

AFTERNOON DELIGHT

By Ahelm

Chapter 1. Afternoon Delight

Story Notes:

Not my characters (though I wish Edward was mine). No money is being made from this writing. Consider it the dirty part of my brain coming out to play.

Twilighted beta:vjgm

"Hello," he said.

I felt the blush forming immediately, and wanted to kick myself for the squeak that was my voice as I responded. "Hello."

His bronze hair stood up at odd angles and his bright green eyes were particularly gorgeous today, set off by the colors in his shirt. I briefly thought about my appearance and was grateful that I'd put some effort into it today. Well-fitting jeans, a black tank top and ballet slippers, and my hair was freshly washed and straightened but pulled back into a loose ponytail.

When I dared to look him in the eye, he smirked, his crooked smile rendering me breathless. "How are you, Bella?" he asked.

"Um. Fine. I'm fine. How are you, Edward?"

"Oh, I'm great. Doing anything fun this afternoon?" he asked.

As if, I thought to myself, but only shook my head in response. I hated that he turned me into this blubbering mess, but it seemed to be my natural reaction to Edward Cullen. I couldn't help it.

"Well then, let's do something." He said it, and I felt my jaw drop in disbelief. Edward Cullen and I? Spending an afternoon together? Was I dreaming? He smiled. "Rent a movie, eat some popcorn? You can come to my place." He moved closer, so close that I could see the rise and fall of his chest and the glimmer in his eye.

Before I knew what I was saying, I agreed and we were walking to his Volvo, leaving my red Chevy in its parking space outside the Whole Foods Market where I'd just met Alice for lunch. He drove us to the nearest Blockbuster and I fidgeted the whole way there, feeling stupid. I was twenty-five and so was he. Who cared if I'd admired him from afar since we were seventeen? Why couldn't I act normal? I sighed to myself as we walked in.

"What should we rent?" he asked.

I looked around. "Nothing from the horror genre. Vampires and whatnot creep me out." He laughed and nodded his head. "Maybe a cult classic?"

He smiled broadly, "I know just the one."

We walked to a nearby section and he picked Empire Records from off the shelf and I smiled in agreement. We checked out and were quickly on the way to his place. It struck me that if this afternoon went badly, I was without a car. *Shit*, I thought to myself as we pulled into his drive and began the walk to the door of his townhouse. I nearly lost my footing at one point, but thankfully caught myself before anything disastrous happened.

"So this is it," he said, once we stepped inside. "Bathroom that way, kitchen's just in front of us, living room that way," he pointed. We walked a few more steps. "And my bedroom is that way."

At the mention of his bedroom, I thought I saw him sneak a glance at me, and I blushed as a result.

I walked into the living room as he went to the kitchen to pop some corn for our movie. As I perused his massive music collection, I found some copies of Van Morrison and Jeff Buckley albums that I didn't have and had opened the cases by the time I heard him enter the living room.

"No roommates?" I asked.

He shook his head, and sat the bowl of popcorn on the table.

"Well, that's nice. I have two - Angela and Alice. You remember them from high school, right?" Again, I wanted to kick myself as I placed his CDs back where they belonged. Did I really have to babble like that?

"You're adorable when you're nervous. Has anyone ever told you that?"

My jaw dropped and I took a step toward his couch and sat down. "Um. No?" *Does he know I have this massive thing for him? Crap, crap, crap.*

The smile melted from one side of his mouth, leaving a crooked smirk as he walked toward me. Just when I thought he would stop and sit down, leaving a foot or so of space between us, he kept coming, and suddenly, his face was inches from mine, and, for the second time that day, I found myself speechless and breathless. His hand kept his balance by pressing into the back of the couch.

"Do you know, Bella Swan, that I have wanted you since we were seventeen?"

His words hung in the air like a heavy fog. I could feel them around me, inside me, reverberating in my core. I had to be dreaming now.

Almost imperceptibly, I shook my head.

"Let me show you." His request was simple and I knew I couldn't deny him.

He pressed his lips to mine, gently at first. I marveled at the softness of them, and then his tongue invaded my mouth and his sweet taste overtook me. I felt my hands knotting in his hair, my body turn to him. He pressed into the kiss, pushing me back against the couch as he brought a knee to the couch for leverage.

I felt his hand slip to my side and move to the center of my lower back, arching me toward him, and I forgot all my nerves, all my anxiety. All I could focus on was him.

He growled into my mouth and as he pulled away, he gently nibbled my lip. I kept my hands in his hair, surprised at the next words that came out of my mouth.

“We’re not going to watch the movie, are we?”

It was as if my desire for him had made me into someone new. I was no longer the careful, quiet Bella. I wanted him. Now.

He shook his head slowly, and the smile that I loved grew over his lips.

“Shame on you, Edward Cullen. For bringing me here with your ... intentions.”

He bent then, kissing and licking the skin of my neck and as I arched my head away from him, giving him more room, he muttered, “As if you mind.”

As he kissed me urgently, he slipped his arms under me and carried me down the hallway to his bedroom, where he laid me on his mattress and then simply looked at me.

“What?” I asked.

“Can I ask you to do something?”

“It’s a little late to worry about that, isn’t it?” I laughed quietly as my mind went over the many ways we could wile away the hours in this bed.

He pulled off his t-shirt and tossed it in a corner. “Strip for me, Bella. Please?”

Again, I shocked myself by acquiescing to his request.

I stood, walked over to him and pushed him down by his shoulders, so that he was seated on the end of his bed. Then, I turned away from him and kicked my shoes off near the door and closed it. No roommate was fine, but I didn’t need a visitor to walk in on our romp. I turned the lock and swung back around, pressing my back to the door as I did so.

He sat, waiting patiently.

I would give him a good show if it was the last thing I did.

Slowly, tantalizingly, I brought my black tank top over my head, and was suddenly glad I was wearing nice underwear today. I had almost felt silly putting the set on this morning, but ignored it, thankfully.

The bra was wine colored lace over a pink material with a tiny bow at the center of my cleavage, and the panties were a thong in the same wine color with a ruffle that hung from the top seam.

I saw his eyes sweep hungrily over my upper body as I walked slowly toward him and ripped the rubber band out of my hair, allowing it to fall freely over my shoulders, neck and breasts.

I met his eyes as I slid my hands down my torso to the button on my jeans. His eyes focused on my navel region as I unbuttoned the jeans and slid them to the ground, revealing my gorgeous panties. I heard him sharply take in air as I turned slightly to the side to step out of my pants, revealing how little material my underwear was made of. I let him see all of me by turning slowly around.

He mumbled something under his breath. When I spoke, the huskiness of my voice surprised even me.

“Had enough, Mister Cullen?” I said, and, on a whim, reached out to a chair at his desk and grabbed a tie he had hanging over it. It was already tied, just loose, so I slipped it over my head and let it hang between my breasts, down to my stomach.

He stood. “Not by a long shot. Come here,” he commanded, and when I got closer, I could see the erection through his jeans, which he removed hastily as I approached.

He grabbed the tie and pulled me to him, crushing my lips to his and pulled me back, on top of him and his bed. I rolled to the side, so that we were lying, facing each other. He hitched my leg over his hip and pulled me closer. He kept his eyes on mine when he said, “You are so fucking beautiful. Did you know that?”

However, I never could answer, because he quickly brought his hand to my center and began to rub slowly, up and down, over the slight cloth of my thong. I felt the wetness that was already pooling begin to double. He grinned and continued to caress me as I closed my eyes in ecstasy.

After a minute, he moved my leg back to its natural position and hooked his fingers into my panties, pulling them down my legs. Then, he reached up and expertly unhooked my bra and tossed it and my underwear aside. He took me in as he removed his boxers, showcasing his perfect, hard cock. I gazed at it as he moved down the mattress, gently moving my legs to either side as he lowered his face.

“Bella, I want you to cum. In my mouth. Do you think you can do that?”

I gasped as he touched his tongue to my clit, and circled it, and then moved up and down, so slowly, I thought I might explode. He lapped and lapped as I felt the juices developing and kept his hands on my thighs, pressing them to his mattress. I felt the heat grow from my belly button to the middle of my thighs and then finally—finally—my orgasm coursed through me and I bucked my hips toward him, involuntarily.

He growled again. “Mmmm, yes, baby. Just like that.”

I rode out my orgasm and when it was done, he licked one final time before moving back up to the pillows. I was at a loss for words.

He slid his fingers into my still sensitive core and looked at me, watching as I closed my eyes in pleasure. “You are so sexy, Bella. So fucking sexy.”

I felt myself place my hand over his, guiding his fingers, and saw the surprise register on his face. Before I could gaze at him too long, though, he kissed me, hard, and kept at it with his fingers. I could still taste myself on his lips.

When we pulled apart, I could feel myself beginning to feel the heat again, and so I stopped him, pressing a hand to his chest. A look of dismay appeared on his face.

I almost whispered my response. "Don't worry, Mister Cullen," I said, pulling the tie that still sat around my neck off and tossing it to the floor. I moved to sit up and then pressed him into the bed as I said, "I think I owe you."

A mischievous look appeared in his eyes as what I said registered and he visibly relaxed into the bed. I crawled down the mattress, at first taking him into my hand and moving, ever so gently. At the first touch of my hand, I saw his cock twitch, and I kept going until I could gauge how much of him I could take into my mouth.

I began to kiss the area below his navel and heard him moan slightly as I took his head into my mouth. I moved my tongue around the tip and as I began to bob my head up and down, I heard him say, "Holy shit, Bella." I smiled, knowing he was enjoying this, and then his hand knotted gently into my hair, guiding me in the rhythm that suited him best.

When he came, he tasted like salt and sugar, all in one. And I lapped up every last bit of his juices.

I kissed my way up his chest and lay back at his side.

"What now?" I asked, a lazy smile on my face.

Wordlessly, he pushed me onto my back and closed his mouth around my left nipple. I felt it harden even more than it already had, and then he began to tease the right, softly pinching it with his hand. "Edward," I said, my voice thick with desire. "Stop teasing."

He pulled away from my breast and ran his hand down my stomach and curved it back into me. "It's not teasing if I plan to deliver, my dear," he said and he pulled himself more upright. "Jesus, you are so wet, Bella."

I looked at him through my eyelashes as he moved his fingers luxuriously up and down my slit. "Yes, you see what you've done to me?"

Desire washed over his face anew as he replied. "Ah ha. So you can talk dirty, Bella?" I stared at him. "What do you want me to do to you?"

Without hesitation, I responded. "Fuck me, Edward. Do it now."

"If you insist," he smiled, and pulled himself up my body. I could feel the tip of his dick so near my center, it was all I could do not to jerk my hips upward to feel the friction that I knew would come from the contact.

Suddenly, tenderness came into his lust-filled eyes. He pressed his forehead to mine. "Are you sure, Bella?"

I nodded. "Yes, Edward. I'm positive."

"OK, then," he whispered, his voice sweet, and kissed the place where my neck joined my shoulder.

Gently, he pressed into me and I felt myself growing more and more wet. His eyes were focused on my face as he slowly, delicately pressed himself into me.

I grew impatient. In one fast move, I kicked my legs up, wrapping them around his waist, and pushed him all the way inside me.

The effect was phenomenal, and we both gasped. He began to move and the friction that grew and grew made me moan his name. "Edward! Oh my god, Edward, please don't stop!" I surprised myself, because I was normally quiet during sex, but I had been smitten with Edward for years. It made sense for me to lose some composure.

I began to move my hips in sync with his, so that he could push even further into me. He took a nipple into his mouth and nibbled and I gasped. "What do you want, Bella? More of this?"

"Harder, Edward. Fuck me harder."

And so he did. I could hear our skin slapping together as I released my legs, letting them fall to the side. And when he came, he screamed my name. "Bella! Holy ... oh god, Bella!" His breathing came in loud gasps.

When he collapsed on to me, I kissed his neck and whispered in his ear. "Once more?"

He nibbled my ear. "If the lady insists," he said, and a sly smile formed on his face.

"Lay on your back." I commanded. I realized I was getting off on being in control. I'd have to remember this.

He moved quickly, and even though I'd ordered it, I gasped at the removal of his member from inside me. *That's ok*, I told myself. *It will be back where it belongs soon.*

I pressed my hands into the mattress on either side of his head and kissed him deeply and passionately. While I kissed him, I reached down, beginning the work with my hand to ensure his member was still hard and ready for me. As I moved to spread my legs over his hips, my chest hung near his face, and he took a nipple into his mouth, rolling it between his lips and teeth. It was almost enough to make me stop what I was doing until I remembered how good he felt, rock hard and inside me.

I pulled my hips up and kept a hand on his cock, guiding it into me, and he groaned as I sheathed him. *Thank god for birth control*, I thought as I arched my back, feeling every twitch and slight movement of him inside of me. And I began to writhe against him.

I rode him and rode him and rode him until I thought he was going to come, but instead, he licked his thumb and pressed it to my clit, encircling it as I moved back and forth. I was already soaking wet, but his thumb made my wetness pool even more. And as I felt the heat in my hips give way to the best orgasm of my life, I arched my back again, and knotted my hands in my hair, my elbows out to the side as I rode it out.

Just as I was finishing, so did he, with a shout of, "Oh, fuck!"

When we were both done, I hesitantly rolled off of him and stared at the ceiling, my brain suddenly rife with worry. What if he was all talk? What if he just wanted to get laid today? What if he didn't really like me and this wasn't going to go anywhere?

I looked over at him and just as I was about to ask what would become of us ...

My alarm went off.

"God damn it!" I screeched as I turned it off. My panties were soaked.

I stared at the ceiling. Remembering every detail of my erotic fantasy, I wondered how on earth I was going to get through the first date I had tonight with my high school crush, a one Edward Anthony Cullen. I had a feeling it would go quite well. Perhaps the dream was a bit of precognition on my part.

Before I left my room, I grabbed the panties and underwear I'd been wearing in my dream, planning to wear them that day. *Might as well be prepared*, I thought with a smile, and stepped into the hallway and towards what I knew would be a very cold shower.

Chapter End Notes:

So, that was my first attempt at what I suppose you'd label smut. I had fun letting the dirty side of my mind come out to play and I hope you did. *cue me dreaming I could write Saturday School ... haha* P.S. I've been asked if I would consider furthering this story. I would, if there's enough interest. Let me know if you'd read it. :)

UPDATE: Obviously this has been continued into a chapter fic. ENJOY! :)

Chapter 2. The Past

Author's Chapter Notes:

So, I was quite surprised to learn that people really wanted to know B/E's past, and how she ended up getting a date with him after all this time.

Therefore, this is dedicated to Twilghtlvr, sg360girl and falconcranelove, who specifically asked for the prequel. The smut may or may not continue in chapter 3. HA!

And, as usual, these characters are the genius of Stephenie Meyer, not me. And, there's underage drinking in this chapter.

I stood in my bedroom, pulling the brush through my freshly washed hair. As I tossed the brush onto my dresser, my cell phone rang.

"Hello, Alice," I said with a smile.

"Bella. Something tells me we need to go shopping today." She'd been running errands all morning. I wondered briefly if she had heard my yelling at the alarm clock before she left.

I laughed. "I am definitely going to need a distraction, so thanks. I'll take you up on that offer."

Alice gasped. "Oh! Tonight's the night, then?" She paused. "Finally."

"Shut it, Alice."

"Bella, seriously. You guys have been eyeing each other for eight. Whole. Years. It's about time."

"Yeah, yeah. Not everyone moves as quickly as you and Jasper did, ok?" I smiled. Alice and Jasper were so perfect for each other that it was no surprise to anyone when they eloped. Of course, my party planning best friend had come home and immediately planned a massive event to celebrate the two of them. She and Jasper were staying at the apartment that Alice, Angela and I were sharing for another month or so, and then they were moving into their own place.

"I'll pick you up in say ... an hour?"

I confirmed with her and, as I used the blow dryer on my hair, thought back on the admittedly long history that Edward and I had.

It was January of our junior year when we met. He and his brother Emmett were among the most popular guys in school and every girl had a crush on one of them. I was new to the area and had already met Alice. Shortly after I arrived, she and Jasper began dating, and I learned that he knew 'The Dream Team' from playing baseball in a league on the weekends. As it turned out, Jazz was quite handy with a bat.

I was walking inside one particularly dreary, wet morning, my hands full of papers, folders, textbooks and my coat. In a typical Bella move, I moved to take the first step up the flight that led into the main hallway of Forks High School but I didn't quite step high enough. I lurched forward, papers already flying

and was beginning to brace myself for contact with the hard, linoleum covered steps when a strong arm wrapped around my waist and pulled me back up.

"Ugh. Thanks, my life is plagued ..." I began, and then I looked up into a set of vibrant green eyes and, for the first time in my life, saw what could only be described as a crooked smile on his face.

"It's plagued with what?" he asked, his voice velvety smooth and causing shivers to run up and down my spine. His arm was still around my waist, holding me against his lean physique and even then, in my seventeen-year-old innocence, I didn't know what to do with the phenomenal level of attraction I was feeling.

I stuttered. "Um. Oh. With clumsiness," I finally finished, feeling like an idiot.

He loosened his arm from my waist and left a hand on my hip, hooking a finger through my belt loop. "Well, be careful. I can't always be around to save the day," he replied, his smile, once again, robbing me of my speech. "I'm Edward. It's Bella, right?" I nodded. "Well, I'll see you around, Bella."

And with that, he'd smirked at me and walked out to the parking lot.

And I was, effectively, in love from that moment.

Alice knew how much I liked Edward Cullen. She was forever trying to talk me into letting her set up a date for us. "I swear, it will be great, Bella. I wouldn't make you do anything lame!" she swore. I always refused. But I continued admiring him from afar.

Then, the fall semester of our senior year, Edward and Emmett Cullen had a party during Homecoming weekend. Their parents were out of town and Emmett's girlfriend, Rosalie, was coming into town from Portland. It was supposed to be the event of the year. Alice and I were deemed worthy of an invitation, and so we went.

It was sometime after midnight, and I'd had at least four beers when Edward made his way to stand by my side in their backyard.

"Hello, Bella." My throat seized up and I felt butterflies in my stomach despite, or perhaps made worse by, the alcohol. I cleared my throat and mumbled a hello. "Are you having a good time?" He asked. I looked up to find him staring at me with such intensity that I had to look away.

I nodded. "Had quite a bit to drink ..."

"You and half our graduating class." He smiled at me and I nearly lost my balance. He looked at the ground and then moved only his eyes to meet mine. The effect was smoldering. "Why don't you stay here?"

I choked on the sip of beer I'd just taken. "What?"

His eyes went wide, feigning innocence. "Alice and Jasper probably won't make for fun company on the ride home. I think Jasper's feeling particularly ... frisky." I groaned. "So..."

I considered my options. A twenty-minute car ride possibly filled with Alice mauling.

Clearly, the Cullen's won that one.

"Um, yeah, sure. I'll just ... call my dad." I smiled and downed the last of my beer and he led me in his house to their phone. My dad had requested that I call, no matter the time, if my plans ever changed. I called him, left a message that said I'd be spending the night at Alice's (who would be staying with Jasper, I was relatively sure, but her parents were somewhat reformed hippies who only loosely watched what Alice did), and then bid him good night.

"So you're all set, then?" he asked. I said yes, and that I needed to find Alice to let her know. As I walked by on my way outside, he grabbed my hand lightly and gave it a squeeze.

As I meandered around the remnants of the party, I tried not to focus on the detail of where I would sleep. Every time I thought about it, it felt as though my stomach was tying itself in knots, bringing on a feeling of severe nausea.

I found Alice in Jasper's lap, and could tell Edward's surmising had been correct. She was giggling as he nipped at her ear lobe.

I cleared my throat loudly, to announce my presence. "Alice, Jasper. I'm staying here. You guys can go ahead without me."

Jasper raised an eyebrow. "Edward finally made a move, I take it?"

"Oh shut up, Jasper. He just knew you'd want to feel Alice up on the way home, ok? There's nothing more to it." I wouldn't let myself think there was, anyway. Jasper smirked.

Alice spoke up. "Bella, I'm telling you, Edward likes you. Why else would he refuse to get serious with *anyone*?"

"Look, Drunk One and Drunk Two, is either of you ok to drive?" Jasper nodded. "The last thing we need is for one of you to get a DUI while we're still in high school. Text me when you get home, ok, Jazz?" And with that, I turned on my heel, leaving them to themselves.

Just before I stepped back inside, Alice called out after me. "Call me in the morning and tell me everything!"

Edward was still waiting where I'd left him, and he pushed a hand through his unruly bronze hair. "We all set?" he asked.

"Y-yeah."

"Well, follow me, I'll show you around in here." He walked me through the house and then we went up stairs, where he pointed to his brother's room. Very obvious noises could be heard from within. "He and Rose are quite ... active," he said, and laughed as I felt my skin blush crimson.

We finally made it to his room. "Yeah, so this is my room." He gestured with his hand for me to walk in and I did, all the while trying not to lose my composure.

"You have so much music," I observed. An entire wall was covered in huge bookshelves filled with CD cases.

"Yeah. It's my thing." He replied, and I noticed a guitar leaning against the corner.

"So where am I sleeping?" I yawned.

He raised both eyebrows at me and the corners of his mouth raised ever-so-slightly. "Here."

I felt my eyes grow to saucers and my mouth drop open. "Here? In your room?" I squeaked.

He nodded, a sheepish look on his face. "I said I don't bite ... I'll even give you your own blanket and stuff, if you'd rather. Or I can sleep on the couch ..." He looked over his shoulder, downstairs.

"I ... no, it's fine. I won't kick you out of your room." I smiled, an attempt to look like I wasn't nervous. "Can you give me a t-shirt or something to sleep in?"

