

(companion [My Whole Existence is Flawed](#)) - Romance/Drama/Smut - They had an agreement. Everyone wins, no one gets hurt. Right?

Title: **You Get Me Closer To God**

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Chapter 1: Prologue

You Get Me Closer to God

Ok so this is my first Twilight story, and is *definitely* the first story I've ever written like this so bear with me. I've had this song in my head all day and it inspired me. Don't be afraid to tell me if it's shit, because what's the point of doing this if I don't learn something, right? Right. I'm rambling because I'm nervous, so I'll stop now. Here we go.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

Prologue

Bella

My back would have scratches from the up-and-down friction against the wall. But hell if I cared.

Nine Inch Nails oozed through the speakers and I felt the vibrations that carried up his body, adding to the intensity of this.

This- his fingers, tightly locked into mine, pulling me up and stretching me out. My mouth hung agape as his moved in a constant loop from my neck to my nipples. Our harsh breathing complimented the beat. My legs gripped like a vice around his waist.

"Fuck, Bella." I slipped down the wall slightly as his knees buckled with pleasure.

"Edward," I momentarily found my voice, "sit down." Nothing else was said as he pulled my arms around his neck and carefully sat on the floor, my body perched on top of his. We never stopped moving.

I took advantage of my position, reclaiming his fingers and forcing my open lips onto his. There were no words for this, the savage sensation as his tongue battled with mine, as my hips rocked back and forth, up and down. We spoke only in groans and slurred versions of our names.

“I wanna fuck you like an animal”

He rolled us over, mouths never disconnecting. Letting go of my hand, he threw my left leg over his shoulder before pushing back into me. The loud moan that emerged from my throat was almost embarrassing. But again, hell if I cared. We’d been through too much to be embarrassed at this point. Plus, he fucking loved it. His tongue became more forceful against mine as he reciprocated with a grunt of his own. I pushed on his shoulder, rolling us over once again.

“I wanna feel you from the inside”

I scratched my fingernails across his nipples and yanked my mouth away from his, focusing instead on the sensitive spot behind his right ear. He rewarded me with a reverent groan, murmuring my name as if I held him to the earth.

“I wanna fuck you like an animal”

In the three months that we’d been sporadically fucking, it’d never been this forceful. His fingers pulled my mouth back to his before tightly gripping my waist, assisting me in my movements. I hadn’t actual screwed anyone else, but I could not imagine it being better than this.

I moaned again as he sucked violently on my bottom lip, occasionally using his teeth. The pleasure and pain of it all was nearly unbearable.

“My whole existence is flawed”

His eyes, lit up with agonizing passion, burned into mine as his hips became rougher. I sped up, and down, up and down on his length and he lifted off the floor to meet me with each thrust. Our breaths lost all rhythm and melted into moans. Our hands groped blindly, grabbing everything we could reach. Our lips met over and over again.

That familiar and intensified explosion spread through me from forehead to toe and I slammed onto him one last time with all of my weight.

“You get me closer to God”

My eyes tried to roll back in my head but I forced them to stay on his face. In my seventeen years I had never seen anything sexier than this man during orgasm. Because when we fucked, he wasn’t my sort of friend from high school, and he wasn’t my biology lab partner, or my brother Emmett’s drinking buddy. He was a man, and he brought me to heights that I could not understand.

I collapsed, my head falling limply onto his sweaty chest. Placing a chaste kiss on his nipple, I rolled off of him onto the gold carpet of his bedroom. The only noises in the room were the fading notes of the song and our shaky breathing.

After a long while I broke the silence. “God I know I need to go home, but I can barely feel my legs.”

He chuckled in arrogant amusement. I smirked back at him, knowing he was as tired as I was after that particularly agreeable session. His grin fell slightly and he reached towards me. He brushed his fingertips gently across my lip, sending a shiver through my fatigued body. When he pulled back, his finger was painted red. I was bleeding?

“I’d say I’m sorry, but I’m not.”

I smiled at him, relieved he didn’t try to get sappy on me. “And I should feel sorry that you’re not sorry, but I don’t.”

I sat up with a groan and redressed. He didn’t move from his spot on the floor.

“Shit.” My back cramped when I grabbed my backpack. He sat up quickly and sent me a concerned look. I cleared the pain off of my face and grinned. “Totally worth it, Edward, Jesus Christ.”

He got off the floor, only to collapse on his bed with a crooked smile. “Jesus Christ is right.”

I zipped up my jacket and headed for the exit.

“See you in biology, Eddie,” I teased. He hated that name.

“Right back at you, Jellybean.” Damn it, well played.

I shut the door behind me, making sure it was locked, and stepped back into the world where Edward and I barely interacted.

I skipped all the way to my car.

TBC. Reviews are always appreciated :)

Chapter 2: Closer

AN: Ok, I'm trying to get the chapters out as quickly as possible. Don't expect them this quickly all the time, but I do what I can :). Hopefully this sheds some more light on the situation.

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“Closer”

Bella

I left Emmett at the car, and met up with Alice outside of homeroom. We started our daily routine. She scoffed at my outfit, and I flipped her off. There was nothing wrong with my wardrobe. Jeans and converses never went out of style, and hoodies were just practical. It's cold in Washington.

“I'm serious Bella, you'd be amazed at the response you'd get if you wore that sweater I bought you. A little cleavage makes all the difference.”

“Don't talk about my cleavage, and I won't talk about your ridiculously huge crush on Jasper Whitlock that for some reason you won't act upon.” Her face reddened slightly and she glared at me.

“Fine,” she relented, “just don't come crying to me when you're thirty and still a virgin.”

I heard a loud cough from behind me.

He smiled. That asshole.

“You still sick, Edward?” Alice asked, genuine concern on her face. I adored this girl. She worried so much about the people she loved, even if she wouldn't let up about my clothes. “You left school so quickly and then you were locked in your room all night.”

He fought to keep the smirk off his face, and mussed up his twin sister's hair. “I was really tired yesterday, but I'm almost better, thanks.” He glanced at me, “Hey Bella, how are you this morning?”

“Alright. Ready for some compound microscopy?” I airily responded. We were good at this nonchalant thing.

“Oh, definitely.” Key the eye roll. Flawless.

“Jesus, Bella, what happened to your lip?”

I had a decent sized scab on the side of my bottom lip from Edward's aggressive mouth. I should have expected Alice to notice. The girl saw everything. Of course Emmett didn't notice, but he's usually too focused on his blonde bimbo girlfriend to see much else. In a way I owe Rosalie for the distraction. I don't think Emmett would be too happy to know the other places Edward marked me yesterday...

But I couldn't think about that now if I expected to get through the day. I ran my tongue over my lip as if I were noticing it for the first time.

"Ah, right," I forced a look of comprehension onto my face, "I ran into a wall last night. Too eager for dinner I guess." Alice and Edward both laughed, and Alice shook her head.

"Figures."

"I hope that was some good dinner, Bella, your lip is banged up pretty badly," Edward smiled at me. He reeked innocence. I wanted to smack him.

Instead I just answered, "Eh, I've had better." His eyes darkened slightly, but he didn't get a chance to respond before Alice and I turned into our first class.

History was always boring. The professor was no younger than fifty and showed as much interest in the subject as the students did. I usually spaced out or fell asleep. I ran my tongue slowly over my scabbed lip again and smiled thinking about how it got there.

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Edward and I had met six months ago when Emmett and I moved up from Phoenix to live with our father. I shared a few classes with Alice in the morning, and we hit it off instantly. So she invited us to sit with her friends at lunch. She shared a table with two girls, Jessica and Angela, and two boys, Eric and Ben. She mentioned that her twin sat with her too, but nothing prepared me for the first time I saw him.

The second I laid eyes on his flawless face, all of my blood rushed between my legs. I had never felt such an immediate attraction to anyone in my life. He had sharp green eyes, porcelain skin, and bonafide sex hair. I remember he wore a tight black t-shirt and fitted jeans, showing off his lanky frame. I'm really surprised I didn't drool.

After I gaped at him for what felt like minutes, but was actually just a few seconds, something miraculous happened. I extended my hand and introduced myself without stuttering or blushing.

"Bella Swan, new kid from Phoenix, friend of Alice."

He raised an eyebrow at me. "Edward Cullen, always lived in Forks, brother of Alice."

The heat I felt upon our handshake was incredible. Pure sexual chemistry, an electric spark flew through my hand. His wide, beautiful eyes showed me that he felt it too. I might have jumped

him right there, Alice and her friends be damned, had Emmett not sat down loudly beside me, effectively killing the moment. Emmett and Edward talked about sports and music, and I listened to Alice ramble on about Port Angeles for the rest of the lunch period.

We didn't speak again until biology. He sat quietly beside the only empty seat, reading a book. A small smile graced his face when he noticed the addition to his lab table.

