

Episode One-hundred-fifty-seven:

We spent the rest of the day quietly working on our computers. Jasper brought his laptop into bed with him to relax with me when I didn't feel like going into the office. Every once in awhile, he would bring me a glass of wine and a snack of some sort. Then he would kiss my temple and whisper that he loved me.

He ran to the grocery store alone, picking up bread and a cake for dinner. When he returned, he presented me with a large succulent plant in a decorative planter. It had multiple kinds in different styles and colors. I placed it in the middle of the table outside to get some sunshine.

Loving it, I thanked him for it profusely. I had never gotten one as a gift before. He told me he wanted to give me something that grew and lasted longer than flowers. It almost made me cry again. It helped to convince me I was having some kind of argument with my hormones. I put myself in time out, taking a long bath by myself with a facemask and a joint.

By the time Edward arrived home, Jasper had done all the work with the lasagna, garlic bread, and salad. It was sitting out on the table, cooling with foil on top because it was best when it rested for at least thirty minutes. Steam was still rolling off of it, just coming out of the oven. He timed it really well.

I was outside by the pool, smoking another while working on the computer when he came in. I couldn't hear what they were saying, but they embraced and whispered in each other's ears. Tenderly, they kissed before Edward's eyes darted over in my direction. I smiled and curled my fingers at him. He returned it, coming outside after throwing off his blazer. Wordlessly, I offered the smoke to him.

Edward was tired of doing voice-work every day, and his throat was sore as a result. Acting would be a welcome break, but I think he would have rather come with us to New York. It wouldn't be too long before he needed another real vacation.

They were both obviously worried about me, though they wouldn't say anything about it. We had a quiet dinner, and afterward, they played games together while I continued to work on the pictures. I wasn't really in the mood for talking or playing. I was almost done with my work by the end of the day.

Once again, I was in the middle, but for a different reason.

We woke up with our boyfriend because we had to go shopping for Jasper right afterward. We were getting an early start because we didn't know how long it was going to take. It wasn't something he was looking forward to and kept putting it off.

I took his arm as we walked into the mall. He almost looked uncomfortable in it. Nice clothes and shopping was Edward's thing, not his. But I would help him. I wanted him to look good for the occasion.

"So, we should get you a style that's versatile and maybe a few shirts and ties to mix it up. We'll be going to a lot of things like this, so it'll be good to have them on hand. Maybe you should get a couple of suits," I mused as I looked at the racks after we walked into some store I had never heard of before. It was nicer, everything wooden with shelves built into the walls. It was supposed to give off the male professor's feel, but it was trying too hard.

"I don't want to spend too much right now, though," he complained, weakly pushing some white shirts to the side.

"Put it on the company credit card. This is a work thing. It makes sense for you to put it on there," I argued.

Smirking, he shook his head as he moved to the other side of me. "Did Tony tell you to say that?" He shoved through a couple of pairs of trousers without looking at them.

It did sound like something he would say, but in this case, he was right. I finally accepted it. Sometimes, to make money, you had to spend it, and that included your appearance. "No, it just- This is not something you'd purchase otherwise. And we have to maintain an image now as part of our job. We need to look good for Edward."

He hummed as he looked away, then huffed. "Fine. Okay." He forced a smile, but I could tell how much it annoyed him. "I don't know what looks good, though."

Reaching for his hand, I squeezed it. "That's why you have me." I pecked his cheek softly. "You're so handsome, everything looks phenomenal on you. It'll be easy."

His lips twitched at my compliment as his skin heated a little. He glanced at his shoes for a moment before leaning over. "You always make me want to kiss you when I can't," he whispered in my ear. I pointed at my cheeks. He quickly pressed one to each. "It's not what I really want." His tone was deliciously husky.

"Me either, but it'll have to do."

He pouted playfully, taking a couple of steps away from me before holding up his hands. "Where should we start?"

Biting my lip, I tapped my fingers on my chin as I glanced around at my options. It wasn't as much as I liked. "You should get a black one and a colored suit. Maybe blue. It would bring out your eyes," I mused.

"As long as you think I look nice, that's all that matters. You're the only one I'm trying to impress."

"You always do. I think you're one of the hottest men I've ever seen," I breathed, pulling out a burgundy ensemble with black lapels and held it up to his chest. "You are beautiful beyond words. Both of my men are. I'm so lucky."

"Thank you," he sighed. His cheeks were pink as he took the jacket from me to try on. I handed him another in black. I wasn't sure it was the right size, so I got two different ones. "And what are you wearing tomorrow?"

"Silver, long-sleeved, floor-length, long slit up the side," I explained, looking at the shirts. They had turtlenecks in several colors. I retrieved the black in two sizes. "This will go with anything."

Finally, he searched too. He pulled out a silver button-down. I smiled to myself as I walked to the table in the center with the ties. I drew a black one from the strand and brought it to him. He lifted the shirt to his chest, and I held the tie to his neck.