He pulled out an old baseball shirt and pajama pants he said were too small for him and I quickly went to the bathroom to change. When I returned, he had put on his pajama pants and removed his shirt. I had a moment before he noticed I had returned to check out his fantastic abs.

He flopped down on his bed and placed his hands behind his head, his arms out to the sides, spanning the width of his pillow, and then looked over at me.

I realized he was waiting for me.

The tension I was feeling was palpable.

Don't be an idiot, I thought, as I tentatively stepped toward the bed. As I got closer, he pulled back his comforter. He was still lying on top of all the bedding.

I laid my head on the pillow and faced him, a tiny bit in awe of the fact that I was in Edward Cullen's bed, regardless of what would or would not happen.

"Are you comfortable?" he asked, as I snuggled into the pillow, which I noted happily, smelled like him.

I nodded. "But if you don't mind, I usually sleep on my other side ..."

"Of course, Bella," he said. "Whatever you need."

And so, I flipped over and said good night to him, painfully aware of the fact that I wanted him to make a move.

Just before I was asleep, I felt him moving, his weight leaning towards me. "Good night," he whispered, as he kissed the top of my head. And then he wrapped his arm around my waist, still on top of the blankets. And that's all I could remember before falling into a deep, blissful sleep.

The next morning, he drove me to Alice's, where my truck was.

"Thanks for coming, Bella," he said, his smile already in place.

"Sure. I had fun."

"And thanks for staying," he replied, instantly.

I began to blush and glanced down at the ground where I stood just outside of his car. "Sure, Edward."

He reached out of the car and said, "Hey". As I looked at him, he beckoned me forward, so I leaned on the open window, and he had reached up with his left hand and softly molded it to my cheek.

I fought the urge to cover his hand with mine, and then he removed it, placing it securely back on the steering wheel. He sighed. "I'll, uh ... see you around, Bella," he said.

And that was it.

We never went on a date in high school.

We never made out, had sex or even spoke about that night again ... nothing.

Because we never discussed it, I fought every urge that was in me to think that he could possibly have feelings for me after that night, regardless of the way things had seemed and regardless of the electricity that had coursed through me at the gentle touch of his hand to my face.

Despite that fact, I was still completely and totally in love with him, all the way through our high school graduation, and then our separate college graduations. Sure, I dated people. Jacob, James, Garrett ... but none of them were ever serious and none of them had ever captured my attention the way that Edward had.

We stayed in contact through the years, and even had coffee and dinner on several occasions, but I'd never felt as though it was a date anytime I got together with him. It was always casual. So I kept my feelings for him hidden and at a slow burn, deep inside.

So, when he called and said he, Emmett and Rose were moving to Seattle from Portland and that he'd like to meet for coffee, I was, of course, happy to oblige.

We met up at Tully's and small-talked for a while before he changed all of that.

"So, what brings you to Seattle?" I asked.

"Rose and Emmett are opening a bar, believe it or not." He sipped his coffee and gazed at me over the cup.

"I believe it," I said with a grin. "So they're still going strong, huh? What's it been? Seven, eight years?"

He nodded. "Yeah. I'm willing to put money on them getting married in the near future." He took another sip of his coffee. "Are you seeing anyone, Bella?"

I shook my head. "I was seeing this guy, but it was nothing serious," I answered. *As usual*, I thought to myself.

"Listen, Bella, I'd love for you to come see me play my gig and then take you out this Saturday. Would you let me do that?"

It kind of felt as though my world stopped spinning.

Edward Anthony Cullen had just asked me out.

Of course I said yes.

We made the arrangements, and I agreed to meet him at the pub he was playing at and then we'd grab a bite to eat and a few drinks.

And then, the morning of said date, I'd woken up, panties drenched, thanks to what was probably the hottest sex dream I'd ever had.

"This should be an interesting night," I said to myself in the mirror as I heard Alice's horn beep from our driveway.

Chapter End Notes:

:) Now, on to the date ... and perhaps some smut-filled fun ...

Chapter 3. The Date

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters. This is me wishing I owned Edward Cullen. *sigh*

We have arrived at the date. This chapter is dedicated to kelseymarie33 and lobste4ever who specifically requested this chapter, and to all the wonderful people who reviewed asking that I keep this going. Hope you enjoy!

BPOV

As I stepped out of the taxi, I pulled my jacket around me. It was chilly, even for Seattle, and the pub Edward was playing was right off the water, so the chill in the air was extra potent.

I'd realized on the way over that I had no idea what kind of music he played, and therefore had no idea what to expect.

I walked in to find him on stage, his guitar hanging at his waist and as soon as I saw him, he grinned at me. Instantly, I was reminded of my lovely dream and felt myself go scarlet at the memory of his lips on my body. Good thing he couldn't see it from there or I might have to explain.

I took a seat and shortly after, his band began to play. They were great, an odd mix of blues and soul and rock and I had to admit that Edward was damn sexy strumming away up there on stage. He reminded me of John Mayer minus the crazy "o" faces. About ten minutes into the set, a waiter brought me a beer and said it was from the band. As I sipped it, I tipped it in Edward's direction and shot him a smile.

When the show was over, he put his guitar in its case and then walked over to me. "Did you like it?" I saw the other women in the bar stare angrily at me as they realized he was there with me. I smiled smugly.

I nodded. "You guys are great," I answered.

"Let's get out of here. You hungry?" he asked.

Hours later, after a stop at an all night eatery that I'd known nothing about despite living in Seattle for three years and then several cocktails at a fantastic dive bar, I was tipsy and he was getting there. "What now?" I asked, and then giggled out loud before I could cover my mouth.

"What's funny?" he asked.

I clamped my mouth shut after replying, "Nothing."

"Oh, come on, Bella. Tell me."

"No, really, it was nothing," I said. Inside I was mortified at the idea of having to recount my dream to him aloud.

"Fine, fine. Do you live around here?"

I nodded, the alcohol keeping me from freaking out at the idea of Edward being in my house.

He paid and then we walked to his car and I gave him directions.

Once we arrived, and were standing in the doorway, I said, "So this is it. Bathroom that way, kitchen's just in front of us, living room that way." We walked a few more steps. "And my bedroom is that way."

I blushed profusely at the memory of my dream. Again.

"OK, Bella, what could possibly be embarrassing about the layout of your apartment?"

I sighed. "Fine, I'll tell you," I said, to my horror, before I knew what I was doing. The alcohol was clearly still impacting my decision making. I said it quickly, like ripping a band aid off. "I had a sex dream with you in it last night."

His green eyes lit up and his right eyebrow rose. "Do tell, Bella."

I shook my head. "Uh uh. No way."

"I could always make you," he said, calculatingly, taking a step toward me.

"I find that hard to believe," I replied, and scooted around him and down the hallway to my room to toss my coat in my closet. He silently followed me and as I came out from the closet, he was seated on the end of my bed, looking devastatingly handsome and frighteningly like he had in my dream.

"Tell me."

"No."

"Bella, come on. Tell me."

"Edward, no."

He sighed. "You can't tell a man who is obviously interested in you that you've had a sex dream about him and then not share the details."

"I can do whatever ... wait, what?" I stopped in my tracks.

He looked up at me. "I don't know how you didn't know." I gave him a confused look. "Do you know, Bella Swan, that I have wanted you since we were seventeen?"

And there it was, right out of my dream.

And there and then, I lost all composure.

EPOV

Suddenly, she was on top of me. Not that I minded, mind you, but still, it was a surprise.

She straddled me and then crushed her lips to mine, and I let my hands wander over the body that I'd wanted to touch since I was a junior in high school. Ever since that day I'd felt her slender frame on the stairwell, I'd wanted to take Bella Swan out, to be with her in every conceivable way, but for some reason, I'd never had the nerve to ask her out. The one time I could have made a move, I didn't. I had kicked myself every time I thought about the night she'd stayed in my bed with me. So did Emmett.

I wouldn't make that mistake twice.

She fumbled blindly with my last button and our tongues slid around, making room for each other and at war at the same time. She slid my undershirt over my head and, in a moment of stillness, I pulled her shirt over hers, tossing it to the side.

As she kissed me, I could feel my erection forming, and I whispered roughly in her ear, "Tell me what happened in your dream, Bella."

She pulled back slightly, her fingers toying with the button on her jeans. I moved her hands and undid it myself, pleased at the sight of a hot little set of wine colored lace underwear as she stood to remove them. Who knew Bella would wear a thong? I had no complaints.

"We were at your house," she began. "And you said exactly that, 'Do you know, Bella Swan, that I have wanted you since we were seventeen', and then you kissed me and then we had hot dirty sex, and it was fucking fantastic."

Hearing Bella curse was enough to make my already present cock twitch and I pulled her to me, kissing her and moving her to the side, so that I could remove my jeans as well. As I stood there, looking at the woman who had been the object of my desire for nearly eight years, I said, "Give me some details."

She pushed up on her elbows, still lying on her back, her long dark hair over her shoulders. I could see the lust coursing through her eyes as she responded. "You want the sordid details?"

I nodded and then nearly creamed my pants at the directness of her answer.

"You asked me to strip for you. And I did. And then you fingered me. And then you went down on me and then I returned the favor. And then, we fucked each other's brains out. And then I woke up." She collapsed back onto her bed with a contented sigh.

I heard myself growl and all of a sudden, I was lying next to her, my mouth covering hers. I moved to her neck and then to her chest. I looked up at her through my ridiculous hair and saw that her eyes were closed as she brought a hand to the side of my face, touching me gently. I pushed myself up and reached around her, unclasping her bra and, as she pulled it off, moved to remove those pretty little panties.

I stood to remove my boxers and she shimmied underneath her comforter. I quickly followed her, pulling her against my body. She hitched her leg over my hip and I realized this must have been the way things started in her dream, so I appeased her. I slowly moved my fingers down the flatness of her

stomach and curved them into her, savoring the soft wetness that waited for me there. I heard her gasp and pressed my lips to hers, gently, all the while still working in circles around her clit.

After a minute or two, I moved my mouth to her perfectly pert nipples and gave each one the attention it deserved before dragging my tongue slowly down her abdomen. The blanket was gathered around me and I briefly wondered if she was cold but ignored the thought as I focused on what I was about to do.

It struck me that what we were doing was something I'd dreamt of countless times before and that perhaps I should be nervous, but with Bella, it just ... felt right.

And so, I would do this right or not at all. I smiled to myself at the first taste of her on my tongue. She gasped as I moved up and down, slower than I thought possible, and when I pressed her legs into the mattress, she moaned my name and I thought I would lose control right there.

And finally, when she came, I kept my mouth on her, my tongue moving so as to not miss any of the delicious result of my laboring. I smirked to myself as I moved back up her body. When I reached her beautiful face, I said, after kissing her neck, "I believe you owe me?"

Her chocolate eyes darkened as she pushed me to the mattress, first kissing my forehead. As she did, I took a nipple into my mouth and teased it until it was rock hard again. "You did that, too," she whispered in my ear, as she made her way down my body with a trail of kisses.

And then she took me into her mouth.

And never before have I had to fight for control the way I did at that moment.

She was perfect. If it hadn't been crass, I'd have said she was some sort of Fellatio Queen. There was no doubt in my mind that she was the best I'd had ... ever. When she began to bob her head up and down, I instinctively moved my hand to knot in her hair, careful not to be too rough. She swirled her tongue around my head and finally—finally—I came, and to my surprise, she lapped it up. When she noted my surprise after the fact, she looked at me and said, "Only for you, baby" and kissed her way back up my chest to me.

I needed a moment to physically prepare for what I knew was coming next and so I gently rolled Bella over onto her back, kissing her and pulling myself partially on top of her. The feel of her perfect breasts and naked skin was indescribable and then, she reached down and with her tiny hands, began to stroke me, eliciting a moan from me. "Bella ..."

"Come here," she whispered, her voice thick in my ear as she nibbled the lobe slightly.

"Your wish is my command," I said and pushed myself on top of her.

"I'm on the pill, so, as long as you're clean, we don't need to worry about anything," she said.

There was my level-headed Bella. I laughed internally at the fact that, moments before sex, she could think so logically.

"Are you sure about this? I don't want to ..." I started, but she silenced me by pressing her lips to mine.

“Edward,” she began quietly, pressing her head back into the pillow. “I’ve wanted you since you caught me that day on the stairs.”

“So have I,” I said, the wonder evident in my voice. Had we really wasted so many years apart?

I felt her hands pressing into my back, urging me to make the move, and so I did, slowly and carefully so that I could feel every inch, every centimeter of my body connecting with hers. As soon as I felt her on me, I closed my eyes and arched my head back and said her name, reverently.

I looked at her as I moved slowly back and forth and a look of such luxury was on her face, I almost stopped to just to marvel at the reaction she was having. When she wrapped her legs around me, pressing me even further inside her glorious sex, I nearly lost control all over again. She began to rock with me, and I gave in to the monster inside.

We moved in sync for a while before she looked me in the eye and said, between bated breaths, “Edward ... you’re going to ... make me ...” And then she came and the sensation was so fucking intense that I lost all semblance of control and came with her.

As my cock made its final twitch, I said, “Bella, I ... I don’t know what to say.”

I pressed myself up, wincing internally and removing myself from her body. “Say you’ll stay here tonight, Edward.”

I nodded. “Of course I will, Bella.”

I lay facing her, and she turned onto her side, her lovely hand near her face on the pillow. Her voice was quieter this time, almost inaudible. “Say tonight isn’t it. Say we’re going to be something after all these years.” The yearning was clear and present in her voice, and it made me very happy to know what my response would be.

“Oh, Bella,” I said, caressing her cheek. “We are most definitely going to be something after all these years.” I paused. “Bella, I’m pretty damn sure that I’m in love with you.”

Her eyes lit up and she wrapped her arms around me, our still naked forms molding together as naturally as can be. “And I’m pretty sure I’m in love with you, Edward Cullen.”

And with that, she rolled over, pulled my arm around her waist and we fell asleep, both glad for a new era in our lives, one where we were together and not apart.

Chapter End Notes:

I had to make Edward show some vestiges of the sweet, chivalrous Edward of the books. And, to be honest, I have to admit that I’m quite vested in this version of Bella and Edward now. If you’d like me to continue the story, let me know and I’ll consider it. Of course I won’t if I can’t come up with a killer plot line. I’d gladly take suggestions. :)

Hope you had as much fun as I did.

Chapter 4. The Morning After

Author's Chapter Notes:

As you know: Not my characters.

Due to a rather overwhelming response, I'm continuing this story. It's morphing into a chapter fic thanks to my wonderful reviewers. If there's something you'd like to see happen, let me know, and I can probably work it in.

*And: Thank you to **hammondgirl** and Kim for their assistance on this one. haha.*

EPOV

I woke up and for a moment, didn't know where I was.

But then, I saw her mahogany hair sloping down the pillow and under the comforter that covered us both, and it all came back to me.

The date. Followed by the best head I'd ever gotten. And sex. Mind blowing, life altering sex. But more importantly ... I finally admitted my feelings. We admitted them. To each other.

Bella Swan loved me.

My mind soared, reaching a place where I could finally let all my fantasies become thoughts, possibilities. I pictured Bella and I, sharing an apartment, living together, married. Vacationing in Cabo. Hell, I even let myself think of kids, buying a house. Sleeping in the same bed every night. Well, maybe not always sleeping, I thought with a smile.

I had no idea this was how things would go when I asked her to come see my band play. I had no idea she had feelings for me, not in this way. I had anticipated a fantastic night out and wonderful conversation, but never in my wildest dreams did I think we would make love. OK, maybe in my wildest dreams. I thought I would go home afterward and exist in the same kind of shell I always did when I saw her before: a strange dichotomy, stuck between loving her with my whole heart and knowing I couldn't bear for her not to be in my life, even if she could never return my feelings. But she loved me. She said it herself. And the fact remained that now I had a tie to Seattle that would be enough to keep me here. But change was coming ... And I couldn't ask that of her. Or could I? I had so much to think through. But being able to say Bella was mine was enough to make me drop everything. I loved her that much. Eight years was long enough to wait. I wouldn't give her up.

We'll worry about that later, I thought. I kissed her cheek and whispered, "Good Morning, Beautiful."

She mumbled a good morning and as I began to move away, she suddenly turned to me. "Wait, where are you going?" She was frenzied, afraid.

Could she really think I was leaving? Leaving her? I might have laughed if the fear hadn't been so obvious on her face, in her eyes.

I smiled a small, crooked smile at her. "Bella, love. I was going to get coffee for us ..."
She interrupted me, a sweet smile on her face as she extended her hand to meet the contour of my cheek. "No, Edward. Stay here with me. Please?"

The love in her eyes crushed any resolve I had to get anything done that day.

I would follow her to the end of the world if she asked me to.

And so, I crawled back under the blankets, and she moved to lay over me, her head on my shoulder and her tiny, delicate hand lying on my chest. Her naked body against mine held a different sensation this morning. Yes, she was sexy, and of course I could have taken her, right then. But this morning, we seemed to be worshipping each other, focusing on what we hadn't been able to do for so many years. I closed my eyes, savoring the feel of her soft, supple skin on mine.

For a moment, my mind went back to the things I had to think about.

Later, I thought, as she angled her exquisite face toward mine and kissed me sweetly.

Later.

BPOV

Waking up next to Edward for the first time was among the most euphoric things I had ever experienced. Reality had turned out so much better than my dream. In my dream, hot as it was, I was uncertain of his feelings for me. I had no idea what was happening, if anything, between us. But he had told me he loved me last night.

I sighed contentedly, lying on his chest, breathing him in.

I realized I had issues to deal with. My frenetic response to his attempt to go get coffee told me I was going to have to work through some things. I would have been lying if I didn't admit that working through them with Edward was petrifying. I was too used to keeping things bottled up, holding back.

I was also accustomed to only worrying about me. Yes, Alice and Angela were my best friends, but the fact remained that even they had learned how to deal with me when I shut down. I knew it was childish, but it was the only way I knew how to react to unpleasant things. I pushed them away, deep down inside, hoping I wouldn't have to deal with them.

I was terrified that Edward would learn of my issues and think I was too much work, too hard to deal with. What if he thought he had to fix me? I shuddered.

But he had said he loved me.
Wasn't that enough?

I hoped it would be.

Eight years of waiting for him, wishing I had the nerve to make a move, and now I finally had my man. I sighed contentedly as I looked up at him, kissing him on the mouth, amazed that I could. That he was there, with me.

His hand pushed into the hair along the nape of my neck and he pressed his lips harder into mine, parting them and caressing my tongue with his. When we parted, I pushed away just enough to see his smile change his entire countenance. I had always loved his smile... crooked and perfectly imperfect.

He brought his other hand up, tracing a finger along the edge of my jaw. When he spoke, it was with a tone of reverence. "I love you, Bella." He said it as if it were a revelation, as if it brought him joy.

I smiled and kissed him chastely. "Edward, if you wanted me all these years ... why didn't you ever make a move?"

He sighed quietly. "I was a pansy?" he started. "I don't know, Bella. I was just convinced that you weren't interested. I mean, I knew you never dated anyone seriously in high school, but ... "

I laughed lightly. "What about the night I stayed at your house? In your bed, no less?"

He absentmindedly played with a segment of my hair. "Bella, I wanted to do something, anything that night. So badly. But I was afraid or paranoid or something ... I was convinced it would scare you away or that you would freak out and ask what the hell I was doing." His voice grew quieter still.

"And what did you want to do, Mr. Cullen?" I asked, teasingly.

He raised an eyebrow at me and his voice changed, humor evident in it. "Well, I think you know. Although I must say ... I do believe my ... shall we say, *skills*... have improved since then. So maybe you got the better end of the deal."

This time, I laughed fully, and Edward smiled at me. "And how many people have enjoyed your ... *skills*?" I asked.

"Bella, do you really want to know?" he grimaced.
"Why wouldn't I?"

"Because I'm a musician and I used that to my advantage for the first year the band played together." I sat up, pulling the sheet up to cover my breasts. "Are you saying you were a man whore, Edward Cullen?" I grinned.

He sighed. "No. It's just that I don't want my ... ah ... my number to bother you."

"It won't. I promise."

"You're sure?" he asked me. I nodded. He looked resigned. "Fine. Twenty-three." I laughed again. "That's it?"

He sat up this time. "What's your number then?"

I should have known he'd ask. *Crap.* "Five. But that's not ... I mean ..." My voice trailed off.

His jaw dropped. "Five? Five. Holy shit, Bella, I've slept with nearly five times as many people as you! How is that not a lot?"

"OK, so maybe you are a whore. That's almost one for every year of your life," I said and started laughing again. Quickly, before I knew what was happening, he was tickling me, touching my sides. It caused me to jerk away from him and lie down, pointlessly trying to push him away. "Stop, ok, stop!" I gasped. "You are not a whore."

He wrapped an arm around me and pulled me closer to him. "Thank you."

"If we're going to be together, all that matters is that all of your man-whore tendencies existed solely in the past." I touched my finger to his temple lightly and kissed his cheek.

"Bella, I can assure you that those tendencies were laid to rest a few years back. Besides, after last night, I don't think I could even think about being with anyone else."

A wicked grin crossed my face. "And why is that?"

"Because you are phenomenal," he replied. His voice took on a new tone, one I recognized from last night. He kissed me, somehow pulling me closer to him, and then softly traced my leg until he reached the joint of my knee. He hitched it up over his hip and I could feel him, already erect and ready.

My voice was low and quiet. "You're not so bad yourself."

This time when he kissed me, I pushed against him, pressing him into the mattress.

Wordlessly, I pulled my body over his and sat on his pelvis. I realized that I was not nervous about my nakedness in front of him because he looked at me in awe. It made me feel more beautiful than I thought possible.

I leaned down to whisper in his ear. "Care for a bit of a repeat performance?"

