

Computer Repair:

By: Jeska Wood

Chapter Ten:

"You've got to be fucking kidding me," I muttered under my breath. Bella's arm tightened around my own as we looked at the three guys standing in front of us, blocking the nearest exit of the alleyway. It was Mike, Eric, and Tyler. If their strong smell was any indication of what they had been doing, they had been celebrating with a keg of beer or seven. Mike was standing in front of the two boys, all of them looking stupidly amused.

"So what, Bella? Need to feel good about yourself? Just horny? Or, A little bit of charity, maybe?" Mike asked, his words slurring slightly. "Why are you doing this?"

"What the hell are you talking about?" She demanded angrily, her fingers digging into my arm. I think she was trying to keep me from beating the hell out of them. Or maybe she was trying to keep herself from doing it. Mike deserved it at the very least, and the others did too for not stopping his dumb drunken ass.

"I mean... Fucking Cullen. Really? What? I don't get it. Is he doing your homework for you in exchange for a good blow now and again?" He laughed at his words, the other idiots snickering behind him. "If you're not getting anything out of it, you're just a stupid slut."

"Shut the fuck up, Newton," I growled, the anger beginning to course through my veins wildly. I was literally shaking as I tried to stay in place. But, as Bella said earlier, I didn't need to get arrested because of the fool. I didn't need to go act like a caveman to prove myself because of the likes of Mike.

"I just don't see it, Bella," he said, ignoring my very presence as he took a step closer menacingly. I hated how he kept saying her name. "Can you just not handle a real man or something? I heard you had some weird Indian kid stick it to you before and now this freak. Seriously, do you have a fetish for the fucked up?"

Bella snapped. I could see it in her eyes just before she dropped her hands from my arm. Before I could stop her, she went charging towards him. "You listen to me, you drunk jackass. You wouldn't know a real man if he punched you in the fucking face. Edward is thirty times the person you are. I'm so sorry that I won't lay down like you want me to and just take it. I

actually have some fucking standards. Go bother someone else."

"You little bitch," he grunted as lunged forward.

That was it. I was not going to stand by and just let it happen, but everything seemed to be moving so fast. Mike went forward, and Bella slapped him hard across the face. He was not deterred, though. I was about to make a grab for him when two sets of arms went around me. I saw Mike slam her against the wall just before I freed myself from Tyler's grip by slamming his back hard against the opposite wall. Eric was next as I kicked his feet from underneath him. He tripped easily, falling face first into the gravelly asphalt with a hard bounce. That's what he got for being sloshed and trying to start shit. If he had been sober, he probably would have been fine. When I stood from up from that attack, I saw Mike pawing at Bella's breast through her shirt as she struggled against him. I grabbed him by the shoulder and threw him off of her. Then I punched him in the face for good measure.

"Mike, come on! This isn't worth it!" Tyler shouted at him, half coughing it out from having the wind knocked out of him. He was wheezing like an angry goose. Eric had already stumbled out of the alleyway. His nose was broken from the fall most likely, blood gushing from his nostrils and down onto his shirt. When he didn't say anything, they just left him behind. I figured he probably wouldn't be far behind them. He wasn't stupid enough to stick around for more, surely.

I went to Bella, trying to make sure she was alright. She didn't seem to be bleeding or anything. Tears were streaming from her eyes, and her face was a bright red. I wished I could have killed all of them for hurting her. She didn't deserve any of what she was getting.

"Son of a bitch," I heard muttered behind me when Mike's hands went to my waist, throwing me backward. I stumbled, falling onto my ass in a puddle of water. Mike laughed like a donkey, braying loudly, and Bella took the chance to punch him in the face. The crunch of bone on bone was not a pretty sound. Mike cursed loudly, and Bella shrieked in pain. I got up as she tried to run forward, out of Mike's grasp. His arms wrapped tightly around her shoulders, though.

With a surprising amount of speed and grace, despite her obviously broken hand, Bella flipped Mike onto the ground like a pro. Just as I had shown her the once. Pride surged through me as I watched the action quickly unfold. With a hard kick, she cursed at him.

I came to her immediately. "Your hand," I whispered, unable to find my voice. I tried to look at it, but she drew it to her chest.

"I know," she answered back simply.