"So, Bella Swan, new kid from Phoenix, friend of Alice," his eyes sparkled. I didn't know eyes actually did that, "three questions for you."

I managed to control my ogling enough to notice that he was eyeing me up as well, "alright Edward Cullen, always lived in Forks, brother of Alice."

He smirked, "Favorite type of sushi, last movie you rented, and song currently stuck in your head."

I leaned onto my arm, and started to answer his odd string of questions when the teacher started the lesson.

"Unagi roll, On The Waterfront, and Closer," I whispered to him as Mr. Banner read the syllabus aloud. My mouth found itself no more than six inches from his ear, and I had trouble sitting back to a more appropriate distance.

He didn't move for a few seconds, letting out a shaky breath once I was back in my seat, and then ripped out a blank piece of paper from his notebook.

Eel is delicious, good choice.

Marlon Brando, another good choice.

Closer?

He hastily shoved it in front of me, and I responded.

Nine Inch Nails. You've never heard it?

A faint blush appeared on his cheeks as understanding gripped him. He didn't write anything back, and I worried for a minute that I'd scared him off. That was until he leaned so close that I could smell him and sang quietly in my ear, "I wanna fuck you like an animal."

I almost came right there in biology lab.

That beautiful, irritating smirk was on his face when I dared to look at him again.

"That the song?" he mouthed. I just nodded. I didn't trust myself to speak yet.

When class ended, we both left with smiles on our faces.

The next day passed in a similar fashion.

I sat down next to Edward without a trace of grace and turned to him, “Favorite drink, first CD you ever bought, and last book you read.”

He smiled at my game, “Root beer, or if you mean alcoholic then Bacardi Razz, The Moody Blues’ Days of Future Past, and,” he lifted the book beside him, “1984”.

“Moody Blues?” I teased, “kind of a strange album for a kid.”

He shrugged, “my dad loved them, and he used to sing ‘Nights in White Satin’ to get me to sleep.” He smile fell and he reddened as he realized what he’d said. And not the faint, endearing tint from yesterday, but a full, bright red blush that extended from his cheeks to his jaw line.

I chuckled at his embarrassment, “That’s really sweet, Edward.” He laughed breathlessly and looked at me.

And just like that we were back in another moment. Neither of us seemed to be in any hurry to break it. His expressive eyes appraised my face, darkening as he scanned my eyes, my lips. I greedily returned the favor, drinking him in. Banner started the lesson before anything else could happen, and we shook ourselves out of it.

I figured since Edward and Emmett were becoming fast friends, and Alice and I got on so well, I wouldn’t have to worry about being alone with Edward. Brothers and sisters were kind of mood killers. I managed to avoid him outside of school for over two months. We spoke very little outside of biology. I took other precautions as well, making sure I was always with either Emmett or Alice when I would see him.

He seemed to do the same, since he tended to be out of the house when I hung out with Alice. We both knew that we had something between us, and the sexual tension in biology was often too thick to bear. But neither of us was looking for something like that.

One day in late November I was reading *Jane Eyre* again in my living room when there was a knock on the door. I was only in a wife beater and some shorts, but I assumed Emmett had simply lost his key so I didn’t cover up. I set my book down, and opened the door to see Edward. His eyes widened as he took in my appearance and I really regretted not throwing on the sweatshirt that rested useless on the couch.

“Uh, hi. Um, Bella,” I’d never heard him stutter before, “is Emmett here? I wanted to see if he wanted to hang out... or, um, something.”

My voice came out deeper than I intended, “Sorry Edward, he left school with Rosalie Hale, I’m not sure when he’ll be back.”

“Oh,” he whispered. His hands were clenched into fists at his sides. His cheeks were flushed, but not with embarrassment. Any hope I had at all of shutting the door was gone when I looked into his eyes. They were positively burning with longing. Longing and hunger. For me.

I don’t know which of us gave in first, but a moment later, Edward stepped in the door and shut it behind him as I grabbed his shirt and pulled him to me. Our lips crashed together, and I thought I was going to faint. There were no hesitant, soft kisses to test the waters. Only fire, and tongues, and hands, and electricity. I fisted his hair and stumbled backwards with him to the couch.

Up until that point I had only kissed a boy. But with Edward’s lean body pressing me into my couch, there was no way I was settling for kisses. I unbuttoned his jeans as he groped me through my thin tank top. We kept shirts on in case we needed to redress quickly. I have no idea how we managed that small moment of clarity in our long moment of passion.

We both let out a loud groan when my fingers made contact with him. I had heard so many stories of awkward girls clumsily exploring new territory as they gave their first hand job, but that’s not how it was for us. I went on pure instinct, and he certainly seemed to enjoy it. Using the bead of moisture at the end as lubricant, I slowly worked my fist from base to tip. He quickly pulled down my shorts to my knees and ran a long finger along my drenched folds.

I had done that to myself before, but it was nothing compared to this. His dexterous fingers played me like a master and rapidly brought me to a new precipice. My hand increased its speed as my heart rated skyrocketed. We stared into each other’s eyes as we teetered on the edge, before plummeting together. A look of pure ecstasy crossed his angular features, and the sight only increased my pleasure.

We held eye contact for several seconds as we panted, closely entwined on my couch. I pulled my shorts up as he buttoned up his pants.

And then we were both laughing. He kissed me again, smiling against my lips, and then sat up on the couch.

“I think its safe to say that’s been building for a while,” I giggled.

He smiled widely at me, “that’s for damn sure. That very first day you nearly killed me. ‘Closer’? Really Bella?” I just laughed.

We were still chuckling when he left. I think we both assumed it was out of our systems and things could go back to the way they were supposed to be.

That was until the next time we found ourselves alone. And the next. And then we were making excuses to be together. And before I knew it, Edward and I were sleeping together at least three times a week.

No one knew about our after school activities, and we kept it that way. We weren't in a relationship. We didn't see each other in a romantic light, and we knew the others wouldn't understand that. They barely knew we were friends.

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It was a wonderful system really. Edward just laughed when I got drunk and made out with Mike Newton at a party in December. And I was proud of my friend when he got a blowjob from Lauren Mallory in the janitor's closet on the first day back from winter break. We actually had the best sex we'd ever had the next afternoon. Well, until last night I guess...

The bell rang, shaking me out of my Edward reverie. Shit. Now I was horny and it was only second period.

I walked down the hallway with an uncomfortable ache in my pants. It didn't get any better when I saw Edward walking towards me with that arrogant smile on his face.

He was humming something. "Hello again, Jellybean. May I say your lip looks lovely today." He continued humming whatever song was in his head.

"I'd be mad at you if I wasn't so satisfied right now." Well that was a lie. Not after an entire class thinking about him.

He continued to hum, never singing a word aloud until we got to my classroom. He leaned closer, but only a little, and sang, "you let me penetrate you, you let me complicate you..."

I glared at him, and I knew he could see the lust in my eyes when I said, "you're an asshole, Edward Cullen."

He laughed loudly, and walked down the hall.

Just six hours left. Just six hours left.

Reviews really make my day :)

Chapter 3: Enjoy

AN: I really appreciate the response. You guys are awesome. Now onto the chapter. Wagons ho! (did anyone else read *Amber Brown* when they were a kid?)

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight

"Enjoy"

Bella

By last period, I was dying.

Edward had made sure to mention that song, or my lip as often as possible in biology. He even asked me how my back was, offering to “alleviate my tension” if he could. I would have rolled my eyes at his formal speech were I not so turned on.

When I wasn’t squirming in my seat I was loudly humming another one of our “chansons pour baiser”. It only shut him up for a second, but the peace was welcome.

Five minutes were left in Spanish when my phone buzzed.

If you’re not naked in my room within thirty minutes, there will be hell to pay.

-E

Thank god he gave in first. I loved having the upper hand.

Twice in two days, Eddie? A little greedy, you think?

I smiled to myself. My phone buzzed again, not thirty seconds later.

I can seek help elsewhere if you’d like, Jellybean.

No way. He was not getting off without me. Not after teasing me the entire day, and especially after using that nickname. A few months ago he learned that Emmett called me his “Jelly Belly” when he wanted to annoy me. Apparently he found it hilarious, and I’d been Jellybean ever since.

Don’t you fucking dare. Meet me at the corner in five minutes.

The corner was our sexual sanctuary. We loved tempting each other when possible during the day. I mean, the flirting was nearly as fun as the fucking. So it wasn’t unusual for one of us to need a session immediately after school. But with Alice and Emmett constantly around I couldn’t just hop in the car with him in the parking lot.

Things got much easier when he found the tiny street corner a block from the school. Completely shielded by trees and two hundred yards from the nearest house, Edward could pick me up and speed home without any witnesses. It might seem a little excessive, but again, we loved the game.

The bell rang and I walked out of the room as quickly as I could without breaking into a sprint. Normally I'd be concerned about rapidly weaving through the halls. Coordination wasn't my strong point. But I'd learned that sexual frustration was an excellent cure for the stumbles.

