



## Episode Fifty-four-

Bella pouted in her wheelchair with tears still in her eyes the entire time I tried to pack. It was making it hard to focus, and I just crammed everything into them roughly. I had so many thoughts on my mind, all of them racing. She didn't want me to go, and it clearly bothered her. She would not break up with me when I left. Not if that reaction was any indication. So often, I struggled to reassure myself that her feelings were as deep and as real as I hoped, but that was proof of it.

I couldn't stand the silence anymore, so I made a stupid joke like I always did. "I do hate that we didn't get to play with all the fun new toys."

She didn't look at me, her eyes unseeing as they pointed towards the balcony. Her hand was by her mouth, and she was gnawing at the side of her thumbnail viciously. All of her nails were as short as they could be, and that was because she was stress-chewing them. "Take some of them with you, and we'll play when I come."

"We didn't even take everything out of the box," I mumbled with a sigh, putting a couple of the vibrators into my suitcase.

She scoffed quietly. "Well, someone did go a little nuts and bought a lot of stuff at one time."

I walked behind her and curled my arms around her, leaning down so I could kiss her cheek. It was still so salty. "I'm enthusiastic." She said nothing but continued to chew anxiously. I nudged her hand away. "You'll be missing another nail soon if you don't stop."

Bella turned and pushed her nose into my jaw, closing her eyes as she dragged her fingertips over my chin. Her bottom lip quivered just as a little as her eyelashes fluttered against my skin. Her warm breath flowed over it as she tried to breathe. She was so close to crying again, and it hurt my heart so much. I felt it, too.

"I'm not ready to lose you."

Then it broke. I understood her fear, and I hated I couldn't do anything about it. "You're not losing me, I promise." I knew the words were worthless, but I still had to say them. I had to show her with my actions, and only time would ease her worries.

"But you won't be here. I'm selfish." Her lips moved against my skin. "I want you all to myself."

Smiling briefly, I curled my fingers in her soft hair. "I know the feeling. I liked sharing you with your friends, though." I pecked at her earlobe from behind. "I can't wait until you come to Sydney to meet all of mine. They'll love you. Especially Jasper. Oh, and my sisters, too. And you've already won over all my grandparents."

One of my grandfathers asked about my little slugger in the family chat. Tanya corrected him and said she hadn't punched anyone, but kicked them. They were now calling her Ms. Lee, as in Bruce Lee. I would never, ever, show her these conversations. The girls were just sending kicking gifs back and forth, much to my grandpa's amusement. He was a movie buff and knew most of the references.

Bella pulled back a little to look at me, leaning away in the chair so she could meet my eyes. "I can't believe I'm going to Australia for almost a month. I'm glad I've already got my bill money for the next few months. I'm excited, though."

"I plan on putting you to lots of work while you're there. So, don't worry about money." I would do my best to make sure she was taken care of. If Bella felt like she needed to produce, I would help her with that. I would do whatever she required to feel secure in her romantic or financial life.

She grinned slyly. "We have to get through the December list first. What is it up to now? Thirty, thirty-five?"

“Forty-two,” I replied automatically, thinking about our growing file of projects for the future. It made me eager, and I enjoyed adding to it every day. I never got through things like this and didn’t want to. It was a bad sign if I was running out of ideas.

Bella laughed softly. “There is no way you can do that many in three weeks.”

She was, of course, correct. Even attempting half was overly ambitious. But that was just how I was. “Some of the cooking videos we could film all at once, and then I could make them into different videos. We could probably do three or four at a time. I don’t know, you’re probably right. I’ve got to start planning our videos for Australia, too. I need to make sure I have enough videos made until I get back. Fuck, January is going to be nothing but editing.” At least I would hopefully get to see lots of her face until I had her in my arms again.

Wrinkling her nose, she shook her head. “You love the editing. I can tell.”

“I might, but I could stand to do less of it.” Even if all the work was killing me inside, and I was giving more and more to the guys to do... I didn’t want to think about all the responsibilities I was coming back to in LA. I was already tired. My vacation had been anything but relaxing. “Anyway, what would you like to do tonight?”

Her eyes moved over my face, finally meeting mine. “Make love to me.”

