That afternoon when I was alone once more, I worked on the pictures of Lauren and Tyler again. My conversation with Zafrina nagged at me, though. Edward was busy filming, and it seemed like a bad time to whine to him about being so busy making money that he forgets to tell me all the ways that he does. Even if it was annoyingly a big deal. I had made a grand speech on the plane home from Sydney that he didn't have to tell me anything that he didn't want to, and I felt that I had backed myself into a bit of a corner with it as well. I didn't know how to talk to him about it, or if I ever could. And I wasn't going to pout to Jasper either because that felt like a bad idea. I couldn't run to one boyfriend when I was mad at the other.

But still, I wanted someone to talk to. So, I decided to call Alice instead.

"So, my boyfriend made multiple viral Super Bowl commercials, and I didn't know about it," I began right away instead of saying hello.

“What the actual fuck? Really?” I heard clicking in the background. She was by a computer apparently.

“I'm shocked you didn't know,” I mumbled.
Alice scoffed softly. "I only watch the shit you’re in, sweetie,” she answered truthfully. “No offense to him, but I’ve got shit to do."

I sighed a little to myself as I picked at the end of my shorts. I was sitting outside in the sunshine. If anything, I hoped it would brighten my attitude.

“Huh, that’s wild,” she said almost to herself, obviously distracted by searching for the commercials to watch.

"I'm annoyed, and I don't know why."

There was some more clicking and then a slight pause. “Does he inform you if everything he’s working on?” She asked curiously. It was a good question. I thought I knew the answer, but I was wrong.

"As much as he can," I replied quietly. "I don't know. I thought so. But it was around when I was sick, though." I drew my feet underneath me. Just thinking about it made me anxious again.

"Oh, well, that explains that. He was a mess when you were sick. Eddie had more important things on his mind than funny chips ads," Alice stopped then giggled, obviously watching one of them. "Between that and your new fam, he probably just forgot."

I bit my thumbnail nail, absently. “That's a big thing to forget."

"Does he even care about football?" She questioned next rather unexpectedly. I hadn't thought about that at all. But surely he understood how big of a deal the Super Bowl was in America. It had to, at least, be explained to him. He had Google like everyone else.

"Um, no. He’s not really a sports guy. I mean, he did wrestling, and he likes surfing. He enjoys running and weighs. But he's not into teams or anything that I've ever noticed. I guess he would have mentioned it if he were," I mumbled in reply, looking out onto the beautiful landscape. "Being Australian, why the fuck would he even care about American football? It's probably just another day at work. And he records so much shit. He probably has loads of stuff that I don't know about yet."

“Oh, for sure. He didn’t keep it from you on purpose.”

“This compared to Disney? It’s nothing,” I added.

“Exactly!”
“I know that he didn’t do it on purpose. He would never keep something he felt was important from me. I just feel… sorta, dumb? I guess. I don’t know. I don’t even know who I’m mad at. Me or him, but I don’t think I should be pissed at him.”

Alice hummed quietly for a second. “You were blindsided. That’s all. I don’t think it’s anything to start a fight over,” she agreed.

“I don’t either. I just don’t know what my feelings are so that I can discuss them with him rationally.”

“That’s understandable. How did you find out?”

“He’s at work right now. I had a meeting with our manager this morning, Zafrina. Alone, for the first time.”

“Oh, I like her name,” she commented offhandedly.

“Me too,” I replied with a tiny laugh. “You know, it’s probably a good thing that I never made it when I was twenty. I’d be a wreck right now. Seriously, one Buzzfeed article that wouldn’t pass a sixth-grade journalism class and it was all crazy sweet, and I’m already questioning my sanity. Like… what is this reality? Did I go in the wrong timeline or something?” I demanded as my anxiety grew in my chest, burning. It felt like I was going to have heartburn soon.

“What?!” She exclaimed loudly, typing loudly again. “You should have started with that! Shit!” There was only a second of clicking. “There you are! On the front page! And it’s trending, too!” My best friend laughed in amusement. “Demetri is going to be so proud!”

I hadn’t even thought about it. Well, that was a positive at least. “You’re right! I need to show him.”

“I’ll send it to him. Oh, my god! You look incredible, though. Wow. Look at you! Those shoes are crazy,” she told me as she continued to look at the page. “Aw, Bells!”

“Those shoes are well over two thousand a pair. They should be praised. Edward insisted on them on when he saw how much I liked them before I noticed the price,” I laughed a little at the memory. “They’re just so pretty and shiny. I turned right into a teenage girl again.”

“Whoa! Two thousand? Are you fucking serious?”

“Two thousand five hundred, plus, you know, tax,” I clarified.
Alice seemed stunned for a moment. She loved sneakers and had a fun collection of them. The most she had ever spent was around three hundred, and she felt guilty about that. “That’s so much. Are they comfortable?”

