me, confused. "There aren't many who willingly embrace the life of a 'vegetarian'," I chuckled to myself at the term they used for it, "and having a newborn who wishes to do so without any guidance to that lifestyle is almost unheard of."

" What about Carlisle?" She asked sounding slightly smug.

" I said 'almost'." I replied and she scowled at me, realising she had been beaten. "And the fact that you would have insisted we come to help anyway." She nodded, looking very pleased with herself and I laughed, shaking my head.

" Why send him to Alaska?" She looked back out at Emmett and the newborn as they hunted, a small smile on her face. "I mean, my family know what they're doing. He could stay here with them."

" Alaska is a better environment for him overall. The coven can dedicate all their time to aiding him, while here, they have to attend school and Carlisle is expected at the hospital and the only one that would be around would be Esme. It's not really the ideal environment for a newborn adjusting to a different lifestyle."

" Carlisle was able to with me." She looked back up at me.

" Yes, but Carlisle was also able to focus all of his energy on you. No matter how much she argues to the contrary, Esme will not be able to do that and neither will the others. For one thing, the pull from their mates will often win out over any responsibility they feel to the newborn. Not through choice but lack thereof. The bond between mates is such that it cannot be denied." She nodded and pressed my lips to the top of her head. "When Carlisle found you, he was connected to no other creature and was able to focus his energies on you. Though there are many of them, the Cullens will not be able to do the same thing."

" What about Carmen and Eleazar? They're mated."

" But the three sisters are not." I felt her disapproval of the sisters as I mentioned them. I chuckled lightly and she growled against my chest. Apparently, she did not find it amusing. "You're not still upset about the Tanya debacle the last time they were here, are you?"

" Well, who wouldn't be?" She asked, rolling her eyes as if to say 'men'. "I mean, she knew that we were together and yet she still tried it on. Who does that?"

" A succubus." I supplied and she let out a breath, clearly not pleased with the fact that I had an answer for her. "It's true, though. Though they may not have lived that way for a long time, but they do still retain the title of succubus. They act through attractions and use

sex as a weapon purely because it's what they know. It's what they can utilise."

" Sex as a weapon, huh?" She smirked up at me and I scowled down at her.

" Not for you, no." I wrapped my arms tightly around her and she giggled, pressing her back into my chest as she rested her head on my shoulder, sighing gently. "There's nothing for you to worry about, love. There is no other for me." She let out a breath and I could see her becoming insecure and worried about the impending visit from the Denali coven. "Don't."

" What?"

" Do that." I whispered in her ear and she sighed, knowing that I had figured her out. "You are perfect in every way. Do you think that I want them? You think I want the three of them?"

She shrugged, looking away from me as she spoke. She had retained the self conscious image she had had when she was human but it appeared that it was only around these three vampires it really showed. "Well, you could have them if you did."

" Well, I don't." I spun her around, making her face me. She didn't meet my eyes and I knew we were going to have to work on her self esteem which was incredibly low for a vampire. "You're right, I could have them if I wanted, but . . ." I buried my nose in her hair, inhaling her sweet scent deeply. "I don't want them. I want you. You are the most perfect creature to me. The way you look," I urged her to open her eyes, which shone liquid gold at me, "the way you smell," I ran my nose down her jaw slowly, "the way you taste," I gently nipped at her throat, where her pulse point would have once been and she moaned quietly. "The way your mind works, the way you see things in others that no one else would even begin to look for, the way your body responds to my touch. It's all I will ever need. For the first time in my life, I need nothing more than what I have with you. You confuse and perplex me, yet you entice and excite me at the same

time. I have never met a creature such as you and you are mine." I ran my nose back up her throat and jaw, placing a kiss to the corner of her mouth gently. "As I am yours."

She opened her eyes, the gold replaced by black lust as she wrapped her arms around me, her fingers tangling in my hair. She yanked my head down, crashing my lips to hers as her tongue forced its way between my lips. I welcomed it eagerly, never one to deny Isabella anything she wanted.

She pulled away for a brief moment, her eyes locking with mine as we stood there. "Mine." She growled, her eyes landing on my throat. Her eyes were fixed on the mark she had left not a year ago.

"Yours." I whispered as our lips met again in another passionate embrace.

She broke the kiss with a growl and looked over at the trees behind me. I knew what had upset her this time. It was the thoughts of a certain member of the Denali coven that had come to find us. Apparently, she had unresolved issues when it came to Tanya and Tanya was not one to leave them buried for long.

Apparently, she still thought that what Isabella and I had was fleeting.

Not a chance.

I turned to face her, Isabella still locked in my arms.

She stood there on the edge of the woods behind us, a smirk playing on her lips. Clearly she wasn't the least bit sorry for interrupting our moment. If anything she looked pleased with herself. She had a lot to learn.

"Did you not learn anything from our last encounter, Tanya?" I spoke calmly, coldly and she tensed slightly, her mind flickering back to what had transpired between us when she had come upon Isabella

and I alone once before. "Mark my words that will seem pleasant to what will happen should you behave in that manner again." I turned to see where Emmett and the newborn were. He had taken him to bury his kill, ensuring he knew to place it where it would not be found by unsuspecting hikers. Not that they came out this far but one can never be too careful. "Emmett." I called softly and the two of them joined us.

Isabella and I made our way back to the house where the rest of them were waiting for us. Eleazar and Carlisle were speaking of the newborn, his wishes to learn their way of life and his countenance. Eleazar seemed impressed that he had made it to Carlisle's coven without making any more kills. He had deemed him strong.

I had made it my intention to wait before making any assumptions.

" I assure that you're willing to take him under your wing, Eleazar." He turned to face me, his head bobbing in a small, respectful bow.

" Yes, my lord." His response was quiet but his head was teeming with how to control the newborn. "We will depart with him as soon as possible to make it easier for him." His eyes flicked behind me to where he had walked into the house. He was nervous being surrounded by unfamiliar vampires and scents. It would take him a while to acclimatise to the life of a vampire, but he was certain in his mind that he wanted to do this.

In his eyes he didn't want to be a murderer.

Eleazar stepped forward, holding a hand out to the newborn who backed away slightly, unsure of the man in front of him. "There's no need for you to worry. We're not here to harm you." The newborn's eyes flicked to me and I knew he had realised that I was the one, should the need arise, to take away his life. "My name is Eleazar and this is my mate, Carmen." She gave him a warm smile as he addressed her.

" Hello," He had obviously found his voice while out hunting with Emmett. "I'm Garrett. Thank you for coming all this way."

" It's really no trouble." Eleazar's smile was genuine as he talked with Garrett. "We're always happy to welcome another member into our family. This is Irina."

" Hello." She gave him a small wave, staying back, realising that it was wise to, lest she overwhelm him.

