



Episode One-thirty-six:

Although we snacked all day, we ate dinner together. We sat around the table for a couple of hours, laughing and talking. By the end, Lauren was sagging. She wanted to stay for as long as possible, but she was nodding off while sitting up. Edward helped them take their things to the car. He had become her favorite of the day because he was so good at spoiling her. His sisters taught him well. She held his arm as she waddled sleepily, her head on his shoulder while her husband carried her leftovers.

Sarah and Jasper were helping me clean up. He kept brushing behind me on purpose, touching my arms and back. But he pinched and flirted with her and Lauren, too. They both liked his attention because he was so gentle and harmless. It felt like he was giving you all of his personal focus for that second because to him you were special and needed to be reminded that you were smart, beautiful, kind, strong, helpful... It was his magical ability.

Seth was busily setting up in the office so we could first film the drinking videos and then the makeup ones. I had no idea how this would end, but it would be hilarious no matter what.

When Edward came back in, he pulled me to him for a powerful kiss for no apparent reason other than he was in such an excellent mood. He had missed filming with his friends so much and having Sarah there had made it extra special. It was enough to make me breathless and dizzy.

“Mm, I wanted to do that before you put on lipstick,” he mumbled as he kissed my neck. I tilted my face to the side and noticed Jasper watching with his lip between his teeth. I smiled at him, my eyes sinking shut as I was lavished with attention for a brief moment. “So, what should we drink? We have an entire shelf of beer and wine to sample.” He ran his nose over my ear, his breath flowing over my skin.

“You’re the one who wanted to,” I giggled as I became ticklish. “I planned today. You decide.”

“Mm, true.” He looked over at Jasper while still very close to me. “Would you like to pick it out?” He asked as he brushed his shoulder with his fingertips.

“Sure. How many?”

“Two or three videos worth?” He questioned me, seeing how much trouble I would let him get into. I held up two fingers, then touched one of them to his nose. “Aw, okay. Yeah, so eight in total?”

“Are you doing a theme?” Sarah inquired, coming to look at the shelf too. It was crammed full.

“Let’s see. We still have unopened liquor from Australia,” he pointed out. Jasper took it down right away. Of course, he went for the hard stuff first. “Also, this entire left side is the beer of the month from Bella. My wonderful Christmas gift. Whatever you want, lovely. If you see something you like, we can try it.”

She looked up at him, her expression mischievous. “Is this how you make all of your content? Just winging it?”

He shrugged. “Pretty much. It works.”

Jasper and I both scoffed at the same time. “He plans his ass off. Don’t let him fool you. He’s just good at hiding it. I don’t know how he gets so much done,” he explained to her, pulling down another unopened bottle of liquor I hadn’t tried before. He lifted it to his eyes to read the tiny print on the label. “He can go with the flow, but it’s not how he works.”

“I’m good at getting things done on my phone,” Edward replied bashfully. “I can speed through shit when I’m alone, too. And generally, stuff goes better if you have a plan.”

“Alright, all set up,” Seth informed us as he came down the hall as he dusted off his hands like he had done a load of hard work. “Ready whenever you are, boss.”

“You got a drink preference?” Sarah questioned him, lifting on her toes to look on the highest shelf. She hopped onto the counter when she couldn’t reach anything. It didn’t put her much higher, to be honest. She matched Jasper’s height.

“Actually, I shouldn’t drink. I have a date tonight.” He waved her off, looking away like he was almost embarrassed by the fact. I was a little surprised he hadn’t brought it up during the day. He was always complaining about being single. We had joked about hooking him up with Alice, but honestly, Sarah was more her type. Maybe Lauren’s cruel comeback had gotten to him.

“Oh!” Edward said in surprise. “Did you need to leave?” He peeked at his watch. “We’re doing extra stuff now that we didn’t plan. We didn’t even ask. I’m sorry.”

He looked down at his phone, thinking about his answer. He didn’t really want to say no to his boss, but it had already been a long day. “I wouldn’t mind it. I’d like to get a shower, maybe pick up some flowers before.”

“We’ve got this,” he promised.

Seth put his hand on his waist, uncertain. “Are you sure?”

Jasper chuckled, pulling something else down. “I’ll be their cameraman. No worries, mate. Go have your own fun. We’ll be fine here. This is just playing around.”

“Good luck!” I insisted. “I think we can handle getting drunk and eating more junk on our own. Eddie could film that in his sleep.”

“Thanks!” He replied quickly, rushing to get his stuff together. Grabbing his messenger bag from the couch, he hurriedly got his keys out. “It’s a first date, but we’ve been chatting for a few minutes. I’m a little nervous because she’s smoking hot.” He came to Sarah in the kitchen and offered his hand to her formally. “It was wonderful to meet you today, and I had a lot of fun. You’re one of the coolest celebs we’ve met so far.”

She brought him into a big hug after jumping down from the counter. “Aw, thank you! I had an amazing time too! Thanks for being so welcoming. I can’t wait to film with you again. Have a great time on your date!”

“Thank you!” He chuckled, looking down sheepishly at his feet for a minute. “Okay... Um, I guess I’ll see everyone later this week.”

“See you at the party!” I called to him. He waved as he left. “We should get the makeup together before we drink,” I stated once the door closed behind him. “We don’t want to sort that out trashed. It’ll take forever.”

“Eddie, can I do yours?” She beamed at him innocently. “After I do Bella’s. Please?”

Looking up towards the ceiling, he sighed dramatically. “Yeah,” he kind of laughed. “I guess. Hey! You should do Jasper’s,” he countered, pointing at him. Our boyfriend snorted, shaking his head as he took down two more bottles of beer.