"Call the police, okay?" I said softly just before I heard Mike standing up once again. How could he not have had enough yet? Even an untrained, admittedly athletic, little girl was

kicking his ass. "Stay behind me," I commanded her. I was going to finish whatever Mike started.

He lunged forward at me, landing a weak punch against my shoulder. I barely felt it though, rolling off like it was nothing. I came back, punching him in the jaw. His lip split open, blood dripping from it and onto my hand. When he came forward once again, I kicked him directly in the gut. Mike went flying backward, landing against the brick wall.

"Bella should be with a guy like me," he said as he spat out some blood. I could see nothing but rage in his eyes. His hands balled into fists at his side as he looked at us, the anger coursing through him. I could see veins throbbing in his neck and arms. I had never seen someone so enraged before.

"You mean some fake ass nice guy bro who literally attacks girls in dark alleys after being rejected? Go fuck yourself," I hissed back, preparing myself for the obvious attack that was coming. He came forward again, punching at me. I deflected it, but another punch landed against my jaw. I felt my lip tear open painfully. I spit out the blood that pooled in my mouth. Mike looked too proud of himself. He was going to regret that, though.

I kicked him in the knee, blowing it out easily, before delivering a roundhouse directly to the side of his head. I knew exactly what I was doing with that move. My heavy boot covered heel connected to his temple, rattling his brain around dramatically in his thick skull. Mike was not going to get up after that, at least for a few minutes. It was the only thing that was going to stop his stupid ass at that moment. If we kept going, I could have easily killed him. I had to stop myself from the temptation because it was exactly what I wanted to do after what he did to Bella.

I stumbled back to her as she had pressed herself against the wall. My arms wrapped around her, just wanting to feel her calming presence. Bella finally brought her phone up in her shaking hand to her ear, calling the police. She had been too shocked to before.

"Hi... Ummm... My boyfriend and I were attacked. We're right behind the movie theater in Port Angeles. There were three boys, but two of them ran away. Yeah, we know them. Uh," she swallowed, shaking. "His name is Mike Newton. My name is Bella Swan, and my boyfriend is Edward Cullen. I think... I think I broke my hand. Mike? Oh, um... My boyfriend knocked him out. He- He just kept getting up and going after us," she cried softly. "I think Mike was drunk. Thank you," I heard her whimper out brokenly through a strained tear-soaked voice. I closed my eyes, leaning against her as I panted. I had been in fights before but never like that. I had never actually felt scared for more than just myself. "They'll be here in a minute," she informed me.

"Thank God," I breathed.

Bella slowly sank down against the wall with the phone still to her ear, a broken sob

leaving her lips. Her broken hand was cradled against her chest. I slid down beside her and carefully brought her onto my lap. She curled up against me, beginning to weep hard. "I'm so sorry," I whispered into her hair. "I should have done more. I should have stopped him before he did those things to you."

"I shouldn't have gone after him like that. I knew he was drunk," Bella replied, dismissing my apology. The operator was still on the line. "Yeah, I'm still here," she answered. "I'm so stupid."

"He never should have touched you like that. If I were doing a better job of protecting you, he wouldn't have-" She cut me off before I could finish my thoughts.

"Edward, you've stopped him now. That's all that matters. Please, just hold me," she begged, laying her head on my chest.

My arms tightened around her. I felt a sob break in my throat as I buried my face in her hair. "I'm so sorry. I love you, and I just want to keep you safe."

The realization of what I had just said out loud hit me about five seconds later.

Bella looked up slowly, sniffing as she did so. Carefully she ran her finger over my busted lip. With her sleeve, she gingerly wiped away some blood, "I love you, too."

I pressed my trembling lips to her forehead, crying softly now as well. The adrenaline rush came crashing down on me. The sound of sirens came whirling around my ears, but I couldn't listen to them, not really anyway. I was too busy holding Bella to me. I was too busy feeling too many emotions to respond.

"They're here," she quietly whispered before hanging up on the 911 operator.

"Sir? Ma'am?" I heard a male voice call to us. Slowly, I looked up, wiping a few tears from my eyes. "Are you alright?"

"I'm okay, I think," I nodded my head. "I'm pretty sure she broke her hand when he attacked her though."

"Okay. We have two ambulances on the way now. I need you to tell me exactly what happened," the older officer stated firmly. Another officer was standing over Mike, checking his pulse. It had only taken a couple of minutes for the cops to arrive. After he was sure there was one, he searched him for weapons. Of course, just like any other country boy, he had a knife on him. I was so glad that he hadn't taken it out.