" And over here we have Tanya and Kate." Tanya gave him a slow smile, which even I found a little creepy while Kate was standing there, her eyes wide and her body stiff.

Isabella looked up at me as I watched the two of them together. The surge of energy in the air seemed to have caught Jasper a little off guard as he shook his head before looking at me. I shook my head, telling him not to try to diffuse what was literally burning through the air. He nodded, knowing full well what was happening. As did I. The energy I felt coming from the two of them was instant and familiar. The pull that they were now feeling towards each other was just as the one I felt for Isabella.

They were mates.

They stood their looking at each other while everyone else in the room watched them. I now had no doubt that they would be the ones to help Garrett adjust to the lifestyle.

After a few more minutes, the room had subsided into small groups, quiet chattering happening between them. Garrett and Kate had moved out into the expansive garden the Cullen's possessed, talking quietly, getting to know one another. They were still unsure of what had transpired between them in the house but were both determined to work it out between them.

I heard Isabella growl once more and turn to face Tanya where she was standing with Irina. I turned to face her and saw that she was

glaring at Tanya with more fire than I had ever seen before. Rosalie and Alice, whom Isabella had been talking to beforehand, were watching her, a little stunned as she stepped away from them.

"If you have something to say, Tanya, why don't you just say it?" She spat and I smirked as the rest of the room fell completely silent at the words.

"I'm not sure what you're talking about." Tanya replied, a false bravado in play. I chuckled softly, feeling Jasper's amusement at Tanya's attempt to cover up her emotions.

"No?" Isabella smirked at her, a smirk that reminded me a lot of myself in fact. She folded her arms across her chest as she stared at the blonde vampire. "I thought you'd left the days of a succubus behind. Or was that just a story you told your family?" Tanya's eyes widened as she realised that I was not the only telepath in the room anymore. "He's off limits."

It was clear to everyone now what Tanya's thoughts had been moments before and there was no surprise there. Isabella was glorious as she stood there, her eyes burning into the blonde across the room. Apparently, there was no esteem issues anymore.

My god I loved her.

After Isabella's little outburst, the Denali coven had left pretty quickly, not wanting to witness a confrontation between the two.

It wasn't something I would have minded seeing, but hey, that's just me.

The Cullens had accepted their position as a 'go-to' between the vampires of the world and myself. They were easier to find than I was, considering Isabella and I were constantly on the move and they settled in places for a time. There had been a couple of incidences where vampires had contacted them about a rogue they were worried about and I had always gotten the message. It was a

system that had worked pretty well over the last century or so. And it kept Isabella in contact with her family, which she didn't mind so much.

"Edward?" Carlisle turned to me slightly, wondering how to broach a subject. "Over the last couple of weeks, there's been a scent appearing in the area. It's not one we recognise and we've never gotten a glimpse of who it is. We're concerned that it might become a problem. They've not made any contact as of yet and Alice hasn't been able to get a read on who they are through her visions."

"So you need my help." He nodded and I let out a breath.

"Yes," He sighed, running a hand through his hair. "We've tried following the scent but after a few blocks, it disappears. No trace of anything there at all. We've tried going up and searching all around but there's nothing."

"Alright." I made my way over to Isabella, pressing a kiss to her hair and telling her softly that I'd be back in a while. Her eyes questioned me, wondering if I wanted her to come with me. I shook my head, silently telling her to enjoy her time with her family. "Where was the last place you encountered the scent?"

Emmett led me to where they had last encountered the scent, not the day before yesterday. The weather had been still and dry for the last two days, meaning that the scent lingered.

My head snapped up as we encountered the scent and I felt a growl erupting in my throat. *It couldn't be.*

"Edward?" Emmett stepped away from me slightly, sensing my change.

"Stay here." If the scent was who I thought it was, then I knew exactly where it would lead me. It wouldn't stay in the city. It would lead up into the mountains, where he was most comfortable. He had

always been at home in the mountains, being the master at navigating them when human.

I left Emmett standing there, speeding down the streets. I didn't encounter the minds of humans as I ran, leaving me free to gain speed as I made my way towards the mountains. Isabella and I had been relaxing in earlier. I encountered the scent again and knew I had been right.

I paid no mind to the rocks as I launched myself up into the mountains, following the scent. Why was he here? How was he alive? I had assumed he had perished with the many others all those years ago. What did he want now and why hadn't he made his presence known before now?

I stopped, hearing the worried thoughts fearing that he had made a mistake. Who would know if it was a mistake or not? Not even I could see the outcome of this particular meeting. It had been such a long time since we had seen each other and the last time he had really laid eyes on me, I was coming at him, ready to eat him. Which I did but what does that matter?

I moved towards him slowly and he registered my presence, standing quickly. I pushed my way through the trees and stopped, seeing him in front of me. He hadn't changed at all. Not over the millennia but then again, I guessed that I hadn't either.

We stood there for a few moments, assessing each other before he nodded, doing that bow Eleazar did. Clearly, he knew who I was in our world and knew to show me the proper respect, no matter who he had been to me once.

The past was past and that was where it was supposed to say.

"Seytu." He inhaled at the sound of his ancient name, his body tensing as I spoke. Standing in front of me was the only creature to have survived as long as I had. He was the only one to know the rise and fall of the empires.

Now my question was, how had he managed to avoid me for all these years?

And what was I going to do about it?

"Edaar."

I know I left it on a cliffy, but there is a reason.

You'll find out soon enough what it is and no, it's not a sequel. If you want to find out the story between these two, shove me on Author's Alert and wait and see.

Preemies Outtake Edward's Change

Disclaimer: I don't own. Stephenie Meyer does and the last time I checked, I wasn't her. Sad times.

I know that you've all been waiting for this for a long time and I will tell you now, I've thought long and hard about this and it was not an easy decision to make to post this.

This is the outtake I wrote for the preemies fundraiser which means that yes . . . it is Edward's Change Outtake.

Enjoy.

Edward

How is it you can believe that everything within yourself will stay the same for the rest of eternity and then have it change because of one creature? One whom wouldn't have been significant to you if there had been a slight difference in any of the factors that had brought you together.

If one of you had been born at a different moment.

If you were a different gender.

If it had been another time or place that either of us had been born we might not have been bound in the way that we were.

And looking down at her I didn't know if I could ever be without Isabella again.

As I spent the days with her, I could see that I was changing and yet I was powerless to stop it. I hadn't changed since I had become what I am,. Since I had created my own race and yet, this tiny little woman enters my life and there is nothing I wouldn't do.

She was remarkable.

Before I had met her, I held no one dear. My lifestyle had shown that much was clear. If something or someone had gotten in my way before I had come face to face with Isabella again, there wasn't anything that could stop me from destroying it. But being with Isabella again brought new things to light. Things that showed me the absorption power she had wasn't just one way.