He placed his hands on my thighs as I picked my hips up. He moved his length to a position that allowed me to take him in, and I did, slowly, so that I could feel all of it.

As soon as he was inside of me, I began to slowly writhe against him.

This time was different. The evening had been fast, exciting. This morning was slow, deliberate. We were taking each other in, examining one another. And it was wonderful. When I finally came, the heat coursed through me for what seemed like forever. Afterward, Edward and I had laid there, pillow talking for a long time.

When he finally said he needed to go home to shower and do a few things around his apartment, I found myself disappointed that he had to go. I pushed back my anxieties.

"Come over tomorrow," he suggested. "We'll do something. Make dinner or watch a movie or something. Say you'll come."

I nodded and he kissed me sweetly.

As he stood to get dressed, so did I, wrapping my pale blue terrycloth robe around me.

"That color is sensational on you, Bella. You should wear it more often."

I smiled. "Thank you, Edward."

He held me for a moment and whispered into my hair, "I'll see you soon." And when he walked through my bedroom door, he turned back around to glance at me. I shot him a smile as I sat back on the end of my bed and he closed the door and left. It was then that I remembered that my car was at the club I had watched him perform at. I'd have to go get it shortly.

I slipped my feet into my slippers and padded down the hallway, now eager for the coffee I hadn't allowed him to go pick up. As I poured the grinds into the coffeepot, I heard a voice behind me.

"Bella?" Alice asked. "Was that Edward Cullen I just saw sneaking out of your room?"

I turned around, my mouth in a half smile.

"You have some explaining to do, young lady," she said, grinning from ear to ear.

Chapter End Notes: A/N: So there we have it. Where am I going from here, you ask? I have the basic plot outlined, and I hope you like it. Yes, there will be more smut. Not it won't encompass every chapter. :) Got any requests? Ask away. And, I write more than smut. Go read my other stories to get your mind out of the gutter. haha. I'll update soon!

Chapter 5. Later That Day

Author's Chapter Notes:

This is me *wishing* I owned Rob. If you haven't noticed, he is my Edward Cullen. :)

Much love to **hammondgirl** for betaing for me. Go read her story, "Resident Advisor".

BPOV

"Morning, Alice," I said, turning back to my pot of coffee. "How was your evening?"

She laughed. "Don't even try it, Bella. Edward just snuck out of your room. I take it your date went well." She walked around the bar and took a seat on the other side of the counter. Once she was comfortable, she leaned forward, her elbow propped up on her knee, and raised an eyebrow at me.

I could feel the slight blush forming on my cheeks. "Um. Yeah, I'd say so."

"Bella! Details!" she squealed.

I grinned and then pursed my lips. "Alice Brandon Whitlock! A lady never tells."

An impish look appeared on her face. "On the contrary, she does. What do you want to know about Jasper? I'll tell you. And you'll tell me what happened last night. I'll win this battle, Bella." She winked at me.

I sighed good-naturedly. I knew she was right; I would give in. "Fine. Take me to get my car and we'll grab something to eat and I'll tell you all about it."

Appeased, she returned to her room to get dressed. Unlike the rest of the free world, Alice never needed caffeine to operate in the mornings. She was naturally energetic, flitting from one task to the next as if she would never get tired. It was exhausting for someone like me who was quite the opposite of a morning person. *Except when I wake up next to Edward ...*

After the coffee finished brewing, I poured some into a small thermos and returned to my room, quickly dressing. I would shower later.

Alice called out that she was ready and I slipped on a pair of tennis shoes, wondering how on earth I would explain my evening—and morning—without giggling like a schoolgirl.

We made it to my car and then around the corner to a café, where we took a seat in the back, and I realized I was starving.

My pixie friend laughed at me. “Oh yeah, you had sex. You’re starving, huh? Nice job, Edward.” She grinned as I threw a french fry at her before she could continue. “Out with it, Bells.”

And so I gave her an overview of the evening.

She was as shocked as I thought she’d be but for reasons I had not been expecting.

“Bella, I told you he liked you back in high school, but you refused to listen. I can’t believe he told you he loves you!” Her happiness for me radiated from her bright smile.

Without meaning to I smiled. “I know, Alice. It’s kind of crazy, isn’t it? I mean, when I was eighteen, I slept in a bed with him and we were both too nervous to do anything. And now ...”

She cut me off. “And now, you can be together without restraint.” She sipped her iced tea. “I’m happy for you, Bella.”

For a moment, I thought I would argue with her - make some futile attempt to disagree with her about mine and Edward’s new-found relationship, but no real argument could come to mind. This surprised me very much, given the issues I constantly dealt with regarding men. Sure, I had dated around, but

nothing had been too serious. Every guy I had been with since high school had only wanted sex, not a relationship, or so it seemed. I made a list in my head - Mike, Jacob, Garrett, Riley, James. They had all left me with what I knew were serious issues. It had been evident this morning when Edward had sweetly attempted to do something nice for me, and I almost had an anxiety attack at the thought of him leaving. I was going to have to remember that this was Edward, not just some schmuck who didn't care about me. But I felt no compulsion to think about any of that.

Instead, I simply said, "I'm happy for us, too."

The rest of our brunch passed quickly. Alice had errands to run, so I returned home alone to shower and figure out what to do with the rest of my day. I walked into my room and saw that Edward had left his jacket. I quickly sent him a text, not wanting to interrupt if he was busy: *You left your jacket. Just thought you should know.*

Moments later, I received a response: *Don't worry. I'll be back for more than the jacket.*

Was he attempting a game of dirty text messaging? Well, two could play at that. I responded: *Oh really? What else were you interested in?*

Five minutes passed and I thought perhaps I'd misjudged his previous text. But then, his response came: *Dinner and other things.*

Dinner? I thought for a moment. *What other things?*

His final response confirmed I had been right all along. It took a moment for me to recall my high school French lessons, but it came back quickly. His response said: *Tu seras mon dessert.* You will be my dessert.

I felt a chill run up and down my spine as I chose a clean bra and panty set and stepped into the shower. It was cold for the second time in as many days.

EPOV

After my fun little text message banter with Bella, I was more eager than ever to see her, though I had implied that I was busy this evening. I was not available this afternoon and that was for certain. Despite the fact that I was embroiled in the least sexual situation possible, I felt my cock twitch in my jeans. *Down boy*, I thought, attempting to refocus on our manager's words.

"Well, I'm glad the future of this band is worthy of your attention, Edward," Laurent said pointedly, before beginning his lecture again. "You guys are blowing up. The gigs are overflowing, and the possibility I told you all about a month ago is officially a reality. There are a few kinks to work out, but they have sent over a final contract, and once you all look over it, barring any issues, we're set." He smiled and I couldn't help but feel conflicted.

The 'possibility' that had become an offer was an opening slot for one of our favorite bands, the Kings of Leon. A month prior, one of their managers had been at one of our shows and had been impressed with what she saw. Her name was Victoria and she happened to be an old friend of Laurent's. She returned to the label and said they needed to check us out. In turn, the label sent a scout to watch another of our shows. They had returned word to Laurent that they would think on it, and if they decided to move forward, we'd be offered a recording contract and the opening slot on the band's upcoming tour.

It all sounded fabulous a month ago. And I would have unreservedly gone.

But that was before Bella. Before I'd grown a spine and asked her out. Before I finally had the balls to say I loved her to her face.

So now, as amazing as this opportunity was, I couldn't help but feel that I had to choose between my musical career or Bella.

The problem was that we'd be recording in Nashville and then touring in Europe. I couldn't ask her to leave her life and come with me ... at least I didn't think I could.

After Laurent finished his spiel, we started rehearsal and it went on for hours. By the time we finished, I was tired mentally and physically. My hands were hurting from playing for so long and I'd developed a headache from thinking about what I'd do about all of this. About Bella.

My beautiful, amazing, sexy Bella.

I sighed as I walked back to my car.

When I got back to my apartment, I called Laurent, knowing he'd be surprised to hear from me. He was great as far as managers went, but we'd never been particularly social with one another. "Edward, hello," he answered.

"Hey Laurent, listen," I began. "If this thing goes through, when are we leaving for Nashville?"

I heard the smile on his lips as he answered. "A month from tomorrow. I just got word that we're in, unless you guys have issues with the contract."

I almost laughed at him. Issues with the contract? Please. It gave us a comfortable set up, complete with a place to stay while recording and a well-stocked refrigerator. And then, it provided our own bus for the tour. Still, what was I going to do about Bella? I couldn't leave her. Not without a lot of pain.

"Thanks, Laurent," I said, and then flipped my phone shut.

Almost as soon as it clicked closed, it rang again. It was Emmett. "Hey, little brother. Got a second?"

"Sure, Em, go ahead," I replied.

"I was just calling to tell you that we're ahead of schedule and the bar will be opening in two weeks." He laughed on the other end of the line.

“Two weeks? Em, that’s amazing. How did you manage that?” They’d only just closed on a building two weeks prior, and were not expecting to be able to open any time in the very near future.

“Dad pulled some strings and helped me find a crew who’d work triple shifts. We’ve got people working morning, noon and night to get it ready, and they’ll be done in eight days. Then, Rosie and I are going to find the perfect décor and we’ll be set. I expect you there on opening night.”

I slipped up in my response. Not that I had intended on hiding anything from my brother, but I cringed as soon as I heard my response, waiting for his teasing. “Of course we’ll be there.”

“Oh, ho, ho. *We*, huh? Who’s the lucky lady, Edward?”

I felt one corner of my mouth pull up. “You won’t believe me.”

“Try me.” His voice was rife with impatience.

“It’s Bella.”

My brother whooped loudly. I could practically see him shoving his fist into the air. “No fucking way!

Well, it’s about damn time! Congrats, man!”

I couldn’t help but laugh. “Thank you, Emmett.”

After further conversation, I updated him on the band’s progress, and he had kindly not asked what I intended to do with my newly minted girlfriend if I had to be in Europe for six months. We said our goodbyes and I then texted Bella, hoping I wouldn’t wake her, given the late hour. *Care for some company?*

I’d rather come to you, she said. She’d been to my apartment several times under different circumstances.

I smiled. *Well come on over, my love.*

Twenty minutes later, there was a knock on my door.

Chapter End Notes:

A/N: Can Robward send *me* snarky little, pseudo-dirty text messages? Please and thank you. And, for all your French Speakers, please let me know if that translation was wrong. I had to use an online translator because I know all of three words in French. And, if you love me, you'll review. P.S. The next chapter, we're back to **business** ... if you know what I mean.

Chapter 6. Saturday

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters, and I'm sure Stephenie Meyer would be appalled at the things I'm making her characters do.

Back to business, ladies and gents. A little sweetness followed by things that are ... um ... not so sweet. Or something.

BPOV

He opened the door and I happily noted that the flow of air from the slight breeze outside ruffled his shirt, which was hanging open over what I considered to be the most perfect specimen of abdominal muscles I had ever seen. I smiled and he stepped back and said, "Come in."

I stepped in and deposited my purse on the couch, leaned on the back of it and then grabbed his shirttails and pulled him to me. He cocked one side of his mouth up in that amazing crooked smile of his and placed his hands strategically on either side of me, effectively trapping me between the couch and himself. Not that I minded. I pulled myself up on my tip toes and kissed him and he quickly deepened it, pressing himself against me. When he slowly kissed his way down my neck, I arched my back, pushing my body even closer to his, and moaned his name. "Edward ...

He pulled his lips away from my skin and whispered, "I thought of you all day after I left." His voice was husky and I realized that I was having some very dirty thoughts about what we could do in the position we were in. I could lean back and wrap my legs around his waist. I could bend over the couch ... I quickly nixed that idea. I wanted to see him.

He curved his forefinger and traced the lining of the yoga pants I was wearing and sighed. It seemed that with that simple movement, he had changed his mood.

"What's wrong, Edward?" I looked beseechingly at him. Had I wrongly assumed this was a booty call? And could it really be considered a booty call if you were someone's girlfriend? This was new territory for me.

He stepped away from me and I placed one hand on my hip and the other on the back of the couch. "I have a lot to think about," he said, and frowned.

“Well, would you like to talk to me about it?”

The words were barely out of my mouth when he cut me off. “No.” My look of shock must have surprised him. He looked apologetic. “I just ... well ... I will. I will, but not tonight. OK?”

I nodded and moved toward him. When I was near enough, I wrapped my arms around his waist and nuzzled into his chest. I felt what could only be described as freedom overwhelm me as I said, “I love you, Edward. Just remember that.”

When I looked up at him, he stared at me and I saw his eyes change. The green brightened and he caressed my cheek. I pressed into his hand and he said, quietly, “I need to take a shower. Care to join me?” I opened my eyes and nodded and he grinned. “Give me ten minutes,” he said, and ran down the hallway.

I sat on the arm of the couch and waited, and when he called my name, I took my jacket off and threw it over my purse. The walk down the hallway was short, and as I walked into his bathroom, my jaw dropped slightly.

He had somehow managed to find a slew of candles and had them arranged on almost every surface. They were of varying heights and widths and some had to be intended for aromatherapy, because the room smelled slightly like vanilla and lavender. He was seated in the water, which was covered in bubbles, and his clothes were in a pile next to his oversized garden tub. I grinned. “You must have a lot of lady friends, mister, with all these candles around.”

He shook his head. “Only one.”

And then he looked at me with eyes that smoldered and it was as if I was under a spell. I locked my eyes on his and slowly pulled my shirt over my head and dropped my pants to the floor at my feet. I stood there in my black boy short panties and lace bra and let him admire me. Then, I turned away from him, giving him a superb view of my ass and reached around my back, unhooking my bra and dropping it as I turned back to him. I walked toward the tub and finally removed my panties, letting them lie on the

floor as I settled into the tub, leaning against Edward's rock hard chest. I could feel other parts of him beginning to harden as well.

He wrapped his arms around me. "Why did we wait so long?" he asked.

Eight years. I leaned my head back and over his shoulder. "I have no idea."

And with that, he started to massage me. His hands were all over me as he gently rubbed my back, my shoulders, my arms. He even gingerly took my fingers into his and massaged each segment. I could feel myself growing aroused and I moved to turn around but he stopped me. "Let me hold you, Bella. I just ... I just need to be still and be with you. Would that be alright?"

I bit back the feeling of rejection that seemed to immediately come over me. He loved me. I was being ridiculous. "Yes, of course, Edward," I said and settled back into his chest.

We sat like that until the water grew cool. Then, Edward climbed out of the tub and grabbed a towel. As he held it around his waist, he handed me a robe—his robe—and I stepped out of the tub, breathing in the cocktail that the smell of his aftershave that seemed to permeate the cloth. He extended a hand to me and led me to his bed where we proceeded to talk quietly until we both drifted off to sleep, his arm wrapped around my waistline. I was still wrapped in his robe.

The last thought I had before my eyes closed for the night was that I had just spent the most intimate evening of my life with Edward. It blew everything I had ever experienced away. And though I didn't know what could be bothering him, I had to trust that I would find out soon.

EPOV

I didn't think Bella would ever fully grasp how beautiful she was in my eyes. I woke up before she did and simply watched her sleep. I watched the rise and fall of her chest, the slight fluttering of her eyelashes and I watched as her lips parted slightly as she sighed. While she slept, I decided I would have to tell her today. I had toyed with the thought of just ending things, making it as if I'd never made a move and we'd never been together, but the thought was so intensely painful that I audibly winced. My decision was made; I would tell her what was going on and then give her the choice.

It was as if I was standing on pins and needles awaiting her response, but I decided to wait until tonight.

She woke up and rolled over to face me. "Hey, Handsome." A lazy smile played on her lips and I kissed her.

"Good Morning, love. What do you want to do today?" I asked.

She thought for a moment. "Ooh, let's go to Gaslamp Park and watch the sailboats on the Sound."

I grinned. A visit to the Puget Sound would be fantastic. "Perfect. We'll pack a light lunch and a thick blanket."

We were both ready in no time, though I nearly pulled her to the mattress when I saw her drop my robe to the floor. I had gone to her car and brought in her overnight bag after she finally fell asleep and she had changed into a new set of underwear. When the robe fell to the ground, she'd been facing away from me, but the lace panties she was wearing were so damn sexy, my jaw dropped. I was beginning to love her penchant for boycut underwear ... there was something about the way they cut across her perfect ass.

We talked animatedly on the way to the park, and she grabbed the picnic basket we had packed just before leaving. Hand in hand, we walked over the knolls until we found the perfect place to sit, where I proceeded to take the basket from her, sit it down and then wrap my oversized blanket around me. It was large enough that it covered both Bella and I comfortably, which made for a nice blockade against the wind coming in from off the water.

About an hour after we arrived, we had eaten lightly and were sitting in silence. I was about to comment about a sailboat I happened to like when she looked up at me, a devilish glint in her brown eyes. "What, Bella?"

Silently, she slid her hands to the fly of my jeans and unbuttoned and unzipped them. “Bella, what are you doing?” I wouldn’t allow myself to believe she was doing what I thought she was doing. Not in public.

But sure enough, she was.

She moved her hand inside of my boxers and gingerly wrapped it around me and then gently began to move it up and down. I felt my cock harden and swallowed hard as I noticed she had locked her eyes on mine, almost challenging me to lose control enough to have to close mine or look away.

She kept pumping, and I felt myself beginning to lose any semblance of self-control I had left. I thought I could handle it until she licked her lips with her cherry red tongue and then bit the bottom one slightly. Finally—finally—I came, thankful that she had kept my dick within the confines of my boxers, somehow. I managed to keep my gasp quiet.

She had kept her eyes trained on mine the whole time, and when I opened mine again, I saw a look of satisfaction flash through hers.

I leaned forward, so that my lips were near her ear. “You will pay for that, Bella,” I said as I rebuttoned and zipped my fly.

She looked at me sideways, through slightly slanted eyes. “You never had that dessert you promised.” She was referring to my text from yesterday.

That did it.

I stood, grabbed the basket, the blanket and then her hand and she laughed as I walked back to the car faster than I thought possible. I shoved the things I was holding into the trunk as she took her seat on the passenger side, all the while looking very satisfied with herself.

I sped home and flew into a parking space. I opened the door and took her hand. As we walked into my apartment, and I could already feel myself hard again.

She walked in behind me and as soon as she turned to face me after closing the door, my lips were on her, frenzied, passionate. I pressed against her, pushing her into the door and then wrapping my arms around her. I lifted her slightly and she wrapped her legs around my waist and I moved to sit her on my kitchen counter, all the while kissing her.

She yanked her shirt over her head and threw it to the side, and I unzipped her pants. She lifted herself just enough so that I could pull them off. I smiled as I revealed the sexy pair of underwear I'd seen earlier.

As I was unbuttoning my jeans, she said, "Here? On the kitchen counter?"

I smirked. "Did you have a better idea?"

She looked devious. "You're on the third floor."

I nodded. "Ok ..."

"You have a patio chair that you can lay out on, right? I mean, your legs can stretch out on it?"

I leaned into her as I let my jeans fall to the floor. "Are you suggesting that we do this outside, Bella?"

She smiled and feigned an innocent look. "Perhaps."

I grabbed the blanket I kept on the back of the couch and wrapped it around myself and, as she stood, pulled her to me. "Your wish is my command."

We walked to the patio, and I was thankful, for once, for the fact that my balcony had a solid wall barrier. The last thing I needed was for my neighbors to label me indecent, though I supposed that was the truth, at least for this afternoon.

I handed her the blanket and stood in my boxers. I laid in the chair and she looked at me, biting her lip again and I beckoned to her. She moved towards me, wrapped the blanket around her shoulders and, just before she got to me, removed those sexy little panties I'd grown to love. "Your turn," she said.

I shimmied out of my boxers and she straddled me. No foreplay, no nothing, though I suppose that little incident at the park counted for something. The cold air seemed to set my skin on fire. "Oh my g ..." I began as soon as she settled her hips over mine and I could feel myself all the way inside her, but she cut me off.

"I know," she said and leaned into me, her pert nipples grazing my chest. I closed my eyes in ecstasy and she started moving back and forth, back and forth. I ran my hands over her curves, feeling every centimeter of her breasts, hips and stomach as she moved over me. The blanket was like a tent, covering us from her shoulders down. My hands had a mind of their own and I settled them on her lower back, and when I finally came, so did she.

Mindblowing, I thought, and then said, "Bella, you're so damn sexy."

She pulled up and slid next to me, her body still moist with sweat and slightly sticky. "You're not so bad yourself," she said and I wrapped my arms around her. We fit perfectly together.

She gave a little contented sigh and nuzzled into me. Then and there, I realized it. I couldn't leave without her. My heart couldn't take it. And I didn't know what would happen next.

Chapter End Notes:

Ahem.

So, I hope you liked it.

Edward's a little moody, no? Drat those musicians (says the singer). LOL.

I'll update with the next chapter ASAP. Also, I've got a one shot waiting to be approved that is an outtake of chapter 5. All AxJ. Because I love them. And they deserve a little fun, too. And seriously, go read my other stories. I promise they are good, even if they aren't filled with hot, dirty, outside sex.

Happy Holidays, all!!

Reviews are better than activities under blankets with Edward Cullen. OK, that's a lie. But still. :)

Chapter 7. Realizations & The Discussion, part 1

Author's Chapter Notes:

Ah, it is upon us.

Sorry for the terrible placement of this ending. Don't hate me too much, okay? :)

Now on with it!

Stephenie Meyer owns all things Twilight.

BPOV

We stared over the wall that enclosed his balcony and my mind was reeling. I could tell my cheeks were still flushed and the same thought kept repeating in my mind: I can't believe I just did that. I can't believe I just did that. I. Can't. Believe. I. Just. Did that.