“No,” I scoffed. That was absurd, and she should have known the answer. They were high heels. “I’m going to wear them at least two thousand times though, so I’ll probably get used to them.”

She giggled for a moment. “Wear them around the house while you bake. Out to the grocery store,” she joked. “To get the mail.”

“Five dollar t-shirt, twenty dollar jeans, two thousand dollar heels, just so that I can go get a pint of ice cream and some tampons.” She snorted at my words. “Maybe sleep in them.”

“Eh, Eddie has the money,” she teased. “If you had to pay for them, you’d be on the corner wearing them.”

I cackled, leaning my head back against the lounger. “I know that’s right. Try to find me a pole somewhere first. They’d be glued to my fucking feet then.” She barked a loud, shortling laugh. “Get them dollar bills, y’all,” I continued snickering.

“Aw, damn,” she giggled playfully. “I miss you!”

Taking a deep breath, I replied, “me too.”

It was the first time that I really felt lonely in LA. I was all alone in a home that didn’t feel like my own. The main benefit of this anxiety was that I finished the maternity shoot pictures and sent the edited and unedited ones to them to look over. I wrote a short email letting them know if there was anything that they wanted to be done differently, I would be happy to do anything that they liked. I would make their favorites into canvases for them for their party.

It was well after midnight when Edward finally got done shooting for the day. He would have to be back in the morning by seven for another full day of filming. The house felt uncomfortable and too quiet.

I decided to go to bed at around ten, tired of my own brain. I laid with the lights off, but I couldn’t relax or fall asleep without him. He didn’t text that he was on his way home, probably worried he would wake me up. When he got to the house, he quickly undressed and climbed into bed with me so that he could spoon me from behind. He gingerly ran his hand over my shoulder. And then I felt him go rigid behind me.
“What’s wrong?” He asked instantly.

I shook my head and whispered back, “nothing.”

“You’re as stiff as a board, and you’re lying in the dark. Obviously wide awake. Plus, you would have greeted me when I came in if you were in a good mood. So, you’re either upset with me, or things with Zafrina really didn’t go well.” Edward was too smart and observant for his own good.

“I’m not mad at you.”

He kissed the back of my shoulder once. “Okay,” he said slowly. “Then what happened with Zafrina? Did she say something to upset you?”

"I'm displeased with myself. That's all. It's nothing to worry about," I countered, but I could hear the pillow shift as he shook his head. "Seriously, don't worry about it." I just wanted to go to sleep now that he was home.

"No. You're mad at me then. Why?" He pushed. I gave a short laugh and sighed. He was being persistent.

“I told you that I wasn’t.”

Edward shook his head again. “You haven’t kissed me yet,” he pointed out. I rolled over and looked him in the face in the dark. With both of my hands on his cheeks, I gave him a quick kiss on the lips. His eyes moved over my face.

“No. Tell me,” he insisted, unsatisfied.

I looked down at his chest, looking at his tattoo. It was beautiful and fresh, the design still perfect since it was new and everything had healed beautifully. My fingers traced over it, taking a breath as I considered my thoughts.

“I can’t keep up with you,” I admitted in a tiny voice.

“What do you mean?”

"I can't even keep up with what's going on with your career, and I'm supposed to not only be your girlfriend but be your partner on just one tiny aspect of your work. And just that seems like it will be a full-time job once we get going with all these plans that you have. And I have to learn from Zafrina that you went viral over Super Bowl commercials. That's a big fucking deal."
He made a little face in confusion. “Okay, so it was a lot of money, but I don’t see why it’s a big deal? I go viral all the time, love. God, that sounds cocky, but you know what I mean.”

I shook my head. This wasn’t even close to the same thing. “They talk about those things for years. And it didn’t go nuts with your fans. People who never knew your name before are going to go look you up, just to see what else you’ve done. You’re going to get so much more attention now. Millions, maybe even billions, of people now have heard your voice, and they loved it. You’re going to get so much work from it and I just…” I stopped, not knowing how to finish. Panic was building in my chest, my heart thumping too hard.

“What?”

I shook my head once more, looking away. He pressed his lips to my forehead after he sighed heavily. ”I don't know. I don't know why I'm upset.”

“You don’t have to keep up with my stuff. That's not your job,” Edward answered gently. “I'm sorry that I didn’t tell you.”

I pressed my face into his neck for a moment, taking a deep breath. “You don’t have to tell me everything. It just makes me feel like a terrible girlfriend for not keeping up on my own. Especially when you’ve been so wonderful to me with everything that’s been going on with the hospital and my family. But it annoys me that you just couldn’t go, ‘hey, look!’ Just real quick in passing. Like it wasn’t even a conversation, and I don’t know what else I’m missing. And I don’t want to complain either, not when you’re literally killing it out there. What a stupid thing to whine about, because obviously, this isn’t important to you at all.” I closed my eyes as my throat tightened.