What could have happened if he had terrified me beyond measure.

"We had just come from dinner at the diner just down the street. We were going to go to the movies. After we were going to get some dessert, so we decided to leave the car there and just walk it since it wasn't too far away," I began. I took a deep breath, swallowing back some of my emotions. Bella nodded against me, shivering slightly. I took my coat off and wrap it around her. She whispered her thanks, burying her face deeper in my neck. "We were walking this way when we heard footsteps behind us. Mike," I pointed at his limp body, "was there, along with a couple of his buddies. We all go to school together."

"What are all their names, if you know them?" The cop asked, writing down all the information quickly.

"Mike Newton, Eric Chow, and Tyler Crowley. We're all from Forks," I explained. "Mike... he hates me for some reason. I don't know why. He's always treated me like the scum of the earth, but then he started calling Bella these terrible names. She basically told him off for it, and he attacked her. Eric and Tyler grabbed me while Mike... while he..." I stopped, unable to say the words. I choked back my sobs.

"While he touched me," Bella finished for me, her voice barely above a whisper. "He groped me through my shirt."

"You look awfully familiar," he said to her, looking her over slowly. "What did you say your name was again?"

"Bella Swan," she whispered, rubbing a hand over her cheeks to wipe away the moisture. There were tiny flecks of blood on her forehead from being so close to the fight. I brought my hand up and gently tried to wipe them away.

"Wait. Chief Swan's kid?" He asked in shock. She nodded slowly, not really up for talking anymore. The day had been too long for her already. It had taken a toll on her, and she was in pain, I could tell by the shaking. She leaned fully against my chest. "Alright, honey. I know he's on duty tonight. I'm going to give him a call. Give me a second."

He talked into his radio for a few minutes a few feet away from us with his back towards us. The sounds were too muffled there. Bella whimpered quietly, clutching her arm tighter to her chest. I rocked her back and forth gently as we waited for the cop to finish whatever he was doing. We were still waiting for the rest of the emergency services to show up. Sometimes it took a long time in small towns.

"Alright. After he grabbed you what else happened?" The cop asked, squatting down in front of us. I realized he had taken a slightly softer tone since he heard that Bella's father was a fellow cop.

"I threw Tyler off of me, and I tripped Eric so he'd let go of my arm like I've been taught to. He fell. I think he broke his nose. They decided that it wasn't going to end well and they left. I threw him off of her. I thought Mike would leave after that, but he didn't. Why didn't he?" I asked the last question too quietly for him to hear me.

"Do you know martial arts?" The cop asked, narrowing his eyes at me.

I nodded my head slowly. "I do," I couldn't lie about it. It's not like they couldn't figure out where I worked. "I tried not to- I didn't use excessive force. Mike- Mike just kept getting up and coming after me. I could smell the liquor on him," I said, my voice strained. I swallowed again and again. "It was so strong."

"Okay. Tell me what happened after that?" He asked, realizing that I was starting to lose my cool. One of the ambulances finally pulled up. I knew Mike was going to go first since he was in the worst shape. He still hadn't moved from the ground.

I licked my lips, thinking out my words carefully as the scene flashed in my mind. "He grabbed me and threw me back. He went after Bella again, and she punched him in the face. It didn't even slow him down, though. I could hear the sound. The sound of her knuckles..." I shuddered, taking in a deep breath. My hands were shaking. "She tried to run, but he grabbed her again. She... she flipped him. I'm not sure how but she did it with her hand. It must have hurt so much."

"Do you know martial arts?" The cop asked Bella. She just shook her head. He nodded, writing something down. "Continue, please."

"He got up... then Mike punched me. I hit back, just trying to stop him. He tried to punch me again, but I deflected it. But then he punched me in the mouth. He just talking all this *shit*," I sputtered out, getting lost in my own words. "I kicked him in the knee and then the side of the head. I didn't mean to do any real damage. I swear. I just wanted to stop him. He just kept coming after Bella and me. I couldn't let him do that to her. I'm so sorry."

Tears flowed down my cheeks, and I buried my face in her shoulder. Her unhurt arm wrapped around my own, holding me to her tightly. I felt like a coward all of a sudden.

