

(Notes: this piece was cut from the original epilogue. Though I briefly explained Emmett's back story in Chapter 14 "Mind over Matter," I really miss not having it detailed in his own words.)

Emmett and the Bear

I was surprised to find a strange kinship growing between myself and Emmett, especially since he had once been the most frightening to me of them all. It had to do with how we had both been chosen to join the family; we'd both been loved—and loved in return—while we were human, though very briefly for him. Only Emmett remembered—he alone really understood the miracle that Edward remained to me.

We spoke of it for the first time one evening as the three of us lounged on the light sofas of the front room, Emmett quietly regaling me with memories that were better than fairytales, while Edward concentrated on the food network—he'd decided he needed to learn to cook, to my disbelief, and it was rough going without the proper sense of taste and smell. After all, there was something that didn't come naturally to him. His perfect brow furrowed as the celebrity chef flavored yet another dish according to taste. I repressed a smile.

"He was finished playing with me then, and I knew I was about to die," Emmett remembered softly, winding up the tale of his human years with the story of the bear. Edward paid us no attention; he'd heard it before. "I couldn't move, and my consciousness was slipping away, when I heard what I thought was another bear, and a fight-over which would get my carcass, I supposed. Suddenly it felt like I was flying. I figured I'd died, but I tried to open my eyes anyway. And then I saw her—" his face was incredulous at the memory; I empathized entirely, "—and I knew I was dead. I didn't even mind the pain—I fought to keep my eyelids open, I didn't want to miss one second of the angel's face. I was delirious, of course, wondering why we hadn't gotten to heaven yet, thinking it must be farther away than I'd expected. I kept waiting for her to take flight. And then she brought me to God." He laughed his deep, booming laugh. I could easily comprehend anyone making that assumption.

"I thought what happened next was my judgment. I'd had a little too much fun in my twenty human years, so I wasn't surprised by the fires of hell." He laughed again, though I shivered; Edward's arm tightened around me unconsciously. "What surprised me was that the angel didn't leave. I couldn't understand how something so beautiful would be allowed to stay in hell with me—but I was grateful. Every time God came by to check on me, I was afraid he would take her away, but he never did. I started to think maybe those preachers who talked about a merciful God might have been right after all. And then the pain went away...and they explained things to me.

"They were surprised at how little disturbed I was over the vampire issue. But if Carlisle and Rosalie, my angel, were vampires, how bad could it be?" I nodded, concurring completely, as he continued. "I had a bit more trouble with the rules..." He chuckled.

"You had your hands full with me at first, didn't you?" Emmett's playful nudge to Edward's shoulder set us both rocking.

Edward snorted without looking away from the TV.

"So you see, Hell's not so bad if you get to keep an angel with you," he assured at me mischievously. "When he ever gets around to accepting the inevitable, you'll do fine."

Edward's fist moved so swiftly that I didn't see what knocked Emmett sprawling over the back of the couch. Edward's eyes never left the screen.

"Edward!" I scolded, horrified.

"Don't worry about it, Bella." Emmett was unruffled, back in his seat. "I know where to find him." He looked over me towards Edward's profile. "You'll have to put her down sometime," he threatened. Edward merely snarled in response without looking up.

"Boys!" Esme's reproving voice called sharply down the stairs.