

HOW RENESMEE SAVED HER LIFE

In our searches all over the world, we have found only a handful of vampire/human hybrids (vampans), and all but Renesmee were fathered by the same vampire called Joham. We expected to find others or at least oral or written evidence that they existed, but so far, we have not.

The women of the Denali coven have adopted a lifestyle of seducing human men, so it would seem likely that male vampires also have indulged themselves in greater numbers than what we know of. Indeed, legends exist of both the succubus (female demons who couple with human men) and the incubus (male demons who impregnate human women). Obviously, we know that human women can conceive with a vampire. Throughout history, though, there must have been only a very few successful births or surely we would have found them in our research.

That has lead me to consider why vampans are so rare. First and foremost, legend and logic tell us that very few humans, male or female, survive sexual congress with a vampire. There is no greater prophylactic measure than swift death.

Second, a serious flaw exists in the reproductive biology of the vampan. It is in the best interests of any species (parasitic, if you will) not to kill its host before it has a chance to reproduce. The vampan violates this tenet by prematurely destroying its pregnant carrier. We know that all of the mothers of existing vampans died during birth. Given that so few creatures exist, and given our experience with Bella's gestation of Renesmee, we can assume that of those women who were spared by their impregnators, most of them died before the fetus was mature enough to survive on its own.

Third, it would seem natural that a human being who conceives the baby of a monster—even a beautiful, seductive monster—would try to abort the fetus. Besides that, based on what we know of Joham and what

legends tell us, rape is the vampire's preferred method for impregnating a human. Women traumatized in that way often choose to abort their fetus if they have a choice. Abortion would help explain why we have found vampans to exist only in a marginal tribal culture. One might suppose that medical techniques of termination are more successful in modern hospitals than in the remote jungle.

There's no way to know for sure if other vampan children developed in the same way as ours—Renesmee's mother being the only one left to ask—but our daughter, at least, came with unusual mechanisms of self-preservation. I conjecture that these may be common to all vampans.

As we've discovered, the vampan fetus has a physical barrier against destruction—a granite-hard shell surrounding itself, which is indestructible by human hands. To the best of my imagination, the only way to abort a fetus inside that shell is to remove the shell and the fetus together through surgery. That might work, if blood loss can be controlled. Otherwise, the fetus will grow to maturity at an extraordinary pace for as long as the pregnant mother survives. (Perhaps the mother's tendency to die is what accounts for the highly accelerated developmental rate.)

In addition to the physical barrier, Renesmee has a special gift that has protected her almost from the day of conception. This gift was her ability to communicate with her mother (her biological host) in impossible and profound ways.

First, Bella began to dream of a baby whom she felt compelled to protect but feared she could not. It didn't matter that the irresistible child was a wanton killer who left piles of bodies in his wake. So...first came the dreams.

Next came the communication from the womb, which initially manifested in what Bella calls "nudging." Her "little nudger" would move inside Bella almost as if in response to events outside the womb. For example, when Bella was regretting having to leave Isle Esme so abruptly, the baby nudged her and Bella started talking to it. "I know. I

don't want to leave either" were her first words. Bella says she would have found it impossible to give up her pregnancy from that moment on. She became instantly and powerfully attached to the fetus. Bella described her connection to it as an "absolute necessity," as "necessary as breathing."

Third, Renesmee carries a unique and powerful charisma—like the immortal children did—that causes humans and vampires alike to fall in love with her. The instant anyone met the child, whether inside the womb or out, they were irrevocably drawn to her. Like the ancient vampires, we would have done anything, including sacrificed our own lives, to protect hers. This might be true of human infants to a degree, though we know by the number of infanticides worldwide that it is not at all certain. For vampans, though, it would seem to be.

I believe I could have overridden Bella's wishes to bear her child by sheer strength if nothing else, something I would have done to save her life. But Bella was clever enough to ensure her own virtual suicide by enlisting one as strong as her husband to prevent me. However, it is also clear that after I made contact with Renesmee's mind, I could no more have harmed her than I could have stopped loving Bella. While still in the womb, she became an absolute necessity to me as well.

One by one, each of us in the family fell to Renesmee's overwhelming charisma. This is a gift that was common to the immortal children, and I speculate that it may be inherent to the vampan child as well. This gift, along with her other natural defenses, ensured that not only would Renesmee not be aborted, but that nobody could destroy her after her birth. As a scientist, I see these as survival-of-the-species protections.

My theory was to be tested when we drew attention from the Volturi, the Italian coven which destroys vampires who dare to exist outside their rules. They've destroyed many an immortal child in their time, so it is not impossible to bypass the children's remarkable gift. However, the Volturi made it their practice to dispatch them immediately upon discovery, which is one reason why we were so afraid for Renesmee. I believe they did this to prevent the children from getting their "hooks"

into a prominent member of the Volturi guard and, thus, save themselves. (I would argue, in private only, that Jane and Alec are Aro's immortal children—with their hooks deeply embedded.)

In our case, it was fully due to Renesmee that so many of our friends and acquaintances chose to bear witness to her legitimacy. In truth, Renesmee saved herself from the Volturi by charming a large number of immortals enough to risk their lives for her. And thank heaven she did, for she is our necessity.



Edward

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