I looked up at Edward and his eyes were cloudy. My thoughts then morphed into worry. His moods had been flip flopping since I arrived last night and now it looked as if he'd switched it up again. "You ok?" I asked, putting a light smile on my face, hoping it would make him smile in turn.

It did. A corner of his lips turned up. "Yeah. I'm great, Bella. I love you." He breathed out and then a small laugh erupted from his mouth. "My neighbors better not have gotten too much of a show."

I felt my entire face flush and I knew I was blushing. "I ... well, I hope they didn't either." I laughed.

He turned his face to me and kissed my forehead. "I'm going to take a shower. Care to join me?" he asked.

I shook my head. "I need to call Alice, if you don't mind."

"Of course not, Bella. I'll be quick, so you can jump in when you're done." He smiled good naturedly and we stood, the blanket wrapped around us both. I managed to pick up our underthings from their scattered positions on the floor of the balcony and we walked inside. The door led straight into Edward's room, where I wrapped myself up in his comfy robe once again. He pulled out a new pair of boxers as he held the blanket around his waist and then grabbed a white t-shirt. He shot a grin my way as he walked just out of the room to his bathroom, and when I heard the water begin to run, I used speed dial to call Alice.

She must have been having a phenomenal day, because she was even more chipper than normal. "Bella!" she said. I could picture her flipping her phone open with a wide smile on her face.

“Hey Alice,” I said, speaking quietly.

I could hear the concern in her voice as she replied, “Is everything ok? Why are you so quiet?”

“Edward’s in the shower. I wanted to call you while he was in there.”

“Hmm. Ok ... what’s going on?” she asked, genuinely concerned.

I took a deep breath before launching into my speech, which came off rather rushed and mumbly. “Last night, I came over because we text messaged back and forth and I ... well, I kind of thought it was a booty call, but then I wondered, is it even considered a booty call if you’re in a relationship with someone? And when I got here, we didn’t even have sex, we took a bath and granted, it was the most romantic bath I’ve ever taken in my life, and then I stayed here last night and this afternoon we went to the Sound and came back to his apartment and the whole time I’ve been with him since yesterday, he’s been moody as hell and I don’t get it.”

Luckily, Alice talked just as fast all the time so I didn’t have to repeat myself.

“Well. First things first, I guess it is still considered a booty call if you’re dating someone. Secondly, what’s wrong with a romantic bath? And thirdly, what do you mean he’s moody?”

I sighed. “Nothing’s wrong with a bath, I was just ... surprised. And he’s all over the place, Alice! He’s happy one minute and almost ... moping the next, and it’s making me batty.”

“Um,” Alice began, and then paused. I waited. “You’ve been that way, too, Bella.”

I sat up straight from my curled up position against Edward’s pillow, his scent momentarily pulling my focus away from the conversation I was having. “Am I? Well, that’s different. This is Edward!”

I could practically see the perplexed look on Alice’s face. I didn’t even know what I meant by that.

“Bella, what is that supposed to mean? Edward can’t have mood swings?” she asked.

My response came out before I could even think.

“He’s supposed to be perfect, Alice. This isn’t what I was expecting!”

The silence on the line only lasted a moment, but it was palpable and in it, my jaw dropped. Did I really expect Edward to never have a flaw?

Alice spoke quietly. “Bella, that’s not fair. He’s human. And we are inherently flawed.”

I couldn't respond for a moment, and Alice, being the amazing friend that she was, didn't say anything. She let me think.

I knew Alice was right. I knew Edward was only human and was entitled to a few flaws. God knows I had enough myself. As we sat silent on the phone line, I tried to figure out why I expected him to be perfect. That thought had never even remotely crossed my mind with Jacob or Garrett, the two men in my history with which I had had the closest semblance to a relationship with. What made Edward different?

Alice finally said, "I know you've been in love with him for years, Bella. But you can't hold him to that kind of ... that kind of standard."

And it hit me then.

For eight years, I had fawned over and dreamed of and loved Edward Anthony Cullen, and my rose colored glasses had never allowed me to consider him normal. He'd always been a bit like Superman for me. Gorgeous and smart and funny and perfect. But that wasn't reality. Besides, Edward was a musician. I should have expected him to have very intense emotions; otherwise his music would be unimpressive and devoid of any real stimulus or response.

His tempestuous emotions were obvious the other night when I'd seen him play.

"You're right, Alice. Completely."

At that moment, Edward came into the room, his eyes soft and his hair in an even greater level of disarray than normal, the water still dripping from it. As he stood there in his blue boxers and an undershirt, I smiled at him. And I realized then that I had to take his emotions for what they were: a part of him. And I loved him, wholly.

"I'm going to go, Alice. Jump in the shower, you know." I said. And then, "Thank you. For everything."

"Anytime, Bella. Love you!" she squealed as she hung up the line.

"How's Alice doing?" Edward asked as he ruffled his hair and glanced in the mirror. A slight scowl appeared on his face.

I stood up and walked over to him. "What's that face for?"

He breathed out loudly before responding, and then angled his body toward me. "Contrary to popular belief," he said, "I kind of hate my hair."

It seemed ridiculous, but I felt my lips fall open and a look of disbelief form on my features. "You're

kidding, right? Your hair is ... well, it's sexy!"

He laughed. "There are a lot of things we'll need to relearn, aren't there?"

I hopped up on his dresser and pulled him to me. Suddenly, I felt the need to begin a very serious conversation.

He stood between my knees and I lazily placed my hands, interlocked, behind his head and looked up at him. "Edward ... I was wondering. We've talked about why you never made a move that night at your house all those years ago. But we haven't ..." I felt my stomach knotting up, and almost changed the subject until I saw his eyes were still soft and waiting for me to finish. "We haven't talked about why you never made a move period."

He looked down at his hands, which were placed on either side of my legs. As he pulled one up to caress my cheek, he said, so quiet that I could hardly hear him, "I really wanted to, Bella. But, I don't know ... I just ... I convinced myself that you'd be better off without me."

To say I was stunned was putting it mildly. "Better off without you? Seriously?" I heard my voice take on a frenzied pitch and then collected myself. I pulled his face toward mine and then whispered, "Edward, I've been in love with you since we were seventeen!"

He nodded. "I know. But I suppose one could ask the same of you."

I thought for a moment. "You're right. I could have done something too." He smiled at me before I continued. "Edward, you have to know that I believe we have to take this as it comes. We love each other, and I know not everything can be perfect now. I ... It's probably the most adult thought I've ever had in my life."

He pulled slightly away from me and a thoughtful look was on his face. I couldn't help but notice that the green of his eyes was absolutely stunning in the half light of the room and I leaned forward to kiss him, but he stopped me. For the first time in my life, I didn't take that as rejection.

"Bella ... ah ... there's something I need to tell you."

EPOV

I looked at her, hair slightly mussed and falling around her face, wrapped in my robe, and I prayed to whatever god there might be that she would take this well.

I had played out so many possible reactions in my head, it was unreal. I saw Bella crying. I saw her laughing, thinking I was joking. I saw her storming out of my apartment, angry. And worst of all, I saw

her telling me there was no way that she could be with me, either long distance or in Nashville and then traveling.

That last one broke me a bit.

Please don't let that be how this plays out, I thought as I began to speak.

"Here. Let's go to the living room," I said, and took her hand in mine to help her down from her perch on the dresser.

"OK," she said, and followed me to the couch.

When we arrived, I pulled a blanket around my shoulders and she sat with me on the couch, her legs crossed Indian style and peeking out from beneath my robe. "What's going on, Edward?" she asked.

"Bella, I'm sure you've noticed my ... I suppose you could call them mood swings. In the last couple of days, I mean."

She looked relieved. "I have ... I wondered what was going on. Is this where you're going to tell me?" She smiled at me and my resolve strengthened. She deserved a choice. It was not up to me to decide whether we should be without each other. So, I would give her the details and tell her the choice was hers. Of course, I would make sure she knew I wanted her to come with me.

"Bella, the band has been offered a recording contract," I started, and she squealed before I could continue.

"Edward, that's amazing! I knew you guys would have your chance soon! When did you hear?"

I reached out and grabbed her hand. "Just a few days ago. Well, last night, really. And once we're done recording, we have been offered a position touring with Kings of Leon."

She smiled and then bit her bottom lip. "The 'Sex on Fire' guys, right?" I nodded. "Alice loves them. That's wonderful, Edward."

I braced myself for the reaction to what I would say next.

"Bella, the thing is ... we'd be recording in Nashville. And then touring in Europe."

The realization washed over her and her eyes fell to the floor. I squeezed her hand, prompting her to look at me. When her eyes reached mine, she asked, "When do you leave?"

I sighed. "About a month from now. The flight is supposed to be scheduled for about a week and a half

after Em's bar opening."

She stared at me, silent.

We sat that way for at least three minutes, and just when I was about to ask her what she was thinking about she stood and then sat back down, this time folding her knees underneath her. She took my hands in hers.

Keeping her eyes trained on mine, she whispered, "So that's it then. You're leaving and we're over in a month?"

I almost lost control when I saw a tear forming in her eye, so my response was rushed. "No, Bella, please don't think that. I ... I want you to come with me. I'm selfish enough to admit that. But I don't want you to feel like ... like you have to. I mean, I know you have a life here, and friends and family, and I don't want you to leave them unless you feel it would be the right thing for you."

She tilted her head toward her right shoulder and released one of my hands to wipe away the tears that had fallen while I spoke. "You ... you want me to come with you?" she asked, her voice quiet and uncertain.

This time it was me that released her hands and I cupped her face in mine. "Bella, I want to be with you. I love you with more of myself that I can even describe. But I don't want to make this choice for you. I want you to think about things and then let me know."

"And what if I don't want to go?"

It was a simple question, but I found my breath hitching as I attempted to respond. "I don't know, Bella. We could try it long distance or ..."

"Or we would end."

She said it resolutely and in almost a whisper. I looked at her. "I definitely don't want that Bella, and if that's the way this is going to play out. ... then I have to admit to you that I will have to consider dropping out of the band."

Chapter End Notes:

Augh! Sorry for that rather cliffhanger-like ending. What do you think? Will Bella go with him or stay? Would she let Edward quit the band? Oh my, so many questions.

Reviews are better than chocolate cake. And less fattening, too.

Chapter 8. The Discussion, part 2

Author's Chapter Notes:

Thanks to HammondGirl for being a Beta superstar.

And to Kim620 because you're awesome and I only know you through your epic reviews.

Anyone who has read my work: YOU ARE MADE OF AWESOME.

Anyway, on with it ...

Stephenie Meyer owns all things Twilight.

BPOV

Quit the band? When they were just getting their shot? There was no way I could allow that, and as I stared at Edward, my brain was working in overdrive, trying to formulate all the things I wanted to say to him.

I wanted to tell him there was no way I could let him give up on his dream. I knew it would make him unhappy, and I couldn't handle that. Besides, though I knew he would never blame me, I would never be able to stand myself if I allowed him to give up this once in a lifetime opportunity just for me.

I wanted to tell him that I loved him, unconditionally, and that we would make it work. I didn't know what that would entail, and to be honest, the idea of a long distance relationship hurt just to think about it. But I would do it, if that was what it would take.

And what I really wanted to tell him was that I would go with him to the ends of the Earth if that was what was necessary for us to stay together. But the moment I tried to say that, a million things cropped up in my mind that I would have to leave behind. My dad. Alice. Angela. The amazing city I lived in. My job. The rain. In this instant, I wasn't able to clearly determine whether Edward was worth leaving them all.

It did, however, seem as though he was. My heart was screaming, "Yes, go with him!" while my brain was attempting to be rational.

Luckily, I didn't have to say anything immediately, because he kept talking.

"Bella, I know you love me and I love you, and I know this seems ... I don't know, unfair or something. I mean, we finally get our chance to be together and now you're faced with this. We're faced with this." He paused and a tortured look appeared on his face. "I suppose I should get this out of the way, since I've never told you this before."

That piqued my interest.

He swallowed. "I'll admit that the majority of the reason we never got together before was a bunch of missed opportunities. But there was ... well, something else." Suddenly he looked nervous.

"You can tell me, Edward." And he could. I suddenly felt so sure of our relationship, I didn't think there was anything he could tell me that would surprise me.

"Ok," he sighed and looked me in the eye. "A month before the homecoming party we had ... the one you stayed with me at. I ... um ..." Edward was stammering and fumbling over his words and it was so uncharacteristic of him, I began to worry. The rest of his explanation came out rushed. "I ran into your dad and he said you deserved a guy who was a perfect gentleman, who would open your doors and be the equivalent of your Prince Charming and he looked me in the eye and said I could never measure up to his requirements for you."

I was stunned and my jaw dropped. "Excuse me?" My voice was beginning to reach a fevered pitch, and my anger toward my father was growing exponentially. I snapped my jaw shut as he continued.

"Bella, please ... don't be mad at Charlie. I ... I get what he was saying now. No one would be good enough for his daughter. But my teenage brain took that as him saying I better not make a move on you, and so I swallowed down my feelings and assumed we could never be, that he would never allow it."

The cacophony of emotions flowing and colliding in me was indescribable. I was, all at once, mad at my father for being a jerk, and at Edward for not bothering to ask me what my opinion on the matter was. I realized it was hardly logical for me to be angry with him for a mistake he made so many years ago, even if it was a rather massive one. But all the same, I wanted to kick him for listening to my dad, and I wanted to smack my father for making an offhand comment that had so drastically impacted my future.

I still hadn't responded when he said, almost in a whisper, "I hate that I wasted all of this time. We might have been married by now, with kids and a house and ..." His voice broke off, and to my chagrin, I heard him catch his breath. Was he crying? I couldn't handle that!

I moved toward him, so close that my knees were grazing his thigh, and grabbed his hands. No tears were falling from his eyes, but they were dejected and sad. "Edward, look," I began. "Does it royally suck that we missed out on what would have been eight wonderful years together? Sure. But we have now, right? And I have to respectfully tell you that I will not allow you to quit the band."

"But Bella," he tried to interrupt. I put a hand up.

"Let me finish, Edward." He nodded. "You and I ... we can make it through this, I know it. I'm not going to lie. A long distance relationship scares the shit out of me. I've never even had a worthwhile face-to-face relationship till now, so I don't know how I would handle that. But no matter what I decide—whether it's to go with you or not," I paused for effect. "I. Will. Not. End this."

Relief seemed to wash over him and in that instant, all my anger and anxiety and fear was replaced by peace.

EPOV

Internally, I breathed a sigh of relief.

If Bella thought we could make it through this, then so did I.

She looked at me with such tenderness, I almost forgot the heartbreak that had flowed through me moments before, when I mentioned what we could have had if I hadn't misjudged what Charlie had said to me, if I'd had the backbone to ask her what she thought on the matter. Almost. "Bella, I'm sorry I never asked you ..."

She shook her head. "No apologies. We'll figure this out. We need to live in the here and now, Edward, not the past."

Truer words were never spoken.

I caressed her cheek with my hand and leaned in slowly to kiss her. Just before I reached her lips, I murmured, "I love you."

She smiled in response and said, "Don't I know it."

My mind traveled over a few things while we kissed, aside from the amazing feeling of her lips on mine.

I had come clean with Bella about the band's future and she was supportive of me. She wouldn't allow me to leave the band, and although that did leave us in a bit of a strange place, I had to trust that we would figure it out.

I had come clean with Bella about my misconstruing of Charlie's comment. The anger that had flashed through her eyes was so intense, I found myself glad that it couldn't all be directed at me. And she somehow didn't think I was an idiot.

We had about a little less than two weeks until Emmett and Rose's bar opening, and a little less than a month until I left for Nashville. I didn't know if she would come with me or not, but a phone relationship with Bella was better than nothing. As we parted, I saw a quiet grin on her lips.

She whispered to me, "We'll get through this, Edward. I know it."

I nodded as I pulled her into my chest, and we sat that way for an indeterminate period of time in silence, breathing each other in.

I was so madly in love with her, words didn't do it justice.

Eventually, she moved away from me and looked up at me through her eyelashes. "I suppose I should take a shower," she said.

"Oh, right," I laughed. I'd nearly forgotten about our voyeuristic tryst earlier. When I sniffed, I realized Bella still smelled slightly like sweat and ... well ... sex.

I eyed her and she caught on quickly. "Oh no. No, no, no. Don't take this as rejection, honey, but I feel disgusting. I really need a shower. To get *clean*."

This time I laughed whole-heartedly, and she joined me. "However," she said sweetly. "Why don't we meet up with Rose and Emmett for dinner and drinks, and I can promise you a good time later?"

The sweetness was suddenly overshadowed with the suggestive nature of her words.

I gulped. "What Bella wants, Bella gets," I said as she walked toward the bathroom. When she was out of sight, I found my phone and dialed my brother's number.

He sounded harried as he answered the line. "Hello??"

"Hey Em, do you and Rose have a free evening, or are you supervising all the construction?" I asked. It struck me that I really had no idea.

He pondered for a moment and I heard him mumble something to a third party. "Yeah, we're free tonight," he said, and his words were interspersed between the banging of a hammer. "I'm at the bar right now, but I'll be done here around five, and then I'll need to go home and shower. Rosie's buying curtains or some shit."

"Bella and I were wondering if you guys wanted to get dinner and drinks somewhere," I said, and visions of a scantily clad Bella almost made me lose my concentration.

"What the hell are you doing?" Emmett yelled at some poor construction worker. "NO, that's not going there. Damn it, hold on, Edward," he growled and then placed the phone down. I heard overtones of him loudly telling someone where they could shove whatever it was they were supposed to be installing, and when he came back to the line he sounded markedly better. "Idiot was trying to lay the tile that's supposed to be on the bar on the backsplash. Anyway, yeah, let's go to dinner. Say, seven?"

"Sounds good to me. Where?"

He thought for a moment and then said, "What about that place over on Capitol Hill, Cayenne Bar & Grill? They have a good happy hour and great food."

"Perfect," I said, thinking we'd hang up.

"So, things are going well, I take it?" I could hear the smile in his voice.

“Amazingly so, Em,” I replied.

He cleared his throat and it was suddenly very quiet on his end of the line. He must have stepped outside. “How’d she take the news?” he asked.

Of course he was talking about the band. “Really well. We’re going to figure it out.”

“Good,” he said, the relief evident in his voice. He was probably glad that I’d fessed up to my feelings for her, and happy that she was up to speed on what was going on in my life. As tough as my big brother came off, I knew he was a teddy bear inside. I knew he was happy that I was happy. “I’ll talk to you later, man. I gotta go bash some heads. Some of these contractors are morons.”

I said goodbye and hung up. Then, I went to my room to get dressed. I pulled on a pair of jeans and a black polo shirt. As I was pulling socks on, Bella walked in to my room, her skin flushed from the heat of the water and her long, thick hair still wet. “So, are we on for dinner?” she asked, a smile on her face.

I nodded. “Seven o’clock,” I said, and walked toward her. Her bright purple bra peeked out from the v-shaped cross section of the sides of my robe. She looked up at me, her eyes wide.

Silently, I pulled the knot at her waist loose and watched as my robe fell open, revealing her chest and yet another pair of perfect boy cut underwear. I trailed my finger along the lining, just below her navel, and while I kept my eyes on my hand, I said, “I look forward to this evening.”

When I looked up at her, she smiled beguilingly and said, “You should.”

The rest of our Saturday afternoon was spent quietly. We lounged on the couch and listened to some jazz music. She read, while I cleaned up my kitchen a bit. We watched bad weekend television, including but not limited to that show about Paris Hilton and her search for a new best friend. We talked about things: why I hated my hair, why she hated her nose, our favorite movies, our all-time favorite albums, and our most hated food.

In short, it was the way the last eight years probably would have been spent, had things gone differently. I still wanted to kick myself, but for Bella, I decided I would make a conscious effort not to think about it.

Chapter End Notes:

A/N: Cayenne Bar & Grill is a real place, and it really is on Capitol Hill in Seattle, and I want to go there. However, I live in Texas, so that’s out unless you live there and want to put me up. haha. Also, this chapter is, admittedly, a bit short. That’s because it didn’t make sense to cut their dinner with RxEm into two chapters. And, now you know the rather infuriating additional information regarding why a teenage

Edward never made a move. And, it goes without saying: **ONE LEMON, COMING RIGHT UP!**

Reviews are better than happy hours. OK, that’s a big fat lie, but whatever. ☺

Chapter 9. Dinner and Dessert

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters, but I do wish Edward Cullen and Jasper Hale were mine. UNF.

This lemon is brought to you by the Kings of Leon.

BPOV

I had somehow managed to remember to bring my blow dryer with me the night before, so while I dried my hair, Edward got dressed. The day had quickly gotten away from us what with all the public sex and important conversations we had. Rose and Emmett were expecting us at Cayenne Bar & Grill in two hours.

I walked back to Edward's bedroom and actually considered calling Emmett and Rose to cancel.

Edward was so damn sexy. It shouldn't have surprised me, but it did. I walked in to see him buttoning a black, long sleeved button down up. He had paired it with a pair of dark wash jeans and black and white leather Puma sneakers. His coppery hair was tamed—if only slightly—and I wanted to knot my hands it, pull it, something. It contrasted with the darkness of his clothes and made the green of his eyes almost glow. The colors looked more vivid, brighter somehow.

In short, my boyfriend looked good enough to eat.

He turned around to see me and smirked. I probably looked like an idiot, standing there slack-jawed. "You should probably at least pull on some clothes if you want to get to your house in the next half hour. If we're late, Rose will have me for dinner."

I stalked across the room and grabbed my jeans. I bent my frame just enough to step into them and as I straightened back up, I felt Edward's hands on my hips, pulling me to him. I could feel the buckle of his belt against my back, and I had to make myself focus on getting dressed instead of what I knew was under those pants. I moved to button my Levi's and turned around, my face an inch from his. "Well, we can't have that, now can we?" I kissed him passionately, twirling my tongue against his just the way I knew he liked it. He groaned and I pulled away and said, "You'll get what's coming to you. You just wait."