She had the power to exude certain emotions and traits as well.

And apparently compassion was one of said traits.

Figures, huh?

Isabella had often said that she would have liked to be able to introduce me to her father. Well, I wasn't too sure he would have taken to me in the way she thought he would. Apparently, when I had first found her, sitting in that park, reading her book as if nothing else in the world mattered, she had escaped one of her father's many talks about finding a suitable husband.

She had told me that he would bring up marriage as often as he could, stating that he wouldn't be around forever and that she needed someone to take care of her when he was gone.

Isabella being Isabella of course, wasn't too happy with that little statement.

She explained that she knew he was only looking out for her, but something it drove her to madness. That was why she went to the park every afternoon. To escape.

Irony, isn't it?

The one place she went to escape the suitors her father kept finding for her was the one place she had found the one she was supposed to be with forever.

I had taken her back to that park a few years ago and the look she had on her face was one that told me she wished there was a way to go back to that time. I could tell she missed the simpler life of the early nineteen hundreds. There wasn't really much she had to worry about when she first met me. All she had been troubled about was the threat of the Influenza which in the end would have taken her life. Her father did not survive the epidemic and she would not have either.

She remembered more about our meetings as she sat there, in the same spot she had always sat in when reading. There was nothing more beautiful than Isabella, sitting in the park, not a care in the world.

The others in the park didn't pay us any mind, completely unaware that a human being had lost their life in the very spot we were sitting in. Of course, there were many things that happened in this park that those who used it during the day were unaware of. Either that or they chose to ignore it.

Being with Isabella in the place she had grown up had led me to thinking about my own childhood, which was a place I didn't really want to revisit. I hadn't thought about that in a long while but for some reason, I couldn't stop my mind from wandering. Leaving Chicago we got on a plane headed for Europe. This had confused Isabella and I wanted to tell myself we were just headed over there to ensure that the vampires of the world were behaving themselves. Making sure they were abiding by the rules. I had told Isabella that was the reason.

She knew it was bullshit.

And so did I.

She just wasn't sure of the truth.

For some reason, Isabella's visiting her old home, which had been refurbished and now had a human family living inside, had gotten me

wondering about my own past. I hadn't really dwelled on my years as a human since I had turned. They seemed insignificant when it came to it. Why spend an eternity dwelling on something that cannot be changed?

It was pointless.

"This trip has nothing to do with the vampires in this part of the world, does it?" Isabella asked as I drove towards the unmarked land I had called home millennia ago.

I let out a breath, knowing, just as she did that it was nothing to do with the species and more to do with what was going on within my own mind. She could have picked the information out of my head if she had felt inclined to do so, if it had warranted it – as had been the case on a couple of occasions prior to this one – but she didn't. She was patient, even for a vampire and her stubborn streak had often come out in the years we had been together. Sometimes, it worked in her favour, allowing me to open up and keep her 'in the loop' – her words, not mine – as it were. Other times, it just pissed me off. I was glad she wasn't delving into my mind now. "No."

"It's okay to be nostalgic." She said quietly, linking her fingers through mine.

"Is it?" I truly didn't know. I had never really given any consideration to memories before. Especially my human ones.

"Of course it is." Her voice was filled with such conviction I couldn't even find it within myself to argue with her.

Now *that* was a new one.

Arguing with Isabella was always an interesting affair. She had so many opinions and her mind was always teeming with activity. Even arguing with her was endearing. Even though it could stem from the most pointless of subjects and last for such a long time, neither of us could truly figure out why we were arguing in the first place.

And the making up with her afterwards was always worth it.

But I digress.

"I'm guessing you haven't really thought about when you were human, have you? About what it was like?" I shook my head and she sighed, resting her head against the headrest on her seat. "Most of us would love to remember our human years. I know I would." There was a wistful tone to her voice as she gazed out of the window at the passing landscape. "And here, you can recall everything about yours with perfect clarity, yet you have no desire at all to do so. It's a bit ironic if you ask me."

"I can't tell you why I remember being human." I gave her hand a small squeeze as I drove. "But I do. There are a lot of things about my own existence that I don't understand or even *know*."

"Maybe there's a reason you remember." She mused quietly and I was almost certain she was talking to herself – because with Isabella, you can never tell – so I didn't answer.

We drove in silence for a while longer, day turning to night and back again, only stopping to refill the car. We often spent days in complete silence, not needing words to fill the air around us. There was nothing that could be said out loud that couldn't be said with a simple look or touch. Especially if you were with the right person. The person that could understand you and knew what you were thinking – even without the gift of telepathy – without you having to say or do anything.

The one that most never find.

Even though it had taken me fifteen thousand years to do so. I had found her. I had found part of myself I wasn't even aware I was missing. I knew that my existence before had not been as it could have. I didn't not live as one given immortal life should. I shifted in the shadows, only making myself known when it was needed. But

before Isabella had come along, I hadn't really thought of any other way to be.

She had brought out a side of me I didn't even realise existed. Not even in my human years. She was playful and downright silly at times and if it had been any other creature, I would have found it aggravating. But with her, it did nothing but make me love her even more than I already did.

She was the carefree to my serious.

She balanced me out when I hadn't even been aware of what I was missing.

Having found her, I had found myself doing things I never thought I would. She, of course, wanted to see all the sights in the world. There were some we were limited on, obviously, having to view them at night due to the sun and the problems it caused.

But the look on her face as she gazed upon the Sphinx and the pyramids was one I would do anything to see over and over again for the rest of eternity.

She was turning me into a sap.

She had insisted that we go and visit England properly as she always wanted to do when she was human. So I took her all over the country. We travelled up and down the coast and I found myself thankful for the bleak weather of the country because it meant that we didn't have the problems with running into too many humans. They tended to stay inside when it was cold outside.

We stopped off in London and we went on all the tours of Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament. Remind me again why I was doing this?

Isabella. Right!

While we were in London, I had heard through the human minds about a rash of murders happening throughout the city. I searched the future surrounding the city and discovered that a vampire had decided to make the capital city of Britain its home and was not being careful about his feeding habits.

He was no longer causing any problems.

Isabella had made a tourist out of me and while a part of me hated it, another part didn't really care because she was content and happy. She was doing things she had always dreamed of doing as a human and hadn't really had the chance to in her first century as an immortal.

She turned to look at me, an eyebrow raised as I stopped the car on the side of a narrow lane. I had driven it up onto the grassy curb far enough so that other vehicles were able to pass without causing much of a fuss. I didn't answer her questioning look as I got out of the car, looking over the vast expanse of land in front of me. She silently climbed out and stood beside me, clasping my hand in hers, a silent show of support, watching me, her golden eyes curious and alight with questions.

"This is it." I said quietly, looking down at her. She was confused with my cryptic words, as was expected. "This is where I was born."