He was already parked when I got there, passenger door slightly ajar anticipating a speedy getaway. I slid into the seat and shut the door. His lips were on mine before I could even buckle my seatbelt. Were we even going to leave the corner? It'd happened before.

"Took you long enough," he grunted when he pulled away. "It's cold today, we're going to my house."

Edward was a good driver, though I hated admitting it. The thought of him behind the wheel initially scared the shit out of me. He was reckless, and drove way too fast, but he never lost control. I'd only even seen him swerve once, and that was my fault. Poor kid was too afraid to try road head again after that.

I focused my excitement to his right thigh, alternating light caresses with firm squeezes, and earning some frustrated groans. Alice had ballet after school so there were no obstacles to avoid. He pulled me from the car by the hand and yanked me into the house, up the stairs, and into his room.

I sat squirming on the bed as he scrolled through his CDs, finally settling on Bjork, and turning to me with a smirk on his face.

"You were not very nice today, Jellybean."

I scoffed, "I wasn't nice? I have the reminder of our last escape on my face, something that you felt the need to point out frequently, Edward."

"But humming 'Enjoy' in biology when I couldn't do anything about it?" His eyes narrowed with irritation. "You're an awful tease."

The banter was nice, but I was too aroused for this. "I can't be a tease if I have every intention of following through."

His lips curved into that devastating grin and we both shed our shirts before our mouths met. I yanked him on top of me on the bed, letting go of his face only to reach for his belt. He'd gotten the button of my jeans undone when we heard a very unwelcome sound.

"Edward?" The door muffled Alice's high voice, and we instantly stopped kissing. He took a few ragged breaths before responding.

"Yeah Alice, what's up?" His palms ran over my torso with intention and I bit back a moan.

"Why are you locked in your room listening to Bjork?"

“Why aren’t you at dance?” He was much more coherent than I would be right now.

“It was cancelled,” she responded, “now answer my question.” As much as I loved Alice and her no bullshit mentality, it was not appreciated right now.

He leaned his forehead against mine and sighed. “Do I need a reason to be alone?”

Alice’s laugh echoed in the hallway, “No, but stop it, I need you to come help with Mom’s present.”

Edward started to protest but Alice was quicker, “and no buts! Get your ass downstairs.”

Her footsteps got quieter as she moved down the hall and Edward let out an anguished groan. I didn’t blame him. We just got cock-blocked by his sister, and she didn’t even realize it.

“Stay here,” he got off of me and pulled his shirt over his head. He hissed when his fingers made contact with his obvious erection. Looking around quickly, he grabbed a baggy sweatshirt that fell below his waist. “I’ll be back as soon as I can.”

The door quietly closed behind him and I let out a loud moan into his pillow. I had no idea how long he would be gone and I couldn’t leave with Alice in the living room. My backpack was in his car, left behind in our eagerness, so I put on my shirt and walked over to his bookshelf.

I was momentarily astounded by the size of his library. I mean, I was in his room all the time, but I wasn’t exactly in the mindset to look around. The majority of the books were classics, with a few of my modern favorites on the smaller bottom shelf. I grabbed a novel to occupy my time, but lingered next to his bookshelf.

I knew he had an impressive music collection, but I took a moment to scan the artists. I didn’t recognize a lot of the names, but I noted some wonderful albums that I wouldn’t expect him to enjoy.

At that moment I realized exactly how little I knew about Edward Cullen. Physically, I knew him better than I knew myself. I knew that he had four freckles on his right shoulder and three on his left. His lips became pinker when he was aroused, and his eyes changed tone depending on his mood. His feet were his most ticklish body part. There were a series of scars on his knees from boyhood injuries. And when I sucked on the sensitive skin behind his right ear, he responded with enthusiasm.

But I had no idea what he did for fun, besides me. I didn’t know where he wanted to go to college, or what he wanted to do with his life. I didn’t know his favorite color or food, if he had allergies or if he’d ever broken a bone. Most of the random facts I knew about him I learned through Alice.

Footsteps sounded in the hallway and I panicked, diving under the bed right as the door opened. I heard the lock click behind whoever entered.

“Bella?” he whispered quietly.

I let out a sigh of relief and climbed out from my hiding spot. My cheeks burned red when I made eye contact with him and sat on top of the bed. He simply laughed quietly and turned up his speakers.

“She can’t hear us, but she won’t leave until about five. Now where were we?”

Edward’s beautiful hands reached for the hem of my shirt, but I batted them away.

“Edward, I will not have sex with you with Alice downstairs!”

He whined, but his small smile showed me he understood. Neither of us wanted to have that conversation if she *did* hear something. He squeezed my hand once and walked over to his shelves, scanning the titles for a new CD. When my heart rate had calmed to a reasonable level, I remembered my previous thought.

“We know nothing about each other.”

Edward turned from where he standing and frowned, his forehead wrinkling in confusion. “What are you talking about? Of course we do.”

“Do we?” He still looked confused, so I explained further. “Edward I didn’t even notice your incredible book collection until today. I have no idea what interests you or what you want to be when we graduate. I don’t know you.”

A look of understanding crossed his face.

“Huh. I guess you’re right. We kind of jumped into the physical stuff didn’t we?” He smiled at me crookedly, and sat beside me on the bed.

I couldn’t help but smile back, “Yeah, and believe me, I don’t have any regrets about that. It just kind of freaked me out when I realized I didn’t even know your middle name.” I laughed, “I could describe every inch of your body in such minute detail but I don’t know your middle name.”

He chuckled and held his hand out, “Edward Anthony.”

I shook it, enjoying the tingles that spread up my arm at the contact, “Isabella Marie.”

“Well Isabella Marie, we have two hours to kill,” he put his palm under his chin as if he were thinking intently. “What is your favorite color?”

AN: I could have written another 1000 words describing their “getting to know you” conversation, but if that’s boring to write I can only imagine how boring it is to read. So let your imagination run wild. We’ve all read *Twilight*. We all know the specifics.

Reviews are better than a sex-deprived Edward :)

Chapter 4: Young Lust

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Young Lust"

Bella

One week. Seven days since I’d last had sex. Six days since I was last in Edward’s room.

The two hours we spent locked in his room was surprisingly enjoyable. I never felt bad about sleeping with Edward as casual acquaintances, but I was surprised at how much better I felt now that I *did* know him. He was just as funny and smart as I expected. Incredibly passionate about music, he was torn between his dream of playing piano for a living and his father’s dream of him being a doctor. He had a girlfriend for three months when he was fifteen, but it was nothing serious. His favorite type of food was Japanese, and he hated pizza. In a way, I guess it was good his sister interrupted us.

But any small amount of gratitude I held towards Alice was completely gone now that it’d been seven days. Emmett had gone super-brother on me when I got home- asking where I’d been, why I hadn’t called, the usual. I was a little nervous to go Edward’s after school for the next few days.

At this point, I couldn’t give a shit. Emmett could watch if he wanted.

I walked with Alice to our lunch table, sitting down across from Edward. I offered him a smile and pretended that my arousal didn’t ache at the sight of him. Emmett sat down next to me and started talking to Edward about football or something. I spaced out, staring at my sandwich until I saw Alice sit up stiffly beside me.

“Edward,” she paused, “Shit, is that a hickey on your neck?!”

My eyes shot up to him right as his hand covered a spot on the right side of his neck. What the hell?

Edward’s cheeks were a little red when he answered, “None of your business, Alice.”

“What the hell?” Thank you Alice. “Gross! Who’s it from?” I could have hugged her right now.

“I said none of your business.” His voiced was laced with venom, ending the discussion.

Emmett gave him a congratulatory punch in the shoulder and Alice huffed in her chair. I scanned the other members of our table. Eric and Ben looked amused at the small outburst. Angela was quiet, giving her salad her full attention, but that was nothing unusual. However loudmouth Jessica Stanley sitting quietly beside her, a bright blush on her face... that was *very* unusual. Mystery solved.

Well this was a first. Edward and I never hid hook-ups from each other. It was not a big deal, and I was not mad at him. If anything I was annoyed that he got some relief while I spent the weekend fighting sexual frustration. But why didn't he tell me? Was he embarrassed that he hooked up with Jessica? I glanced at Edward, who had popped up the collar of his jacket to hide the offensive mark. Maybe that was it.

The bell rang and I headed to the bathroom before going to biology. Edward was at our table when I got there, drawing aimless circles on his notebook. I sat beside him and considered my approach. Why was I overthinking this? Edward wasn't one for bullshitting, and I owed him the same courtesy.

“So when did you hook up with Stanley?” I kept my eyes on my own papers, writing my name in cursive over and over again on the top.

He let out a quiet laugh. “Saturday, and how'd you know it was her?”

