



One-hundred-forty-nine:

“I am so ready for this,” Edward said as he clapped his hands together excitedly. It was the channel launch day, and he had just ordered all the food for the mukbang. He was getting it from two different places. One was a barbecue place known for its meats and one that was vegan.

Lauren was going to be so happy with him. I promised her no matter what, there would be plenty for her to eat, even if she wasn't going to in front of the camera.

We were setting up to film in the dining room with the pool and mountains as the backdrop. It was the perfect day for it. Jasper was almost done with the equipment, and I was wiping off the table.

“So, I'll do the intro since this was my idea, and it's the first time we're doing something like this,” Edward thought out loud to himself as he rubbed his palms together. “I'm actually anxious. I don't know why.”

Seth popped into the house with only a quick knock. “Hello, everyone!” He cheerfully called. “Who is ready to fucking EAT?!” He paused. “Wait. Can we smoke before this?”

His boss grimaced slightly. "Just a little. Don't get shitfaced." He whipped out a vape pen and took a big hit, smiling at him. "Get hungry, not stupid." He pointed at him.

"No worries! I'm just nervous, you know? This is a huge day for everyone."

"Don't worry! It'll go fantastic!" Jasper promised encouragingly. He wasn't too worried because he would spend most of his time behind the camera. We would switch out so everyone would get turns to speak.

There was another knock at the door. It was the first part of the food. These were the vegan treats. Jackfruit pulled 'pork,' coleslaw, potato salad, vegan mac and cheese, vegan sausage, grilled corn, and mashed sweet potatoes. He even ordered a vegan pecan pie- a whole one. There was so much food.

I started switching it to prettier platters and covering it with foil so it wouldn't get cold. Jasper helped me without being asked. I kept trying bites of everything because I was so curious, and I would sneak him a little too. Everything was amazing.

"I like the fake pork stuff. That's yummy," he whispered in my ear. "It tastes so much better off your fingers."

Flushing, I looked away with a smile. I leaned in so I could softly reply. "Don't start that."

"Start what?"

"Something you can't finish..." I trailed off as I sucked the sauce off my fingertips while holding his gaze.

His nose wiggled, and he pursed his lips. "I can, but I shouldn't. And I'm sorry, I'll behave." I laughed in disbelief. He pretended to be offended, putting his hand on his heart. "Rude." I blew a playful raspberry at him. Jasper quickly grabbed me up by the waist with one arm. "I will throw you in the pool right now."

I squealed and giggled the entire time.

"Hey, hey, hey," Edward immediately broke up our obvious flirting. "Put her down. And not in the water," he said in his big video voice. Our boyfriend rolled his eyes as he placed me to the floor. "Thank you."

"I wasn't going to do it. I'm not stupid. I was just going to dangle her over the edge a little."

"You sound like a psychopath," he remarked.

“We talked about human skin curtains and cannibalism yesterday. No, I think he’s fine,” Seth sarcastically stated as there was a knock on the door. He went to go get it.

Edward instantly seemed horrified. “Are you fucking serious?” He peered at Jasper and me. We nodded at the same time. “Oh, god. I’m so happy I don’t have to do that.”

“The killer was from down under, too,” he added as the rest of our friends came in. “What did you say?” He pointed at our boyfriend. Seth snapped his fingers as he tried to remember. “She looked like every mum from the nineties.” Jasper nodded. “She cooked his ass! Literally! Baked that rump in the oven.”

“I’m so glad I’m a vegan right now,” Lauren said as she waddled in behind her husband. Gagging, she stuck her tongue out.

“Don’t talk about that kind of stuff before we eat,” I chided.

“We talked about it all yesterday, and we snacked the entire time.”

“Because we’re dark souls with broken brains that enjoy it just a touch too much.”

Tyler snorted, muttering under his breath. “Mm, only a touch. Sure.”

We flipped him off at the same time. His wife glanced over her shoulder as she came towards the kitchen to me. “Maybe you shouldn’t annoy the people who have more knowledge than you do on how to hide a body.”

“Hey, Bella... How would you hide his?” Seth asked in a thundering voice. “We could do a murder edition of twenty questions.”

“I couldn’t. I’m barely five feet tall. Are you fucking kidding me?”

“Good. That’s exactly what we’ll tell the cops when the time comes.” He winked at me stupidly. I laughed loudly, leaning into my sweet blond boyfriend. “Next question. Who’ll drive you nuts first? The boss or Jasper?”

“Myself,” I stated sarcastically. “Baby, there is no drive. It’s like two blocks away. You can stroll there.”

Giggling, Lauren swatted my arm. She started peeking into all the bowls. “What is this?” She lifted another. “Oh, that looks so yummy.”

