



Episode thirty-nine:

A chubby middle-aged man opened the red door for us while still wearing sleep pants. He waved us in, taking things from Bella's hands. "Hi, sugar. Demetri is still asleep," he drawled in a thick southern accent.

My girlfriend stopped in the foyer, rubbing her fingers through his beard. It was bushy and black. "I love it so much." It made him smile, his eyes disappearing behind his thick glasses.

"After November, it's getting trimmed. Demetri hates it. It's for No-Shave November," he explained. I had no idea what that was. "Cancer research," he added quickly.

"Oh, it will look good when it's all trimmed up. You should keep it thicker."

"Maybe." He shrugged before looking over at her best friend. She had not woken up gracefully. Or at all. "Al, how are you?"

She simply put her milk crate of stuff onto the countertops before turning and leaving the room. She stomped towards a set of stairs, slamming the door behind her. Bella snorted, shaking her head as she walked over to the stove.

Once again, she owned the kitchen. This was a much bigger and nicer space to work in. Riley and I helped in any way we could, but she mostly ordered us to wash things. It took her

hours until she got to a point where she didn't have to babysit the food. It was still stupidly early in the morning, and I had already eaten four doughnuts and drank three mugs of coffee.

"So, do you like video games?" Riley asked conversationally as we watched her beginning to decorate. "She has a vision, it's best just to let her go," he whispered.

I chuckled to myself. "Yeah, love them. What are you thinking?"

"I got a bit of everything. Want to do a fighter, racer, or something like that?"

"I always love a good fighter."

We were deep into our match on the couch, both of us wearing headphones so it wouldn't get too loud and bother all the sleeping people in the house. I kept stealing glances at my girl as she danced around the room, making everything perfect for the day.

Suddenly, someone was touching the top of my head. My hands stopped moving as my body got stiff in surprise. Bella started to giggle. "Why are you petting my boyfriend?"

"What?" The tall skinny man said as he squinted his eyes at me. It was evident that he was blind as a bat. "Fuck. Sorry. Wrong head. Hello."

"Uh, hi," I began to chuckle nervously, looking over at his husband, who was rolling his eyes and shaking his head.

He started to pat him instead. "Good morning, baby."

"Go put your glasses on," Bella shouted at him. He just pouted. "Go get laser surgery then. This is embarrassing." Amused, she shook her head and rolled her eyes at her friend, too.

"I don't have the time to be blind," he snapped.

"That's not how that works. The laser fixes your blindness."

Riley cleared his throat, looking up at him as he continued to get petted. "He's scared of it."

My girlfriend looked confused. "But, you get work done all the time."

"But it's my eyes!" Demetri whined loudly, huffing a little. "Fine. I'll go get ready and put my contacts in. Bells, then I'll do you."

“Got it.” She smirked before saluting him dramatically to be a ham. “Also, that’s what she said.”

He snorted as he disappeared back into his bedroom to get ready. He emerged, looking like Jeffery Star’s twin brother. It wasn’t a bad outfit, just shockingly pink. Bella never sat down in the hour that it took him to get dressed.

He looked around when he came out again, putting his hands on his slender hips. “It looks great!”

“I don’t know. How can you tell?” She quipped meanly.

He made a face before ignoring her. “I left some shampoo and conditioner out I want you to try. I got some free samples. I think I want to do it curly today.”

“Whatever you want to do.” She shrugged, dusting her hands off before heading into the kitchen.

When she did, Alice finally came out and stomped to the couch. She plopped down beside me. I offered her the bag of doughnuts from the table. She gave me a weak smile, settling in to watch television with me. Riley had to work on something in the kitchen, so we had paused our fighting match.

Bella kissed the top of my head before she went to get ready in the same bedroom that Demetri had disappeared into earlier.

About five minutes later, she popped out. “Eddie, can you bring me my bag? It’s by the front door.”

“Yeah, sure,” I instantly agreed, darting off the sofa. I brought it to her, slipping inside to have a private moment with her. Then I realized that she was only in a towel. With no thought, I shut the door and tugged her to me. I kissed her lips, my hands sliding down her body.

I pulled on the thin fabric that was keeping me from seeing her perfect breasts. “I wasn’t expecting to see your tits in the middle of the day, but I’m not mad about it at all.”