“She looked like a fucking tomato at lunch today,” he laughed again and I turned to look at him. The hickey was small, but dark, and was located an inch behind his right ear. Shit. That girl did *not* mark him there. Edward knew how much I loved that spot. What a bitch.

“So what did she do, eat you? That fucker's dark.”

A crooked grin spread from ear to ear. “She was a little more eager than I was. Sucked a little too hard, I suppose.” I smiled back at him. Rookie mistake, Miss Stanley. “Though I must say, I didn't mind her enthusiasm when she applied it elsewhere...” He trailed off laughing.

I looked back down at my paper as a slew of foreign emotions crept up on me. My stomach twisted horribly and I had to work to keep a frown off my face. The blood rushed to my cheeks as if I were embarrassed and I leaned forward, creating a shield with my hair so Edward couldn't see.

“Sorry I didn't mention it, I completely forgot.” Before I could respond Mr. Banner smacked a yardstick on his desk to get our attention, and began the lecture. I sighed in relief and resumed my doodling.

What was going on? I felt... possessive? No, that wasn't it. I felt possessive of his marked neck, but that was it. I know I felt frustrated. It'd been a week since I had gotten off. The appeal of

masturbation had greatly faded now that I knew how much better it felt to be fingered by him. It was never the same when I did it myself.

Yeah, that had to be it. How dare he get pleasure elsewhere when I was so completely unsatisfied?

I made the mistake of reminiscing over our last fuck. How quickly he'd ripped my clothes off my body... how he'd pushed me up against the wall before I could even take my socks off... how welcome the rug burn had been, and how desperately and thoroughly his hands explored my skin. I was breathing harder at this point, and I felt a foot tap my own.

Edward looked at me with amused confusion. His expression changed instantly upon our eye contact and he knew exactly what I was thinking. I almost let out a moan when he placed his hand on my leg, gently rubbing me from my knee to mid-thigh. He turned back to the front of the classroom and continued his ministrations, never straying from that stretch of leg, but driving me crazy nonetheless. I returned the favor and smirked when his breath hitched. My motions were very deliberate as I lightly brushed my fingers over the bulge in his pants. His hand finally moved, wandering to my inner thigh.

My eyes shot to the clock. Five minutes until class ended. I removed my hand from his leg and wrote on my notebook with a shaky hand.

I can't wait. We're skipping next period. Follow me.

I shoved it towards him and he responded with a slight nod, stopping his hand's movements but letting it rest on my thigh. I recited Romeo's first soliloquy from *Romeo and Juliet* to make the five minutes move faster. Finally the bell rang and we both shot out of our seats. I fought the urge to make physical contact and walked a few feet in front of him. We swerved down the hallway, turning into the music wing. At the end of the hall was a bathroom. Notoriously dirty and rarely used, it was the most isolated spot that I knew of in this school. The moment we were both in the door he grabbed my arm and pulled my face to his.

Edward had never seemed this urgent before. He devoured my mouth with enthusiasm, tracing my breasts and stomach with his capable hands before reaching for the button of my jeans.

"Where are we going to do this?" he murmured against my lips, as unwilling to part from me as I was from him. I groaned when his thumbs pinched my nipples through my shirt, and then pulled back. I smiled at the look of shock on his face and walked towards the bathroom stall, unzipping my sweatshirt as I strutted. I flipped the seat down, set my sweatshirt on it like a blanket, and pointed.

"Sit."

He smiled widely at me and unbuttoned his jeans, pulling them down to his feet before sitting on the toilet, facing me. I pulled my own pants down as I walked towards him.

“A little eager, Jellybean?”

I glared at him, “Hey just cause some people got sucked off by Jessica Stanley this weekend doesn’t mean we all did.” His smile faded slightly. “Now shut up.”

I straddled his lap quickly, facing away from him, and pushed down onto his ready erection with a loud moan. His hands flew up my shirt, forcing my bra up and palming my breasts. I let my head fall to the side and he ran his tongue between my ear and my shoulder as I lifted my hips up and then down again. The friction of our clothing added to the sensation and I had to remember where we were so I didn’t cry out. He stifled his grunts in my neck, pushing my hair to one side before grabbing my waist, taking over the pacing.

Within minutes our movements had sped to an alarming pace. Little moans escaped my mouth with each breath. My name fell from his lips like a prayer. I bounced up and down on his lap and his hand moved to my center, circling my clit with careful strokes. I was overwhelmed by pure lust. I needed release more than oxygen now. Just when the tightening in my lower abdomen was about to burst, Edward bit down on my neck and pressed firmly onto my clit. The pleasure rocked through me like an earthquake. I faintly noticed Edward convulsing beneath me as well as I rode out my orgasm.

I collapsed back onto his chest breathing heavily, but he wouldn’t have that. Edward grabbed my waist firmly and pulled me off of him, only to turn me around crush my lips to his. He immediately ran his tongue along my lower lip, sucking it on it briefly before deepening the kiss. I explored his mouth thoroughly, and he reciprocated. We stayed in that position, with me straddling his lap as we made out in the bathroom until the bell rang.

He pulled back and rested his forehead against mine for a moment. “If I didn’t have a test this period, we’d be out of here.” I smiled, placing a chaste kiss on his lips and stood up. My legs weren’t ready for that and my knees buckled. Edward laughed loudly as he caught me, kissing me again before standing me upright.

“You sure you can handle walking? Or did I fuck that ability out of you?”

I stuck my tongue out at him and slid my jeans back on. “You just like catching me, don’t you Eddie.” He shrugged his shoulders in defeat with a smile and pulled his pants up. I left the bathroom ahead of him, grinning from ear to ear. I earned some weird looks but I didn’t give a fuck.

Beat that Jessica Stanley.

AN: A little reverse cowgirl for you. Reviews make my day :)

Song for inspiration: "Young Lust" by Pink Floyd

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight

"Weekends"

Bella

“Jesus Edward, let me get in the car first.”

With some effort, I pushed Edward away from me and held him at arms length. He groaned in obvious annoyance when his lips disconnected from my neck. He refused to remove his hands from my waist, rubbing soft circles into my skin under my sweatshirt.

The afternoon sun shone brightly on our corner, the trees casting shadows on his already beautiful face. I took a moment to admire the view— and what a view it was. If Edward during orgasm was the sexiest sight in the world, Edward right before sex was a close second. His strong jaw was clenched in irritation and arousal, lips pink and swollen from our frenzied kisses. My resolve weakened for a brief moment at the desperation in his green eyes, and I was up against the Volvo again in an instant, his lips reattaching under my ear. *How on earth did he do that?*

“Bella, I just spent the last hour thinking about your gorgeous body, fantasizing about everything from your long, creamy legs wrapped around my waist to the long column of your neck as you throw your head back in ecstasy.” His strong and gentle hands ran up the sides of my thighs before squeezing my rear firmly, eliciting an involuntary squeak. He watched his fingers for a moment in amazement as they molded my body, and then returned his mouth to my ear. “Your ass is perfect, firm and perky. I really wish you wouldn’t hide it behind these baggy sweatshirts.” Tugging lightly on the offensive fabric once, he let his palms wander up my shirt and over my stomach. I bit my lip to stifle my moan as he continued with his compliments. “Other girls would kill for your figure,” he placed a wet kiss on my neck. “Those breasts, this stomach,” he moved his lips to the other side of my neck. “You’re a goddess, Isabella,” another soft kiss, “and I worship at your feet.” One of his hands left my stomach and I faintly heard the soft click as he opened the car door. He wrapped his other arm around my lower back, pulling me close enough that if I leaned forward an inch, ours lips would touch.

The electricity crackled in the air between us. His eyes captured mine and the intensity of the moment scared the shit out of me. This wasn’t our usual routine. Dirty talk had rapidly turned into something completely foreign, with Edward saying these sexy, beautiful things. The normal urgency I felt when we fucked was gone but was replaced with something infinitely more powerful. His arm loosened only so that he could climb into the driver’s seat before pulling me down into his lap. We both took a moment to pull down our jeans, never breaking eye contact, and he adjusted the seat into a more comfortable position. Finally, and with a gasping shudder, he entered me.

Edward had fucked me in bathrooms and cars, in his parent's bedroom, on my couch. Once he even screwed me against the side of his house while his family ate dinner inside. He'd bent me over backwards, sideways, over chairs and over the edge of the bed. My tongue had explored every inch of his skin and he had more than reciprocated. But I had never felt as vulnerable than I did in that moment, sliding up and down Edward's cock and peering into his eyes. There was... emotion in this that I didn't know how to handle.

But fuck, I couldn't have stopped it if I wanted to.

Our movements were slow and deliberate, the same intensity from before bursting back to life with each movement. Breathless moans escaped our lips as we panted in unison. It was fucking erotic and I immediately stopped worrying about the implications and the confusion. I just leaned my forehead against his and allowed myself to get lost in that forest green, basking in the sensation.

