



Chapter Thirty-six: On Our Anniversary

Jasper took my hand and led me to my new car, but he stopped at the door and didn't open it. It was a beautiful bright red convertible Jaguar gifted to me by the publishers. They gave it to me when we got back to Dallas for reaching the million sold mark, but it was already almost to a million and a half. Unlike me, he was not afraid to drive it. Justin loved it. It was from one of his lots, though, and he helped Eric pick it out.

He leaned forward and quickly captured my lips in a kiss. As he did, he pulled a tie from his back pocket.

"May I blindfold you?" He whispered in my ear. It was our anniversary, and he was taking control of the night's plans. I grinned wickedly. It was already going better than I hoped.

"I love how polite you are about things you know I like," I smirked a little.

Ducking his head, Jasper's nose went pink. "Well, we're not doing a scene, so I figured it's better to ask before I just whip it out."

I bit my lip to keep from laughing, both at his words and at his accent. Since coming back and spending time around his family, it had come out in full force. “Feel free to ‘whip it out’ anytime you wish, sir,” I replied dryly.

“Stop,” he laughed. I toyed with the lapels of his jacket, yanking him to me for a deep and passionate kiss. Smiling against my lips, he played with my hair. Pushing my curls away from my face, he tugged my head back so that my chin was up. He pecked it lightly, then my mouth, nose, and right between my eyes before putting the fabric over them.

Once inside the car, I held his hand and relaxed as I listened to the playlist he had started for us. It was instrumental and soothing. If he was trying to set a mood, he was doing a great job.

“So, are you going to give me any hints about where we’re going?” I questioned, clutching his palm.

“No,” he chuckled. “It won’t take us long to get there. Don’t worry.”

“Well, I know it’s not a wild party,” I began.

He scoffed. “Good heavens, no. The event we’re attending will be a very private one.”

“Oh... Just for two?”

“Mmhmm,” he hummed, squeezing my thigh.

Biting my lip, I grinned to myself as I tried to figure it out. “Hm. It’ll involve food.”

“Of course. Because it always involves food,” Jasper joked lightly. “You know what? I’ll give you one hint.” He paused for a moment. “There will be cake.”

“Oh! Oh, there will be cake?” I began sarcastically. “What a hint! I’d never guess that—” he smacked my thigh, making me dissolve into giggles.

“You’re so feisty tonight,” he mumbled.

“Should be an enjoyable evening for you,” I playfully wiggled shoulders. He chuckled before reaching over to pluck one of my nipples through my dress. I squeaked in surprise before laughing, my head falling back against the rest. “I already know I’ll have fun.”

“I hope so,” he purred, his hand going to my knee and gripping it through my skirt.

It really wasn't that long to get to our destination. He took my hands and led me from the car up a concrete walkway. I could hear it clicking underneath my heels.

"There's a step," he informed me quietly. As soon as my foot hit it, I knew where we were. I grinned. "What's that look, Isabella?"

"Nothing," I replied as I shook my head. "Just excited for tonight."

"You're such a terrible liar," he teased, opening the front door of our new townhouse. His keys rattled loudly. Anticipation ran through my body. A moment later, I was in his arms and being carried like a princess. I hadn't expected it. He intended to carry me over the threshold and everything.

"Oh, my god! Don't hurt your shoulder!" I cried out automatically as my arms tightened around his neck.

"It's been nearly a year, and I had to lug around double your weight to go back to work," he responded, not even sounding strained. He kicked the door closed, locking it behind us with his hand under my shoulders.

"Be careful," I murmured. "And please don't carry me up the stairs."

"The stairs... where exactly?" He asked in a laughing voice. Shrugging, I smiled as I readjusted my head on his chest.

He walked through the small living room, and I could imagine us moving towards the dining room. He turned away from it, though, going all the way to the back to the sunroom that had a lovely view of the backyard I was planning to fill with plants. I would have a garden and soak up the sunshine while I wrote in comfort. Spring would be amazing.

The room was nice and warm despite it being nearly thirty outside. He carefully put me down to my feet, but he didn't remove my mask. He moved his hands over my shoulders and kissed the back of my ear. "Stay here for just a second."

"Okay," I smirked. "This is fine. As long as you don't leave me alone outside. That's when we have a problem."

He chuckled softly. I heard his footsteps, and suddenly the light trickled in underneath the black tie. My fingers clutched the sides of my dress as I impatiently waited for him. Jasper quickly hurried out of the room, only to return just a moment later. I could hear something like wicker crunching. Then, glass on metal.