“If there weren’t so many people in there, I would be tempted to have a quickie.”

I would have taken it out and bent her over something in a second, regardless of the people outside, but I knew for sure she wouldn’t let me do that. So, I felt her up as much as possible before I was told to behave. I massaged one of her breasts, making her nipple get hard against my palm.

“That would be terrible of us. We can’t, but let me kiss them goodbye before they go away.”

Then I wrapped my arms around her thin waist, bringing her up towards my mouth to cover them with kisses generously. She moaned softly, her head falling back as my fingers gripped her ass cheek. Sadly, she started to pull away. I plucked each of her nipples before she left my grip.

Aroused, Bella blushed. She bit her lip, looking me over. “Don’t worry. You can play with them all day tomorrow if you want to.”

I smiled at her words. “I was planning on it...”

She began to pout a bit. “I wish you could join me so you could come play with me. But I guess I will just have to masturbate in the shower all alone.”

She was so evil. Fuck. My cock begged for attention as she grinned wickedly. I whined a little, smacking her ass as she pranced away.

It took a few minutes to get myself to calm down enough to go back into the living room. When I did, it was my turn to plop down beside Alice. I glanced at her with a smirk.

“I don’t suppose you’ll tell me what you two did in college,” I said sarcastically. I wiggled my eyebrows at her playfully. “Was it dirty?”

Alice raised a brow in my direction. There was a little powdered sugar on her cheeks, and her spiky black hair was everywhere. It was cute. She looked like a teenager on Christmas morning.

“Oh, we fucked. We fucked a lot.”

And then that came out of her mouth.

“Mary Alice!” Demetri snapped at her in surprise. My jaw hit my chest, and I couldn’t say anything.

“What?! It’s true.”

He sighed. “What if she didn’t want him to know that?”

She shook her head, rubbing her hand over her cheek as she did. “It’s not like she’ll keep it from him. Bella won’t lie to him, and she wouldn’t want me to either.”

“You still shouldn’t say it like that,” he mumbled as he went into the kitchen to help his husband with something.

Once again, she looked over at me. “Sorry, I’m kind of blunt. But, yeah, we fucked a lot in college. And high school,” she stated more quietly. “I hope that doesn’t make you uncomfortable. It’s been years.”

“Um, no.” I shook my head quickly. “I’m just surprised.”

“I seriously didn’t mean to out her earlier.” She frowned, picking at her pajamas. “She used to flirt with Aiden like that all the time. I just thought you two were doing a thing, and I was... cranky. And jealous.”

I shook my head again. “As I said, I kind of figured. I didn’t know about the pansexual part, but I didn’t even think of it as an option. I thought bi. She’s made jokes about women’s butts...” I trailed off. She laughed a little. “I decided to let her come out to me. I just figured it was best to let her do it when she was comfortable.”

“That’s good. Yeah, I think that was the right thing to do with her. Bella really isn’t an open book, even if she acts like she is. She is honest to a fault and will always tell you the truth, as gently as possible. She’s just not one to talk.”

“She sometimes does,” I commented.

Alice stared at me hard, considering what she wanted to say to me. She glanced back towards the kitchen for a minute before looking at me again. “So, Eddie, I like you, so I will be honest with you. You seem like a great guy, and I want you to know that I am on your team, as long as you’re on hers. Her happiness is all that is important to me, so I will do whatever I can to ensure that. And if that means helping you, that’s what I’ll do.”

“That’s awesome... Thank you,” I mumbled awkwardly, blushing a little. “I appreciate that.”

She lifted her finger. “I’m not done.”

“Oh. I’m about to be threatened, aren’t I?” I joked. She snorted and nodded.

She lowered her voice even more. “If you hurt her, there is a line of people that will happily cut you and put you into the ground. But they won’t get to you before I do. Bella is my best friend and the love of my life, and even though I’m not hers, I will protect her as much as I can because she’s been abused too much.”

She was serious. "You're in love with her?" I whispered. Alice sighed. "Does she know?" She nodded once more, frowning. "She cares for you, too. I-"

"We dated for a while when we were kids, but we don't work like that. I can't give her what she needs, and she was miserable with me. So, I broke up with her," she explained even though I didn't ask her to.