She looked over at the land with a new expression on her face, as if she maintained fields in front of her now held some kind of deeper meaning.

"It's different to how it used to be."

She was quiet for a little while, her eyes fixed on the tiny village about a mile away that was, ironically, in the exact place my tribe's encampment had been. If I hadn't known otherwise, I would have said they were the descendants of my people.

That, though, was not possible.

"Show me." She said softly, looking back up at me. "Show me what your world was like." She wanted to see my memories. It was not unexpected considering how long she'd been curious and where we were. I knew she would ask at some point.

I wanted to show her. I wanted to share what had happened to me and what I was like as a human but there was another part of me that had to admit I was scared. I hadn't felt this way since the night had turned. It was as though being back here was bringing me back to the human I once was. The human that had dwelled, slept and hunted on these very lands before the humans had turned them into the organised strips they were now.

I let out a breath, sitting down. I pulled her down with me and she settled in my lap. This was not an unusual place for her to be. She rested her head on my shoulder, her forehead pressed against the side of my neck.

Are you sure?

Absolutely.

I closed my eyes and allowed myself to do something I'd never done before.

I voluntarily went back to my human days.

The carefully organised and split fields the humans used that had been in front of us not a moment ago melted away and turned into a rugged unkempt area. The grass was long, the plains melting into the forests that had now been demolished by man, making way for crops and livestock.

In the centre of the vast plain there were signs of life, of human dwelling. Of my people. My tribe. My family. By modern standards, it was incredibly savage, being nothing more than simple wooden and grass huts made from the surrounding trees. Animal skins had been used for insulation where possible and there wasn't much in the way

of flooring. Whatever we could find really. Animal skins. Dried grass. Whatever we could find to keep ourselves warm.

There was a large fire in the centre of the encampment, which was primarily used for cooking the game that had been killed that day, if any at all. These were not the times of convenience food or fast food restaurants. Unlike modern times, humans had to work for their food. It was required that each and every man had the knowledge and the skills of the hunt.

The fire was also an effective deterrent for any animals that might wander too close to the tribe. What with there being children, babies and the sick around, no one wanted to risk losing someone if they didn't have to. Death might not have been as much of a tragic occurrence as it was in modern times, being much more frequent, but there was still no sense in putting oneself in danger when there was no need.

Knowing Isabella would want to know everything, I allowed myself to slip back into who I was then. Back into the mind of the seventeen year old boy I had been. In a sense, I was seeing everything as though I was living it once again.

Not something I thought I'd ever do.

The things we do for the one we love.

It was surreal to say the least. Having the knowledge of the modern world and yet not being able to apply it to where I was now within in own mind.

I didn't like it very much.

It was evening and the meat was being cooked by the women while the men relaxed.

It was a celebratory night of sorts. A clan a few miles from my own had decided they want to try and take our land. They had failed and

tonight we were celebrating our victory. It wasn't often we were able to celebrate. Unlike modern times, marriage wasn't something that happened. Generally, the only time anything was celebrated, it was the conception of a child. Pregnancies were something that were always celebrated, no matter who you were or what your standing. A child was always something that would be welcomed into the tribe.

I went to find my mother, who was not at the fire ground. She was back in our hut, waiting for the celebration to begin. She had been tired lately and I worried about her.

I walked into the hut and she was laying there, in her little area, fast asleep. She was as beautiful as she had always been. Her long hair was the shade as mine, a deep dark red. There was no control over her fiery locks and I knew I had inherited that trait from her as well. Not that I minded. She was slender, her days of having to work hard in the camp while we were out trying to find some meat for us to eat had contributed to that.

Her beauty had caught the eye of many of the male members of the tribe over the years, one encounter having resulted in me. But just because she was a mother didn't take away from her beauty. It only proved to the other men that she was a suitable mother for their children.

Not sure how I felt about my mother being thought of in that way.

But there was one I didn't want hanging around her.

Neyaar.

He annoyed me. There was no other way to put it. Hanging around my mother as though if he annoyed her and was persistent enough, she might give in.

Not really going to happen.

Waking my mother up gently, she smiled at me, taking my hand in her own and pressing her lips to the backs on my fingers. It was her way of telling me she was happy I was home. She didn't want me to get hurt in any way, which I guess was a mothers' wish when it came to her offspring.

I spied Neyaar across the fire, his eyes never leaving my mother as she sat down. I made sure I sat close to her, making sure she was touching me in some way. I didn't like the way he was watching her so closely. His eyes flicked to me and I saw the annoyance building in them. He didn't like my presence around my mother and I had the feeling, had he the chance, he would have gotten rid of me a while ago. The possessiveness he exuded while watching my mother was unnerving to say the least.

It was as if he would do anything to have her.

Or at least make sure that no one else could have her.

I wasn't going to lie. I knew my mother was one of the more desired women in the tribe and most of the males lusted after her in some way. Some more than others of course, but that was neither here nor there. My mother had turned them down at some point or another. Sooner or later, they realised she wasn't interested and moved on to another female.

But Neyaar was like a gnat that wouldn't go away. He was the perpetual thorn in my side and I could see the annoyance in my mothers' eyes building each and every time she approached her.

Looking at him, it was no wonder the females in the tribe had disregarded him when choosing males to sire their offspring. He wasn't that much older than I was, maybe four winters my senior but you wouldn't have thought he was the elder of the two of us.

He was pale, slim in build and boasting next to nothing in body mass. There were many in the tribe more impressive than he, myself included and to say that irked him was no lost on me. I had always

been able to read others easily and Neyaar was no exception to that rule. In fact, he was one of the easiest to read in the tribe. That might have been because he was never one to hide his emotions. His intentions were clear to me so there was no doubt they were clear to everyone around him.

He wanted my mother.

And I didn't want to see how far he would go to get her. I didn't want to risk my mother in any way, shape or form. She was the only constant I'd ever known in a world that was always changing.

She was the comfort that lingered after the harshness of the day had ended.

Of course others in the tribe wanted her but there was nothing about them had posed a danger to her, should they catch her alone. They were more likely to try to win her over with displays of their strength and prowess rather than force her. Forcing a woman was not something that was acceptable at any time.

They wouldn't fathom hurting her.

Unlike Neyaar.

After the celebrations were done, I left my mother in the company of the other females in the tribe. They would look after her, caring for her as she had done for them in the past when they had been with child.

The fact that she was with child again made me even more nervous about what Neyaar would do given half the chance. The fact that he felt no one should be with my mother, other than him, he was not pleased at the news that had brought the rest of the tribe joy, as did the news that any of the females were expectant mothers. He was rife with jealousy and that could influence a man's actions in many ways.

None of them too good.