Finally, he pulled it off. We were in the sunroom as I had suspected. It was filled with the outdoor furniture I picked out for it with him online months before. We had orders put in for everything and were just waiting for it to arrive before we moved in. There were two black iron chairs around a breakfast table, a chaise lounge with a side table, and a sofa with a coffee table. It matched perfectly and was finished with dark blood-red cushions.

There were also dozens of plants of every kind and size in pots around the room, on the floor and on the tables. Some were large flowering rose bushes, while others were tiny cactus. It smelled like earthy flowers and new furniture. He decorated the window with white fairy lights. In the middle of the coffee table were two dozen red roses and a wicker basket. There were flameless candles, too.

“Aw! It’s perfect.” I laughed with joy, putting my hand over my mouth. “When did you do this?”

“Yesterday and this morning. But I had some help. I wanted to give my favorite author a place to work.” He grinned against my cheek as he held me from behind. “Happy anniversary, darlin, and welcome home.”

“Would you like to know what your gift is?” I asked, reaching down for my purse. I didn’t wait for his answer.

He smiled at my excitement. “Sure.”

I pulled out the simple white envelope from inside. It was thick and heavy. “Here you go.” It was, by far, the most expensive one I had ever given.

Jasper opened it slowly, swallowing as he did. His eyes went over the page. It was the deed. “You paid it off? Bella! I could have put-”

“Shh... Consider this your payment for all the work you put into *The Cop’s Story*,” I whispered before kissing him.

“I can’t believe that’s what you’re calling it.” I gave him a sour look. “Yeah, I know. I can’t come up with anything better, either.”

Giggling, I pushed my face into his chest. “We’re home.”

“Yes, we are. And I arranged movers to come to your place tomorrow to get the rest of your things so you won’t have to lift a finger.” Tanya had been so good about allowing me to keep my stuff at the apartment. I paid my part, though. She didn’t feel at all guilty about it, not that I blamed her.

Swiftly, I wrapped my arms around his neck. He snaked his around my waist and pulled me close. "I hope there is a bed somewhere in this house," I breathed against his throat, pecking up to his ear. I tugged on the lobe gently.

"Yes, there is." He smiled before kissing me lovingly. "And trust me, it is as waterproofed as it can be short of plastic sheeting." I snorted loudly, throwing my head back. "I have plans for tonight."

"I like them already," I giggled as I brought him into a deep kiss.

"Well, I hope you continue to enjoy them," he replied as he walked over to the basket and lifted the bottle of wine. "Come sit down and let me serve you, Goddess."

Every time he called me that, I could still feel my cheeks get warm. I went to the sofa and sat on the edge of the cushions, crossing my ankles underneath me as I watched him pull out our dinner. It was a sushi meal for two with salads.

"This is so nice. Thank you."

He poured us each a glass and sat beside me. "This is just the beginning, I promise." He tapped the crystal to mine. Jasper took a little sip before looking at me with his head slightly tilted to the side. "May I feed you?"

"Mm, yes, please," I grinned as I pointed to one of the rolls. He carefully dipped it in soy sauce before bringing it to my lips. Humming as it went into my mouth, I quickly covered it with my hand as I giggled. "This will get dirty so quickly."

"I'll try not to make a mess."

"That's not the kind of dirty I was talking about," I teased as I popped some pickled ginger into my mouth. Then I picked up a piece of the nigiri I knew he liked. I dipped the top of the fish into the salty black liquid before bringing it to his lips. He took it from my grip, closing his eyes to savor it.

"Not yet," he promised after he finished chewing. "I'll try to be a gentleman for a little while longer."

I bit my lip for a moment before batting my eyelashes. "I hope only for a little while."

"Don't worry. My self-control will only last so long." He leaned forward and lightly kissed my cheek. "What would you like next?"

We ate a good portion of the food before he put the rest away in the fridge. We shared some wine, and he opened a bottle of champagne to go with the gorgeous chocolate cake he had bought for the occasion.

“So, are you ready to open your presents?”

I laughed. “You mean this...” I spread my arms. “Isn’t it?”

“Hardly. I was just eager to sleep in our own bed in our own house,” he replied. “Actually, I’ve got a lot of gifts for you. I went a little overboard, but I was excited to celebrate my sweet darlin.”

With both hands on my cheeks, he pulled me closer. I melted into him totally. “You know, I gotta tell you. This is not what I was expecting.”

“What were you expecting?”

“Dinner out before going back to the hotel for spankings.”

He laughed at my bluntness. “Yeah, that was a consideration.”

“I seriously hope I get spankings,” I said with a bit of a pout. Jasper smirked in return.

“Spankings, huh?” he teasingly asked. I nodded my head vigorously. “Is that all you want?”

“Preferably over your knee,” I continued to flirt, slowly running my hand along his thigh.

Leaning in, he pecked my ear. “I’m trying to be romantic, Isabella.”