"What couldn't you give her?" I blurted out in surprise. "I mean, you're lovely and smart. Generous. She loves you, too. She called you the love of her life earlier."

Rubbing the back of her neck, she shook her head. "She was joking, though." She considered my question for a minute. "Bella needs a lot of affection. I don't know if you've noticed. She needs to be touching, hugging, kissing, all the time. And I hate it. I loathe being touched when I don't want to be. Which is most of the time. And the girl loves to fuck," she said bluntly. I laughed. "I don't know if you've noticed," she repeated more sarcastically with her eyes wide as she looked at her lap.

"Yeah," I chuckled, clearing my throat. "She is... affectionate. I wouldn't say it was overly so."

"Oh! No! Not at all," she hurriedly agreed. "And you seem like a loving guy which is what she needs. I'm... not. And I couldn't force myself to be when we were together. I mean, if I were in the mood to fuck, it would be her that I'd want to do it with."

I sighed. "Have you ever considered trying again now that you're older?"

She shook her head. "Honestly, the last three years that we've lived together has probably been my ideal relationship. Separate beds with cuddles only when I want them. Zero expectations of sex while coming home to homecooked food and a clean apartment. And I love it, and she's... It's killing her spirit. I didn't realize how much so until you came into the picture."

I didn't know what to say. Looking down at my hands, I ran my thumb over my knuckles.

"I don't know what has been said, or if I'm telling you information that you don't already know, but Bella is in love with you. She hasn't admitted it to me. But it scares me because I don't know if she has enough in her to rebuild again. She's been broken down so many times."

"I love her," I whispered. "She's not told me, and I haven't told her. She's said it in her sleep, though."

Alice laughed. "She talks so much, doesn't she? If you ever want to know what's on her mind..." she trailed off. Once again, she glanced at me. "But like I said, I'm on your side. Make her happy, and we'll be fine."

“Thank you,” I repeated. “I’m sorry.”

She shrugged, shaking her head. “Don’t be. I’m relieved that my friend is smiling again.”

A moment later, Bella came out of the bedroom. She had changed into a sweater and blue jeans, her curls damp. She smiled at both of us, walking to the couch so that she could lean over it and kiss the top of my head again.

“Demetri,” she sang. “I’m ready for you…”

They set up, and he began to do her hair and makeup while bossing people around for her since she was too quiet to do it properly over the noise. I sat with them, watching with fascination as he started to paint her eyes as an artist would a canvas. He covered her in gold.

“I bought her some pretty gold lipstick, and it looks very nice on her,” I mentioned when he complimented the shade on her.

“I’ve seen! I like your style of gift-giving,” he replied with a sassy little wink.

I smirked. “Carpet bombing style? One of them is hopefully going to be a hit?”

“No, outrageous. Exactly how it should be.” Demetri waved around the lipstick that he was holding practically in my face. “I’m going to do a plum lip. It says more fall.” He turned his attention back to Bella as he took her jaw. He lifted it some, leaning in.

“Something matte.”

“That’s what I was thinking,” he concurred with a nod before looking at me. “You should spoil this fine lady. She’s my best girl, and she deserves top-quality everything.”

“I couldn’t agree with you more.”

His face became serious, and he squared his shoulders. “Good. Because I will fuck you up if you make her cry. I’m her big brother. Got it?”

I kind of laughed, unsurprised at this point by the threats. I put my hands up in acceptance. “Got it. Dr. Zucker gave me the same warning already, pretty much. He may have been a bit more graphic on how, as a doctor, he could get rid of my body if I do anything untoward to his daughter.” I wouldn’t tell her about Alice’s. I felt maybe that one should be between the two of us.

Bella flushed red and began to laugh. “Oh, no. Sorry.”

Her friend quickly turned to look at her. "He met Aiden's parents? How did that go?"

My girl beamed like she was proud of me, looking down at her lap as she did. "Oh, god. They all loved him. Claire fucking flipped. We went to the cemetery, and Esther was there. I couldn't tell her no, so we went back to the house and spent the day there. I don't think it was too bad," she finished, peeking up at me worriedly.

Smiling, I nodded. "It was great. I am still full."