He stared as I got dressed, and then we rushed to his car. I had no intention of wearing jeans to any public place where Rose was. She dressed to the nines to go grocery shopping. I didn't want to look frumpy. And so on the way to my place, I called Alice and asked her to put something together for me. She practically burst my eardrum, her squeal was so high pitched. When I got to our place, I walked in

to find a black, knee-length dress lying on my bed. It buttoned from my chest all the way down to my knee and had a very thin belt that clipped just under my breasts. The result was the accentuation of every curve of my body.

I looked fucking hot. End of story. Alice knew what she was doing.

I made a messy knot in my hair so that tendrils hung around my face, and shoved a hair stick through it, giving my hair an Asian-inspired look. Then I applied light make up, adding a bit more mascara than normal, and stepped into heels. Voluntarily.

I guess I wanted to look like sex on a stick, since Edward did.

When I walked out into the living room, where he sat with Alice, she screamed as I came into view. "Oh. My. God. I'm good."

Edward casually looked over and did a double take.

I smiled. That was all I needed.

He stood, we said goodbye to Alice and were on our way within minutes.

The line at Cayenne was long, but Emmett had had the necessary forethought to make reservations, and Rose came to the entrance and waved us in. We took our seats and Emmett whistled. "Wow, Bells, you look awesome! Long time no see!" He stood and gave me a hug and I remembered how massive he was.

I grinned and wrapped one arm around what I could of his waist. "Good to see you, Emmett. Hey, Rose!" I walked to her and we hugged lightly and she smiled as we took our seats.

It was quiet for a moment before she spoke. "So, he finally did it I see."

Edward turned a very slight shade of pink. "Shut up, Rosalie."

"What, you did." She sipped her water. "You know Edward, I can make a statement and not make fun of you. Give me some credit."

Edward chuckled and squeezed my leg under the table just as the waitress appeared. "What can I get you all this evening?" she asked.

"Give me a Heineken, and Rose here will have a Cosmo." Emmett ordered for Rose and she nodded quickly, confirming it.

"I'll have a Cosmo, too," I said and looked at Edward.

“Whiskey. Jameson’s if you have it,” he answered.

“Woo! Represent, little brother,” Emmett whooped. Irish men and Irish whiskey, I thought, laughing internally.

The first round of drinks were brought and gone before I realized it. We were all joking and laughing, and it almost felt as though we’d reverted seven or eight years back to high school in some ways. We were all so comfortable, not that Emmett was uncomfortable anywhere.

“So, guys, what did you end up naming the bar?” Edward asked.

Emmett snickered and Rose smiled. “Fiend.”

I laughed. “Fiend? That’s interesting.”

Rose downed the rest of what was left of the second round of drinks. “You don’t know the half of it,” she replied, wiggling an eyebrow at me. This caused Emmett to burst into laughter, and Edward flagged down the waitress.

“Another round please, and this time put it on my tab,” he said. She nodded and strode away, probably wondering when we were going to leave.

Emmett and Rose were picking on each other and Edward was laughing at them, so I took an opportunity. I reached under the table, being careful to ensure that my hand was hidden by the tablecloth, and rested my hand in Edward’s lap. He kept a smile on his face but I felt his lower body freeze for a moment until he realized what I was doing.

I swept my hand from his belt straight down to the chair beneath him and cupped him in my hand, but only for a second, and then I snaked my hand back to his lap.

He leaned over to my ear and whispered huskily, “You’ll pay for that, Bella.”

I looked up into his eyes and said, “I’m very afraid.”

And then the third round was delivered to us.

Emmett began retelling dirty jokes, some of which I swore I remembered him telling back in high school, but they were funny nonetheless. He laughed and asked about Jasper and Alice and I answered. Then Rose smiled and said to me, “So Bella. How’s it going?” She glanced at Edward and Emmett, and they were talking about some baseball game that neither of us cared much about. They weren’t paying attention to us at the moment.

I understood what she was really asking.

"It's going really well, Rose. Not that I'm surprised, you know." I shot a sideways glance at Edward. "It went outside earlier." I sipped my drink.

Her eyes lit up, full of mischief. "I approve. Wholeheartedly," she said. "Maybe you should know that for the last ... oh ... year or so, it wasn't going at all for him."

This was surprising to me. "Really? Not even once?"

She shook her head. "He was like a priest," she replied, and then flagged down the waitress to order another round.

As the fourth Cosmo of the evening appeared before me, Edward leaned over and whispered in my ear. "I want to be inside of you. We need to go."

I didn't need a second request.

I sipped quickly, and Emmett and Rose called the waitress over to close our table out. The final bill was brought to us just as I finished my drink. Edward handed Emmett a wad of cash and took my hand. When we got to his Volvo, I got in my seat and he looked over at me. "Well, that was fun."

I nodded. "I've always liked Emmett. He's such a teddy bear."

He laughed. "That he is." He paused and cocked an eyebrow at me. "You are aware that I heard that whole 'going' conversation, right?"

My jaw dropped. "No! What are you, superman?"

"No, but if that's what you want, I'm not above role-playing," he said frankly, and I swear I could feel wetness pool in my panties.

I coughed and said, "That won't be necessary, Edward. So, it's true? You abstained?"

He nodded as he drove fifteen miles over the speed limit. "Before you, it was eleven months, three weeks, two days and one STD test."

"Wow," I said. "OK, then."

When we arrived at my apartment, we walked in to find the place silent. The only remnant I found of my roommates was a note from Angela saying she and Ben were going to be out of town for a few days. I

left it up for Alice to see and walked to my room, Edward hot on my heels.

I prattled around my room, taking my time on purpose. Edward sat like an impatient teenager at the end of my bed and I laughed internally. "Bella, come on!" he said.

I looked up at him and blinked. "I'm sorry, were you waiting for something?" I put a perplexed look on my face.

He growled and shot across the room to me. His arms wrapped around my waist and started sucking my neck. "OK, OK, vampire-man ... hold on," I said. "I have something for you."

He pulled away with a groan and sat down again. I disappeared into my closet and took a deep breath as I changed my clothes. I found what I was looking for easily, and slipped out of my dress to put it on underneath. As I pulled my dress back over it and left my heels in the closet, I knew he'd think I was crazy since it appeared that nothing had changed.

EPOV

She walked out of the closet after teasing me for nearly twenty minutes, sashaying around her room in that sexy dress. Her legs looked a mile long, and I had to do a double take. She was in that closet for at least ten minutes, so I was expecting her to come out in something ... different.

But when she came back out, she was still in the dress. Not that I minded. It was sexy as hell, hugging every curve of her body perfectly. I made a mental note to thank Alice for picking it out.

"Bella?" I asked.

She grinned at me. "Mmm hmm?"

"You're killing me here," I replied honestly.

She walked up to me and took my hands, wrapping my fingers around the first button on the dress. She'd left the miniscule belt in the closet. "Go ahead."

I smiled like a madman, I'm relatively sure, as I unbuttoned her dress. It was at the center of her cleavage and when I pulled the material to each side, a black bra with a red trim peeked out at me. I raised an eyebrow and looked her in the eye as I continued moving further down.

She pouted her lips slightly. My hands froze as I asked, "What?"

"Half the fun was going to be seeing your reaction. Look at it Edward, not my eyes. Just for now, please," she answered.

“You got it,” I said, and shifted my eyes down to the bra that peeked out at me. I undid the next button and revealed a red ribbon tied into a perfect bow.

After the next button, the bra was completely revealed and I saw the beginnings of sheer black material covering her sides.

Three buttons more and her panties were revealed ... a tiny thong with a matching red bow.

She trained her eyes on mine and shrugged her shoulders, which allowed the dress to fall to the floor.

She turned around in what seemed like slow motion, and when she was facing away from me I wrapped my arms around her waist and started kissing her neck slowly. Softly.

She closed her eyes and angled her face toward the ceiling and then parted her lips in a low gasp. “Edward, please don’t stop,” she mumbled.

Of course I didn’t.

She turned around and kissed me full on the lips, her tongue and mine twisting together slowly but surely, already in our comfortable rhythm. As we kissed, she removed my shirt and undershirt, and our lips only parted as she pulled my undershirt over my head. In the second after my shirt was removed, she slid her tongue down my neck and kissed my collarbone and then pushed up on her tiptoes and whispered, “I love you”.

“And I love you, Bella,” I replied, once again kissing her, this time with increasing passion. She molded her body to mine for a moment, and I felt complete. Then she pulled away and unbuckled my belt and slid my jeans to the floor.

Her mattress was queen-sized with a pillow top and therefore sat around her mid-thigh. I walked her backwards to the bed and when the backs of her legs hit it, she murmured against my lips, “Uh uh” and maneuvered around me so that we traded places.

“Bella?” I questioned. She put a finger over my lips in the universal sign for ‘shhh’, pushed my boxers over my hips so that they fell to the floor, and pressed my shoulders down until I was seated on her mattress. I kissed her stomach and then the entire area along the seam of her pretty little panties before she knelt before me.

She cast one lust-filled look at me before opening her beautiful mouth and taking me into it. She began to bob up and down slightly, and I thought I could handle it until she sighed. The vibrations were enough to make me gently fist my hand in her hair. When I realized what I had done, I went to pull away, but she caught my hand with hers, so I took that as her approval. As softly as possible, I began to move my

hand in the rhythm that would make me cum the fastest. She felt so good—her mouth hot and wet—but I wanted to be inside her, to feel her lose control like I knew she would.

Suddenly, she began tracing a finger along the part of me that she couldn't take into her mouth. Slowly, methodically, she moved up and down and that did it. "Bella, baby, please ... I'm going to cum and I don't want to ... not yet." I'd learned, in the weeks that Bella and I had been intimate that I couldn't stop myself with her. With other girls, I'd always been able to prolong my climax, but with Bella it was simply impossible.

She stood and I firmly placed my hands on her hips, pulling her toward me. I pushed myself back further on the mattress so that my thighs were actually on the bed and leaned forward. I stared into her eyes as I pulled those teeny-tiny panties down, and let them join the rest of our clothes on the floor. I then hooked my hand in the back of her knee and lifted it, so that her foot was near me on the mattress.

It took a little maneuvering, but I placed her hands on my shoulders and started massaging her already moist center. She moaned. I began moving in gentle circles around her clit as I hooked my thumb underneath the bra she was still wearing to touch her pert nipples. I felt her getting wetter and wetter and her fingernails were cutting into my skin as her body reacted to what I was doing to her. "Ungh," she groaned. "Please, Edward. Please. I need you ... I ... oh, God ..."

I pulled away and moved my hands to her hips. She bent the leg that was already poised on the mattress to give herself leverage, and then brought the other one up to the opposite side of my legs. In that position, balanced on her knees in front of me, her still-covered perfect breasts were inches from my face, so I untied the red bow and unbuttoned the single snap that held it together. She shook her shoulders and it fell to the ground.

As I took her right nipple between my lips, she moaned, low and sexy as hell, and then lowered herself onto me.

The sensation was such that I had to stop what I was doing. I threw my head back to face the ceiling and said, "Bella, you feel so good ..." My voice fell away as she gently pressed me back to the mattress. She left her hands on my shoulders as she started to writhe against me. I cannot accurately describe how beautiful she was, skin glistening under a light sheen of sweat, her hair wild and her lips parted as she gasped in rhythm with our bodies.

So often people shortchange men's view of sex. It isn't just the way the connection between our two bodies felt ... anatomy to anatomy ... though that's obviously part of it. As I lay there, watching Bella move upon me, I could see every curve of her form. I could feel her body on mine and saw every inflection of pleasure that raced across her face. I heard her voice and her breathing quicken, and the slight smell of her arousal wafted through the air. It was all encompassing. Every sense was heightened, and all of my focus was on Bella. My Bella.

This time it was like the morning after the first time. Slow. Gentle. No frenzied actions. Deliberate. It was the difference between sex and making love.

She rolled back and forth on me and I moaned. "Bella ..."

She whispered then. "Come here, Edward." When she moved to lie next to me, I took her place. Her perfectly feminine hand took my member and pressed it into her, and I thrust into her again and again until I could feel her muscles spasming and clenching. I started to lessen my pace, thinking she might want some relief from what I knew to be her very sensitive center, but she clutched at my knee with her hand. "No, please don't stop."

I kept at it, and when she came it was so forceful that from her hips down, her muscles were quaking. She arched her back and gasped. Seeing her that way put me over the edge and as I came, I too gasped for air, convinced there wasn't enough for the both of us.

When I had caught my breath, I pulled out and lay next to her. She stood, absolutely beautiful in her nakedness, and grabbed a sheet from a pile on top of a basket full of clean laundry. As she flung it over me, she smiled at me and crawled under it with me. As she laid her head on my chest I said, "Bella, I love you so much."

She sighed, a contented sound. "I know Edward, and I love you."

And we fell asleep that way, in each other's arms.

Chapter End Notes:

A/N: Well, hot damn. Edward the sensitive lover has arrived. Yummy, if I do say so *fans self* Oh, also, if you're interested, the lingerie Bella was wearing is actually from Frederick's of Hollywood. I found it on their website (coincidentally, so is the wine set she wore in Chapter 1 and 2). And, you probably noticed the lemon in this chapter is a) quite detailed and b) quite a bit longer. Why? I blame the Kings of Leon. The "Only By the Night" album is just damn sexy and happens to be what I was listening to ... on repeat while I wrote this.

There's an AxJ one shot from chapter 2 available that I could post here if you want to read it. And, there is one for RxEm as well that explains Emmett's snickering and the bar name.

Reviews are nowhere near as good as Cosmos, sexy times with Edward or the Kings of Leon, but they're pretty cool.

Chapter 10. More Conversation & A Shower

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters.

I might be spoiling you all just a little ...

BPOV

My eyes fluttered open and in that instant, I remembered all the events of the day before. Lots and lots of sex and lots of conversation that was important. I glanced at the clock. It was already well past nine, and Edward was still asleep, his bronze hair jutting out from his scalp at odd angles, as it usually did. He hated that hair. How strange, because it was just so damn sexy ... I kissed his forehead and he pulled me to him, wanting me close even in his sleep. I mumbled in his ear, "I'll be right back, baby," and slid out from his grasp.

I knew it what I was going to do was probably futile, but I didn't care.

I looked down and remembered that I was naked. I marveled in that for a moment. I never slept naked. Ever. But with Edward it was not an issue. I didn't have any of the insecurities I'd always had with it before. It pointed to a level of comfort I had never known before. As I wondered at it, I snagged my robe from over the back of a chair and wrapped it around me, and then grabbed my cell phone on the way out.

Lightly, I closed my bedroom door and went to stand on my balcony in order to assure I didn't wake Edward, Alice, or Jasper with the overtones of my voice.

The phone rang four times before he answered. "Hello?" he said, in a sleepy voice.

I took a deep breath. *Do not lose control, Bella. Do. Not. Lose. Control.* "Good Morning, Dad. There's something I need to talk to you about."

I heard my father slurp his coffee. I knew he could tell by the tone of my voice that I was not a happy camper. "Um. Sure, Bells. What's up?"

"Dad, when I was seventeen did you say something to Edward Cullen about no one being worthy of me? The line was silent. "Aw, gee, I don't know, Bella. It's been eight years since you were seventeen."

"Answer the question, Dad," I said, my voice steely. Then, in a nicer tone, I said "Please."

"I might have." He admitted with a closed-mouth tone.

+Step one was done. I had made him admit to the conversation. I put my phone on speaker.

"Dad, did you ever stop and think about the way that would sound to teenager? The father of a girl saying no one would ever live up to his expectations?" Step two.

"Well ... Bella, what is all this nonsense about?" he asked, clearly thinking this line of questioning was ridiculous.

His tone pushed me over the edge, and I spat at him. "What this is all about, Charlie, is that your little off-handed comment kept Edward from feeling as if he could ever ask me out. He was petrified that you wouldn't allow it. So he never asked."

The line was silent. I never called him Charlie anymore, not since I was twelve and came back from a visit to my mother's during which she was particularly uncomplimentary of him. He knew I was really upset when I reverted to using his first name.

"Do you understand what I'm not saying, Dad?" I asked, my voice pleading. The emotions I was feeling were all over the radar. He did not respond. "Dad, you knew I was head over heels for Edward back then, didn't you? What were you thinking?"

He sighed. "Bella, I just ... you know that older Cullen boy didn't have the best reputation. Always partying and whatnot. I just didn't want you getting mixed up in that."

I seethed on my end of the line, uncertain of whether I should have been pissed beyond belief or just let it go.

"Bells, you have to know I would never ... I couldn't knowingly stand in the way of your happiness like that." His voice was broken and then my suspicions, after so many years, were confirmed. My dad had known I was in love with Edward.

I thought of all the reactions I could have. I could flip my shit and completely lose my cool. I could yell at him. I could act like nothing happened. Or, I could do the practical thing.

"Dad, look. I just needed you to know." My voice grew quiet and I leaned forward, resting my hands on the balcony wall. "I just needed you to know that I ... I really missed out on something, you know? And I ... I can't be mad at you. It's too old of a ... a thing to do that."

"Oh, Bella, I'm sorry. Really and truly. I never intended ..."

I cut him off quietly. "I know you didn't, Dad. It's just ... Edward and I are together now. Finally. And I'm so in love, Dad ... It is unreal. And we have some really big decisions to make together," I said. I cleared my throat. "I just wanted you to know that he and I are a ... we're together. For good." I finished awkwardly, because it wasn't normal for my father and I to have such an emotional conversation. I knew he loved me; he knew I loved him. We just never talked about things like that.

I heard him breathe a sigh of relief. "Thank you, Bella," he whispered.

"Love you, dad," I said and flipped my phone closed.

I sighed to myself and turned around to find Edward standing in the doorway behind me, wrapped in my sheet.

EPOV

She smiled at me, her hair still mussed from sleep and her eyes soft and full of love. For me. She motioned for me to come and stand near her. "Bella," I said. "I'm kind of naked under here."

Her smile morphed from one of sweetness to one of wickedness. "That's ok, I'm kind of naked under here."

She had a point. And to be honest, I didn't mind the view of a naked Bella. So, I walked toward her and as I did, she extended her arms toward me, finally wrapping them tightly around my waist. The robe fell apart and she stood that way—her head against my chest and my chin balanced on the top of it, skin to skin—for a while before she spoke. My arms settled around her, the sheet covering us both.

"So, when should I give you an answer about whether I'll go with you?"

Her voice was so tender and sweet. I closed my eyes as I took it in. "Whenever you're ready, Bella. I will take whatever answer you give."

She looked up at me and kissed me. Slowly, softly, as if we had all the time in the world. Eternity.

The reality was that we had three weeks before things changed drastically. And I hated it. Hated the thought of being away from Bella. Hated the thought of leaving her here. And hated that we were in this position to begin with.

When we parted, I tilted my face toward hers, kissing the top of her head and she snaked one hand up my bare chest and left it there while she kissed me again. I felt her smile against my lips. I whispered, "What is it?"

She hummed as she placed her head against the side of my chest her hand wasn't on. "You feel good," she replied.

I groaned. "Bella, do you have any idea what you do to me?"

She laughed as she looked up at me. "Probably. Come with me," she said as she pulled me by the hand back into the apartment. I wrapped the sheet back around my body, gathering it together in my free hand, and she led me to the bathroom.

I stood and watched her as she turned the shower on. The water was hot, making the room fill with steam. She grabbed a large towel and hung it on a rack just outside of the stall. Then, she turned to me and dropped the robe from her shoulders.

Once again, I was struck by her beauty. Toned legs ending in cute, pedicured feet. Narrow hips that still curved in a womanly way that turned me on to no end. A flat stomach that led to perfect, perky breasts. Not too small, not too big. Literally just enough to fill my hands perfectly. Long, thin, toned arms and a graceful neck. A pretty mouth formed of two plump lips, a button nose and her eyes. Her eyes. Large, almond-shaped and so deep I felt as though I could get lost in them.

“What are you thinking about? You look amazed,” she said,

I smiled. “I am.”

She walked toward me and gently pushed the sheet from my shoulders. As it fell, she turned toward the shower, leading me behind her. I realized that yes, I felt lust. Pure, unadulterated lust in the face of my naked and oh-so-sexy girlfriend. But more than that, I was utterly and completely in love with her. It seemed to grow by the day, the hour. And it made me view her the way she should have always been viewed: as an awe-inspiring, beautiful woman. I wondered briefly what I’d done in another life to deserve someone as special as Bella in my life.

We stepped into the shower and she immediately moved to stand under the water. She released my hand as she grabbed her hair and began to massage it lightly, ensuring it was wet. I watched as the water flowed from her shoulders down her chest and thought I might salivate, the sight was so glorious.

She caught me looking at her and put down the bottle of shampoo she had just picked up. “You. Come here,” she commanded.

I moved toward her and she reached up, pulling my face to hers and kissed me with wild abandon. I forgot where we were. I forgot why we were in the shower. All I could do was pull her to me. Just before she reached me, she wrapped her petite hand around me and smiled for the second time against my lips. As we kissed, she slowly pumped her hand up and down, ensuring that I was hard, almost painfully so by the time she was done. I gasped into her mouth and she pulled away with a smile on her lips.

“I chose this bathroom for a reason,” she mumbled. I realized, finally, that we weren’t in her bathroom. We were standing in the one in the hallway, the one that Angela and Alice shared. She pointed behind me and I turned to see a cut out in the wall, almost as if the space was supposed to be a window. It was probably two feet deep, a foot and a half wide, lined with tile and an assortment of body washes and conditioners were sitting there.