"Alright," the officer sighed. "Well, Chief Swan is on his way over here. He wasn't that far away. The second ambulance is on its way as well. You're both going to have to go to the hospital to get checked out. We're going to have to talk about this some more as well."

Shit, I thought to myself. I was going to go to jail because I defended her. And did a crappy job at it.

"I'm so sorry," I whimpered out, kissing her cheek firmly.

"No. Don't be. I love you," Bella said quietly but in a firm voice. Her good hand went into my hair, tugging my face down to hers. I kissed her softly, leaning my forehead against hers. Just then, I heard a voice I never wanted to hear again.

Mike was just being placed on the stretcher when he came to. He began to flail, his arms going all over the place. He took a swing at one of the EMTs, cursing and shouting the entire time. "WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING TO ME!? PUT ME THE FUCK DOWN! Where is that stupid prick? I'm going to kill him! That fucker! That stupid fucking slut, too. FUCK YOU! LET ME GO."

The police officer that was watching over Mike cuffed him to the stretcher, just smirking. "Charming," I heard him mumbling. "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say or do can and will be used against you in a court of law..." the man continued as his screaming continued.

Bella curled into me more, new sobs breaking forth. I hushed her, whispering words of love into her ear. Thankfully, they got the bastard into the vehicle before I decided to shut him up myself.

Just as the second ambulance showed up, so did Chief Swan and what looked to be his deputy. The young man followed behind, just trying to keep up with the frantic father.

"What the hell happened?!" He shouted as he took in our appearance on the ground. My arms tightened around Bella, my protective instincts kicking in once again.

"Chief Swan," the older gentleman that had been talking to us earlier called to her father.

"Jones," he sighed. "Thanks for calling me. Tell me what you know?" He asked, his tone softening slightly. Two EMTs came up to us and began to look over Bella and me as the cops talked to each other. It was a good thing. I didn't think I could retell the story. I knew Bella couldn't.

"We need to get these two to the hospital," the female EMT said to Bella's father. "She's got a broken hand for sure, and he needs stitches in that lip."

Even though I didn't want to stand, I knew we had to. The paramedic began to walk Bella towards the open doors of the bright red ambulance, and I followed behind, but Charlie stopped me. I just knew at that moment I was about to be arrested. He was going to hate me after all of this. He would never let me spend time with his daughter ever again. I just knew it.

"Did you really knock that guy out?" He asked seriously in a quiet voice.

"Yes," I whispered.

"Did he- Did he really... *touch* her?" He growled angrily.

I just nodded my head, unable to look at him. If I had just punched him out earlier in the day, the whole thing would have never happened. But, I thought I was doing the right thing. I thought Mike was just full of hot air. "I'm sorry..."

"I'm sorry, too. I'm sorry you didn't kill that stupid little fucker. Boy, you've got a whole hell of a lot of restraint not doing some kind of major damage to him. I know you could. Thank you, thank you so much for watching over her. Don't worry about anything. Alright? Everything was self-defense. Just... just don't walk in dark alleys again, okay?"

"Yes, sir. Of course, sir," I said quickly, looking up at him with wide eyes. I couldn't believe he was serious.

"I'll take care of everything with the police here," Charlie sighed quietly, rubbing the back of his neck. "Is your car still at the diner?"

"Yes, sir. It is."

"You ride in the ambulance with Bella. I know she needs you right now. I don't think I'll be any comfort to her. I'm too mad, still. She doesn't need to hear me rant and rave. Give me your keys, and I'll have Sam here drive your car to the hospital. They're taking you to the hospital in Forks, to your dad. I won't allow that son of a bitch to be within a hundred yards of her ever again. I swear to God."

I stared openly at him for a long second. I felt like hugging him suddenly. But, I didn't want to ruin any positive opinion he might have had of me by frantically groping him. After pulling my keys from my pocket, I dropped them into the palm of his hand.

"Thank you for being so understanding."

Charlie was flushed slightly, looking a lot like his daughter for a moment. "Go on, kid. Get in there. She's looking for you."

And, then he shook my hand.

I actually felt like an adult for the first time. I looked into his deep brown eyes, the same brown as his daughter's, and gave him a brief smile. "Thank you again."

"Sure, sure." He blushed a bit more, getting slightly uncomfortable. "Go on."