Wanting to get away from the main activity happening tonight, activities that would not be ending for a good while yet considering the victory we had brought home, ensuring the safety of our women, children and territory. I made my way back to the hut my mother and I shared and lay down to rest. It had been a trying day, seeming difficult compared to most. I needed to relax for a little while. Escape and be with my own thoughts, whatever they may be.

"Edaar!" I was aware of my body being shaken, jarred from sleep and back into the conscious world much sooner than I wanted to be. I opened my eyes to see Seytu, an ally and close friend of mine hovering above me. His eyes were wide and filled with grief, panic and many more emotions I couldn't contemplate or understand. "Edaar!" He shook me once again, probably making sure that I was in fact awake and seeing him in front of me. I pushed him away, making him stop.

He stood up, motioning for me to follow him. I stood up, my body language still lethargic, trying to fight off the feeling as I followed him out of the hut.

The first thing I noticed when we stepped outside was that it was still dark. That confused me even more. I looked at Seytu, who gestured for me to follow him once again.

The camp was in an uproar and for the life of me I couldn't figure out why. I couldn't understand how the racket they were making hadn't woken me up before now but decided not to dwell on it. The women were wailing, trying to provide comfort while shedding their own tears themselves. The men were angry, each of them carrying weapons and heading out in different directions. I wondered if there had been another attack by the rival tribe, trying to catch us off guard.

I stopped when I saw a small huddle of members surrounding the priestess of our tribe. She seemed to be crouched over something.

No. Some *one* .

Seytu grabbed my arm, pulling me towards the group and my confusion turned to panic. I wasn't sure why, but I didn't want to know what was going on.

I didn't really have a choice though as Seytu pulled me towards the priestess. I could clearly see now that it was a woman and she wasn't moving at all. She was dead. Something had happened either during or after the celebrations and this woman had lost her life. I felt my heart sink as I absorbed the fact that a life had been lost and I had been sleeping. It was never a good atmosphere in the tribe when something like that happened.

Stepping closer to the priestess and the woman, I saw something that made me freeze. A spilling of deep, dark red hair and an outstretched arm with a ring of fox teeth surrounding the wrist. I knew that bracelet well because it had been given to the woman when she had been expecting her first child.

This was not another woman in the tribe that would be missed.

This was my mother!

I pushed past everyone surrounding her, dropping to my knees as I took in her lifeless form in front of me. Her eyes, which had been so full of life and laughter not a few hours before were now cold, empty and dead. There was nothing left of my mother in those eyes. She wasn't in there anymore. She was gone, leaving this shell, her physical presence to linger in this plane while her spirit moved on.

There was a spearhead, broken off about half a foot down jutting out of her chest where her ribs curved and met in the middle. The angle of the intrusion would have killed her almost instantly. Her once perfectly alabaster skin was now marred with the red of her blood as it spilled out onto the ground around her.

I looked up at the priestess who was watching me with a strange look in her eye. Her mouth was set in a grim line and the lines around her eyes told me she wanted to know what I was thinking. Running my fingers through my mothers' hair, I looked back up at her, my eyes boring into hers. She knew what I was asking. She knew I was asking who had done it and where they were now.

"Neyaar." The name instantly made my blood boil and I watched as she lifted up a hand and pointed to the side, towards the thick trees that provided sanctuary for us. He had disappeared, which was not surprising. Taking the life of another was punishable by death and if you took the life of a woman with child, you were condemned to the deepest pits. Your soul would never find peace and you would be forced to forever dwell in the world for the rest of the eternity.

He would pay with his very soul for the life he had taken.

I ran my fingers through my mother's hair again, gently closing her eyes before I stood up and faced the forests the priestess had pointed in.

As soon as I started to take a step, I felt a fragile yet strong grip on my arm. I looked down to see the priestess clutching my arm with all her might. She had a panicked look on her face and I didn't know whether I was curious or whether I wanted to shove her off of me and head off in search for the low form of life that had taken the life of my mother.

I had known why he had done it.

Because she had been expecting the offspring of another male. He viewed himself as the only one that was worthy of her. He saw her as being the only one he could have, not caring that she already had me. Either that or he was just too much of a coward to try and face me in a confrontation. He knew I would best him. Despite being my senior, I was stronger, faster and more developed than he was. The only way he could ensure that no one would have my mother again was to kill her.

And her unborn child.

"Edaar!" I looked down at her again and she was stood there, shaking her head at me. She didn't want me to follow him. She didn't want me to find the monster that had killed my mother. She probably wanted him to be brought back to the camp so that he could face what it was he had done and how he would be punished by the Gods.

But then said pointed towards the woods while looked at me and then placed her hand flat on my chest, right above my heart. She held her hand flat for a few moments before clenching her fingers into a fist. She was telling me that if I went after Neyaar tonight, my own heart would stop.

Did she not think that I could defeat him? Was she doubting my skills?

She shook her head and I wondered what she meant. Did she mean that Neyaar would best me or was there something else in those forests that would cause my demise if I followed after him?

I looked down at my mother again, the grief and guilt over not being there to protect her was overwhelming. I should have been able to protect her.

I needed to clear my head. I needed to get away from everyone here. I needed to get away from the women mourning the loss of the sister and friend. I had to get away from the men that were plotting the death of the one who should, by rights, find his end by my own hands.

I pushed away from the priestess and made my way towards the forest in the opposite direction to where she had pointed. I needed time on my own. I didn't want to be surrounded by those mourning.

I wanted to be able to do that in peace.

I don't know how long I wandered through the forests for. I knew exactly where I was. I knew these forests like the back of my hand. I was the best navigator of these trees and the others relied on my knowledge to get them through when on a hunt.

The moon was high in the sky as I walked, casting a silver glow on the ground in front of me, allowing me to see the stray branches and roots on the forest floor in front of my feet.

I stopped, noticing the irregularities in the earth in front of me. This wasn't anything made by the winds or animal inhabitants of the forests.

Human footprints.

I would have assumed that it was Neyaar but there was more than one. It was not the tribe because they were hunting with fire and weapons. They were also travelling in larger groups while these footprints belonged to three or four individuals at the most. These footprints didn't belong to anyone from my tribe.

But what was anyone from another tribe doing lurking in the trees around my home?

I looked around, trying to discern anything I could from the darkness around me, but finding nothing. I grabbed a strong, sharp branch that was on the ground beside me and began to follow the footprints. I knew that the smart thing to do would have been to head back to the tribe and come back with the dawn to search for the owners of the prints in front of me. But I knew there would be a manhunt of Neyaar until he was found. It wouldn't matter how long he was missing for or how long the search carried on for. There wouldn't be anything that came first.

Knowing I should be aiding the search for the one that murdered my mother, I quietly followed the prints. I made sure not to make a sound as the prints began to clearer indicating I had been following

them in the right direction. That was all I needed at the moment. For them to be leading me to nothing at all.