It took my mind a minute to realize what she was insinuating. She walked around me, placed a foot on the side of the tub nearest the wall and propped herself up onto the indentation. “Well, that’s ... uncanny,” I said as I noticed that that the height of the place on which Bella now sat, her wet hair falling over her shoulders, put her at my waist’s height. She smiled and pulled me forward.

My lips were on hers in that second. We were kissing with fervor when she raked her hands down my body, and then pulled my hips toward her. I felt her knees and then thighs against my hips and she pulled her lips from mine, moving them to my chest. As she traced my nipple with her tongue, she pushed herself onto me, and I moaned in response. The feeling of her tight and warm and wet around me, on top of her mouth on my body was enough to make my eyes roll back in my head.

"Please Edward," she said, throwing her head back to face the ceiling. She whispered, "Please fuck me." Her voice was tender.

The word 'fuck' coming from Bella's generally clean mouth made my cock twitch and I set about to giving her what she wanted.

I moved my hips as she angled her body the way that she liked, and when I began to thrust into her, I was sure to do it excruciatingly slowly. I pulled almost all the way out of her and made sure to press as far in as I could on the return. I could feel her getting slick around me as the shower ran down my back. I leaned forward then, and paused mid-thrust, taking her nipple into my mouth. It was already hardened, erect, and when I licked from the bottom to the top for the last time, Bella groaned. "Ungh ... Edward."

As I increased my pace, I felt her getting close, felt the muscles clenching and releasing and finally I lost control. "God, Bella," I said as I came, hard.

My cock was still twitching when she smiled in satisfaction. She took my hand from its place against the wall and said, "Don't stop." She placed my thumb against her clit and began moving it in the way I knew would make her climax quickly. My ministrations continued and she finally came, arching her back and crying out as she did.

Finally, I pulled out of her and stepped back into the water. I washed my hair as she covered herself in soap and then we swapped positions. When she reached to turn the water off, I put my arms around her and kissed the place where her neck met her shoulders. "I love you," I said simply.

"I love you, Edward," she smiled. We stepped out of the shower and she handed me the towel she had pulled out, and then she wrapped herself in her robe. I grabbed her hand and we walked to her room, where we lounged. I realized I didn't have any clean clothing. She only smiled when I mentioned it. "I

don't mind you naked, really, but hold on," she said as she walked to a drawer in her dresser.

She pulled out a pair of still-in-the-package pajama pants and a package of white t-shirts. "I bought these the other day."

"I ... well thank you, Bella," I said as I stood to dress.

She pulled on a pair of shorts and a tank top and when we were both dressed, we walked into the living room. Alice and Jasper were home.

BPOV

My mind was still in the shower when I walked into the living room to see the face of my best friend and her husband smiling up at me. "Hi, Bella," she said. Jasper nodded and stood to shake Edward's hand.

"Hey, Jasper. How's it going?" Edward asked.

Jasper shrugged. "Can't complain. You guys want to watch this with us? We rented *Almost Famous*. Alice loves it."

I looked at Edward. "I'm game if you are." Internally, I smiled because the title sort of applied to Edward, when I really thought about it.

He nodded. "I'll order pizza." Then, he looked at me. "Are we staying here tonight?"

I realized then that I had no intention of sleeping alone if I had the option. Sex aside, Edward made for a good bed partner. What would I do if I stayed behind when he went to Nashville? I shook the thoughts away and nodded. "Yes, if you don't mind."

"Not at all," he answered. "I just need to go home and get a few things." He looked at Alice and Jasper. "Do you guys mind waiting until I get back to start the movie?"

Alice shook her head. "Not at all. By the time you get back, the pizza will be here. Go ahead and go. I'll call and order it."

Edward nodded and walked behind me to grab his keys from the kitchen counter. I wasn't sure how they had gotten there, but he walked up behind me and kissed me before he walked back to my room, put his clothes into a spare bag and slipped his Pumas on. "I'll be back soon," he whispered in my ear as he left.

I closed the door behind him and Alice said, pointedly, "Things seem to be going well, I see."

I sighed a long, contented sigh. "They really, really are."

Chapter End Notes: A/N: Blame Kings of Leon. I really wasn't planning a lemon for this chapter, but they bring out the naughty side of my mind and I happened to be listening to them through the writing of the last two chapters. And besides, I enjoy picturing Rob in compromising positions. Ahem. Consider yourselves spoiled. LOL.

Also, a reminder (from chapter 2): Alice and Jasper are only in the apartment for another month because they recently married and are moving out. Angela is out of town with Ben.

Thanks to **HammondGirl** for betaing like a rock star. Reviews are just nice.

Chapter 11. Almost Famous and A Dream

Author's Chapter Notes:

No smut this chapter.

I'm sure you'll get over it. :)

Thanks to my beta for being amazing and to all of you for reading.

On with it ...

EPOV

I rushed home and the twenty-five minute drive seemed to take much longer than necessary. Being away from Bella, in the knowledge that we had such a limited amount of time before I had to go to Nashville, was almost physically painful. I arrived at my apartment, grabbed my toothbrush, two pairs of jeans, four shirts and a few pairs of boxers. I shoved them into the bag that now held my dirty clothes and hoped that Bella wouldn't mind if I washed my dirty clothes at her house. I thought for a moment about bringing different shoes, but my Pumas were comfortable and generally worked with everything I wore.

As I shot back down the stairs and sat in the driver's seat, I smiled. I had caught the tail end of Bella's conversation with Charlie this morning—the part where she said we were together for good. That meant, at the very least, she was willing and able to give this thing a shot long distance. The idea of being away from Bella permanently did physically hurt, and I wondered how I'd ever handle it.

About fifteen minutes away from Bella's, I received a call from Laurent. He was checking in on me, making sure I was OK, since the band had taken a few weeks off of practice in the knowledge that we'd soon be playing so often. Our fingers would be sore day in, day out. I told him everything was fine and quickly got off the line as I drove up to Bella, Alice, and Angela's apartment.

When I walked up the lawn, I met the pizza delivery guy and paid him. As I took the pizzas and 2 liters of Coke from him I smiled, tipped him and walked into the apartment. Bella met me at the door. "Hello," she breathed, somehow wrapping her arms around me despite the two pizzas and sodas I was holding. I kissed her neck and murmured a hello in response.

Jasper stood then, and took the pizza from me. "Bring those to the kitchen, if you don't mind," he said. I followed him and we set up the pizzas—one supreme and one pepperoni and jalapeno—with paper plates. Alice and Bella came in, took a few slices each and then Jazz and I followed suit. I'd forgotten how relaxing it was to spend time with Jasper. He and I had stayed in contact after we graduated, but life had been so crazy for us that we hadn't actually spent any time just hanging out in months.

Finally, we settled into the couch. I leaned into the corner, one leg along the back of it and the other

foot on the floor. I sat my plate on the end table to my right and Bella sat in front of me, leaning into my chest, her pizza in her lap. Alice curled up against Jasper in much the same position on their loveseat and pressed play.

The movie was a blur. I had seen it before and so I found myself lost in the scent of Bella's strawberry shampoo, focusing in on the way her eyelashes fluttered when she laughed, and smiling at the mannerisms I could only now fully appreciate in this kind of proximity with her. She turned to me and kissed me lightly as she asked, "More pizza?" I nodded and then watched her walk to the kitchen to refill both my plate and my cup. Jasper did the same for Alice right around the same time.

When she sat back down she brought a throw blanket with her, and this time when she leaned against me she quickly ate her pizza and then turned slightly so that she could press her cheek into my chest.

The movie ended and Alice gave a contented sigh. "I love that movie," she said. Jasper nodded in agreement.

"It sort of applies to Edward," Bella said lazily and I felt myself seize up. Of course I wanted Alice and Jazz to know about the band's opportunity, but talking about it made it real. It meant I was really going to leave, and Bella would or would not come with me. I waited for their response.

"What's she talking about, man?" Jasper asked.

"Well. Um. We were offered a spot with Kings of Leon on the European leg of their tour. In about two and a half weeks, I go to Nashville to record our new record, because with that offer, we were given a major record deal as well," I said. The words tumbled out of my mouth.

Alice looked concerned. "That's amazing! But what about the two of you?" she asked, her voice quiet.

Bella cleared her throat. "We'll be fine. I haven't made up my mind yet on whether I'll just go with him or stay here and stick it out long distance," she replied, her voice strong. I wondered if she was as confident as she seemed to be.

Jasper spoke up. "Two and a half weeks? Alice and I will be out of here before you leave. We'll have to have a dinner party or something to say our temporary goodbyes."

"Jazz," Bella began, "I haven't said I was going yet."

He only smiled knowingly and shrugged as Alice said, "Well, I'd miss you, but how amazing would it be to tour Europe on someone else's dime?" Her smile was brilliant as she giggled.

"I've left the choice up to Bella," I said simply. "I can't make that kind of decision for her. I mean, of course I want her to come with me, but it would be selfish of me to ignore the fact that she'd be leaving

a lot behind ...”

Alice cut me off. “Yes, but she’d be with you. And we all know that would be enough.”

Would it? The conversation fell off as Jasper picked up a call from Ben and I let my mind wander. Would I be enough for Bella? Enough for now? Enough for forever? I felt unworthy, like the thought was preposterous. I was one person. How could I replace everyone in her life, temporarily?

But then, it hit me.

Bella was enough for me. If I rarely saw Emmett, if I saw my parents even less than normal, if I lost contact with Garrett ... Bella would be enough for me. She would sustain me.

That revolutionized my opinion of the situation. I already knew I loved her. I’d known that for years. But the realization that she was such a powerful force for me made me really believe that—no matter what happened—whether she came with me or not—we could make this work.

I smiled into her hair and kissed her, and she turned her face up to mine, touching my lips with hers.

BPOV

I hadn’t meant to blurt out Edward’s news without asking him first, but I knew he wouldn’t mind terribly considering our company. Alice and Jasper’s opinions of the situation were apparent, in my eyes. They both thought I should go. I made a sort of pros and cons list in my head.

The obvious pros were that I would be with Edward and that I’d get to see Europe, something that I’d been dying to do for years.

The list of cons was a bit lengthier. I would be away from everything I knew, including my home state, my best friend and my father. I’d have to quit my job at the University and I would have to pack up everything but my clothes and use a storage unit, meaning I would no longer have a permanent residence anywhere.

But I would be with *him*.

Alice pulled out her old Sega Genesis and plugged it in, starting up the original Sonic the Hedgehog game, and I shook the thoughts from my head. Although two and a half weeks wasn’t terribly long, I didn’t have to make a decision at that precise moment.

We played for an hour or so and then Jasper & Alice decided they would go to bed.

I moved from the place I was seated at to sit next to Edward on the sofa. He looked at me, his eyes tired

from something other than the video game. "What's wrong?" I asked.

He sighed and shook his head. "I'm exhausted. But I'd like to talk to you about something, if you don't mind. We can go to your room if you want ..."

I shook my head. "No, of course not. Alice and Jasper will give us our privacy here and Angela's out of town until tomorrow. What's up?" I placed a hand on his knee and looked into his eyes, waiting for his response.

His vibrant green eyes bored into mine and finally, he said, "I'm glad I heard the end of the conversation you had with your dad this morning."

A small smile turned the corners of my mouth up. "I am, too."

"I love you, Bella. It's probably the strongest thing I've ever felt in my life. No, it is the strongest thing I've ever felt. And I just ... I love that you want to make this work no matter what, but I can't believe the timing of this." He finished in a defeated tone.

I decided to be honest with him. "I know. The timing is absolutely ridiculous. But I have to trust that it happened this way for a reason. You believe that, right?"

He nodded slowly and then a crooked grin appeared on his lips. He extended his hand and contoured it to my face, and as I closed my eyes at the sensation he said, "I have to."

I stood and held a hand out to him. He grabbed the remote, turned the television off and stood with me. We walked down the hallway to my room and closed the door behind us. Then, we spent hours talking. It was a conversation in which we got to know each other inside and out. Favorite songs. Dream vacations. Most embarrassing memory. Favorite memory from high school. My favorite was so arbitrary, I thought he'd never remember it. There was a moment, about a week after I had spent the night at his house with him, that we were both at a party. It was being held in a meadow in the woods in the surrounding area of Forks, and I was bored, but Alice didn't want to leave yet. So, I found a seat on a very low tree branch and perched there, careful not to lose my balance. He came up behind me, all smiles and bronze hair, and placed both hands on either side of me. We talked and laughed until the party was almost dead and Alice called to me from across the field. When I turned around to face Edward, I was met with eyes that I didn't recognize, filled with something I couldn't read. He helped me down from the branch and we stood, his hand on the small of my back, and he kissed my forehead.

"Really?" he asked, and I was certain that he wouldn't remember the incident.

"Yes," I nodded. "Looking back, I should have recognized the look in your eyes as a sign that you had some kind of feelings for me. But I thought that was so impossible back then that I didn't allow myself to see it. I'm sure you don't even remember that party ..."

But he cut me off. "I do." His voice was quiet, almost reverent as he looked at me, his head on the pillow across from mine. "That's my favorite memory of you from Forks High, Bella."

My jaw fell open and I was speechless for a moment. "I ... Edward, really?"

He nodded once. "Yes. It was one of the few times I got you to myself. No one else was around and I could just talk to you. I replayed that entire conversation over and over in my mind, wishing I would have had the nerve to ask you out." His voice was still quiet.

"Oh, Edward," I said and moved toward him. Automatically, he pressed his back into the mattress and lifted his arm to allow me to lie on his chest. I squeezed him gently and whispered, "I love you. So much."

And then he repeated his actions from so long ago, He kissed the top of my head and smiled into my hair and we fell asleep.

EPOV

That night, I dreamed.

I saw myself on a stage, staring into a blank faced audience. They all stared at me with no emotion. I knew none of them. Then, my bandmates--Garrett, Benjamin, and Riley--appeared in a line on the stage, facing me. First, I talked with them. We joked around for a while and time flew. Then, I saw Bella waiting patiently behind them. She smiled at me from in between them, and I beckoned for her to come. She shook her head and gestured to the guys.

I waited for them to notice her, to move to allow her to come through, but they never did.

I grew frustrated and attempted to push my way through so that I could make it to her, but it was futile. They were made of stone, it seemed, and I wasn't strong enough on my own to move them from impeding my way. I couldn't simply walk around them—I had to go through the line.

Bella continued to smile at me, serene in my impatience, and I called out to her, "What am I supposed to do? I want to be with you, not alone with them!"

In response, she only smiled and dipped her head, angling it slightly to the floor. I glanced down and noticed that there was a guitar pick in my hand and on it was written, in all caps: ASK.

I almost laughed, but followed the directions anyway. "Guys, can you let her through, please?"

Garrett smiled and said, "That's all it took to bring her over, man. That's all." Then he moved, extended a

hand to Bella and she walked straight to me and into my arms.

When I started awake, it was 5:30 in the morning and I hoped that dream was foreshadowing the future. I asked the band to allow her through and they had. In reality, I had asked Bella about coming with me and then put the choice in her hands. Now all I could do was pray that she chose to come on tour with us, since she had already made it evident that she was choosing me, distance or not.

Bella stirred in her sleep and I glanced over at her. She had shifted and was facing away from me, her hair fanned behind her on the pillow. I gathered it together and pulled myself closer to her. As I wrapped my left arm around her, she snuggled into me and sighed contentedly in her sleep.

I breathed in her strawberry scent, sighed to myself and fell back asleep.

Chapter End Notes:

A/N: OK so, I know this chapter seems largely like fluff, but I promise you there are important things in it. Remember it later.

Reviews make me one happy camper.

Chapter 12. Fiend

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters, and I can promise you SM would not approve of this chapter.

wink

Dedicated to my beta, **HammondGirl** and I'm pretty sure she knows why.

BPOV

I was rushing around, attempting to be sure I was ready when Edward returned from his jam session with the band. We were going to the opening of Fiend, but I had worked all day in my tiny office, grading papers and meeting with students. It was interesting how different my Freshman Lit class students were from my senior students. I loved to interact with them, but this was the last week of the semester and I was running ragged by the time I got home. Alice met me at the door.

She raised one perfectly arched eyebrow and me and said, "Shower. Now. We don't have much time. Edward is going to be here in exactly an hour and a half and we're going to make you look like Sex."

I knew there was no point in arguing, so I went straight to my room, shrugged out of my clothing and wrapped myself in my robe on my way to the bathroom. As I stepped into the shower, I heard Alice sing out, "Bella, I have your dress lying out on your bed. We can negotiate on the shoes!" I smiled as I turned the water on. I would miss her.

Wait, what?

I would miss her had just flown through my head.

I hadn't even made a final decision ... consciously, anyway.

I shook the thought from my head and stepped into the shower, knowing that by the time I got out, Alice would be dressed and ready to pounce. I washed my body with Edward's favorite body wash and then shampooed and conditioned my hair quickly. When I stepped out, I quickly blow dried it. "Hurry up, Bella! You know your hair takes forever to straighten!"

"I'm coming, Alice!" I hollered back as I stepped into my robe. As I walked into my room, she smiled at me and reminded me of the Cheshire cat. Her eyes were shining and happy.

"You are going to look amazing!" she squeaked as she held up a very short, midnight blue dress.

My jaw dropped. "Alice. Is that even going to cover my ass?"

"Of course, silly. Here."

I shrugged and took the hanger. As soon as I held it up to my form, I imagined Edward taking it off and could feel wetness beginning to pool in my center. *Damn, he was just so sexy ...* "Where are my underwear, Alice?"

She shook her head.

"What?" I asked. "None?"

"Bella. Have you *seen* that dress?" she asked, a look of annoyance on her face.

"Alice, I really don't like to ..."

She cut me off. "I know. Go commando. Whatever. Get over it, Bella. Edward will die when he realizes you have no underwear on."

I thought about arguing for a moment but then decided to just go along with it. I stepped into my closet and then into the dress. It stopped several inches above my kneecaps and the spaghetti straps were attached to a neckline low cut enough that Edward would probably be able to see half of my chest without looking. I glanced over my shoulder into my full-length mirror and my jaw almost dropped to the floor.

This tiny dress looked fabulous on me and fit like a glove. My ass was firm, my breasts looked perky and my stomach was flat. Edward was going to flip his shit.

This dress was a keeper.

I walked out into the room with a contented smile on my face. Angela had joined Alice in my room, and was wearing a tiny black baby doll dress with three inch black peep toed heels. She was applying make up to her eyes and the affect was astonishing. Ben wouldn't know what hit him.

Alice was wearing a bright purple dress that was only slightly longer than the one I was wearing. It had a low v-necked top and ruching along her sides, making her already tiny waist appear to be even narrower and she had black, strappy, stiletto heels on. She'd already made her face up, and she was, of course gorgeous.

They both looked at me and Alice cat-called. "Wooo! Bella!" I smiled and did a twirl for them. I knew I would be freezing outside, but I simply didn't care.

"Alright Alice. Make me up. Shoes last, OK?" I requested. I got a text from Edward then, saying he was about ten minutes away.

As soon as I sat down, Angela began to use her Chi iron on my hair and Alice started in on my make up. By the time my hair was flat as a board and my make up had been applied, I had a mere five minutes until Edward was due. Alice had screeched that Jasper and Ben had to stay in the living room until we came out, so they were sitting around, probably wondering how much longer this ordeal would be.

“Bella,” Angela began. “These are your options for shoes. Alice and I have agreed already and you have to choose one of these two pairs.” She held up a pair of four inch silver shoes that laced up to just above my ankle and a pair of silver slip on shoes that were backless. I narrowed my eyes and chose the lace up shoes. Alice trilled quietly in my ear. “You’re going to drive him crazy.”

As I placed my feet in the shoes, I looked at Angela. “Well, how do I look?”

She grinned. “We’re going to kill them tonight. Who is walking out first?”

“I will,” I said confidently. I was eager to see Edward’s reaction.

Alice would come out second and Angela third. I smiled as I thought about how much taller Angela would be than Ben in her heels and then opened the door. As I stepped into the hallway, I called out, “We’re coming.”

EPOV

Jazz, Ben and I were sitting around in the living room. I had only been there about ten minutes when Bella called out that they were finally ready. I was on pins and needles waiting to see what Bella would be wearing. As I’d looked around the room, it was obvious that the three of us had dressed to the nines. I was in a pair of black slacks and a pale blue button down shirt. Jazz and Ben were just as well dressed and I knew tonight would be a good one.

I had imagined what she would wear. The thoughts had been in my mind all through rehearsal and it made me want her tonight. A black dress maybe. Or perhaps some tight little pants to show off that perfect ass I was always admiring. I had to admit it—Bella was gorgeous everyday, but I was definitely excited to see her dressed up for an event like this. Emmett and Rose were reserving a table in what they called their VIP area for the eight of us, and I was looking forward to that as well. But Bella’s choice of dress ... I was dying to see it.

I thought I was prepared.

I was wrong.

When she came around the corner, I nearly called Emmett and said, “Sorry, Brother. I know this was important to you, but something came up.” Literally.

The midnight blue dress she was wearing came only a few inches over her rear and clung to her curves like a second skin. Her legs were bare and her feet were nestled into four-inch heels that snaked up her ankles. Bella's long, lush hair had been straightened and hung around her shoulders and her make up was done in such a way that her eyelashes appeared to be a mile long.

I wanted her.

Right then.

I didn't care if Jasper, Alice, Angela & Ben watched.

I wanted her.

She made her way across the room to me and I stood and leaned against the arm of the couch. My hands fell naturally to her waist. I had to touch her. She was exquisite. Bella positioned herself just between my thighs and I kissed her cheek as Alice exclaimed, "OK, let's go!"

I leaned in and whispered, "You look fucking fantastic." My voice was thick with desire and I could tell she picked up on it because one corner of her lips turned up and she leaned into my ear.