“And you’re doing very well,” I praised, making him chuckle. “But you don’t have to be for me,” I promised as my fingers tightened around his shirt.

“Well, I want to be able to tell our children about this moment,” he breathed, pressing another kiss to my temple.

He was rather serious. “Oh, our kids, huh?” I questioned with a soft giggle. “I’m sure our future metaphorical children won’t care about our anniversary or us moving in together,” I teased lightly.

“Probably not,” he agreed before dropping to his knee in front of me. “But they might ask how I proposed to their mother.” He pulled a green velvet box from his pocket. Jasper carefully popped it open. “Isabella Marie Swan, knowing you has been the greatest single honor of my

life. You are my reason for breathing, and if you allow me this, I will spend the rest of my life earning that precious oxygen. I swear, I will worship you every single day, and I will treat you like the Goddess you are. Will you marry me? Please?" He said the last word quickly with a voice thick with emotions.

The ring was huge. It was gold with a square-cut diamond with smaller ones dotting all the way around on the inside of the band. I couldn't say anything, so I just held my hand out so he could put it on and promptly nodded my head.

"Oh, my god," I laughed, looking down at my finger after he did. My eyes got huge as I brought it up to look at it. "Wow. This is stunning."

Jasper was still on his knee in front of me. "Oh, good. Thank Rosalie and Alice. They designed it. It's repurposed from Mamaw's wedding band, but I bought the stone in the middle," he explained. "But if you hate it-

"Shut up," I laughed again and attacked his mouth, wrapping my arms around his neck. He chuckled against my lips, holding me tightly.

"Say that you'll marry me," he spoke against my neck. "Say that you'll be my wife. You haven't said yes yet. I need to hear the words."

"Yes. I'll be your wife. I love you." Placing both of my hands on his cheeks, I pecked at his lips repeatedly. "Isabella Hale. Wow."

He pulled back in surprise. "I thought you'd keep your name. You know, for writing."

"I can publish under any moniker, honey. I definitely want yours, though. I'm too proud to be yours to not want it," I told him as I looked down at my ring. "You're right. It is better than a collar."

"Well... obviously, I wanted everyone to know that you were mine," he quipped softly.

"And they will be able to from a mile away. I hope I don't have to hide this from your mom for too long..."

"We're still eloping," he stated with a smirk.

"And what if I want a big church wedding, huh?" I asked, tilting my head to the side. He just sighed and rolled his eyes. "You don't know, I might have changed my mind! With the big-ass fluffy snow-beast dress and-" My fiancé laughed. "We'll invite five hundred people even though I only know like ten."

“Just give the guest list to my mother, and she’ll have a thousand people she could invite.”

My nose scrunched up automatically in disgust. “Ewww... Can you imagine having to do that in front of a thousand strangers?” I stuck out my tongue. “In a church. In a one hundred pound dress. I’d die there.”

Jasper nodded his head again. “Yeah, it’s actual torture. We’re definitely not, but we can talk about that later. Would you like me to feed you some cake, Goddess?” He asked flirtatiously as he kissed along my jaw.

“No, I still totally want spankings.” He pulled back to look at me again, his eyebrow raised. “You don’t have to tell our imaginary kids that part. Daddy got down on one knee, and then he took mommy over it.”

His mouth moved with amusement as he tried to think of how he wanted to respond. “Down here, or are you ready to move upstairs?” He asked, nodding his head at the door. In answer, I picked up the chocolate cake and champagne before I started heading towards it. He quickly followed behind with the flutes.

We didn’t really sleep at all that night. I was glad someone else was doing all the heavy lifting. I knew not a single box would be unpacked after they arrived. Luckily, he had made the bedroom just as nice as the sunroom. He had his sister and my best friend’s help with that, too.

At ten in the morning, he finally woke me up with coffee and a kiss. “So, the movers will be at your place around one. Do you want to go over there to take a shower?”

“Probably a good idea. I have chocolate in funny places.”

Chuckling, he wiggled his eyebrows at me playfully. There was definitely chocolate on his forehead still. I smudged it away with my thumb.

I had brought no clothing, so I just put on my dress from the night before. He switched into his jeans and t-shirt. We were mismatched, but it didn’t matter. I smiled at him happily.

The sun was blinding bright when we got outside. Groaning, I covered my eyes as I twisted my head away from the light. Jasper was holding my other hand as we walked to the car. When we got to the bottom of the three stairs, he stopped. I turned to look at him in confusion. My fiancé looked... horrified and angry. His cheeks were red hot, his forehead wrinkled. Slowly, I followed his gaze. It took a moment for my new car to come into focus.

“Hello Bella,” was etched into the bright red paint job, over and over again.