Eventually the pressure was too much and I regretfully increased the speed and strength of my movements. He moaned loudly and dropped his head into the crook of my neck, placing hot, sloppy kisses over every inch of bare skin. I convinced myself I didn't miss the eye contact and gave into the pleasure of it all. A few more thrusts and we came apart in each other's arms.

Edward slowly lifted his head from my shoulder. His eyes were cautious as they scanned mine and his mouth was tense. Basically he looked as freaked out as I felt.

"Bella," his voice shook slightly and the knots in my stomach tightened violently. His voice *never* shook. He never even stuttered. His hand left the small of my back and ran through his hair as he sighed. Looking back up at my eyes, he whispered, "What was that?" I searched his eyes with a frown on my face, hoping I could find... something, anything to explain this new development.

A loud knock on the window broke the moment, and I screamed.

Edward yanked my sweatshirt down to cover our lower halves and his eyes shot to the window. His jaw dropped, then he blushed furiously, averting his gaze. I took one deep breath and turned my head slightly to see who had caught us.

Blonde hair and blue eyes and perfect skin.

Rosalie.

Rosalie Hale.

My brother's girlfriend.

And I couldn't even get off Edward's lap because he was still fucking inside me.

My hand shook violently as I hit a button on the side console, the electric window sliding down slightly. “Um, what’s up?” Damnit, Bella, that’s all you’ve got? What’s up?

Her eyes were wide and her mouth opened and closed several times. She shook her head once before speaking, “Are you kidding me, Bella?”

I shoved my face into Edward’s shoulder, completely mortified and totally fucked. His arm tightened around me in comfort, bless him, and he kept his voice light. “Why are you here, Rosalie?”

Turning my head so I could see her, “I live there.” She gestured with her thumb to the large house closest to the corner. I guess she finally digested the situation because her face scrunched up like she smelled something horrible. “Now care to explain why you two are fucking in front of my fucking yard?”

She was beautiful even in her fury and I was intimidated as hell. “What do you want me to say?” My voice was shaky and uncertain.

Her mouth tightened into a disapproving grimace. She closed her eyes, rubbing her manicured hands over her face as she calmed herself.

“Emmett’s here, and is dying to know who the lucky couple is, so I’d get the fuck out of here if I were you unless you were planning on being killed today, Edward.” She pivoted gracefully on her heel and strutted back to her house. The second she was gone I was shoved into the passenger seat; my head hit the glass window with the rough movement. Edward yanked his pants up just past his ass and sped off, adjusting the seat as he drove.

“Fucking Christ, that hurt Edward!” I fixed my own clothes and huffed, rubbing my head where a knot was already beginning to form. His knuckles were white as he gripped the steering wheel, emitting a tense silence. I’d only seen Edward this upset once before. He earned a lower score than expected on the SATs and I ended up just leaving because his negativity pissed me off. He was so damn stubborn. But it’s not like I could jump out of a moving car and I sure as hell wasn’t walking home.

On impulse, I grabbed the small CD binder from its spot beside my feet, unzipping it quickly and scanning my selection. Flipping through, I thought back to our “getting to know you” day in Edward’s room. We talked about music in length. His tastes were very partial to his moods; he listened to the Stones when he felt creative, Vampire Weekend when was really happy, and when he needed to calm down... my finger stopped on a disc. The Perishers. Without a word I pushed it into the stereo and sat back as “Weekends” came through the speakers.

“You don’t know me, but I’m sitting next to you

Every morning on the bus or on the tube

You look tired, would it help to hear me say

Don't you worry, Friday's not that far away?"

His grip visibly relaxed on the steering wheel and his breaths came more regularly. I closed my eyes and let the song wash over me, trying desperately to ignore the relevancy of the lyrics. There was no way I was dealing with that issue right now.

"On the weekends we try to get our share

Of excitement and of fresh air

Trying to forget who we're gonna be

When the alarm rings on Monday morning"

Edward reached over to me and smoothed my hair in a silent thank you. I ruined the peace by wincing as he brushed over the growing bruise. His hand shot back over his mouth as he remembered his hostility, paling considerably with a horrified and ashamed look. As he should. I didn't have much patience for short tempers.

"I am so so sorry, Bella, I was angry and wasn't thinking clearly." He pinched the bridge of his nose, something I noticed he did when he wanted to bring in his emotions. He looked at me with remorseful eyes. "Are you okay?"

I rolled my eyes, "I'm fine, Edward, just chill the fuck out." We drove the rest of the way to my house in silence. He sighed when he pulled up to my curb, finally looking at me with a heavy gaze.

"So what are you going to tell Emmett?"

I thought this over for a second. "I'm going to tell him to mind his own business." The atmosphere was too tense as Edward frowned at me. I needed to break it somehow. "Plus I'll tell him if he brings it up again or tries to get you, I'll castrate him in his sleep." It worked, and Edward let out the first genuine laugh I'd heard from him since biology. A wave of relief washed over me. My time with Edward was supposed to be enjoyable and it certainly wasn't supposed to be tense.

I raised my hand to my forehead in a mock salute. "Wish me luck, soldier."

He chuckled and brushed my hair out of my face with a smile. I blushed at the unusual post-fuck sign of affection. "At ease."

As soon as I shut the car door, I ran up the porch steps and slammed the front door behind me. I sank to the floor, leaning my head against the wall. My thoughts were as jumbled as my emotions, and I could only acknowledge one coherent thought.

What the fuck happened today?

AN: And so the angst begins. I wasn't going to end it here, but damnit I'm tired and I want to go to bed.

The Perishers are awesome, and I chose them at complete random for Edward's calm down band. So imagine my surprise when the first song on *Let There Be Morning* was relevant to their situation at the moment.

Remember, reviews are love. And better than dirty car sex :)

Chapter 6: We Looked Like Giants

AN: This story has over 1120 hits now. My most popular *Friends* fanfic has 1110 and that's been on the website for over three years, so I just wanted to thank you guys. You're awesome. That said I still haven't gotten many reviews. Please please please, just take a second to click that big button at the bottom and tell me what you think. Reviews really do inspire me to update more, and it's hard to find the desire to write without some feedback.

So now that I've done what I swore I would never do and probably made an ass of myself, let's get back to the story :)

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight

"We Looked Like Giants"

Bella

The wonderful aroma of garlic and tomatoes filled the room. Lightly salted water bubbled in a pot on the stove and the sounds of steam and boiling pasta bounced around the small kitchen. Chicken crackled as it cooked in the oven, covered in a crust of breadcrumbs and spices. Of course I barely noticed any of this because I was too busy waiting for Emmett.

I had no idea what Rosalie would say to him. She wasn't exactly my biggest fan, and she certainly had no allegiance to me. As much as it grossed me out to admit it, Emmett was perverted and hormonal like every other teenage boy. He would ask Rosalie what she saw. And as his girlfriend she owed him the truth. I didn't like the girl, but I knew she loved my brother so I wouldn't hold this against her. All I could do was cook his favorite meal and wait for him to come home.

Adding a pinch of thyme to the sauce, I wondered how she would break the news.

Tactfully?

I found Edward and Bella together.

To the point?

Bella was in Edward's lap, and neither was wearing pants.

With a joke?

Well Edward may not be a motherfucker, but he sure is a sisterfucker...

I tried to imagine a situation where Emmett reacted well, brainstorming as I took the chicken out of the oven. Honestly, I couldn't see it. Emmett still saw me as his six-year-old sister who cried when she fell and depended on her big brother to protect her from any monsters. And Hhrmonal boys were the scariest kind of monster.

It would be almost impossible to convince him that this was not entirely Edward's doing. He would not believe that his beloved sister had welcomed Edward's advances and pleaded for more. Knowing Emmett, he would assume that Edward pressured me into it, taking advantage of my innocence and robbing me of my virtue. It didn't matter that he knew Edward was a good guy. It also wouldn't matter that we were both virgins before all of this. None of it would matter.

Instead of dwelling on that, I prepared my speech- the main point being to keep Edward alive and intact.

The stone driveway crunched under Emmett's tires when he finally pulled up to the house. Figuring I might as well start ahead, I put together a plate for him- bowtie pasta and chicken smothered in my homemade marinara sauce and topped with freshly grated Parmesan. A piece of bread completed the presentation, and I started a plate of my own. The door of his Jeep slammed and my heart pounded. He walked towards the house at a leisurely pace. I busied myself in the arrangement of the individual bowties on my plate until he opened the door.

I heard his backpack slump to the floor, footsteps growing heavy as he approached the kitchen. I took a deep breath, and then turned to smile at him. My brow furrowed as his expression. He didn't really *look* angry.

"Smells delicious, Jelly Belly. You make this for me?"

My jaw dropped but I quickly cleared my expression and nodded. He grabbed his plate with a wide grin and sat at the table. I took a seat beside him and agonized over my next words.