"You're not so bad yourself, Edward," she whispered.

I shook my head lightly and walked to her to the car. When I took my seat, I couldn't help but notice her chest and long legs and I looked at her and said, "Bella, you're going to be lucky if we make it to the club before I fuck you senseless."

She pursed her lips and said, with a smile, "Well, you let me know and we can make a stop."

I almost took her up on that offer but I knew Rose would be upset if we were late. Throughout the entire drive to the bar, I couldn't keep my hands to myself. I was constantly touching Bella's leg, her arm, or pressing a strand of hair behind her ear. We arrived at the bar and used the valet service. As Bella stepped out of the car, I noticed every man in the general vicinity's eyes focus in on her.

As I wrapped my arms around her, wanting to show them all that she was off limits, I looked down at her, past her shoulders, and noticed her nipples were already pebbled under her dress. I kept an arm around her waist and as soon as we stepped inside so that the music was louder than my voice, I growled in her ear, "Are you not wearing a bra?"

She looked up at me, her eyes wide and doe like. "No panties either," she said as she winked and led me to our table, where Emmett stood already, a broad smile on his face.

It was safe to say that I was glad my slacks were loose because the tent that had been built in my boxers

would not have been comfortable otherwise. We sat down and ordered the first round of drinks. Men were gawking at our table. I knew why. We had a blonde, three brunettes, long hair, short hair, tiny dresses and tall heels. Emmett, Jasper, Ben and I were the envy of every guy there that night.

While we sat there, I kept touching Bella. She began to return the favor, caressing my back and thighs, running her fingers through my hair. We'd both just finished our third round of drinks when Rihanna and T.I.'s "Live Your Life" came on. I stood up and pulled Bella with me. "Dance with me?" I asked, pulling her into my chest. She nodded and I walked us out on the small dance floor. We found an open place to dance and began to move. I glanced back at our group and noticed Jasper's lips were parted as Alice whispered in his ear. Emmett and Rose were nowhere to be found. I idly wondered in they had made their way to the back room.

Bella was swaying her hips, her arms bent at her side and I couldn't take it anymore.

I pulled her to me and we moved together, her chest pressed into mine and her breath hot on my cheek. The chorus came on and she wrapped her arms tightly around my neck. While we were dancing, the music changed and she hitched her leg up over my thigh. I held it there and suddenly I could feel the heat of her sex through my slacks.

We'd been at the opening of the club for three hours.

I had wanted to be inside her for three hours.

I looked at her and could tell that she was turned on. Without warning, I let go of her leg and after she put her foot back on the ground, I walked through the crowd and to the back of the room. A quick glance around the area showed me a small, secluded hallway, and I walked quickly there.

BPOV

It wasn't hard to imagine what Edward was doing. But when we arrived at the hallway, he pressed me up against the wall and kissed me so hard, it took my breath away. As I was recovering, he nipped and sucked his way down the side of my neck, stopping only to kneel slightly and bring my leg up, hitched over his hip. He held it there with his left hand and then he whispered gruffly in my ear, "Put your arms around my neck."

I obeyed. He was so damn sexy when he was aggressive.

He kept his eyes trained on me and I gasped when he gently began ministrations up and down my center. "Edward," I moaned quietly, thankful that Alice had forbade underwear that night.

"Shhhh," he said, a smirk on his face and his green eyes almost black with desire. He slid one finger slightly inside of my core and then began to press and encircle my bundle of nerves. He moved then,

tracing my collarbones with his tongue, then finally crushing his lips to mine.

“Edward”, I whispered against his lips, as I could feel myself coming close to my finish. My voice was needy, wanting. He only grunted in response. He had previously had one hand on the wall above my head and he brought it down to flick his thumb across my painfully erect nipple. “Edward,” I cried, a little louder this time.

“Yes, Bella,” he said, his voice strained. When I looked at him, his lips were curled into a crooked smirk and he made one final ministrations and then I could feel myself cumming on his finger.

I mumbled something incoherent as I came back down and he removed his fingers from between my thighs. As he ran his tongue over one of his fingertips, I swallowed hard at the sight of him tasting me that way. “We should go,” I said, my voice still slightly trembling.

He nodded and we walked out to the VIP area we had been seated in. Emmett and Rose and reappeared and Alice was in Jasper’s lap. Angela was sitting in a chair and Ben was leaning so close to her that it was obvious that Edward and I weren’t the only ones with further plans for the evening. As a matter of fact, it was obvious we were all dying to get home. “We’re going to go, Em,” Edward announced.

Emmett nodded. “We’ll see you guys on Sunday for brunch?” he asked. I had momentarily forgotten that I had agreed to make brunch for the group on Sunday morning. Alice and Jasper were already partially packed and would be moving out by the end of the week so we wanted to do something—all of us—at the house before they moved into their condo.

“Yes. 11 AM,” I smiled as Edward’s hand made its way to the small of my back. “We’ll see you guys then!”

We rushed out of the bar to his car and he held the door open for me. He was still a gentleman despite his obvious reason to feel rushed. He pressed his lips sweetly to mine before allowing me to sit down. When he took his seat and started the car, he said, “We’re going to my place. I don’t want any interruptions.”

I could only nod as we sped down the road, heading toward his apartment. I was vaguely aware of the fact that I had no clean clothing at his place but in all honesty, I couldn’t focus on that when Edward’s face was so focused. He wanted me. That was all I could think about.

As we slid into the parking spot that he reserved, he opened my door and we nearly ran up the stairwell. He took his keys out and shot a look at me. Before I knew what was happening, he had me pressed against the door, his tongue caressing mine softly. When he pulled away, his eyes were focused on mine and I heard the lock click as the door opened.

Emmett and Rose’s bar was a raging success. The place was packed and the music was fabulous.

Also, Edward hadn't been able to keep his hands off of me all evening.

I had no complaints.

EPOV

I closed the door behind her and she stared at me. Quickly, I moved toward her and picked her up. As she slipped her arms around my neck, my lips attacked hers with fervor. We didn't make it to the bedroom. I had a chaise lounge. It would have to do.

I laid her down and she shimmied out of that tiny ass dress. Her lack of underwear made my cock twitch and I immediately leaned over her, kissing her deeply as I unbuttoned my shirt. She moved to unbutton my slacks and pushed them over my hips. I stood for a moment and shrugged out of my shirt. As I stood there in just my boxers, looking down at my very sexy, very naked girlfriend before me, I said, "Sit up, Bella."

She shot a calculating look at me and moved. I knelt down to the floor, and folded my knees beneath me as I pulled her toward me. Gently, I pressed the inner part of her knees outward and began lightly kissing her inner thighs. I heard her breath hitch and she almost growled at me, "Edward."

I smiled into her skin and murmured, "You smell so good, Bella. Just let me do this," as I continued moving toward her center.

I heard her swallow hard as I neared the intended goal. Keeping my face toward her body, I shifted just my eyes to look up at her face and slowly—achingly slowly—pressed my tongue between her folds. Slowly I ran it up and down her body and only moments into it, she groaned. "Fuck, Edward. Ungh..."

I could see the muscles in her stomach and legs flexing as I turned my head to the side slightly to press my tongue just that much further into her. I kept moving up and down and sucked and licked every ounce of what her body was producing. But it wasn't enough, so I pulled my mouth momentarily away from her sex and moved upward just a bit. With more pressure than before, I pressed my tongue into her clit and that was all it took.

Suddenly, she was writhing against me, her muscles clenching and releasing over and over again. "Edward," she growled. "I need you inside of me. Please. Now."

She didn't have to ask me twice.

I picked her up again and walked us to the bedroom.

No words were exchanged. I placed her on my bed and crawled over her as she reached for me. When

her hands touched my face, she pulled me to her and she attacked my lips with hers. I pulled away for just a moment and pressed myself all the way into her. She felt delicious. I was still for a moment, savoring it and then I started thrusting. Back and forth, back and forth. She responded almost immediately, moaning quietly and whispering my name.

I had never heard anything sexier.

I pulled one of her legs up and around my hips. She followed my lead and wrapped the other one tightly around me, sheathing me even further and my thrusts became wilder, erratic.

I came long and hard and momentarily blacked out as I did so.

Damn if it wasn't always this good with Bella. It never ceased to amaze me. Hot and frenzied. Sweet and innocent. Attentive and slow. Fast and furious. Outside. Inside. In public.

Every single time we had sex—no, made love—it was mind altering.

Before I could pull out, Bella pressed her hips against mine and mumbled, “Again.”

“Bella, I don't know if I can ... I mean, you know ...”

She nodded and said, “Fine.” With that, she traced a line from her breasts down her stomach and I swear I felt myself hardening again when she pressed her first two fingers against her clit. I watched her for a moment before grabbing her hand and placing her finger between my lips to taste her again. I pressed my thumb gently against her bundle of nerves and began rocking slightly on my knees.

It took some doing, but she came.

And when she did, she arched her back and cried out loudly.

It had been a good night.

Chapter End Notes:

A/N: UNF. I can't even thank Kings of Leon for inspiring that shit. I hope it was good for you. It was for me.

HAHA.

REVIEW? Please?

Chapter 13. Sunday Brunch

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters.

And I need to warn you all that this chapter is short. I will update again soon, and the chapter will be rather long. If I'd put everything into one chapter, you would be waiting another week for an update and I think you deserve better than that.

Anyway. Read on!

BPOV

By the time Edward woke up, I had been in the kitchen for over an hour. He walked in, bleary-eyed and still sleepy with his hair standing at odds all over his head, and I smiled. “Good Morning,” I said, as I handed him a cup of coffee.

He sipped it and swallowed. “Nectar of the gods,” he said quietly as the warm brew slid down his throat. I kissed him on the cheek. “Do you need any help?”

I loved Edward. There was no way around it and I didn’t particularly want one. But I liked to work alone in the kitchen, for the most part. It was the morning of the brunch, and I knew I was going to be busy, so I shook my head. “You shower and do what you need to. Everyone’s going to be here in two hours. When you’re done, I’ll probably be at a point where I can stop what I’m doing and shower myself,” I answered.

He stepped toward me, putting his mug on the counter. Placing his hands gingerly on my hips, he pulled me slightly to him. “Are you sure I can’t talk you into coming with me? A shower would be a lot more fun with you ...” He smirked at me and I pushed him gently, ignoring the warmth that was suddenly in my core. I wondered sometimes if he really knew what he did to me.

“No, no. Everyone would get here and we’d still be in there and then you’d have to face Jasper’s cooking.”

He grimaced. “I gather it hasn’t improved since we were in college,” he said. I shook my head no. “Oy. Alright, well then. I’ll jump in and be out in a flash.” He kissed my forehead and I watched him walk down the hallway, marveling in the way the muscles in his lower back twitched with each step.

When I turned back to my counter top—which was chock full of bowls filled with various substances—I

set about prepping as much as possible.

I had already made waffle mix and the Belgian Wafflemaker was already hot. There would be eight people eating this morning, so I made twelve waffles. Then, I set two frittatas in the oven to bake, and seasoned a bowl of eggs that I would scramble or make omelets with when everyone arrived. I also fried up an entire package of bacon—if I knew Emmett, he'd eat half of it. Lastly, I diced onion, bell pepper, tomato, sundried tomatoes and cooked ham. I placed each ingredient in a bowl, wrapped it in saran wrap and then began work on the drinks.

I made a champagne sangria. It included lemon, lime and strawberry and a little simple syrup. Instead of using wine, I used Prosecco and set the container in the freezer so it would be nice and chilled when everyone arrived. Then, I made a small batch of Screwdrivers because I knew Ben loved them. Along with this, I had water, plain orange and Apple juice and ice cold milk.

By the time Edward returned from the shower, I had pulled the frittatas out, sliced them into pie-like pieces and was in the process of washing my hands.

"Wow, Bella. This is amazing," he said quietly as he leaned against the wall.

I looked over my shoulder. "It is quite the spread, isn't it?"

"You blow my mind," he murmured as he walked up behind me. When his arms wrapped around my waist, I felt a shiver make its way down my spine. "You're going to spoil me," he whispered in my ear.

"Whatever do you mean, Edward?" I asked.

He cleared his throat. "I'm going to ask you to marry me one day. And when you're my wife, I'm going to be spoiled rotten. Not only are you beautiful, but you cook like a master chef."

The thought of mine and Edward's future brought to mind a million thoughts, but I pushed them back. I needed to be alone to be able to think clearly about them. "Is that so?" I asked. "And what if I don't accept?"

I turned around and looked at him. He raised an eyebrow. "Oh, you will," he said with a grin.

"I know," I said in reply as I smiled at him. "I'm going to take a shower. Do me a favor and in about ten minutes, take the sangria out of the freezer."

He nodded and I scurried down the hall.

As I showered, I mentally kicked myself. Edward left in a week and I still hadn't really made up my mind regarding whether I would go with him. I was happy that he had put the decision in my court. Not once

had he tried to persuade me to go or to not ... But I knew in my heart that he really wanted me with him. I just didn't know what I wanted. I knew I would miss him—it would be physically painful. The mere thought of being separated from him was enough to cause me to wince. But could I leave Seattle, my job, my friends, my father? I kept circling around and around and never actually making a decision.

On top of all of this, the last few days had been filled with packing. Alice and Jasper had already moved a large portion of their things into the home they'd closed on. It was in Bellevue and beautiful, and Alice was aglow in the joy of home decoration. Jasper was happy to have a backyard in which to grill massive amounts of meat. Men.

Angela and Ben had also found a place, and she would be moving out by the end of the week as well.

It wasn't as though this was a real surprise to me. It was just that it had seemed to just ... appear. One second, we had a month and a half left till the lease ended and the next, we needed to be moved out in five days. It seemed as though time had flown. I knew it was because I finally had Edward.

Edward ...

I finished my shower, blow dried my hair and pulled it back into a high ponytail with a side part. Then, I shoved hair sticks through it so that it resembled a messy bun and got dressed. By the time I walked back out to the living room, Alice and Jasper had come out from her room, Angela was seated on the couch, and Emmett and Rose were on their way up the stairs to our door, having just arrived. Ben was in the restroom, washing his hands in preparation for the big meal.

We all shared a wonderful morning. We talked and laughed and joked. By the time the food was gone and we'd gotten to my dessert quiche, Alice, Angela and I were near tears over the idea of the three of us no longer living together. It was through conversation with them that I realized I had been oblivious to time passing, but also to something rather important.

"So, Bells," Angela said as Ben took her hand. "Where are you moving?"

Crap, I thought. *I have five days to find a place. How did I completely forget that I had to move too?* As if he were reading my mind, Edward spoke up. "You could always move into my place, Bella."

Emmett interjected then. "That is if she's going to still be in Seattle ..."

I cleared my throat. "Even if I'm not, I'd rather not pay for a storage unit, Em." I looked at Edward. "Are you serious?"

He nodded. "Most definitely, Bella. If you don't come, I'll be so happy to get home to you and knowing you'll be there—in my old apartment—will be awesome. If you do come, it makes more sense for you to leave your things in my place, and when we get back, we'll find a place to live together."

He made things sound so easy.

I smiled and nodded. "I will accept your offer then," I answered.

Three days later, Alice and Jasper officially moved out. Our apartment was a skeleton of what it once was, with only my couch and end tables left in the living room. Angela and Ben had moved the majority of her things as well. Edward and I sat on the couch, talking quietly when he said, "Bella? I don't want to push you, but ... I was just wondering if you've made a decision yet." I looked at him. He rushed through the remainder of his statement. "I mean ... you don't have to tell me. I just ... I leave in two days and Laurent just sent us the flight info for our trip to Nashville and ..."

I cut him off, quelling his misery. "Edward, I'm still weighing my options. I know it seems ... I don't know ... unfair or something that I haven't given you a definitive answer but I'm trying to think of myself and what is really best for me. And while I believe that what is best for me is being with you, I just want to be 100% positive that I will be able to handle being away from the rest of my life for six months." I paused and sipped my tea. "You are so important to me, but I can't do this just for you, you know? I have to really feel it's the right choice for me."

He nodded. "I know."

I saw a hint of sadness in his eyes and it killed me. I knew he wanted to beg me to go, to sweep me away and never look back.

But Edward would never do that. He wanted me to choose, and so choose I would.

Chapter End Notes:

- 1) I know that was a mean ending and that the chapter, as a whole, was significantly shorter than they usually are. Trust me, your suffering will be worth it. Why?
- 2) Because I'll be listening to Kings of Leon in preparation for the next chapter. And you all know what that means.
- 3) Reviews make my day.

Chapter 14. Revelry

Author's Chapter Notes:

A/N: So, I feel compelled to tell you all this is a bit ... fetishy. You'll get over it.

Need I say it? NOT SAFE FOR WORK.

Not my characters either.

EPOV

I walked in to my living room and looked at the few boxes that surrounded me. Most of my stuff was not coming with me to Nashville, but there were some things I wanted to bring with me. It was all in a neat pile near my doorway, thanks to Bella. She was supposed to be here, but it was absolutely silent in the place, and I wondered where she was. I walked to the kitchen and found a note on the counter.

Welcome home.

I'm in your room.

I grinned. She was in my room. I floated down the hallway toward my door and as I opened it, I was assaulted by the scent of vanilla and lavender. I stepped inside to the dimly lit room, and noticed that the set of candles I had managed to procure for that lovely bath Bella and I had shared a few weeks ago had been moved into my bedroom. They were set up in such a way that they surrounded the space, and were the only light available.

Quietly, she spoke. "Close the door, please."

I looked around the room until I found her. When I did, my jaw almost dropped to the floor in amazement.

She sat in the middle of my bed, her legs folded into a z-like position—one in front of her and one behind—and she wore a simple black set of panties and a bra. Her dark hair hung loose. Her petite hands were clasped together in front of her, and she shot a small grin at me as she noticed my eyes roving over her. When she stood up, she walked toward me and silently pulled my polo shirt over my

head, followed by the undershirt I'd been wearing. When they were both in a pile at my feet, she unbuckled my belt, unbuttoned my jeans, and pushed them over my hips so that they fell to the floor too.

I stepped out of them, and asked "Not to be obtuse, Bella, and please know that I don't mind, but what is this?"

She smiled and took my hand in hers.

As she led me to the bed, I was about to ask what was going on again, but she spoke. "I've never done this before."

I must have looked at her with disbelief on my face. We *had* done this before. *Several* times. My body was being affected just thinking about it. "Bella?"

She put a finger on my lips. "I've never done this before. I want you to tell me what to do. What you want," she replied.

It was almost like I'd suddenly lost all of my comprehension skills. "What?" I asked dumbly and this time when she replied, her smile was full.

"Tell me what you want, Edward," she breathed.

Her breath on my neck from her whisper brought me back to reality. "Really?" I asked.

She nodded. With her affirmation, my mind was suddenly in a million places at once. The listing of enjoyable—and completely pleasurable—things Bella could do for me was ridiculously long, and my mouth fell open at the mere thought. I looked at her and saw she was waiting expectantly. *What the hell*, I thought, and went with my gut instinct. "Kiss me."

And she did. She reached up, snaked her arms my neck, and pressed her lips to mine. In a motion that was tantalizingly slow, she brushed her tongue against my lips, and then into my mouth. Gently, she tangoed with me, and it struck me that perhaps kissing wasn't a good first request, because if her lips were on mine, I couldn't make a second one. As if she could read my mind, she moved then, trailing down my neck and I whispered, "Bella."

She looked up at me, her lips slightly swollen.

"Sit down, please," I said quietly.

She nodded and acquiesced to my request. When she was sitting in the middle of the bed, I moved to sit next to her. "Come here, please," I whispered. She pulled up onto her knees and looked at me.

"Where?" she asked quietly, a sly grin on her lips.

In response, I placed my hands on her hips and pulled her over to me, so that she had to straddle me. I moved to unclasp her bra, but she stopped me. "What do you want me to do, Edward?"

And then I realized what she was doing.

If she was waiting on my instruction—my every whim, if you will—then I had to verbalize every detail of what I wanted. I had to tell her precisely what I wanted her to do to me. I had to tell her precisely what I wanted to do to her. And the idea of describing those kinds of acts made my cock twitch instantly.

It also gave me a bit more resolve to obey her command. "*Tell me what you want, Edward,*" she had said. Was Bella was being *submissive*?

"Take it off, Bella. Now."

She grinned then, and I realized I had been right.

If she wanted Commanding Edward, she would get him.

She moved then, and removed her bra. As it fell to the floor next to my bed, I said, "Stay very still." I dipped down and pressed my lips against her skin—moving along her collar bone to the center of her breasts and then taking an already erect nipple into my mouth. As I rolled it between my lips and swirled my tongue over the sensitive skin, I pulled away only to say, "Put your hands in my hair."

She did as I said.

I thought maybe we should do this more often, and alternate who was in control.

I moved to her other breast, giving it the same attention I had given the other one. I knew she was enjoying it when I felt her fingers knot tightly into a fist. I smiled against her skin. Then I lifted my lips to hers again and kissed her chastely.

When I pulled away, she sat there, straddling me, and I narrowed my eyes. "What am I going to do with you, Bella?" It's safe to say I was already enjoying this game.

The look she gave me next made me wonder how long I could keep it up. She angled her face downward so that she was looking at me through her eyelashes. Her lips were pouted and she said, her voice lower than usual, "Whatever you want."

Yes, I was definitely enjoying this game.

I laid back then, placing my hands behind my head so that my elbows were to the sides. I stared at her for a moment and smiled at her. "Come here."

She leaned over me and when she was two inches from my face, she stopped. “Yes ... *sir?*”

I pursed my lips and nearly rolled my eyes at the feel of her weight on me, and her pert nipples brushing my bare chest. “Take those underwear off. They’re in the way.” She pulled up then and moved herself to my right on the mattress. She removed those pretty little black panties—boy cut, just the way I liked them—and knelt there, gloriously naked. I shifted my eyes from hers, to my boxers and back. I wondered if I would actually have to say what I wanted.