“Okay,” he said again, nodding his head. ”It is important. It's just that I do so much other shit. And it was while we were in Sydney, and I didn't want to think about work anymore.” Edward pulled me back so that he could look into my face. “You're not a terrible girlfriend by a long shot.”

I shook my head, swallow back my emotions. “No,” was all I could get out.

“It’s more than just that, isn’t it?”

“I want you all to myself,” I complained into his skin, feeling like I was blubbering like a child. “I was so lonesome today. And as much as I love you, I don’t want to just watch you work all the time. I do realize that you would love that, but I don’t think I can be that still. I like working and being helpful. And I need to be doing something, too. At least, I need to have an excuse as to why I’m not keeping up with you to some degree because I’ve just been sitting on my ass.”
He quickly grabbed my shoulder. “Stop! You haven’t. Bella, we’ve talked about that already. That’s totally fair. Sweetheart, in New Orleans, when we spoke about you moving in, you said you wouldn’t always put your career ahead of mine. I fully expect and respect that.”

“But I’m not even working right now! I’m just mooching off of you and living in your house.” I began to cry.

"Bella!" He spoke my name almost angrily. "You have been working, and besides, shit has been going on-"

I shook my head again quickly. “I can’t keep using that excuse. And what work have I been doing, hm? We’ve barely even filmed anything new-"

“All of your music, all of your pictures. The charity stuff. Meeting today with Zafrina was work. The event was work. Getting prepared for that was work, love. You add new stuff to your store all the time, too. You didn’t charge them, but the photo-shoot was too. What did you do today? Edit? Bella, your life doesn’t come before my career ever. I never expected you to ‘keep up with me’ and I don’t know why you’d want to,” he stated as he brushed my hair behind my ear, soothingly running his fingers over my cheek.

“Because I love you!”

He laid his forehead on mine. “Yeah! I know! That’s why there is a prepacked lunch for me to take to the set that’s enough for two people with a note that you love me taped to the top in the fridge even though you’re annoyed with me right now,” he answered with a little smile. “I didn’t ask you to even try. Please don’t let this upset you.”

“I was trying to ignore it,” I mumbled.

“Yeah, don’t do that either. We can talk about anything. At any time. You could have called me and chewed me out if you wanted.”

I laughed. “I wouldn’t have. You didn’t do anything wrong.”

“Neither did you.” His big hand cupped my cheek. “I’m sorry that you were lonely today.” His thumb moved over my skin lightly as he leaned in to kiss my forehead again. “One of my fears has been that you would hate how much I worked and how often you were by yourself because of it. When Jasper finally agreed to come, that helped relieve it a little. Knowing that he would be here to spend time with you. You could take care of each other. Though, I think you’d be doing most of the nurturing.”

“I shouldn’t need a babysitter, though. I can’t even handle a single day. What is wrong with me?”
“Nothing!” He shook his head. Edward looked away, thinking for a moment. “When was the last time you were completely alone, Bella, for any amount of time?” He asked in curiosity. “More than just a couple of hours. Before this week?”

I had to think about it for a moment. “Washington.”

He shook his head again. “And before then?” He had a point he was trying to walk me to. He really would have been a good therapist.

“I don’t know,” I admitted softly. “New Orleans, I guess.”

“Exactly. Love, you haven’t been alone with your thoughts in months. Washington was emotional, and you had been around tons of people for days, plus you really weren’t alone that long. Christ, think about all that’s happened! New Orleans was the start of this chaos. You were starting to get sick, but you were high on your anti-anxiety medication still. I didn’t realize until much later.”

I snorted quietly. “Yeah.”

“You hate being alone as much as I do. Admit it.” I shrugged then nodded. “We’re the unhappiest when we’re left with our own thoughts for too long. So, no, you don’t need a babysitter. You need a distraction, or the melancholy will set it. Just like me. That’s why you need Alice and a million tasks to keep you busy.”

“Jasper is more than a distraction,” I breathed.

Edward nodded in agreement. “Yes, he is. He’s much more, but he can be a million wonderful things at once. And so can you and so can I. It’s not a bad thing.”

“I suppose so.”

“We just want your happiness, just like we know you want ours. It’s okay. It’s not a bad thing,” he repeated.

I pressed my face to his chest, breathing in his scent deeply. It was delicious. His hand went to the back of my head, rubbing it gently. “Do you want to distract me right now?”

“Are you trying to use sex to end this conversation?” Edward smirked knowingly when he pulled back to look at me.

“Yes.”
“Oh, okay. Just checking.” He nodded gravely before rolling me over onto my back, straddling my waist. I giggled, smiling with a sigh as his hands roamed across my stomach, over my ribs and over my arms that were stretched over my head. “Next time, call me. Or text me. If you’re upset or lonesome, or whatever. Let me distract you because I want to.”

And then Edward did, for probably far longer than he should have.