

## ADJUSTMENTS

*Renesmee followed through on her plan, though she waited for several weeks after our talk to pop the question. She knew that changes in Jacob's mode of responding to her had always been triggered by her own changes. As an imprinted soul, Jacob could only love Renesmee in a way that was appropriate to her needs at any given time. He couldn't see her as an object of adult love and sexual desire until she was grown up enough to want that from him.*

*After realizing that she was ready to commit herself to Jacob and join her life to his, Renesmee's feelings for him swiftly evolved into romantic love. She began to behave differently around him—with a new shyness and a perceptible physical reaction to his presence—and soon after she declared her intentions to me, she initiated their first kiss. The change in Jacob was almost immediate and their romantic courtship began.*

*When you have a child who grows and matures at a rate four to five times faster than the human norm, it can be difficult—even painful—to keep pace. One minute you know your child as your own; the next minute she belongs to someone else. Renesmee's transformation left both Bella and myself reeling. Change for vampires is difficult under the best of circumstances, but when you must alter something so fundamental as your relationship to your child, adjustment seems impossible. I spent many an hour conferring with Carlisle to try to gain some perspective on the situation and to process intellectually what was required of me as the father of a child who had entered adulthood in less than five years—something that had taken me over one hundred years to accomplish. It was mind-boggling and so very difficult to accept.*

*Bella and I did our best to release Nessie to her future, but the required shift was unnatural and Bella could enumerate many*

*instances in which I behaved less than graciously toward Jacob Black. Accepting that Renesmee is his has been the most difficult change I've ever had to undergo, including when I returned to drinking animal blood after feeding on humans for several years.*

*Carlisle offered his advice, his comfort, and his reassurance that every ending is also a beginning and, hard as it is to let go of Renesmee, I would reap rewards from that sacrifice in time. She and Jacob would bring new joys into our lives including, perhaps, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. This is the natural order of things, even for us, the most unnatural of creatures.*

*Billy Black was thrilled when Nessie asked him if he would honor her by becoming her father-in-law. Billy graciously accepted and offered his son to her along with his blessing. Nessie told us that she kissed his cheek and then grabbed his wheelchair and spun him around in circles as he used to do with her on his lap as a child. She said that in his chair he'd always made her feel like she could fly.*

*Renesmee proposed to Jacob soon afterwards and he accepted with no hesitation, though he wanted to postpone the wedding until the tribe could fulfill its duty of constructing a house for them on the reservation. It was his fervent desire to present his new wife with a home of her own as a wedding gift.*

*If, as we suspect, Jacob and Renesmee are genetically compatible and choose to have children, then they will raise their offspring as human on the reservation, sons and daughters of a Quileute chief. Nobody knows whether the presence of a half-vampire in the tribe will stimulate the magical change from Quileute to wolf among the tribe's teenagers or whether the combining of vampire and Quileute blood will suppress it. Time will tell.*

*Bella is exceedingly happy that with Renesmee married to Jacob, Charlie will have access to his granddaughter and potential great-grandchildren for the remainder of his life, even if his daughter*

eventually has to move on. He also gets the son-in-law he always wanted, if one generation farther down the line. We expect him and Sue Clearwater to marry one day, which will make both Renesmee and Charlie tribe members intimately involved with the tribal council. Who besides Alice ever would have guessed?

The months following Renesmee and Jacob's engagement were awkward for Bella and myself, as the two of them began displaying all the behavior patterns of young lovers...the whispered secrets and private laughter, the disappearances, the inseparability, and the inevitable lovers' quarrels, which are always rather one-sided, since Jacob lives to make Renesmee happy. Nessie has her mother's stubbornness and temper, and occasionally sets herself against her fiancé over this or that, which makes Jacob miserable. I can utterly sympathize, though he tolerates Renesmee's moods and whims better than I ever tolerated Bella's. My son-in-law-to-be is his own man, but absolutely devoted to my daughter and I love him for that.

I am still struggling with the issue of sex...that most delicate and disturbing of subjects when it concerns one's daughter. After conferring with Carlisle, Bella sat down with Renesmee and discussed her options for birth control. Though her menstrual cycle is three times longer than a human's, we presume that she is fertile. Bella and I have advised her against having children right away. As Bella put it, she and Jacob (literally) have all the time in the world to raise a family.

I never asked Bella what type of birth control Renesmee settled on or when exactly she started using it—I really don't want to know.

## Edward