Taking her cheeks in my hands, I kissed her slowly to savor the taste of her mouth. It was delicately sweet, some of our wine from dinner lingering on her lips. “I’m afraid I’ll hurt you,” I admitted when I leaned back.

Bella pulled away, reaching for the bottle of medicine on the table. She rather dramatically swallowed a tablet, holding my gaze as she did. “There. Now you won’t. And it’ll be extra fun for me in about twenty minutes.”

Laughing nervously, I looked away for a moment. That wasn’t how that worked, but I wanted her so badly. I bit my lip, thinking about how I wouldn’t get another chance. The fear was so strong, but I needed her. “You have to tell me the second something hurts. Seriously.”

She smirked. “So, no ball gag then? Darn,” she deadpanned wickedly.

Damn, she was funny.

I came around the chair, quickly scooping her up. “Next time.”

“Take it with you, and you can tie me up in your bed when I come to visit,” she offered as I sat her in the middle of her pile of pillows on the mattress. She wiggled into the blankets.

First, I took off her shoe. I kissed the top of her thigh-high covered leg. I moved up her body slowly, pressing each kiss purposefully. Her ankle, her knee, the inside of her leg as I held her gaze. When I slid it over my shoulder, I pushed up her skirt. Bella was biting her lip, smiling as she watched with flushed cheeks.

“You do not know how tempted I’ve been. I’ve gotten such glorious views while on my knees for you the past couple of days. And then in the shower...”

“Me too,” she pouted, rubbing her toes up and down my back gently with her uninjured foot. Her other leg spread open for me. It was such a splendid invitation.

I pushed her dress over her hips so that her panties were finally exposed to me. They were already a little damp, the heady smell pleasant. I couldn’t wait for another second to kiss the crimson fabric repeatedly. Tracing my nose over her clit through it, I sighed softly.

It was exactly where I wanted to be.

Bella pulled it over her head and threw it to the floor. Her bra purposefully matched her panties. One of her things from Victoria’s Secret she promised me. It looked so luscious against her light olive skin. Her fingers moved through my hair, smiling down at me.

Even with the broken leg, she was the most beguiling woman on the planet. She let me cover her body in kisses, needing to show her how much I wanted her, hungered for her. It wasn’t enough. I could have done it for days.

When I slid inside her, her eyes locked on mine, and we moved together. It made me realize this was what real love-making was. I always thought fucking, sex, and love-making were the same when I was growing up. Nothing more than synonyms. But the difference was undeniable. And we had experienced all three during my trip. And they were all breathtaking.

The emotions I felt when I looked into her eyes were so overwhelming. Her slight smile and beseeching gaze made me feel adored. Bella wanted this, needed it, as much as I did. I wouldn’t be so pathetic to blurt out my feelings in the middle of it, but it was there, swirling in my mind. She deserved more romance than that. She was worthy of fairy tales, and I would give her that.

“You’re so beautiful,” she said breathlessly as we rocked together. She was so close to another orgasm, the slight telltale pulsing beginning. I wanted to experience it again. I was trying my best to make it last as long as I could. Her fingers moved over my cheeks into my hair, gripping it. “God, you’re incredible. You make me feel so unbelievably good.” I drew in a sharp breath as the unexpected stroking of my ego pushed me closer to the edge. I grabbed her hips, struggling to focus and adjust, but it hit the right spot inside her. She tightened as she shrieked. “EDWARD!”

Her eyes rolled back as she came all over me. I felt it on my legs, hot and dripping. Lost to the sensation, I was unable to control myself for a moment longer. I was on the brink for too long.

Flopping beside her, I tried to catch my breath. As best as she could, Bella rested her head on my chest while lying at an angle. She was panting too, coming down slowly with her hand on my stomach. Her fingers curled into the trail of hair below my belly button.

Every fear, every emotion, was worth it to experience that fleeting moment with her.

After a few minutes, she pushed herself with a huff. "Dammit, I have to go to the bathroom. I can't have a UTI and a broken foot. I will throw myself off the Brooklyn Bridge."

"Yeah, fuck that," I chuckled, sitting up to get her. Her awkward look was hilarious. She hated being slimy and naked while being carried to the toilet to take a piss. Of course, I didn't care at all, but she was cute.