“Just going to paint us all up?” He asked. She quickly nodded. “I don’t think the stash will look very good. Besides, I’ve already got a bet with Bella that involves it.”

“What? Really?” Sarah questioned. “What about?”

“How many subscribers she’ll get. She lacks confidence in herself, so I’m going to teach her a lesson.” Our boyfriend raised an eyebrow at him at his wording, but he ignored it. “I say she’ll have more than the boys by the end of the week. She says she’ll do my face if she’s right. But she won’t be. I’ll have to think up something extra wicked.”

“What kind of video are you going to have her do?” She inquired. “Got anything fun in mind?”

“Yeah, Jasper. What kind?” I asked, too cheerfully.

He laughed as he turned red. Without looking, he passed two bottles to our boyfriend. “Eh, I have a few ideas. We’ll see how the wind blows me when the time comes. I might have her dance. I’d like to see you do some actual ballet.”

He meant I would dance without clothes. Sarah would have liked to watch that too, I think.

“You just have to ask, and I will,” I informed them. “I don’t mind dancing. The waltzing video was so much fun.”

Jasper hotly gazed at me. “You’d really be willing to let me film that?” I shrugged in answer. “I know Tony will like it, too.”

“That’s because Tony is kinda obsessed with me,” I teased, poking his side before I took a couple of the bottles too.

“Duh,” Edward mocked right back. Sarah giggled at our joking. “What’s not to obsess about?”

When we finally got set up in the office, he was between her and me. Jasper was sitting on a stool behind the camera. We would do the beers first. “So, how does it feel to be between

two of the most beautiful women in America right now?" Our boyfriend asked him before we got started.

"Mm..." He put both of his arms around us over-confidently. They were stretched over our shoulders. Both of us laid our head on him. "It kind of feels like why I wanted to go into movies." I laughed too loudly at his answer. He chuckled too, leaning over to kiss my temple. "I actually feel like the luckiest bastard, and we're going to get paid to do this. I want to do this every day. All of my best friends were here, and it was great. Now I get some beer, and then I'm going to let her paint me like the clown I am."

"I'll make you pretty," she declared, patting his leg. "You won't be a clown. I promise."

"Thanks," he snickered, but he didn't believe her. "Would you like to get us started?"

"Yes!" She instantly cheered.

"Alright, three, two, one," Jasper pointed at her once the red light was on. He was the most professional of us all. It was good we had him to reign us in. We would probably get through things a lot faster with him in control of the camera.

"HEY EVERYONE!" Our friend shouted right by Eddie's ear. He actually jumped in surprise. I had to cover my mouth to keep from laughing. "I'm Emma Sarah, that's Eddie and Bella, and we're going to rate random beers!"

Smirking, Jasper attempted to hide his amusement too. It was going to be a fun couple of videos. We already knew how bad she was with alcohol.

Everybody tried everything, even if we weren't in the video. I let Jasper be in the hard liquor one. She looked so tiny between them. She had them laughing so much. She was hammier than either of them. They also drank way too much. They let her control the bottle, which we all knew from the after-party was a terrible idea.

When they reset, I went to wash my face so Sarah could do my makeup on clean skin. Jasper followed behind to watch while our friend and Edward talked about the next movie she was working on in New York. She was really excited about it because she would get to play the bad guy, which was different for her. But she was playing a mean girl, not a serial killer. Also, the director was a big deal. They were someone he was genuinely interested in working with. We let them have their business talk.

"Ugh, I'm craving a smoke," Jasper mumbled as he snuck behind me for a quick kiss on my neck. I leaned my head back against him, and his lips brushed against mine.

“Well, go to the drawer and get you one. I don’t think anyone would mind you taking a smoke break. We’re not in a rush.”

He grunted softly in agreement and walked over to it, quickly fetching a joint, the lighter, and the ashtray that our boyfriend kept by the bed. He lit it and took a long drag, offering it to me. I still had bubbles all over my face, but I wouldn’t turn it down here. I drew in a quick hit and gave it back, only pinching it with my fingertips so as not to get it wet.

“Bring that with you when you come back!” Edward shouted from down the hall. I smirked to myself. I was surprised he could smell it from that far.

“Of course, darling!” Jasper yelled before turning his attention to me. “You know, I’ve been smoking since I was a teenager, and his prude ass turned his nose up at it every time I offered. He comes to California, and he becomes a free-loving hippy.”

I shook my head. That wasn’t the case at all. “He feared his mother, and it’s legal here,” I said after I splashed water on my skin, patting it dry. “I’m guessing, among other things, it was something he was interested in doing but was too scared. He hasn’t needed it much for his sleeplessness lately,” I mused.

“Hm...” he hummed in answer, blowing out a long trail of smoke. I took it from him, holding his gaze. His eyes went to my lips, his curving into a slight smile. “You know, I’ve really enjoyed watching you work today. I’ve known veteran newscasters who weren’t as professional as you. I’m excited to get to work on the editing tomorrow. Tony’s right. You are a natural.”

Biting my lip, I shook my head in disbelief. “Am I actually doing okay? Honestly? You’re always so upfront with him, but...” I trailed off.

He took my face in one hand and leaned in, but then remembered himself. We weren’t alone. They could come in at any minute. The doors were all open, and we could hear each other if we were loud enough. He sighed and kissed my nose. “Bella, I’m literally betting on you. Yes, you are. Stop doubting yourself so much and just relax. You’re doing everything beautifully. I can’t wait to make that video with you,” he said in a low whisper. “Yeah, I think I’ll have you dance for me.”

“How dirty is it going to be?”

His answering smirk was so sexy. He winked at me before taking another drag, heading into the office again.