"Did you have a good time at Rosalie's?"

A groan of delight escaped him when he took the first bite. He chewed it thoroughly and the swallowed. "Yeah, I did." He paused to take another bite. "You should have seen her. Some

people were screwing in a parked car in front of her house and she scared them off. I've never heard tires screech like that." Chuckling at the memory, he added, "I wish she would have let me come with her, but she was pissed. Even I know better than to argue with an angry Rose."

Hope swelled in my chest and I asked one last question. "Didn't she tell you what she saw? I mean you must have been curious."

"Hell yeah I was curious," he took a sip from his water bottle, "but she wouldn't say a word. She smacked me in the back of the head when I asked. My girl's got a wicked arm on her."

I managed to keep my smile small as I dug into my food, but the relief was so overwhelming that I'm surprised I didn't start laughing. Or crying. I was abruptly filled with appreciation for Rosalie. And I felt guilty that I had been so rude to her. Maybe I could buy her something to show my gratitude. For now this would have to do.

"You know Em, I really like Rosalie." He nearly dropped his fork, eyes wide as I continued. "She's perfect for you."

Emmett was silent for a minute, searching my face for any sign of dishonesty. And then he swept me into a bear hug, lifting me off the ground and holding me tightly to his chest.

"You don't know what that means to me, Bells." His smile nearly broke my heart. When he let me go, I pulled out my phone and sent a quick text to Edward.

Rosalie is a saint. -B

Charlie joined us in the middle of dinner, and we all enjoyed some family time. We talked about school, and how Emmett and I would head to Phoenix this weekend to visit Mom and Phil for spring break. It was a little inconvenient, but I was excited. I really missed my mom.

At six, I got a phone call from a nearly hysterical Alice.

"Oh my god, Bella, I asked Jasper to see a movie with me tonight and he said yes."

I rolled my eyes at the shock in her voice. She was so blind to how he looked at her, "Finally. I was—"

She cut me off "Yes, insert traditional sarcastic Bella comment," I laughed out loud at that one, "but we have a problem. I told him a bunch of us were going and that he should tag along."

I started to protest but she stopped me again, "I know it's a school night but you know I'd never ask unless it was urgent—"

"Excuse me?"

“Alright, yes I would,” she conceded, “but could you please please *please* come with? Rosalie already said she’d come, and I know you don’t really like her, but she’s inviting Emmett right now.” I looked over, and sure enough Emmett was on his phone. “He could drive you.”

I couldn’t think of a valid excuse, and hell, I was feeling generous today. “Of course Alice. I know how much Jasper means to you.”

She screeched in excitement and I pulled the phone away from my ear slightly. “Plus, Rosalie isn’t that bad.”

- - - - -

An hour later I remembered a *very* valid excuse when we pulled into the parking lot, and I spotted Edward talking to Alice and Jasper. Vivid memories of our afternoon, completely forgotten after the Rosalie fiasco, immediately came back to me. I remembered the slow intensity that had consumed us as we... made love. I shuddered at those words. We managed to avoid them for three months, but there were no other words to describe that last fuck in the car.

Nervous knots pulled tightly in my stomach as I tried not to remember the cautious and terrified look in his eye right before Rosalie interrupted us. I kept my face cautiously blank as we approached the group. I caught Edward’s eye for a moment and smiled. He grinned widely at me, pretending to wipe a bead of sweat off his forehead before grinning at Rosalie. Emmett was too caught up in staring at her chest to notice the interaction.

Things fell into their normal groove after that. I figured I had been overthinking things, and that the intensity had just been a side effect of a particularly good screw. Edward and I lagged slightly behind the two couples, occasionally chuckling as Jasper and Alice maneuvered around each other, not touching but clearly wanting to. Rosalie also noticed this and let go of Emmett. She walked directly between the two, grabbing Alice’s hand in her left and Jasper’s in her right, before connecting their hands as if she were teaching two children how to behave. Edward, Emmett, and I burst out laughing. Alice and Jasper blushed furiously, but neither let go of the other’s hand.

At Emmett’s request we saw some crappy new horror movie. Edward and I sat two rows behind the other four and alternated between mocking the horrendous acting and throwing popcorn at Emmett’s head. It was easy, it was comfortable, and it was *fun*. Edward grimaced when Jasper wrapped his arm around Alice, but I could tell he wasn’t serious. The overwhelming lust I usually felt around him only flared up twice. Once when our fingertips brushed in the popcorn bucket, and once when I made the mistake of looking at him while he laughed at a particularly painful scene.

After the movie ended, the six of us congregated in the lobby. Jasper offered to take Alice home, and the two of them turned to leave before we could respond. Edward started to say something, but Alice shot him a death glare and he shut up. I grinned in amusement at Edward’s failed attempt to be the scary brother. It was very endearing.

Emmett cleared his throat, “Hey Edward, I know this is a lot to ask, but could you take Bella home with you?” He sent Edward a meaningful glare, not noticing as Rosalie glanced nervously between Edward and myself.

Edward ran his fingers through his hair once. “Sure Emmett, I’ll see you tomorrow.” I smiled once at Rosalie before Emmett dragged her off to the Jeep.

And then there were two.

Most of the ride was spent in companionable silence. He plugged his iPod into the jack and let me play around with the music, occasionally commenting on a song or an artist. We were about five miles from Forks, listening to old Death Cab for Cutie, when he started speaking.

“I’m so happy we have the break next week. I retake the SATs on Saturday and then it’s eight days of relaxation.”

I nodded in agreement, “Tell me about it. Everyone was right, junior year is so stressful.”

The beginning of “We Looked Like Giants” came through the speakers and Edward quickly fumbled with his iPod to skip to the next song. I smirked knowingly. The much safer “I Was A Kaleidoscope” played and Edward continued.

“There’s this great little record store right outside of Port Angeles that has tons of rarer LPs- Death Cab, Pink Floyd, The Kinks, you name it. You should come with me next week. I haven’t been in a while and I need to buy some new stuff.” His voice was calm as he spoke, but in the dark light of the car his cheeks looked faintly pink and he ran his hand through his hair a few times.

“That sounds fun, but didn’t Emmett tell you? We get shipped down to Mom’s in Phoenix this Saturday afternoon. We’re there all week.”

His face fell slightly, but his voice didn’t betray any emotion. Not that he was hiding any. Ugh, never mind. “Oh, that makes sense. I guess I’ll see if Jasper wants to go or something. I can talk to him about Alice, you know, play the big brother card.”

I laughed lightly, “Edward you’re four minutes younger than Alice.”

He shrugged, “I’m still bigger than her.” I giggled and rolled my eyes. Boys were so predictable. He pulled up to my curb and I turned to say goodbye.

What happened next was my fault really. I should have known better by now.

The lust immediately returned when my hormones remembered I was alone in a car with him. The electricity was back too, ranking somewhere between our normal intensity and the absurd energy of this afternoon, and my stomach clenched in anticipation. His voice was strained and low when he finally spoke.

“I know your police chief father is inside so I’m not going to start anything now, but can I just do one thing?” I could only nod as he took my head between his hands, staring at me for a moment with a strange look on his face, and then pressed his lips to mine. The kiss was too tender, too sweet as he took my bottom lip between his, sucking gently for a few seconds. The knots that had been building in my stomach erupted into butterflies and I placed my hands on the nape of his neck. We continued at this slow pace for several minutes, never deepening the kiss and never using tongues. There was no urgency, or even lust anymore. Only sensation.

Eventually, and with one last too soft kiss, he released me and sat back in his seat, staring intently at the steering wheel.

"Uh..."

I gaped at him in shock and confusion, trying to think of something to say. But nothing came out and he didn't look at me again. I left his car hesitantly and without a word.

Charlie was watching television when I got inside, so I said hello and that I was tired and headed up to my room. I collapsed on my bed with a sigh.

Things were getting weird with Edward, and I didn’t really know how I felt about that. This wasn’t supposed to happen. He was just a fuck, a way to release tension. If there had been something else, we would have felt it three months ago, not now.

Whatever was going on, I couldn’t wait to leave for Phoenix. I had guy friends there, and several of them had shown interest before the move. Maybe all I needed was to fuck someone else. Maybe that would make the strange knot in my stomach finally go away. Some distance could bring us back to casual friends who occasionally fuck, like it used to be. Like it was supposed to be.

It was worth a shot.

AN part deux: There you go. The longest chapter so far. You should look up the lyrics to "We Looked Like Giants" and then download the song, because it's wonderful. Here's an excerpt: "When every Thursday, I'd brave those mountain passes, And you'd skip your early classes, And we'd learn how our bodies worked."

See why Edward skipped the song? ;)

Reviews are almost better than Death Cab For Cutie, but not quite.

Chapter 7: My Manic and I

AN: Sorry for the delay. I had too much work to do, and honestly school comes first.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight

"My Manic and I"

Bella

After days of begging, Emmett had convinced Rosalie to accompany us to Phoenix, so Saturday evening found me at my old dining room table with four other chatty individuals.