His eyes looked me over hotly. "I'd like to see this on you... and nothing else. Maybe this is what you can wear when you play for me. With just one button," he breathed as he pressed on my stomach gently with his finger. It slid down to my belly button. "The tie, hanging low... Lacy bra and panties," he whispered so only I could hear him.

"Hey, excuse me," a young man came up, making me jump. He had an enormous smile. He was maybe in his early twenties and handsome. Well dressed, he had a name tag on. I expected him to ask if we needed some help, which we did. "Are you Bella?"

"Yes," I drawled, glancing at Jasper. He wasn't what I was expecting when it came to my fan base, though it was ridiculous to think I had one. I had a channel for less than a week. He probably liked Edward's work.

Studying me slowly, he smirked as he did so. "You're prettier in person than you are on YouTube."

Awkwardly, I laughed. "Um, thanks." I didn't know what else to say.

"So, uh, is it your day off?" He questioned, taking a step closer. He peeked around. "I don't see any cameras. Filming anything? Eddie around?"

My boyfriend's eyes narrowed, his mouth scrunched up in disgust. "No, just us, trying to shop like normal people. Do you work here?"

"Oh yeah," he chuckled. "I'm sorry. Do you need a room?"

"Yes, please," he grunted as he forced the clothing towards him. Then he turned his attention to me with an uncomfortable grin. "Dove, why don't you keep picking out whatever you like? I don't care what I wear. You've got wonderful taste."

He just wanted to distract the idiot who was flirting with me. Jasper didn't enjoy watching someone talking to his woman in such a way. I understood the feeling.

The boy went to the dressing room, opening it with a key. I followed behind slowly, picking up things as I went. He took them from me, arranging them on the bench inside the room. There were already several items on the hooks.

"He needs to be sized for pants, please," I declared, trying to get down to business. The faster we got done, the sooner we could go have a quiet lunch. "Jasper, what shoe size are you?"

"Uhhhh... I don't know in American."

I laughed. "And, that too. We should get you a couple of pairs."

"Uh, do I really need that many?" He complained. "One good pair of shiny ones will do."

"Do you really want to go shopping again in a month or two for the same thing or-"

He poked his head out of the dressing room. I could tell by his expression I already had him. He didn't like that I was right. "Ugh, fine."

I continued to shop while the young salesman worked on getting his measurements. When he called them out to me, I pulled out pants and shoes for him to try next, along with complete suits. It was plenty to keep him busy for a little while. Each one was quite the show to put on.

The salesperson came towards me again, taking things from my arms. "So, what are you shopping for?" He put them to the side for the next round.

“A red carpet event with Eddie,” I explained, not feeling comfortable enough to say much more. Turning my back to him, I scanned through the pocket squares.

“Sounds like fun,” he said excitedly, trailing behind me. He was over six feet tall and hunched down to speak to me, coming too close into my personal space when I stopped by the shoes. He leaned over me, his elbow resting above my head on the shelf. “So, what are you doing tonight?”

“Excuse me?” I laughed humorlessly, turning to glare at him. It was a crazy jump I wasn’t expecting. “I am with another person doing something, and you are at your job.” I stared in disbelief. “I am going home to my boyfriend.”

He pointed towards the dressing room. “I know he’s not your man. I saw that video. Aw, come on. You always look like so much fun in them.” When I tried to move away from him, he blocked me. We were less than a foot apart.

Jasper came out, fully dressed in the tight burgundy suit with a black turtleneck. He hadn’t heard what was going on. “What do you think?”

“I think we need to shop somewhere else,” I continued to glower at the young man. He was a fucking predator. It was one thing for them to know me and want to talk to me, but I didn’t like being hit on, especially in such a manner.

He seemed shocked, pushing off of the shelf. Clearly, he didn’t think he had done anything wrong. “Aw, sweetheart, I’m just asking you out.”

My man took a few steps forward, barefoot and only in socks. “You know who her boyfriend is, and yet you still bother her? What fucking chance do you think you have?” He demanded angrily. It was rather surprising, his venom. It was loud enough to get an older gentleman’s attention. “She is literally just a woman trying to buy things. Why on earth would she want to be harassed by you two seconds after meeting her?”

“I’m sorry, is there a problem here?” The other person stepped in.

Jasper jabbed an angry finger in his direction. “This twit is bothering my companion.”

Looking at the manager, he raised his palms up with a slight smirk. “I didn’t know she had a guy,” he attempted to say innocently.

“Yeah. Right. Well, it’s Eddie fucking Cullen,” he hissed. “Now you know.”

“Jasper,” I called his name. “Just get changed, and we’ll go. It’s fine.” I pushed off the wall and away from the gross jerk.

“Go do something else,” the older man barked at the younger, then came to me. I was walking towards the dressing room to wait for him right outside. “I’m so sorry, ma’am.”