“This is yours. Well, not only yours. I got enough for everyone to try, but I got this for you,” Edward explained. “It’s all vegan. It just arrived.”

She hugged him as tightly as she could with her round belly in the way. It was obviously a struggle. He patted her back, and she grinned up at him. “Thank you so much for being thoughtful.”

Tyler sighed as he stood beside me. “Your man is seducing my wife with food. Tell him to stop.”

“Shut up,” she snapped before hugging Edward’s waist. He embraced her from the side with a smirk. “He doesn’t need the food for that.”

“Though you’d make a lovely couple, and he would be the best stepfather to your children...” I trailed off playfully. “No.” She cackled and came over to me. I wrapped my arms around her shoulder and kissed her hair as she leaned into me. “He should be more worried about me seducing you with food,” I whispered into her ear loudly. Her husband groaned.

We began to take stuff to the table. “Honestly, it wouldn’t take much to get me into bed right now. I have never been this kind of horny in my life!” She blurted out. “All I want to do is get off, nap, and shove Oreos in my face.”

“Same,” three people said at the same time.

“I’m going to stop bringing you to these things,” Tyler threatened her.

“No, you won’t,” she mocked as she rolled her eyes. He pouted a little.

The doorbell rang again with the rest of our meal. It took four people to bring it all inside. I had no idea what he did. I knew it was going to be a lot, but I didn’t realize it would be ungodly. When spread out, it barely fit on the tabletop.

Jasper stood behind the camera, and Lauren was sitting at the island with an array of food. She was already eating off of three plates. There was a computer beside him to read the comments as they came up. They had been advertising it for a couple of weeks.

He raised his fingers. “Three, two, one.” He then pointed at Eddie.

“What’s up, and welcome to our live-streaming mukbang event. We’re going to be enjoying this hearty feast and answering questions to celebrate the launch of the brand-new Cullen Network. The boys will be forming new channels under our umbrella with new monikers and lots more content each. It will be under their real names, and links will be down below. And

not to fret about their old stuff because all of their content is being moved over. Last but not least, the super talented Ms. Isabella Swan is starting her very first channel!”

I leaned into him with a smile. “We’re incredibly excited to be here, and not just because of the channels or the delicious meal that you see in front of us.”

“No! Because we’re getting fat for a cause. It’s the very best reason to eat. Today we will be snacking on mountains of some of the best barbecue in all of Los Angeles while collecting donations for the LA food bank. If you have the ability, please give. Even if it’s only ten dollars. One hundred percent of your contributions will go directly to putting meals on tables. So... Here’s the deal, I will match whatever amount you donate. If you give two-hundred thousand, I will contribute that, too. If we only get ten or twenty, I will give them at least twenty-five thousand, but I want to give them more than that. Make me put my money where my mouth is!”

“It’s a big one, too!” Tyler said with an enormous cheesy grin, his eyes innocent and wide. He flashed a smile at his boss.

He shook his head. “So send in your questions and your donations down at the links below, and let’s get started!”

I picked up a fork and instantly stabbed some brisket. “This smells incredible.”

“The first question,” Jasper called, reading the screen. “Where is the food from?”

Edward already had sauce on his face somehow, and I was not going to wipe it off either. It made it funnier. “So, part of it is from Soulful Barbecue, which is a lovely vegan restaurant. And the other is from Dr. Hogly Wogly’s Tyler Texas BBQ.”

I snorted. “Seriously?”

“Yeah. It’s one of the most popular places in town.”

“That name,” I laughed. “I’ve been to Tyler many times too! It’s where Alice and Rose’s grandma lives.”

“Have you had the barbecue there?” My boyfriend beside me asked. He licked the sauce from the corner of his lip.

“I have, and it was very good.”

“Can you name all the dishes?” Was the next question.

We talked about the food for a while with some questions about the update schedules and things like that thrown in. Of course, Eddie's work was discussed. Who wouldn't be interested in those things? He was happy to talk and eat at the same time. He was pacing himself.

Then it started getting more personal around an hour in.

Jasper was sitting beside me, switching places with Seth because he needed to slow down and take a heartburn pill. "How do you feel about your 'coming out' video going viral?"

"I don't pay attention to any of it," I admitted. "I don't watch any I'm in, and I didn't even know it came out until a little while ago. I don't plan any of that stuff. My family already knows about me being queer, so I haven't gotten any shocked phone calls or anything. And I never go on social media or watch television. So... it doesn't affect me at all." I shrugged.

My boyfriend picked at his food. He had a big beef rib on his plate, and he was pulling it apart with his fingers. He waffled his head around. "It has, admittedly, gotten more attention than I thought. It's a little weird, but I'm happy everyone is being so supportive."