“Emmett, I just can’t get over how beautiful she is.” Renee gushed, tightening her arm around Rosalie’s shoulder. Rosalie leaned into the embrace with an enthusiastic smile on her face. It was surreal to watch confident Rosalie try so hard to win over my mother and stepfather. Though I didn’t know why she was so worried. Phil always went along with whatever Renee said, and it was blatantly obvious that Renee was thanking the heavens for such a charming and lovely girl in Emmett’s life.

Plus seeing Rosalie in action made me see for the first time why Emmett liked having her around. When she wasn’t being a bitch, she *was* charming and lovely. Sometimes she was even funny. Between this and the Volvo incident, I might end up genuinely liking Rosalie Hale.

I did not see that coming.

Phil only had two passions in life- baseball and my mother- so he wasn’t much for conversation. At least not conversation with me. Emmett bombarded him with question after question, having gotten really into minor league baseball after Phil moved in with us. I was content to watch my family eagerly and awkwardly interact with one another. After all, good children should be neither seen nor heard.

I jumped slightly when I felt a quick vibration in my pocket. Everyone turned to me with amused faces.

“Sorry, phone.” I flipped it open and smiled at the message.

*How’s the meet and greet, Jelly Bean?
Ready to gouge your eyes out? – E*

I quickly typed a response.

*I’m waiting for Rosalie to start jumping through
hoops. Lucky for her, Mom is easily impressed – B*

When I looked back at the table Rosalie was still talking to my mother, but her gaze was on me. A peculiar emotion shaped her eyes and mouth as she listened to Renee talk about property or

hairstyles, I don't know. I looked down at my hands, suddenly self-conscious. Renee never stopped talking. She was too excited to notice my discomfort.

Later that night I was in my old bedroom, admiring the familiarity, when I heard a knock at the door.

"Bella, it's me."

Rosalie's clear voice permeated the door. She knew I was in my room, so I had no choice but to answer. She entered without a word, closing the door behind her and sitting on my bed.

We sat in uncomfortable silence for a few moments before she started talking.

"How are you, Bella?"

So we're beating around the bush. I was equally guarded in my response.

"I'm fine. Now what do you want to know?"

A quick laugh escaped her before she got back to business.

"Were you texting him at dinner?"

I took a moment to consider my answer. I wasn't surprised that Rosalie had caught the change in my mood when I read my phone. She had been giving me strange glances since the Volvo incident, and I completely understood why. The boyfriend's sister and the boyfriend's best friend? This was good gossip. But Rosalie hadn't told anyone, and she didn't seem the gossip girl type. I actually had no idea of her intentions. So I decided to go with coy.

"What 'him' are you referring to, Rose?"

She smiled, perhaps at my evasiveness. With a heavy sigh, she asked, "How long have you and Edward been doing this?" I couldn't detect any hostility in her question, only curiosity. And Rosalie had protected me from Emmett's rage earlier, so I trusted her.

"Three months."

Wow, it was fucking wonderful to say that out loud to someone.

"Seriously?" Her eyebrows raised, "So are you guys secretly dating or what?"

I rolled my eyes before stating seriously, "No, we're just screwing around."

"That looked like more than just screwing around. That was screwing."

And she's witty too. Damn it. I do like Rosalie.

I continued my stint of honesty. “That is exactly why we didn’t say anything.”

Instead of scowling at me like I expected, she fucking smiled. “Bella, believe me, I understand the need to get off.” I smiled back at her, trying to avoid thoughts of Emmett in bed. “But is that really all he is to you?”

I nodded because, shit, what else could I do?

Rosalie saw right through my avoidance. “You guys looked pretty intense when I saw you. Am I right?”

At that moment, Rosalie became my favorite person. I knew what she was doing. She was giving me “girl-talk” time about Edward, something that had been completely missing from my life. It’s not like I could talk to Alice about my issues.

“That last time was actually very strange,” I took a moment to think. She just sat there patiently. “I mean usually, we just fuck. And it’s really good fucking, don’t get me wrong. It’s animalistic and pleasurable in it’s own right. But that last time,” I tried to think of a way to describe the intensity, the electricity, but I came up blank.

“But...?” Rosalie never lost her patience, just sitting there on my bed until I was ready to talk.

“But... last time, it started with dirty talk, which isn’t that weird, but then he started saying these things and,” I looked her in the eye, “he called me a goddess. He said he worshiped at my feet. And then the whole thing changed. It was like he saw right through me.” I chuckled at the ridiculousness of my story, “it scared the hell out of me.”

Rosalie didn’t do anything but sit there and smile at me for a long time as I ranted. It felt wonderful to finally talk about it, like a weight had been lifted from my chest. A few minutes later, her smile finally fell slightly. She reached for me, and rubbed my arm in comfort.

“I hate to tell you this, but that’s how I felt when Emmett touched me for the first time.”

I frowned, and shrugged her arm off. Way to prove I was right in not telling anyone, Rose. “But Edward and I have been doing it for months and we never had that power, that scary heat. Why is it different now?” I could hear the desperation in my voice, but I didn’t care at all. Maybe my brain knew that Rosalie had seen my at my worst, straddling Edward half naked in his car. Or maybe it knew that she used to be heartless with her affection, like me. But somehow it knew she wouldn’t judge me.

“Has anything happened recently? Anything out of the ordinary?”

“A week or so ago, we almost got caught in his bedroom and ended up talking for two hours. But I don’t get what that has to do with anything. I mean last week we fucked in the music hall bathroom, and that didn’t make me feel any different. The tingles were gone as soon as I was.”

Rosalie grimaced slightly. "I'll never use that bathroom again, so thanks."

I smiled right back at her.

"I'd say 'I'm sorry' but that was a good one."

She stared expectantly at me for a few seconds, but I didn't know what she wanted. Finally she spoke. "Do you really not understand, Bella?"

I frowned again, "All I don't understand is why I suddenly feel nervous around him. I mean last time he fooled around with Mallory I gave him a high five. When he messed with Stanley last weekend, well, the bathroom thing happened."

Rosalie paused for a minute, as if she were carefully thinking out her response. It reminded me of when my mom had tried to explain divorce to me when I was six. "Have you ever thought that maybe you just liked him?"

What? "Of course I like Edward. He's funny, smart, and listens to good music. He's great. What's not to like?"

She shook her head. "I mean *like* him, like him."

"No." I didn't even let myself think about that. I recalled the day in biology when he told me about Lauren Mallory. His eyes were incredibly apprehensive, and he seemed so nervous. When I told him I didn't care, I got a glimpse of that megawatt smile, and we got back to the lesson. It wouldn't make sense for things to be different now.

Rosalie looked unconvinced. "Rose, I swear, there is nothing romantic between Edward and myself."

After a long look, she stood up from my bed and ran her manicured hand through her hair.

She sighed, "I'm just trying to understand, Bella."

I don't know what compelled me to do it, but I shot up from my seat on the bed and hugged her with all my might. All of the gratitude I had felt this last week, and the gratitude I felt now spilled out, taking refuge in her neck.

Her arms tightened hesitantly around me.

I didn't want her to be uncomfortable, so I explained myself. "I really needed to talk about this Rosalie, so thank you."

She pulled back, keeping her arms around my waist comfortingly.

"You're welcome. Just so you know, if you ever want to talk I'm here."

All I could do was hug her again, and tell her another secret. “And just so *you* know, I think you’re perfect for Emmett. And I’m not just saying that because you’re protecting my fuck buddy from certain death.”

She laughed with me this time. “You’re right about that.” Her smile faded slightly as she smoothed my hair. “Please think about Edward a little, will you Bella? I think you might like him more than you want to admit.”

Emmett chose that moment to burst through my door. He paused for a moment, in shock and our close and friendly proximity, before speaking. “Rose, Bella, do you know what time it is?”

We both shrugged our shoulders.

“*Mario Party* time! I call Yoshi!” Emmett shot out the door and down the stairs with the enthusiasm of a child, and Rosalie and I followed, laughing all the while. I welcomed the distraction. My intention this week had been to distract myself from Edward, not to analyze our sort-of-friendship.

The rest of the evening was relaxing and fun. Emmett was hysterical, and got angry whenever he lost a “minigame”. We ganged up on him whenever we could. I only broke from the happy environment long enough to send a single text. To my old friend and former crush from Phoenix, Jacob Black.

J- I’m in Phoenix for the week. When can we hang out? –B

AN: So I know, not too much action. But I promise, this chapter was necessary. And please excuse any typos. I don’t have a beta, and it’s kind of late. Song for your listening pleasure- "My Manic and I" by Laura Marling.