I turned on him in my rage. “He cornered me. I’m five feet tall, and that is never acceptable and always threatening. He waited until my partner was getting changed. Maybe you should think about who your employee is.”

“Good grief,” my boyfriend muttered from behind the door. “I can’t leave you alone for a second. There are dickheads everywhere.”

“They’re attracted to little chicks,” I complained. We were leaving the manager sputtering. I continued to glare at him because I would not be meek. “They think we’re easy targets.”

He didn’t even have his shoes on when he came out. “Good thing you’re not.”

“I’m sorry, he’s actually my son and-” My scowl stopped him cold. “I apologize. I will- talk to him.”

“Yes, do that. No wonder he acted like he couldn’t get fired,” Jasper growled before shoving his feet into his sneakers. Taking my arm, he purposefully walked us out of the store and stared at the boy in the opposite corner of the dressing rooms.

We were four shops down before he slowed.

“Are you okay?” I breathed.

Glancing at the ceiling, he shook his head as he put his hand on his back. “You’re asking me? That cunt just-” He grunted. “I hate guys like that. He’s hurt someone before. If not, he will.”

“I agree, but you can’t arrest people for being creepy. Let’s just go somewhere else.”

The next store we went to had two very polite older women who cooed over how handsome Jasper was, like one of their grandsons. They were a lot more pleasant and helpful. Because he didn’t want to chance more shopping, he bought way more than he expected. But I talked him into a lot. Everything looked so good on him, though.

He was quiet on the ride home. I held his hand and kept squeezing it. When we pulled into the garage, he kissed me deeply.

“I want to go back there and rough up that fucker for upsetting my woman, but I can’t.”

“Please don’t. It wouldn’t be worth it.”

“But it would feel so good.” Staring ahead, he chewed on his words. “I want to go in there and punch the shit out of him while screaming in his face, ‘she’s mine,’ and that he can’t touch you without your permission. Tony could have.”

“He wouldn’t have, though.”

“I don’t know about that, especially after that one bastard in New York.”

I put both arms around his neck and pulled him closer so we could kiss again. “It’s kinda hot to think about how both of my men would whoop someone’s ass for messing with me. You’re both so strong.” I pecked his chin. “You’re so good at protecting me,” I added in a seductive voice.

“You’re just trying to distract me,” he mumbled.

Nodding, I kissed him again. “Why don’t we go inside, and you can make that video...”

He chuckled. “Maybe later. I don’t really feel like objectifying you right now.”

“Oh, honey... You’re better than that. I know you wouldn’t be doing that.”

Jasper sighed. “Maybe later,” he repeated. “I’m just not in the mood. I don’t wish to ruin something perfect with my poor attitude.” He paused for a long moment. “Ugh, I need a smoke.”

“Alright, well... let’s go have one, and then do you want to play video games with me?” I asked in a soft tone before pecking his ear. I saw a small smile curl at his lips. “I can’t wait to play more retro stuff with you. It was so much fun. I’m so happy I get to do these things with you.”

“Me too.”

That night, Edward forgot to text that he was on his way home, but I could see why as soon as he came in. He was too excited, bursting through the door.

“HEY! Guess what?!” He said laughingly, first kissing Jasper’s cheek, then coming to me. He scooped me up in his arm.

“What?” I giggled, my legs dangling a foot off the ground.

He twirled me around once before putting me on the counter. “Rob, the director from Hunter’s Moon called me. They’ve been test-screening the movie with audiences, and they love it! And they adore you. So much so, they want to add some end of credit scenes with just us.” He put his palms on the countertop so he could lean down to look into my eyes. “And the song for the film is getting a video, and they want all three of us, me, you, and Sarah, to be in it.”

“What?” I repeated slowly.

“The audience loved our chemistry.” He wiggled his eyebrows. “And they want more of it. So, he wants to add a small mid and end-credit scene. It’ll only take a day to film. They’re also going to shoot the music video the following day. And don’t worry, you will be paid very well for your time.” He brought his hands to my face, leaning down to rub his nose on mine. “My little star. The singer got to watch the movie and asked for you to be in it personally.”

“Are you serious?” He nodded. “Who?”

“Erica.”

Instantly, I knew the name. She was one of the most popular artists of our generation, winning Grammys for every album she’s ever put out. She had a huge following that adored her. I screamed, covering my mouth with my hands as I bounced in place. “NO!”

He laughed loudly. “So, I take it you want to do it? It is in a month or so.”

“Hell yeah, I do! That’s incredible!”

“Sarah has already agreed, too. Jasper,” he called, turning to look at him. He reached his hand out to him. “And I asked if you could be an extra in it, and they said yes. If you want to. I thought it would be enjoyable to do something all together.”

He came to him, taking it. “Sure, it does sound like fun.” He glanced at me, a small smirk on his face. “I’d love to see our dove act.”