Bella fell asleep quickly, exhausted and drugged. She didn't bother to get dressed, only wrapping in a sheet. I watched her for a long time. Her good leg rested on mine, her body twisted oddly so she could touch as much of me as possible.

I took a picture of her because she was so gorgeous. Everything was covered, her leg peeking out at the thigh. The white fabric rested just at her breast and was tucked under one of her arms that were resting on her stomach. The other fell above her head when I moved to get my phone. Her lovely black hair tumbled over the pillows onto her shoulder.

I sent it to Jasper because I was a creep, but I had to show someone how exquisite she was.

"I wanna sleep next to this woman every night for the rest of my life," I stated in the message.

He replied right away. "I can see why. What a fox. Doesn't she look snug in her pillow nest?"

I chuckled at his words as I went to the bathroom. I didn't want to bother her, and I was nowhere near sleep. "What are you doing? What time is it there?"

"5. I just got off of work. It's fucking late there. What are you doing awake?"

I called his mobile. It would be easier to have this conversation that way. "I can't have another nightmare. I don't want the last moments I'm with her to be filled with night terrors."

“That bad?” He said in surprise.

Sighing softly, I rubbed the back of my neck. “Yes. I’ll sleep on the airplane. I can’t-” I didn’t know what I was going to say. Shaking my head, I turned away from my image in the mirror. “I don’t even know if I can get on that damn plane now.”

“It’s not like you have a choice, darling. When do you film?”

“In a few days. Soon.”

My best friend huffed when I didn’t say anything else. “Aren’t you excited about that?” I pouted a little but still didn’t speak. “Oh, come on. I know you are. Please, don’t give up on your hopes and dreams for this woman. I know what this means for your career.”

“I’m not. I’m just... worried and scared,” I admitted. “She almost fell face first on her crutches tonight. The only reason she didn’t was I caught her. And she’s already said no to coming home with me. I need to take care of her,” my voice got higher during the last sentence as I got emotional.

Jasper sighed. “You don’t have to take care of everyone.” It was something he had suggested to me many times.

“Okay, you’re right. But not everybody. Just her. I need to make sure she’s okay. She’s hurting because she protected me. I made the situation worse and-”

“No, that’s not your fault. And it’s only a broken foot,” he interrupted.

There was no way he could understand all my overwhelming feelings on the subject. “No, it’s not my fault, but it’s more than that...” I trailed off and groaned. There was no point. “It doesn’t matter. I’m getting on in a plane in a few hours, one way or the other, and I know she won’t be with me, and I just fucking hate it. When we’re together, the pull is so strong, and when we’re apart, I feel like I’m missing something.”

My best friend sighed again, but it was more lighthearted. “You are so damn dramatic. I hope she’s into that.”

I snorted. “She is.”

“Lucky you. Um, hey, I got to go. Sorry. I’ve got to run some errands. Text me later, darling. Chin up, hm? You’ll be fine, and so will she. I promise.”

“Yeah,” I nodded. “You’re right. Have a good evening.”

When I came back to bed, Bella shifted, so she was lying with her head on my chest again. She was awake, stroking my stomach with her fingertips. Slowly, her palm slid down my nude body to my waiting erection. It was surprising how quickly it reacted to her.

I drew her mouth into a kiss as she massaged me lazily. When she pulled away, she gazed into my eyes. I could barely see them in the very dim light. "I want you."

"I'm yours."

We made love for another couple of hours before I finally exhausted myself and fell asleep for a little while. It wasn't long. Just a nap, but it was better than nothing.

When I brought her into the shower to get cleaned up before we left, Bella had a wicked smile on her face. She didn't play around this time. Leaning in, her breasts brushed against my cock while she kissed my stomach with her hands on my hips. It instantly grew against her warm, wet skin.

When she took me into her mouth, she hummed in pleasure around it. Her fingers dug into my thighs as she bobbed, working me with astounding skill. Her mismatched eyes were hungrily watching my expression. I couldn't move, fixed in her stare.

I was hers, totally and completely. She owned my body, and I wanted to be hers. I would be her slave if she demanded. All Bella had to do was say the words, I would do anything she wanted. And I was lying to myself if I said I wouldn't stay if she asked.