I went into the ambulance with Bella. She was sitting on the stretcher, staring blankly at the ceiling. They had her hand wrapped up and covered with cold packs. My jacket was wrapped around her, but she still seemed cold. She looked over at me slowly, stretching out her hand to me. I took it quickly, bringing it to my lips. "Hold me," she whispered.

Thankfully the EMT didn't say anything when I went to the stretcher and pulled Bella onto my lap. Together we laid back against the slightly raised bed. Her head settled on my shoulder as she took in slow breaths. At least she wasn't crying anymore. They shut the door and began to go back towards Forks, the evening not ending at all as I had planned.

"Are you alright?" I asked after a few minutes, no longer able to stand the silence. It was too much.

"I'm... I'm kind of in shock, I think," Bella said quietly, her voice void of emotion. "I can't believe that just happened. I knew Mike was a jerk, but I didn't think he'd do anything like this. I don't get it. I just turned him down for a dance."

"He was drunk," I pointed out.

"That's even worse!" She said, her voice raising slightly. "When- when Eric and Tyler had you and he was touching me," she shook her head, "he was telling me how he was going to show me what it was like to be with a *real* man. Edward, he would have raped me. That monster... That," she groaned, frustrated. The emotions were coming back. The main one being pissed off. "How could he think that he was a man? Or, even fucking human!?"

"Shhh," I hushed her, kissing her temple. I wanted her to talk, not to get upset again. "It's over now. I will never ever allow that jackass within a mile of you again. I will protect you. I promise."

Bella turned slowly and ran her fingers over my jaw gently. She eyed the bruise that was growing there. "I know," was all she said before leaned forward and kissed the unbruised side of my mouth. I didn't care if it hurt or not, I had to kiss her better than that. I wrapped my fingers into her hair, bringing her closer. I had to show her just how much I loved her. We pulled away after a moment, resting our forehead against each other.

We sat in silence after that. I was tired, my rush of adrenaline wholly gone for the night. Bella snoozed, for lack of a better word, against me. She wasn't really asleep, I think, but she wasn't really in the present either. I rubbed my hand over her back gently, pretty sure she was sore in a few different places. I knew I was, but I was a lot better off than she was.

When the ambulance came to a stop, Bella and I stood together. My father was standing in front of the doors, concern written all over his face. For once he didn't seem like my fresh-faced goofy dad. He was a worried doctor, fear dancing slightly in his green eyes.

“Jesus Christ,” he mumbled under his breath, running his fingers through his wild blond hair.

I got out of the bus first, hopping down carefully. Taking Bella by the waist, I set her down to her feet. She leaned against me, not meeting my dad's eyes. “Charlie called and said you were on your way. He told me what happened. Are you okay?”

I sighed. I knew I would be answering that question a lot. “I’m fine. Bella's hand...” I said, not really wanting to say anything else. He nodded his head quickly and wrapped an arm around her waist, leading her into the ER.

“Don't worry about a thing, darling. I'll take care of everything personally, and I'll get you two out of here as quickly as possible. Do you have any other injuries? Are you hurting anywhere else?” He asked, his hand on the small of her back as he led her down the halls. I followed behind, finally relieved that an adult that I trusted and loved was taking over. Charlie was great and all, but there was no one like my dad. I loved him more at that moment than I ever thought possible. I was so proud to be his son.

“I think I have some bruises, but that's it,” Bella shook her head at her words. We came to a small room at the very end of the hall. She sat down numbly, running her unhurt hand through her hair. “I'm just- I don't know... I feel so tired and confused. I hurt. I just-” And then she began to cry again. My father came up to her quickly, pulling her into a gentle hug and shushing her. Her face buried in his chest, letting him comfort her.

“It's okay, dear. I'm going to get you a mild sedative and some painkillers. Then we'll get you into x-ray and see what damage has been done. You've been a brave girl tonight. Can you be brave for me just a little bit longer?” He asked, lifting her chin. She nodded slowly, her eyes still watering with her full bottom lip pushed out slightly. “That's a good girl. Edward,” he called to me. I knew exactly what he wanted. He wanted me to take over the comforting. I came to her side, rubbing my hand up and down her back. She leaned into me, pushing her face into my chest. “Alright, I'm going to get all of that into the works. I'm going to send a nurse in to look at that lip. We need to get it at least cleaned.”

“Thanks, Dad.”