After a little longer, I could make out the glow of a fire just ahead of me. I kept to the shadows, making sure that none of those that could be surrounding it, keeping warm were aware that I was there. I ducked behind a large tree, able to spy three men sat around the fire. None of them were Neyaar, so I knew they weren't harbouring him.

From what I could tell of the skins they were wearing, they were from a completely different region. What were they doing out here? Could it be possible that they had become lost purely by chance? Or were they here for another reason completely?

It seemed that the region they were from was more advanced than the home tribe. They were communicating to each other in ways that we had never used before.

They were using their voices.

Of course, when it came around the first time I had no idea what they were saying, but sitting here, now, immersed in the memories that had been carried with me from my human years, I understood them. I had known what they were saying since the time I had learned their language and remembered the words.

I kept an eye on the males sat around the fire as they communicated, wondering what was going on.

"You think we can do it?" One of them asked as my modern mind was able to understand the words perfectly while the memories I had were confusing me greatly. The two things happening inside my head were warring over what I knew. I wasn't sure what the hell was going on.

"Yes," another answered, clearly convinced that whatever they had come over here to plan was going to go off without a hitch. "All we

need to do is wait for Unnur to come back with the sacrifice and we can begin. That is all we need. Everything else we need, we already have in our possession."

What were they talking about?

Sacrifice?

What or who were they planning on sacrificing?

I didn't have time to ponder those questions at all before I was aware of what was happening, something hard and heavy collided with the back of my head, causing my vision to blur as I lost my footing and collapsed. There was the sound of movement from the fire and someone laughing behind me. There were muffled words as something started to ring in my ears. I felt myself being pushed over and eyes on me. My hands went to my head, wincing as my fingers brushed the area.

There was blood.

"He is perfect, Unnur." A voice above me said gleefully as my head started to clear a little. I was aware of my arms and legs being grabbed and the earth disappearing underneath me. I was being moved. Just where the hell were they moving me to?

When I was placed on the ground again. I could feel the heat of the fire against my skin, I tried to open my eyes to find out what was going on but the pain as I did so was unbearable. What on earth were they doing?

There were bindings being placed on my wrists and ankles, being tightened and fastened into place so that I couldn't move. Why on earth were they binding me in place?

I knew that there was something wrong but the me with no knowledge of what was happening was completely oblivious. I, on

the other hand was aware that I was the sacrifice they had been mentioning a moment ago.

There were fragrances all around me, some sweet and some rancid as the lights from the fire flickered behind my eyelids. I could sense and hear the movement of the men around me as I faced away from the fire and slowly opened my eyes. It was easier without the orange and yellow light that glittered and danced next to me. Turning my head slowly, I tried to allow my eyes to become used to the light before I was able to see the men.

I pulled at my bindings, having no luck. I couldn't move an inch. The bindings were so tight they were cutting into my skin. I wasn't sure they were even aware of the pain they were causing me. Or if they even cared. I pulled again, trying once again to get free. The only thing I managed to do was hurt myself even more. They had noticed I was trying to get free and had turned to laugh.

One of them hovered above me, wrapping his fingers around my neck as his lips moved in an unfamiliar pattern and strange sounds escaped his mouth.

Of course I knew what they meant now.

He released my neck and made his way back over to where the other three were waiting for him. There were more words spoken and more smells and things thrown into the air. The four of them reached up to the stars as they stood around me. What on earth was going on?

They knelt down next to me and I wondered if they were going to let me go. No such luck it seemed.

Two of them grasped my wrists while the others did the same with my ankles. This was becoming more and more frightening as they progressed. What on earth were they doing?

What were they going to do with me?

I couldn't hold the cry of pain back as I felt the four of them slice through the skin at my wrists and ankles.

Before I could register what was going on the cuts made were covered by something wet and warm. I turned my head to the side to see one of them at my wrist with his lips attached to my skin as he sucked harshly.

I could feel the same sensation at my other wrist and turned to see one of the others doing the same thing. I didn't have to look to know they were doing the same thing at my ankles.

They were drinking my blood!

What on earth could possess them to do that? What could they possibly gain from it? There was nothing I could think of that could bring them aid through my blood.

I wasn't sure how long they carried on for but the moon was lowering in the sky and the struggles I had been trying to put into place ever since I had realised what they were doing were nothing more than weak nudges as I felt myself going weak. I felt myself losing consciousness after a while and I knew that this night would be the night my heart beat its last.

I should have listened to the priestess when she told me not to enter the woods. I would not be here right now. I would be aiding the hunt for Neyaar. Now I would be joining my mother in the peacefulness of the next world.

I could hear my heart beating in my ears, pounding slow and lethargic, preparing to beat its last as the four of them drained me. I didn't want to know what they would gain from this but all I knew was that it had cost me my life.

I wasn't sure what I was expecting as my heart beat its last but I wasn't expecting to be aware of it. I was expecting to be completely

oblivious to the knowledge that I was dead. Was this what death was like?

It was then that a prickling began in my veins, like one has when they've stepped on something slightly sharp and not really recognised what they had done until it had made itself known. It wasn't just in my fingers or toes or even in the places they had been sucking the life out of me.

It was everywhere.

And it was escalating.

The prickling was picking up intensity as it spread. Soon it was more than a prickling and had turned into an inferno that was like liquid fire running through my veins. What had they done to me? This was a fate worse than death for I knew death was not so unforgiving.

Maybe this was my punishment for disobeying the priestess and disregarding her warning about the forest.

Would the priestess have cast something like this on me as a warning not to disobey her again?

No, she wouldn't. She did not harm. She helped and nurtured. She was not one for vengeful wraths nor was she the one to dole out pain. That was up to the men of the tribe.

This was magic of another kind. Of an evil sort. This was not something that humans were able to conjure up. This was something made from demons. No human could enforce this type of pain onto their fellow man, could they?

If I had thought going through this once was unbearable, reliving it through my memories was even worse. Purely because I knew what was coming. The four men were speaking in panicked tones, clearly not understanding what was going on.

When I had burned initially, I clung onto the voices, not understanding them but wanting them to remain near so that I could place where I was and maybe hold onto some kind of hope that I was still on earth and alive.

But now I knew what was being said, I knew they were panicking, wondering what had gone wrong with the ritual they had been performing. After having learned the language they spoke, I understood that they had been performing the ritual in the hopes of becoming immortal. It had seemed that they had gotten the ritual wrong and turned the sacrifice they had thought would bring them immortality. They did not understand what was happening to me, yet curiosity kept them around and stopped them from leaving me where I was.

Needless to say, they were the first to go.

After a countless amount of time, the pain thrumming through my body began to dissipate. It started at my fingers and toes, slowly drawing up my legs and arms, concentrating in my chest where the pain had become so intense I wished I had the ability to shout out for someone to make it stop. Even now, through my own memories I could barely handle the agony of the change. I had never wanted to revisit that part of my existence. Not just the emotional pain but the physical pain as well.