It turned out that I didn’t. She moved quietly and hooked her fingers into the waist of my underwear, and slowly pulled them down my legs and dropped them off the end of the bed.

Despite the fun I was having—and the fact that she was obviously enjoying it—I really didn’t want to verbalize my next request. It felt wrong. But I supposed there were better ways to get her to do what I wanted.

I beckoned to her with one hand, painfully aware of the erection I had, and she moved imperceptibly closer to me. I grabbed her hand and then placed it on my lower abdomen. “Please,” I said and she gave me a slight nod, and then gingerly took me in her hands. Slowly, she pumped her hand up and down and I somehow became even harder. She massaged the skin around my cock with one hand, and dragged the other up and down my length. Then, she flicked her tongue across the tip and took me into her mouth, and it felt so divine, I felt my mouth jerk open reflexively and my eyes rolled back into my head.

She began to bob then, moving perfectly, just the way I liked it, and without thinking my hand wove through her hair, just to feel her in another way. I knew I was getting close, and I didn’t want to finish ... we still had all night. So, I whispered and my voice was raspy. “Bella, baby. You can stop.”

She moaned slightly, another sign that she was enjoying our evening thus far, and sat up. She had just begun to perspire and her skin had a slight sheen to it. She was beautiful. So fucking beautiful.

I wanted to be inside of her. But first things first. “Lay down next to me,” I commanded.

She did and said, "Whatever you want, Edward."

When she was comfortable, I sat up and she looked at me. I crawled a few feet down the mattress until I was near her shins. "Bella," I said. "I'm going to put my mouth on you. You will like it, and you will not touch me while I do it." She nodded. "Put your hands under the pillow, under your head."

She moved her hands and I gently pressed her knees into the mattress. I held them firmly there as I slipped my tongue over her center. It was already wet, and as I moved up and down slowly, I felt and saw her hips begin to writhe against the bed. "Ungh," she murmured. I smiled into her skin then, and pressed my tongue against her bundle of nerves. "Edward, oh my god ..." she moaned.

I started over then, enjoying her taste and the effect I was having on her, when I felt her hand in my hair. I pulled away then. She gasped at the removal of my lips from her sex and looked at me, her mouth agape and panting. "I said not to touch me, Bella."

Her brown eyes were nearly black with desire. When she spoke, her voice was husky. "What are you going to do, Edward? Punish me?" She laughed lightly then and I raised my eyebrow.

As her smile lit up her entire face and she pressed the top of her head further back into the pillow, I couldn't help myself anymore. Without any warning I moved quickly and pressed myself—all of myself—into her. I heard her gasp loudly and then I whispered loudly into her ear, "You will keep your hands under the pillows."

Meekly, she nodded, her lips parted and her tongue running over the bottom of her teeth.

I began to rock, pulling myself almost all the way out of her before pushing back in, and she moaned in pleasure. If I hadn't been attempting to keep it together, it was entirely possible I would have finished right then and there. At one point, she pulled a hand out from under the pillow and, without thinking, began to inch it toward me. "Uh uh," I muttered, and pulled the other hand out from under the pillow before wrapping my hands around her wrists and pinning them to the bed. She stared at me then, eyes wide, and wrapped her legs around my waist, allowing me more contact with her.

I slowed my rhythm after a few moments and said, "I'm going to lie down and we're going to trade positions."

I moved to lie where I was before and she crawled on top of me. She leaned down and luxuriously pressed her tongue against mine as she sheathed me, and I felt my hips involuntarily buck into her. She smiled on my lips. I attempted to speak when she pulled away but she cut me off.

"I think I've had enough of this game, Edward. Shut your mouth and enjoy this," she said as she started moving on me.

The sensation of Bella's weight, Bella hot and wet around me, and Bella's assertiveness was almost too much. I had to reign it in. I had to make this round last. She felt too damn good all around me.

So, I started rocking with her, pressing further and further into her each time she moved. Then, she slowed her rhythm only slightly and pinned my hands the way I had previously positioned hers. Slowly, she pulled up, exposing my dick to the air of the room only to slide back down. She did that for a few minutes and I wriggled my right hand out of her grasp and reached down then. Methodically, just the way she liked it, I encircled her clit.

For a moment, she paused as she stopped breathing, but almost immediately afterward she began moving again.

Her voice came in gasps then, and I could tell she was about to cum. "Edward ... Edward, please ... cum ... with me. Please," she gasped.

When I felt her clenching around me, I let go, finally obtaining the release I had been waiting for, and it was obscenely good. "Fuck," I shouted, glad I didn't have a roommate for what must have been the millionth time.

She leaned down and kissed me, and I loved feeling her on top of me, skin to skin. Her sigh was warm against my skin and I whispered, "I love you, Bella."

She rolled off of me then and smiled at me. We both sat up then, and I pulled the sheet down so that we could climb under it. As I spooned her, I thought about so many things and how many of them had led us to where we were.

The rather disastrous meeting on the stairs at good old Forks High.

The party at my house.

Her spending the night and my being too much of a wimp to do anything about it.

That party in the meadow.

Years of pretending I wasn't interested in her until I woke up one morning when we had plans, and decided I was going to get over my shit and make a move. When I asked her to come see my show, I never dreamed that she was into me too. I had ignorantly assumed that she was just not into dating, and that was why she was perpetually single or only in casual relationships. She had been a slight point of contention when Garrett and I decided we were going to try to form a band. The two of them had only been on a few dates, but I was painfully jealous of him. It led to a conversation in which I fessed up to years of loving her without telling her, and we had come to an understanding.

And the last weeks had been ... absolutely mind-blowing.

Bella was everything I always knew I wanted and more. She was beautiful, smart, well-educated, funny, and sexy as hell.

She pressed her back into my chest and sighed, and I knew she was asleep.

I loved that I finally knew these little things about her. What she liked in her coffee in the mornings. How she straightened her hair with a flat iron, in thin sections beginning with the nape of her neck. How she always polished her toenails on Monday nights to make sure her feet were presentable for the week. The way she liked to grade her student's papers, and how being an English tutor made her smile. Her favorite ways for me to touch her. Her 'spots', the ones that were guaranteed to drive her wild. That she liked for me to play with her hair when we watched television.

And over all of that, she loved me. She loved me with her whole heart and then some, and sometimes I was struck with so much gratefulness that she was finally and truly mine, I couldn't find the words to describe it.

She amazed me.

I was really going to miss her the next six months.

Chapter End Notes:

HIDES UNDER A ROCK

YES that means she is staying behind.

I will promise you that you will not be disappointed in the ending. That's all. There aren't many more chapters.

I love you all. And you can thanks KoL for the lovely smut that took up most of this chapter.

Reviews are just lovely, so long as you're not screaming at me.

Chapter 15. Jasper's Advice

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters.

But, oh, how I love them.

I was an idiot.

As I sat on the couch, that thought was the only thing that resonated in my mind. It haunted me in my sleep. It was with me all day at work, and made me irritable with my students.

I was an idiot.

Why on earth did I think it was a better idea to stay behind and let Edward go to his recording session in Nashville? Why on earth did I think that six months wasn't so long to go without seeing him? Why did I think I could handle it, when we'd only been together a number of weeks after waiting for so long?

I was an idiot.

It had only been four days.

Four days of phone conversations that did not even begin to fill the void that I felt in his absence. Four days of me kicking myself for thinking I could live in his apartment—among his things, his smells, his home—without going crazy.

He called me the first night we were apart and it was the hardest conversation I had ever had.

"Bella, I miss you already," he said, his voice thick with sleep and emotion.

I sighed. "I know. I miss you, too. It sucks," I said, the petulant child in me coming out full force.

"We'll be here two weeks, Bella. I would not be against you coming to visit ..." he began, but his voice trailed off. "I mean, if you wanted to."

We discussed it, and both thought that unless I was going with him on tour, a short visit to Nashville would make this separation even more difficult. I couldn't stand the thought of seeing him for a day or so and then having to say goodbye all over again.

But that was before I'd gone a full day without his touch, his voice, his smile.

I had guaranteed my own personal hell by staying behind.

I picked up extra shifts at work. I cleaned Edward's apartment—I refused to think of it as mine just yet—from floor to ceiling. I organized my files, cleaned my car and took walks around Seattle to pass the time. Alice tried to keep me busy but she was quite preoccupied with decorating her new house and therefore didn't have the time to spend every waking hour with me. That meant I was forced to spend a lot of time by myself, when I wasn't otherwise involved in something. Because of that, I had what seemed like copious amounts of time to think about how stupid it was for me to stay here.

But Edward—wonderful, amazing, smart, sexy Edward—had never pushed me, even though we both knew he desperately wanted me to go. He said it was OK for me to stay behind and that he would be happy to come home to me, but I had other thoughts.

After they recorded their EP, the band was touring with Kings of Leon. Caleb Followill and the rest of the boys in the band were nothing if not attractive, and I knew they had female groupies that probably stalked around after them. Naturally, that meant Edward would, too. Edward was gorgeous. I had been aware of that—perhaps painfully so—since I was in high school. I knew there was no way he'd ever begin some kind of secret tryst with any groupie, but I also know he couldn't stop them from attempting to begin something with him. He was too handsome not to.

And then, there was the yearning. It never went away. I was drowning in it. And it had only been four days.

The last night he was with me, in his bedroom, I had been submissive. I did whatever he said, without question, and I enjoyed every moment of it. We had spooned until we fell asleep, and then the next morning I'd driven him to the airport, clinging to his hand the entire way.

"I love you, Bella," he whispered fiercely into my ear as he held me to him.

"I love you," I whimpered into his chest. "Edward, I love you."

He kissed me then, taking my breath away before pulling away quickly.

Anyone else would have been offended by his quick exit, but I understood why he'd done it. If he hadn't moved away, he would have stayed a minute longer ... and then two ... and then three ... and we would have stood that way—in that embrace—until he missed his flight. He knew I was serious about not allowing him to give up on what could be his one big chance to make it big, just to be with me. We would make it work. We had agreed to at least that.

But that night, when I came home to an empty bed, I couldn't sleep.

I lay there, staring at the ceiling for hours. I flipped over, attempting to get comfortable, but I couldn't. I attempted to read, but all I could concentrate on was the fact that I was alone and exhausted, but unable to sleep. I didn't try to kid myself into making up another reason why: I knew it was because he wasn't with me. I'd grown accustomed to his mannerisms and couldn't relax without him there.

He slept on his right side every night, one elbow folded under his pillow and the other arm around me, holding me to him. I always fell asleep before him, but as a result, I woke up before him too. Every morning, his arm was still lying loosely over my hip and I was pressed into his chest, warm and comfortable. As a result, I never wanted to get up. Bed had become a sanctuary in so many ways since Edward had stepped into the position of boyfriend in my life.

I yearned for him.

For his touch.

For his arms around me.

To feel him on me, against me, inside me.

I was dying a slow death.

And it was all my fault.

Already, I had mailed him a care package. I made cookies and fresh croissants and overnighted them to him and his band mates. He had called me to say thanks, his voice carefully even until the last second.

"I'm glad you like them, Edward," I said, attempting to keep it together. It had only been two days.

"They were delicious. Exactly what I needed," he paused, and I heard him take a ragged breath. "I need you, Bella. Please come here. With me."

My heart had broken then, and I didn't know what to do. Everything in me wanted to run to him, hold him, kiss him, make him not miss me. But he had quickly amended his statement. "I'm sorry, Bella. I told myself I would never do that to you. I will be home soon enough. I'll talk to you later," he said. And then, we had disconnected the line.

I knew better than to believe that he meant to rescind his question. He'd asked it. He meant it.

I knew because I wanted to go. But I had a life here, and just a few days earlier this life had been enough to keep me here.

But as I stared at Edward's loveseat across the room from me, I had come to a realization.

My life was a shell without him in it.

He fulfilled me, loved me, held me together in so many ways and without him, I could feel myself gasping for breath, wishing he was with me to soothe me. I had already been independent, self-sufficient and complete in myself, but with Edward, I reached a new level of completion. Of self-fulfillment.

I had known for a long time that I was irrevocably in love with him.

But I hadn't known that I could no longer exist without him near me. Not without constant, dull pain. And the worst part? It was self inflicted.

I was pulled out of my miserable musings by a knock at the door. I wasn't expecting anyone, but I stood and ambled my way over. When I opened it, I was surprised to see Jasper staring down at me.

"Hi, Bella. Mind if I come in?" he asked. I shook my head and watched as he took me in.

I knew what I must have looked like. My hair was pulled back into a knot, and I wore no make up. I was in track pants and an old hoodie of Edward's. It was way too big on me, but it was comforting to think that he'd worn it before he left.

We sat down on the couch and Jasper handed me an envelope. "What's this?" I asked.

"That," he said, "Is a listing of everyone in the band's phone numbers in case you don't have them. I know you've got Edward's number but now you've got everyone else's, too."

"Thanks, Jazz," I said quietly.

He stared at me evenly for a moment before speaking. "Bella, may I speak candidly?"

I nodded. "Of course," I replied.

"Why in God's name did you stay here?" he asked.

That was all it took.

I broke down.

The tears fell and then, as my gasping for air quickly gave way to sobs, I felt Jasper's long, strong arms wrap around me and pull me to him. "Shhhh ... Bella, shhhh. It's OK," he whispered just above my head. I could feel my tears making a wet pool on his shirt, and when I finally calmed down he mumbled, "Alice will be glad I was here for this. She wouldn't want you dealing with this alone."

I nodded as I pulled away, still sniffing and having a bit of an issue breathing. "I thought this was what I wanted, Jasper. I thought I could deal without him for six months. I mean, what's six months when I've been in love with him for years?"

A soft look appeared on his face, and suddenly, I could see everything about him that Alice loved. "Bella, honey. Things are different now, and you know it."

His voice was calm and soothing and I felt myself regaining my composure. "I know, Jazz ... I just ..."

He cut me off by holding up his right hand. "Hold on, Bella. Let me say something." He waited for me to affirm that he could speak. "You're right. Six months isn't a long time. But six months of being away from Alice would kill me. I would feel like half a person. It would be the same for Em and Rose." He cleared his throat. "So, you see Bella, we all know how you feel. We all know that it seems like you're breaking into a million pieces without him here."

I felt my lips part involuntarily as he verbalized exactly what I was feeling.

"Bella, hon ...I'm not going to lie. And Alice doesn't know I'm going to say this, so keep it between you and me, OK?" I nodded. He cleared his throat again. "You were stupid to stay here."

I let that sink in.

Under normal circumstances, I would have been offended, but Jasper was 100% correct.

"I love you, Bella, but you and I both know you should have gone."

His voice was calm still, and I was soothed somehow by his honesty. Jasper would be the only one in our group who could ever be honest with me in any situation. Alice would meander around uncomfortable topics and so would Rose. Angela was too sweet to be blunt, and Emmett was never bothered by anything. But Jasper would be real with me, and that in and of itself was enough to make me snap back into reality.

"You're right," I sighed.

He looked at his watch then. "Bella, Alice wants you to come over for dinner tonight. We'll order in, whatever you want." He stood up and I moved with him.

As I hugged him tightly, I said, "Thank you Jasper."

When we parted, he looked down at me. "Bella, he loves you. And you love him. There's absolutely no point in making yourselves miserable. There never was."

In that concise statement, Jasper had condensed mine and Edward's entire romantic history—or lack thereof. I nodded. "I know," I moaned.

"Come over around seven, OK?" He said. Then he walked to the door. Just before he walked out, he turned around. "And Bella? That listing I gave you has everyone's number on it. Remember that."

"OK, Jasper," I replied and locked up as he left me alone again.

Tired of my self-induced silence, I walked over to Edward's plethora of CD's all arranged by artist. I smiled as I thought about my dream. It seemed so long ago that I had woken up from that steamy little product of my self conscious! Had it really only been weeks? I picked out the Jeff Buckley album I'd been toying with in my dream, and put it into Edward's—no, into *our*—CD player. As the tones of "Hallelujah" flowed from the speakers, I curled into the corner of the loveseat and remembered everything.

I pictured Edward through the years and it brought a smile to my face. In high school, he had been tall and a bit gangly, as though he'd gone through an intense growth spurt and his limbs hadn't quite caught up yet. But it hadn't mattered to me. After high school, he'd filled out, becoming more wiry than anything else. His eyes remained a vibrant green, and his smile crooked and heart stopping.

I loved him through it all.

I wondered if he had given the listing of phone numbers to Jasper, or if Jasper had put it together himself. I realized I was still holding it, so I unfolded it and took a look. It was definitely Jasper's handwriting. How thoughtful of him to make sure I was taken care of in Edward's absence.

I thought of Edward in Nashville, jamming out in a studio and smiled again. He, Garrett, and Laurent would be having the time of their lives. He'd asked me to come ...

My mind was hung up then. *Laurent* was in Nashville with him.

Quicker than I thought possible, I made a choice. I whipped out my cell phone and looked down at the slip of paper in my hands and dialed.

When he answered, I was breathless, excited, almost dancing in my seat with anticipation.

"Laurent? It's Bella. Can you book me a ticket? I've changed my mind."

Chapter End Notes:

So, I feel compelled to tell you all that the next chapter is really short.

And it's the end.

hides from the rocks that are being thrown at her

Having said that, I am contemplating a sequel. As my amazingly wonderful Beta HammondGirl said, "They are like soooo in love with each other, it is kind of gross ... but a good gross." And I would love to continue their story. It would be less smut and more angst, probably. I have a lot of ideas in my head but my big question is this: **WOULD YOU READ IT?**

I need you to let me know, either for this or the next chapter. Reviews? They make me write this shiz, so leave one, OK?

Chapter 16. To Alice

Author's Chapter Notes:

Not my characters, but I'm sure you know that by this point.

Thanks to **HammondGirl** for betaing and to **you** for reading and all that jazz.

(P.S. I warned you this was short, but I felt that it would have been weird to include it on the last chapter.)

Alice,

I miss you all so much already. Tell Jasper I can never, ever thank him enough for giving me his advice, and for the paper with everyone's number on it. I feel as though I'll never be able to repay him. Were you at all behind that? If so, you know I love you. Please relay that to Jazz, too.

I got your text asking for a play by play of our reunion, and it would have taken forever for me to reply that way, so here you are ... an email explaining it all.

Before I jump in, I thought I'd let you know that I've taken a leave of absence from the University. They're not expecting me back till a month into the Fall semester.

I arrived in Nashville last night, and Laurent picked me up from the airport. We drove directly to the studio where Edward and the guys were recording. I left my bags in the car and the driver took them on to the house they have rented for the band, while Laurent and I walked in to surprise them. He had told everyone but Edward that I would be arriving that night, which was exactly how I wanted this to happen.

Alice, when I walked into the building, I was so nervous. It was like I hadn't seen Edward in months as opposed to just a week. I was so glad that Laurent was able to get me a one way fare on such short notice.

Anyway, when I walked into the recording studio, there he was, just on the other side of the glass. He was staring at the floor in concentration, strumming his guitar to the rhythm. The band was standing around him, working through the song that is intended to be their first single. One by one, the other guys stopped playing and grinned at me. I held up a finger to my lips so they wouldn't shout out a hello and as the music faded, I felt my anticipation growing.

Finally—finally—he looked up at me and what I can only describe as disbelief paired with elation appeared on his face. He said my name quietly and stood from his seat on a stool. Laurent called for a break and Edward came flying out of the room. I met him in the hallway.

He asked what was going on and I told him that thanks to some gentle persuasion from Jazz, and some not so gentle thoughts about myself and how I was an idiot to stay behind, I was with him for good. I think the exact words were, "I have always loved you and I will always love you, Edward. I'll never leave your side again."

It was all very romantic, Alice, and when he kissed me I could barely breathe.

Later that night, we went back to the house and the guys were conveniently gone. I learned from talking to Riley that Edward had been moping and annoying the week they were there alone. I won't write out the details of what we did last night ... but I'm sure you can imagine. It was wonderful.

Anyway, we're going to be leaving here in five days. We just met the guys from Kings of Leon and they are amazing. Really cool. The first stop in Europe is Munich, and from there we go to Paris and then London. Expect a package a week. I don't want to have to keep track of all the little things I pick up for you, Jazz, Em, Rose, Ang, and Ben while we're here.

We return on August 23rd. I will miss you every second until then, but I'll be with Edward so everything will be fine. Sometimes it amazes even me how deeply I am in love with him.

I'll send a postcard when we get to Germany.

Love always,

Bella

Chapter End Notes:

A/N: *Takes a bow* (I'm kidding.)

So, a few things: You guys have made me feel so flippin' loved. I have quite the love/hate relationship with fanfiction for reasons I'm sure you don't care about. All this to say that for the last chapter, I received more reviews than I ever have for **any** chapter in my **entire** fanfiction career and I was a bit verklempt over it. So thank you.

OK, I'm going to stop being sappy now.

All that to say:

There **will be** a sequel because you all reviewed like mad. *waits for the applause to die down*

I've got the plot outlined, but give me a little time to get the first chapter written. To ease some fears: I said I wanted it *less* smutty, not smut-*free*. And, I don't like it when stories make you feel like, "GAH, I need therapy, there is so much angst here", so don't worry about that either.

In the meantime, I have a lot of other stories posted to fanfiction.net (and *Tahoe Tanglings* is a WIP here as well). You can read those til I get the sequel to this going. I toyed with the idea of only posting the sequel to ff, but we shall see. I think a lot of you are not members there, so that could suck in multiple ways.

Wheweee! Longest A/N EVER!

Hit that review button and I'll see you soon!