He rubbed a firm hand over my shoulder before kissing my forehead. I reminded myself to give him a huge hug later. I didn't do it often enough. After that, he left us alone.

I played with her hair as she began to calm down again. She rubbed her eyes roughly, her bottom lip sticking out still. Her face was extremely blotchy, and her eyelashes were clumping together. “Bella, you're kinda cute when you cry,” I blurted out, instantly feeling stupid.

"Shut up, you liar," she laughed brokenly, looking up at me.

"I'm serious," I defended myself quickly. "But I think you're cute all the time."

She gave me a small giggle, running her fingers over my neck. "I love you," she said again. I loved it. I would never hear it enough.

"Say it again," I pleaded. I needed to hear the words again.

A small smile grew on her face. "I love you, Edward."

My fingers wrapped around the back of her neck. "Again," I pleaded as I brought her closer.

Her smile grew even bigger. "Edward Cullen, I love you. So much."

I kissed her firmly, ignoring the pain in my lip.

"I love you, too, Isabella Swan."

"Alright, I'm here to see a man about a broken lip!" A nurse I had known since I was a little kid came in, her scrubs a too bright pink shade. She was probably just around my dad's age, starting at the same time as him at the hospital. She was another one of my dad's good friends. Tanya knew what she was interrupting, and it amused her far too much. "Boy Edward, you sure know how to bust up something right," she mumbled as she examined my lip. Thankfully, she didn't ask Bella to move. I don't think I could have let go of her at that moment anyway. "Well, I need to get this all cleaned up and get all the lipstick off of there before we can patch it up," she said with a slight smirk.

"What can I say?" I asked with my chin raised up high. "I like to be pretty."

Bella burst into laughter, shaking against me. I laughed as well, the rush of emotions too much. It was also around midnight already. I knew I had gone off my rocker a bit, but I think we needed to break some of the tension in the air. The nurse rolled her eyes, smiling to herself.

"Oh, and it's just your shade, honey. But it's got to go! Now, I'm gonna get it cleaned up and then I'm going to put some liquid stitching on there. I think that'll fix you up."

"Thanks, Tanya," I gave her a small smile. She returned it sweetly, running a thin hand through my hair. It made me feel like I was five again, but with her, that was okay. She was practically my aunt.

Charlie came in about that time, looking naturally concerned. The sweet nurse had

already wiped my mouth with a wet washcloth and was now rubbing an alcohol-soaked pad over it. "Christ," I muttered through the burn.

"You can handle three drunk football players but you whimper over an owie on your lip?" He asked with a raised eyebrow. I smirked, unable to help myself. He gave me a small smile in return, patting me on the shoulder. "By the way, we picked up the other two. You did break his nose. Stupid little-" he cut himself off, shaking his head.

Tanya swabbed something over my lip quickly before declaring me done. It honestly felt a bit like super glue. I moved my mouth around, just trying to get used to it. "I'm done here, kiddo! No more fights."

"I'll try," I teased her. "I never start them."

"Just finish them?" Charlie smirked a little. I grinned a little proudly to myself, pushing my face into Bella's hair so no one could see it.

"Alright Ms. Swan, I come bearing many happy drugs." My father came back in with a slight smile on his face, holding three bottles and a single needle. Charlie's eye got wide. Tanya sneaked out of the room, already able to tell there would probably be some sort of trouble with that. Nurses had that sense. "Oh, hi Charlie," he said as they shook hands. "I've got a mild sedative for her and some painkillers. She'll need them once we start the cast. I'm going to give her a prescription for at home as well. Oh, and we have something for her stomach as well. Painkillers can have a nasty effect."

"Be warned, she's a lightweight. She gets loopy really easily," Charlie chuckled. My dad began to prepare the drugs, putting them all in the same syringe. Bella cringed beside me, holding onto my arm tighter. If I were to guess, I would assume that she didn't like needles and neither did her father. "So, um... I've got a lot of paperwork to take care of. If you want me to, I can stay, but I'm sure you don't want to-"

"It's alright, Dad. I've got these two. I'll be fine," Bella assured him.

"Okay, sugar. I'll be back in an hour or so. Do you need me to bring you anything?"

She said no, and he quickly left before my dad could shoot her up. "Shoulder, gut, or ass? It needs to be in fat," Dad asked her playfully. I rolled my eyes at his misguided attempt to be funny.