No wonder Aro had looked at me with such hatred after I bit him in Volterra.

But I digress.

Somehow my heart, which I thought had stopped beating before the pain started was now beating faster than anything I had ever felt or heard. It was as though it was trying to beat its way out of my chest. I wanted something or someone to end it. I couldn't stand it anymore.

And then it was over.

There was nothing.

There was no pain, no heartbeat. Nothing.

I opened my eyes, everything looking different and yet the same. Colours were enhanced, the different shades of the leaves and the bark on the trees more evident than ever before. There were sounds I had never been able to hear before. I could hear the tiniest rustle of the leaves and the insects burrowing deep beneath the layers of the earth. I could hear the river flowing from where it was many miles away before it split into the small stream that led down past where the tribe had set up camp.

I could hear the fearful heartbeats of the men that had seemed to make the mistake of using me as their sacrifice. It was their heartbeats that drew my attention away from everything else. There was something about them that took up all of my attention. I wasn't sure what it was about them, but the four of them smelled exquisite and I quickly noticed an excruciating pain in my throat. It drew all attention away from everything else and I knew I needed to find something to sooth the burn.

I stood up quickly, the four men in front of me cowering slightly at the speed. The branches were moving, swaying slightly in the wake of my quick movement. I found myself momentarily distracted by that thought. And also the fact that I could see myself in my head. But it wasn't as though I was looking at myself. It was like I was seeing myself through someone else's eyes. There were also things flitting through my head that I didn't even know. The strange sounds that the four men had made when I had been hiding from them and after I had been struck.

Thinking back to the males in front of me, my eyes snapped to them and it was as if I could see their pulses. It was as though I knew instinctually what I needed and my body was going to take what it needed, however it needed to get it.

I made my way over to the four of them, trying to come to grips with how my body was responding to my mind. It was as though each and every movement was more fluid than ever before. I could see and feel every muscle in my body as I had never been able to before. I had always been aware of my body, having to keep up with the elder males in the tribe my entire life was no easy feat.

Stopping in front of them, there was a picture in my mind of how I looked. I had seen myself before in reflections of the river's surface but never before through someone else's eyes. I wasn't sure I liked it. I had never looked like this before.

I looked like a monster and I was aware that that was what I had become. I was no longer human.

My pale skin was now as white as snow and as smooth as marble. There were no blemishes that I had had before. I had always had a small scar above my left eye and that was now gone. I had had a cut on my lip and a cut on my arm from the battle my tribe had had with the rival tribe before my mother had been killed. Both of those were now gone.

What had happened to me?

Pulling myself out of the minds of the four males in front of me, there was something pulling me to them. And I had finally figured out what it was.

Their blood.

Reaching out and grabbing one of them, my teeth were instinctively pulled towards the flow of blood in his throat. He let out a scream as my teeth sank through his skin and the rush of blood that flew down my throat was more exquisite than anything else I had ever tasted. The burn in my throat dulled as I drank, his body becoming limp and weak as his heart beat its last.

Throwing him down on the ground. I flew through the others, draining each of them. Something inside of me had been awakened and I didn't know how to dampen it down. There was nothing I could do to stop the thirst from burning in my throat. I wanted blood and I wanted it now.

I didn't know where to get it though.

I kicked the lifeless forms out of the way as I stood where I had been lying as I went through the pain that should have been the end of me. I closed my eyes and allowed myself to try and find other heartbeats around.

The tribe.

I started off in the direction I knew the tribe was, moving at a speed that would have astounded me if I hadn't been so focused on my goal of blood. I needed it. I *craved* it.

And I would do anything to get it.

I stopped on the edge of the forest, smelling the tribe all gathered in one place. It was as though they were all waiting for me to end them. To drain them.

I inhaled and found that there was fresh blood in the air. I could see them, all gathered. They were standing, facing two of them members. One I knew was the priestess that had urged me not to enter the woods or my heart would stop beating. She probably thought that I would die.

Little did she know that I would be the one to destroy my own people.

The other one I knew as the one that had killed my mother. Neyaar. He would be the first to die. He had taken her from me without a single thought for anyone else in the tribe or the life she was nurturing. He was lower than scum.

Maybe I should leave him till last to show him what a true monster was. I knew that feeling no remorse over the deaths of the four men I had just ended proved that.

I walked out of the woods and into the sunlight, momentarily distracted by the effect it had on my skin. It was as though I was covered in tiny water droplets, glistening in the sunlight. I heard them all stop and turn to face me as I made my way towards them.

"Edaar!" It was Seytu, my best friend. He started towards me, his mind showing the disbelief he felt upon seeing me. I knew that there was something different in the way he was. He couldn't believe what he was seeing.

According to his mind it had been three sunrises since I had been seen, since the priestess had warned me against going into the forest.

They stood there, cowering as I approached. Their heartbeats were beating fast, almost as one and it was incredibly hard not to charge them and destroy them all in one fell swoop. There were images being blasted at me of the last few days, from my disappearance being discovered, to the finding of Neyaar. It appeared he had been trying to make a getaway over the mountains that resided not too far away. Less than a days' run from here. He had been found by Seytu and his group of hunters. Seytu knew those mountains as well as I knew the forests and no one could escape from him there.

Not that that mattered anymore.

The tribe split as I made my way towards Neyaar. They were lucky they were still alive.

"Edaar!" The priestess stepped towards me, stopping and gasping when she saw my eyes. They were the colour of the blood I had just consumed from the four men in the forest. They would not be found. Their carcasses would be devoured by scavengers before the day was out.

I stopped in front of Neyaar, who was bleeding from several wounds. He had been beaten when they found him, there being no mercy for one who had taken the life of another. He was small and scared, as should be expected. He had known since they found him that he was to die, yet he hadn't comprehended that I would be the one to end him.

After my disappearance, none of them had.

I grabbed him by the shoulder and dug my teeth into his flesh. The women screamed while the men were frozen in horror as I drained him quickly, dropping him to the floor once I had finished with him.

The danger I presented registered with them as I turned, my chin covered in his blood and the look in my eye obviously told them to run.

They scattered.

It was only the priestess that had remained and she was running through rituals that could banish the monster and bring the old Edaar back. He was gone. I knew that now. There was no way for me return to the boy I had been not four days ago.

He was dead.

And so was she.

I drained her just as quickly as I had Neyaar and turned to see the men that I had once called brother standing there, banded against me, weapons at the ready.

I wasn't sure how I knew they would be useless against me but I strode towards them, brushing their spears and sharpened flints sides, destroying and draining the males filled with fear quickly and more efficiently than I had ever cut down a man while I had been human.