Demetri shook his head. "I love that woman's cooking. She'll feed you until you pop. She reminds me of a less racist version of Riley's Grandma."

Snorting, she closed her eyes. "Yeah, she's definitely not a racist. She'll feed anyone no matter their color, gender, or sexuality. And keep feeding you, and feeding you, and..." she giggled. I chuckled with her.

When he began to paint her lips, she reached over and squeezed my hand for just a minute. Her eyes were still closed.

People started filing in not long after, all of them coming to greet her warmly. They lit up when they saw her, genuinely excited to be with their friend again. Everyone was telling me how wonderful and kind she was as if I didn't know. She was having a great time, constantly laughing as she leaned into my side. Bella got so many hugs.

"This is my boyfriend, Edward," she would introduce me, smiling up at me happily. Her gorgeous mismatched eyes peered into mine adoringly. I thought about Alice's words constantly.

After a while, a stunning couple came in, and everyone got excited. They called their names and embraced them. Alice and Bella popped off the couches to go greet them. I realized as the new woman and her best friend hugged that she had the same face. She was taller, though, because of heels, and blond with a much larger chest. She also wore a faceful of makeup while the other had none. They were both beautiful, but I might have preferred the latter's look. I thought her roommate's freckles were cute.

The man that was standing beside her was bigger than I was. He was probably close to seven feet tall and three-foot across. His arms were thicker than my thighs, and he looked like he could have hefted me around. His smile when he saw my girl was jovial, his face glowing as he picked her up and kissed her many times all over her cheeks.

"Put my sister down." The blond snapped at him. She made a face, and he quickly put Bella back on her feet so that she could give her a hug herself. "I've missed you so much."

She leaned her forehead against hers, taking a deep breath. "Oh, Roe... I've missed you, too."

Pulling away, she looked between my girlfriend and me several times before she high-fived her. I could have died right there of embarrassment. Bella cackled, throwing her head back.

Rolling his eyes, her husband smirked as he shook his head. He glanced over before offering me his hand to shake. "Hey, man. Emmett."

I returned it. "Eddie. Nice to meet you. Bella speaks so warmly of you both."

He gazed at her, pretending to be confused. "Girl." Emmett smacked Bella's shoulder lightly. "Why are you lying to this man?"

Cocking her head to the side, she peered at him as if he was stupid. "Sweetheart, I can't go around telling people you're a dumbass. It would embarrass Roe."

My girl was mean, and I hated myself for loving it and finding it funny. I pinched my lips together hard so as not to laugh loudly.

Alice's sister brought her finger under his chin, holding his gaze. "Everyone already knows he's a dumbass," she purred. It was clear by his expression that she just turned him on. My girlfriend had joked about Alice being kinky, but I don't think she was the only one. She flicked her eyes to Bella. "Now, tell me what to do, so I can help."

Sighing, he looked at me again. Emmett appeared rather lovestruck. His expression was dreamy. "We're being dismissed."

I figured he knew better than I did. I peeked back at the television, where the game was still going on. "We're playing Smash Brothers if you'd like to join us."

Instantly, he got excited. "Hell yeah. Let me get a beer first."

"Could you grab me one, please?" I asked as I sat back down on the couch. Alice was playing against Demetri and kicking his ass.

"Sure!"

A moment later, he returned and sat beside me. He passed me the bottle. "Thanks, mate. Cheers."

“Yeah, no problem.” He grinned. We watched them play for a couple of minutes. “So, you’re the new guy?”

I nodded my head. “I believe so. I think she prefers the term gentleman over ‘boyfriend,’ though,” I chuckled.

“Classy,” he chuckled, too. He looked at me over his drink, taking a long drag. “Well, you seem like a nice enough dude, so I’ll cut right to the chase. Bella has been one of my friends for a decade, and my wife considers her a literal sister. So that makes her my sister. You hurt her, and I will make your death look like a mob hit.”

I began to laugh. I couldn’t help it. He seemed confused. I shook my head, smiling to myself. “Man, you know a girl is worth it when your life gets threatened four times in twenty-four hours. Wow.”

“Four?” Emmett asked in shock. He glanced over at Alice and Demetri. “That’s it?”

This Episode goes with Episode Twenty-nine of Imperfect Pictures!