Bella grinned nervously. "I guess in the gut."

"Gut, it is," he replied as he lifted her shirt carefully. She squeaked quietly, leaning her face into my neck. I chuckled softly, hushing her as I rubbed the back of her head. She stiffened

as the needle sunk in then just sort of *melted* against me.

"I feel warm," Bella said in a sleepy voice.

"That's the morphine, my dear. I gave you the good stuff," he answered her. "We're bringing the x-ray in here in a minute. You'll have to go for a little while until she gets that done."

The machine came rolling in, along with the x-ray tech. I carefully moved Bella off of my lap, and she swayed backward. "Wow, this is some good stuff," she mumbled, looking very wide-eyed at nothing at all. It was kind of hard not to laugh at that.

I waited with my father in the hall, my arms crossed over my chest. I was antsy being away from her right then. I didn't like it in the least.

"You did good," he said quietly.

"I could have done better," I countered.

"You shouldn't have been walking down a dark alley," he pointed out. "But it is Port Angeles. They probably haven't had a mugging in ten years. They barely have traffic accidents."

"It had nothing to do with being in a dark alley. It was personal. I was so scared, Dad," I confessed to him. "If anything happened to her- I don't know... I don't know what I would have done. I don't think I can live without her."

"God, you are just like me," he said in a quiet voice.

"What do you mean?" I asked him in a curious voice, looking over at him.

"Hard and fast." He shook his head. "And I hope forever. If you're lucky like me."

I smiled slightly at his words. "I hope so, too."

He sighed heavily and dramatically, throwing an arm over my shoulder. "Well, at least you picked a pretty one."

I shoved him off of me, and he chuckled, pushing me back. Before I could forget, I gave him a big hug. I felt him sigh against me, hugging me back tightly. "Please don't tell Mom I'm being soft," I muttered as I pulled away.

"Yeah, she'll want to take your picture to remember the occasion."

We both laughed quietly for a brief second before slipping into silence again. I don't think

either of us really wanted to talk after that. I rubbed my hand over my lip once more, hating the soreness and the uncomfortable pull. It felt strange, but I would have to get used to it. I wouldn't be too surprised if I ended up with a scar.

About ten minutes later, the x-ray tech finally walked out with the machine. "I'll get this to you as soon as possible, Carlisle."

I didn't wait for my dad's response because I needed to get back inside with Bella. When she saw me she smiled, my coat finally away from her shoulders. She was actually a little flushed, her eyes wide. "My pillow is back," she slurred out, smiling wider. "Yayyy..."

I chuckled, sliding in behind her on the small bed. Placing both of my legs on either side of her body, I wrapped my arms around her stomach as she leaned back against me. She had fresh ice packs on her arm, almost all the way to her elbow. She snuggled into me, enjoying the warmth of my body against her. I loved it as well. We laid together in silence for I don't know how long. I think I fell asleep.

"Well, you've got two busted knuckles, and a couple of the bones in your hand are broken, along with a smaller one in your wrist. We're going to have to put a cast on it," my father called as he came in. The sudden noise surprised me, making me jump. Bella giggled, bringing her good hand up to my hair. She tugged on it gently.

"You're funny," she said simply, her eyes still closed. "And, really cute."

"You know, you could probably ask her anything you wanted to right now and get an answer. The stuff she's on is like truth serum," he joked as he pulled out all the supplies he needed for a cast.

"I don't think there are any questions I'd want to be answered in front of my father," I informed him with a smirk. He got a rueful, shit eating, grin on his face. Maybe I did have some of his humor.

"Oh! Like sex questions?" Bella asked with a giggle, a little too high pitched. *They are the fun drugs.* "You don't need to ask any questions about that. Nope. Nope. Nope." She waved her finger in the air drunkenly before touching my nose. "You're great. And, apparently, it runs in the family because Rosalie never shuts up about how good it is. Now I see why."

I flushed instantly, and Dad burst into hysterical laughter. "Oh, I'm very proud," he wiped a fake tear from his eye.

"Please shut up," I muttered to him. I was going to be teased for the rest of my life. I just knew it. So was Emmett for that matter. I guess there were worse things.

"You should be! Edward is great," she hummed quietly, running her fingers over my cheek. "I love him very, very, very much."