But that might have been because I wasn't human anymore. My heart was no longer beating and I wasn't anything any of these men could cut down. I had seen them bring down the largest of game and yet it wasn't enough experience to cut down something such as myself.

I was beyond them.

I looked down at the body in my arms and saw that Seytu was my latest victim. I should have felt some kind of sadness, remorse and guilt but I didn't. All I felt was hunger and the fear emanating from the rest of the tribe.

The females were grabbing the children and running, trying to get to the trees lining the encampment, thinking that they would be able to lose me in the thick forest.

None of them made it that far.

It was over in minutes.

I cut them all down, not caring that they were the women that had fed and clothed me when I was younger. That they had nurtured me as much as my own mother had. It didn't matter to me that they were the ones I had called sister for my entire lifetime.

They meant nothing to me now.

I should have felt gorged by now, satiated and full but I wasn't anywhere near.

I looked around, the last victim I had destroyed hanging limply in my arms as I saw the devastation I had caused. Not a single member of the tribe I had called my family as long as I had been alive were left living.

I looked down at the female in my arms, remorse trickling into my heart and head for the first time since I had begun my massacre.

It was Hana. Her golden hair hung limply from her shoulders, covered in the blood that I had spilled when feeding from her. I ran my hand over her belly, swollen with the child she was carrying.

The child I had sired.

She was the only one that I had felt anything with over her death. She was carrying the only life I had created and I had destroyed it. It shouldn't have mattered to me but it did.

It was then and there that I knew for certain that I was a monster. I was something that no one could justify. I wouldn't be given any salvation after death. There was no spot waiting for me next to my mother now as I hoped there would be when my time came.

I placed her back on the ground, looking at the chaos that had ensued.

There were bodies strewn everywhere, looking like a battlefield. But there had been no battle.

Just a massacre.

I spotted a small stone jutting out of the ground that hadn't been there before I had gone into the woods. It was new. I made my way towards it, stopping in front of it, knowing exactly what it was.

My mothers' grave.

I knelt down in front of the stone, running my fingers over the freshly moved earth. She was underneath me and I could practically see her spirit, feel her disappointment.

Looking back over the encampment at the bodies laying haphazardly where I had cut them down, I turned and ran in the direction I knew would lead to more. It was like as I had started, I couldn't stop my search. Even though I had just destroyed the lives of over a hundred people in less time than it took to cook meat, I still craved more.

Would it stop?

I pulled Isabella and myself out of my memories and she let out a breath, her eyes wide. There was nothing running through her mind and I could see she was trying to process what she had just seen. There were no words.

"Wow." She breathed, looking down at me. I nodded, knowing that there was nothing she could say that would change anything she had seen. It was in the past. "That was . . ."

I shook my head and she ran her fingers through my hair.

"I know that you had told me what had happened but seeing it like that . . . it just kind of takes everything to a whole new level. It gives it new meaning." She whispered and I nodded. "So . . . it's because of those men that you're the way you are?"

"Yes." I nodded once and she squeezed me to her tightly. "It wasn't until later, when I had picked up on the language they had been speaking that I realised they were searching for immortality themselves. Apparently, they hadn't gotten the ritual quite right."

"So instead of turning themselves, they turned you?" I nodded. "Were they one of the ones that turned?"

"No." I let out a breath, looking out across the village that now stood where my own had millennia ago. "The first ones to turn were those in my village. The ones I hadn't completely drained. Seytu was one of them."

"What happened to him?" She asked, her voice quiet as she watched me.

"I don't know." I shook my head, resting my cheek on her forehead as I closed my eyes. "He was probably killed by another turned vampire or a tribe that had discovered fire was a weakness my 'descendants' had."

"What if he wasn't?"

"Then we've done one hell of a job avoiding each other all this time." She giggled at my words. I would have been lying if I hadn't thought about Seytu at least a couple of times over the millennia. I had wondered what had happened to my old friend. I had run into him just as I was coming out of my 'newborn' stage, where I could think coherently and wasn't consumed by such a thirst as I had been before.

He hadn't stuck around when he had seen me. He had been as afraid of me as he had been when I had killed him, which was understandable. The last memory he had of me was me coming at him with the intention of eating him.

Which I did.

"What would you do if he was still alive?" She asked quietly, knowing that I hadn't afforded any that I had made the same comfort I had given her when it came to her existence. She knew I couldn't destroy her. She knew it would be impossible for me to do so. No matter how much she pissed me off sometimes.

"I don't know." I sighed and she pressed her lips to my jaw, humming softly.

"Well, if he is still alive, he's obviously shown he knows how to control his power. I mean there's not really a reason to destroy him if he can do that, right?" She reasoned and I rolled my eyes at her thoughts.

"This is all hypothetical. He was probably killed millennia ago along with all the others that were created in my first year." I looked out across the fields before standing up. I placed Isabella on the ground and she wrapped her hands around my waist.

"It's amazing how much things can change." She whispered, looking out over the fields in the same manner I was. "It's amazing how

something that looks so indestructible, like a vast forest, can be cleared away in no time at all by anything really. I mean fire, man, any kind of natural disaster can destroy something so majestic and yet, something that seems as insignificant as a man," she smiled up at me and I knew what she was getting at, "can linger for an eternity."

"I know what you mean, love." I pulled her close to me, resting my cheek on her head again. "Eternity used to seem so bleak." I sighed softly, running my hand through her hair gently.

"Used to'?" She asked, looking up at me questioningly.

"It doesn't anymore." I whispered, pressing my lips to hers. "I've found the one thing that makes it worth living."

She smiled up at me, linking her fingers with mine. "Let's get out of here." She whispered, her lips moving by mine again.

I couldn't agree more.

With Isabella by my side, eternity wasn't a curse I had to carry.

It was something I could look forward to with this glorious creature by my side.

AN

Sorry about this but this is not an update that you guys have been asking me for.

The short story that I mentioned at the end of this story is not a sequel but more of an accompaniment to Eternally Damned.

I know you're all waiting for an update but I don't know when that will be I'm afraid. There's been a lot happening over the last year or so.

I've found out I'm expecting, started a new job, had my house broken into and nearly lost my mum at the age of fifty-one so writing has been kind of near the bottom of my priority list unfortunately. I can tell you that my stories *will* be finished but unfortunately, I can't tell you when.

When everything calms down some, then I'll get my mind back on writing I'll be updating my stories.

I'm sorry I've kept you all waiting for so long, but hopefully, you can understand.

And 'wavey', with regards to your review and subsequent PM, what did you mean by the 'what did I ever do to you to put my name on character to get killed'? The original names in this story are completely random and don't have any meaning. It's just a story.

And if you want a response to a review, enable your PM's.

Sorry again about the lack of updates. I hope to say that there will be one soon but I'm not making any promises I'm afraid. That's the best I can do for you. All I can say is keep an eye out.