"Bella, why don't you watch your videos?" He read next from the screen.

"For the same reason that a lot of performers don't. The cringe is real. I'll leave it up to the boys and trust that they're doing a good job. I mean, obviously, they are. Look at where we are right now."

Seth smiled at what he was reading. "Are you guys having fun with my idea without me?"

I laughed because I immediately knew who sent that one. "No! We miss you! We wish you were here with us!" I rested my hand on my heart.

"Hey! If it's you... call real quick," Eddie said as he got his phone out. Almost instantly, it rang. "I'm going to put you on speaker so everyone can hear you," he warned. "Ms. Emma Sarah Jones, everyone!"

"Yay! Hey!" She cheered as soon as she answered. "You look like you're having so much fun! Is it good?"

"It's delicious," Jasper promised. "Are you having fun in New York filming?"

"I am, but I wish I were with you right now. So, how're the donations going?"

"Uh," Seth drew out as he looked at the page for that. "Oh, shit. We're up to fifty thousand!"

“Yes!” Edward whooped with both hands in the air. “That is so incredible. Thank you so much to everyone so far!”

His mouth fell open. “It just went up ten thousand!”

“That was from me. I want you to spend more,” Sarah teased. I laughed, resting my head on his shoulder.

Eddie grinned genuinely. “I am more than happy to.”

“I’m still planning on matching it, too.”

He looked at the camera with a smile. “Emma is actually the one who came up with this wonderful idea while she was filming loads of videos with us. So, thank you for your donations and the suggestion. I’m really glad we did this. I’m having a splendid time.”

“Because he gets to eat while talking about himself. Two of his favorite things,” Jasper said sarcastically. He earned a quick swat, making him chuckle.

“The chat wants to know what kind of videos you made together?”

“We got food, we got rankings, and we got some dumbass makeup ones. You’re going to love them all,” Eddie promised. “What are you doing right now, sweetie?” He directed towards our friend.

“I’m on lunch, but I need to head back. I am so glad I got to talk to you. Good luck and call me later!”

“I’ll text you,” I called out to her. “I have something to tell you about that blind date.”

“Good or bad?”

“Excellent,” I promised quickly. “Break a leg!”

Edward put his phone away. “Are we ready for dessert now?”

“So, I don’t have to feed either of you for a few days, right?” I placed my hand on my swollen stomach. He had gotten a sweet potato pie and a cheesecake to go with the vegan pecan. I didn’t know where they had the room. This was bigger than Thanksgiving.

He handed me a clean fork. “You don’t have to, anyway. We just like it when you do because you’re an amazing chef who spoils us daily.”

I automatically gave him a kiss on the cheek. He turned and quickly captured my lips for a brief moment. We smiled at each other.

“The chat wants to know when you’re getting married,” Seth inquired with a mean smirk on his face. He was looking at my boyfriend.

“Boy, they sure are nosy,” I said in a cheerful voice.

Edward laughed and hung his head. “The answer to that is when my beloved wishes, and not a second before or after. Jesus, stop trying to get me in trouble.”

“Now, they want to know about kids.”

“They are meddlesome, damn,” Jasper muttered sardonically beside me, picking a pecan from his piece. I peeked at him and widened my eyes for a moment.

“The only baby I’m having right now is a food one,” I declared bluntly, making both of them laugh. “Lauren is who you’re looking for.”

“Hey, stop choosing the questions that cause trouble,” Edward said to his friend with a smirk. He glanced over at me and shook his head. His cheeks were a little pink. This was why he didn’t do real interviews often.

“Fine,” he smirked. “When’s your next video game coming out?”

The time flew by. When we got to the end of the stream, they brought up the donations page again to read the final number before they ended it.

“Alright. Drum roll, please,” Eddie said in his big voice. Our boyfriend and Tyler both drummed on the table at the same time. It made all the dishes and silverware rattle loudly.

“One hundred twenty thousand, four hundred and five dollars!” Seth cheered.

Edward’s hand went up to his mouth in surprise. Laughing, he grinned behind his fist. He glanced at us. “Yo! That is so incredible!” He looked back at the camera. “Thank you so much for every single person who donated. Your generosity is overwhelming and unexpected. I am so proud of my people out there watching right now. You are all bloody legends,” his accent was getting thicker as he became more emotional. “Alright, that’s about it from us. If you’d like to donate directly to the LA food bank, I’m going to link that down below. Don’t forget to subscribe to all the new channels so you can keep up to date with everything that’s going on. You can also follow all of us on social media. Thank you once again. And if you enjoyed this and want to see more content like this, please like this video! Buh-bye.”