"Can we talk about something else before Chief Swan comes back and I get shot? Seriously. That's not how I want to die," I said in a low voice to my high girlfriend. She giggled again and kissed my cheek firmly. "Bella, I'm serious, baby."

"Okay, you two. What color cast do you want?" My father asked, finally getting more serious. Bella picked out a blue one, and he quickly went to work. Somewhere along the way, she fell asleep in my arms. I held her tightly to me, running my fingers through her hair. I loved having her in my arms. Charlie came in just as Dad finished the cast.

"Here," he said to him, handing him a bottle of pills. "I had it filled at the pharmacy here, so you don't have to worry about this in the morning. She's going to be in pain. She did a lot of damage. Brave girl."

"Thanks, Doc. I guess I should get her home then," Charlie said with a little sigh. He ran his hand over her shoulder, shaking her gently. "Come on, Bells. It's time to get you home."

"No," she whimpered, curling tighter into me. "No, I want to stay with Edward."

I held her to me, knowing exactly how she felt. "Look, I don't want to leave her side either. I know- I know we're young, but I would never do anything to hurt Bella, especially right now. I just- I need to stay by her side. I can sleep in the rocker in her room or on the couch in my room, and she can have the bed, but I just need to make sure she's alright tonight."

Both fathers looked at me and then each other. She had already fallen back asleep in my arms, clutching onto me so tightly I wasn't sure they would be able to uncurl her fingers without a fight. Charlie sighed, rubbing the back of his neck. "I do have to go back to the station tonight. Carlisle, would you be willing to have Bella stay at your house?"

"Of course," he agreed quickly. "They'll be fine, and Esme will be there if Bella needs anything."

Charlie sighed again and handed me my keys back. I had totally forgotten about them. I clutched them in my fist, looking at him in surprise. "Thank you," I breathed out in relief. It was far easier than I could have ever expected. I guess they knew in the end that nothing really could have stopped me from doing so. I wasn't leaving her side. He handed Dad back the pills since she was coming to our house.

I moved quickly before they could change their minds, picking Bella up in my arms. She hummed quietly, leaning her face into my chest to shield her eyes from the light. "Could one of you get my car door for me? I don't want to drop her."

My father smirked and nodded, taking my keys from me. He walked me out and opened the passenger door for me. Charlie followed behind, looking concerned. "Look, kid, I should get done by four. If you want to bring her first thing in the--"

I cut him off before he could finish. "You get some sleep. I'll bring her home after lunch."

"Thanks," he breathed before patting my back. He went back to his squad car, pulling out a cell phone as he did. I knew he had a lot to deal with the paperwork and all that. Always more paperwork. I was glad he was taking care of everything. I knew Bella wouldn't make it through the story again, especially right then. I knew we would probably have to deal with it later, but at least not that night.

I drove home quickly, opening the door and scooping my girlfriend up into my arms once again. My mother was waiting for me, her expression almost frightened. She opened the front door, letting me inside.

"Is she okay?" She asked, touching her hair gingerly.

"Just tired," I assured her. "And drugged up. Dad drugged her up pretty good."

"She probably needs it. She needs to rest. Why don't you get her to bed?" I nodded my head. Before I could go up the stairs though she stopped me. "Are you okay?"

"I'll be fine," I assured her. "Goodnight, Mom. I love you."

I took her to my room, not turning on any lights. I had enough harsh lights at the hospital. Laying Bella back on the bed, she barely moved or responded. I took off her shoes and socks before pulling off her jeans. I didn't want to remove her shirt because I didn't think I could do so without hurting her. I laid her under the covers before I slipped into my own sleep pants.

"Edward?" Bella called into the darkness quietly.

"I'm here, love," I whispered to her, slipping in behind her. I knew I said I would sleep on the couch, but I had to hold her. I had to make sure she was alright. The only place that I felt safe was with her by my side. I draped my arm over her waist, pulling her flush against my body.

"I love you," she breathed out, her uninjured hand seeking my own. She gripped it tightly, pressing my palm to her stomach. I buried my face in her neck, lightly kissing her ear.

"I love you, too," I said it like a promise, "Bella, I love you so much."

She turned her head to the side, and we kissed for a few moments gently. Pulling away

first, she pressed a kiss to my jaw. "Goodnight."

And that was the first of many nights I fell asleep with her in my arms.

The End