

# 1704 words, and a villain wins me further to his side

By Holly Lisle

Baanraak, immortal, soulless, mostly stripped of the memories of a time when he was both mortal and still had a soul, has made first contact with the first enemy in thousands of years who could take him – and who might. And his totally unplanned and unexpected response was ... elation. He was thrilled that he might annihilate her – but that she had an equal chance of taking him out, and that, in spite of his best precautions, she already knew he was coming for her. He doesn't know how he tipped his hand. He knows she has something on the ball. He's ecstatic –

And watching him, typing him out or having him crawl out my fingertips onto the page or whateverthehell the process is that brings surprises to stories and makes characters come to life, I find myself drawn to him even more. He's wicked and evil and a bastard – but goddammit, he's a sympathetic wicked evil bastard.

Strange, strange, the beasts that crawl from our minds when we aren't looking for them or guarding against them.

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