A high five from Edward to whoever catches the Arrested Development reference. And something else from Edward for those who review ;)

Chapter 8: Easy, Lucky, Free

AN: 40 reviews. And over 1000 hits in the last two days alone. You guys rock :)

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Easy, Lucky, Free"

Bella

“A little higher this time.”

I aimed carefully, focusing dramatically on Jacob’s open mouth, before propelling my arm forward and releasing the piece of popcorn. It flew on course for a moment, and then landed... directly in his right eye.

His hand shot to his face and he gasped in pain. “Goddamnit, Bella, what the hell?” I sprinted to his side, checking his russet skin for marks and scratches. His eye slowly opened, and a grin broke onto his face. “Gotcha.”

I smacked him on the arm, but laughed along with him. It was so nice to see Jacob again. So nice and so simple. To me, he was innocence, so I could flirt and joke and talk to him without any expectations. Just like seven months ago.

Everyone always assumed Jake and I would be together. We had been close as children, and our parents were friends. We were both fairly attractive people. And we made each other happy. I’m sure if I hadn’t moved, something would have happened eventually. Jake had a way of making me feel lucky. Easy. Free.

So it wasn’t really my fault that when Jake came to pick me up, I leapt into his arms. He caught me, spinning in a circle like when we were children. Jacob was my sun. He was warmth. I didn’t miss the look I got from Rosalie on the way out the door, but what did she know.

After deciding on a plan Jake and I huddled up on his bed with a bag of popcorn, for old times sake, ready for a movie marathon.

“So Bella, what’ll it be: *Dodgeball* or *The Boogeyman*?”

Edward and I throwing popcorn at Emmett’s head while watching The Haunting of Molly Hartley...

I shook that thought out of my head, “Dodgeball.” I had to smile at his choices. And for a moment I let myself compare him to Edward. Jake was not complex. He watched and adored bad movies. *He* screamed when we saw *The Ring* in theaters. Edward was much more complicated. He loved old French films from the Nouvelle Vague era that I usually didn’t understand, and he had trouble enjoying something like *Anchorman*.

I looked back at Jacob, nearly shaking with excitement at the prospect of watching Ben Stiller in spandex, and smiled. Easy.

He took a seat beside me on the bed.

“So Bells, how is Washington? I see you managed to get even paler.”

I stuck my tongue out at him. “I think we’ve had three days of sun since I moved.”

“I must say, they know how to breed them up there. Rosalie is... Emmett is a lucky man.”

I nodded in agreement. There must be something about that Forks water, because the children were beautiful. Even the sad, desperate ones like Mike or Jessica were attractive in their own right. “Yeah, Rosalie is a good girl.”

His eyes widened, black hair falling into his face. On impulse, I reached out, my porcelain hand contrasting against his tanned skin as I pushed his hair behind his ear. He smiled widely at the small sign of affection, and blinked a few times before finally speaking. “She’s kind of an ice queen, isn’t she?”

“You mean a bitch?” He choked out a laugh at my summary. “Believe me, two weeks ago I would have agreed with you, but she’s really not that bad. And she loves Emmett.” I paused, “It’s kind of gross actually.”

Jake leaned back against the headboard, his body turned towards mine.

“So what about you, Bella? Any sexy Washington boys vying for your affections?” He wagged his eyebrows suggestively, unintentionally imitating Owen Wilson on screen. I laughed loudly for a moment, before considering his question. I needed to answer in a way that told him I wasn’t exactly a little girl anymore, but I wasn’t bound to anyone either.

“I don’t have a boyfriend if that’s what you’re asking.”

His jaw dropped slightly, and he quickly responded. “That was awfully coy, Miss Swan. Got any dirt you’d like to share?”

I shook my head quickly, but that damn blush called my foul.

“Isabella Marie Swan! Tell me everything! Have you been rounding some bases?”

“Jacob Black,” I rolled my eyes, still blushing furiously. I was suddenly very aware that we were alone in his room. Jake had grown in my absence, not a lot, but enough to make a difference. His face was leaner, and he’d grown a few inches. His eyes softened as I continued my appraisal of him. If there was any moment for this to happen, it was now. I could trust Jacob, and I could leave afterwards. No strings attached. I was good at that kind of thing.

I needed some confidence to pull this off. So I did something sort of awkward. I thought of the look on Edward’s face as I drove him to the edge. I thought of the profanities and moans I’d drawn from his mouth. I was a sexual creature. I had made the most beautiful man I’d ever known cry out in ecstasy. I could make him beg me for more. Attracting Jacob was a cakewalk compared to that.

“What if I show you, instead of telling you?”

Jacob's jaw dropped fully this time, and for the first time I saw blood rush to his cheeks. His eyes were shy but insistent, refusing to lose contact with mine. Being the sweet guy that he was, he asked me outright. "Are you sure, Bella?"

Instead of responding I leaned forward and pressed my lips to his, ignoring the knot that had suddenly reappeared in my stomach. It wasn't from nerves this time. I wasn't really sure why it was there, but I was determined to make it go away.

These were not the soft pink lips I was familiar with, but they weren't exactly unpleasant. It was different, he moved differently. Instead of seducing my tongue from my mouth slowly and sensually, Jake pried my mouth open with his, attacking my lips and teeth. The movie played on in the background. I faintly recognized a piece by Mozart playing in the background of a scene.

"Of course Mozart was astoundingly talented, but I am much more taken with someone like Debussy," Edward's eyes lit up into a fiery green as he spoke, his arms moving around emphatically. "He tells stories with his music. Take "La Mer", for example. I can see the ocean as I listen. I can feel the water swirling around me gently, as well as the impending strength of the storm. It's amazing."

I froze slightly against Jacob's aggressive mouth. He didn't notice.

"Bella, you don't know how long I've waited for this."

He moved on top of me, pressing me into the mattress. His hands moved from my waist, eagerly tracing my torso and the curve of my breasts.

"Other girls would kill for your figure."

The knot in my stomach was almost painful, and I could feel the bile in the back of my throat.

Jake's large fingers pinched the approximate location of my nipples. "You're so sexy, Bells."

"You are a goddess."

"Stop, stop." I pushed against Jacob's shoulder with all of my strength. He jumped back instantly, panting, and looking rightfully confused.

"What's wrong? Is it too soon?"

I was breathing heavily, but not in arousal. My mind was flying in circles. "No, that's not it."

He frowned and rubbed my shoulder comfortingly. I wished he wouldn't. "We don't have to do anything, Bells, if you don't feel right about it. I know virginity is very important to girls, and I don't—"

“Who said I was a virgin, Jacob?” The question came out as word vomit, and I immediately blanched, pushing my hands against my mouth as if I could take it back.

Now it was Jacob’s turn to pale, “Bella...”

Panic filled me, and more words shot out unfiltered. “Oh God, Jake, please don’t tell Emmett, he doesn’t know. He would absolutely kill Edward. And I’m so sorry that I pushed you away. Jake. You’re wonderful and sweet and I knew I could trust you, and I just thought that if I fucked someone else it would make all of the other things go away and—”

Jake didn’t speak, but pulled me onto his lap and into a warm hug. My tears were only silent for a moment before sobs took over me, weeks of frustration forming a wet spot on his t-shirt. I didn’t cry over the details— like exactly when things changed between Edward and myself, or why. It only mattered that they had.

I cried over the fact that we couldn’t go back, and I cried because I didn’t know if I even *wanted* things to go back. I cried because I had been willing to use my oldest friend to prove a point to myself, and I cried because Jacob wasn’t the one my heart felt I betrayed.

I wanted difficulty. I wanted to hear and watch Edward talk about classical music and the ocean. I wanted the pretentious films by Godard and Truffaut, and I wanted to explain to him why *Anchorman* was worth watching.

And of course, Jacob was fucking magnificent, soothing me blindly. I had never felt so guilty in my entire life. When the tears stopped, he told me jokes and old stories until I smiled again. He even offered to drive me home, holding my hand the entire way.

Finally, we pulled up to the curb and I hesitated, cautiously making eye contact.

Looking into Jacob’s eyes, I didn’t see rejection or anger, just concern for me. So I said the only thing that could let him know how truly grateful I was.

“You’re my best friend Jake, and I really wish it could have been you.”

He smiled sadly, pressing his palm against my cheek for a moment. “Me too, Bells. Me too.”

"And Bella?" he questioned right before I shut the door, "Whoever Edward is? I hope he knows how lucky he is."

Tears pricked my eyes again at his words, but I willed them away.

I walked up the front steps, thanking whatever higher power cleared the house tonight. I put on my iPod, choosing the newest Brand New album, and curled up into a ball on the couch.

Edward wasn’t my boyfriend. He wasn’t even close to my boyfriend. You can’t cheat on someone who you’re not in a relationship with, so I didn’t do anything wrong. Why couldn’t

things be easy like they were before? What would it take for Edward, the interesting person who made the knots turn into butterflies rather than pain, to turn back into Edward, the guy I called when I needed to get off? And who was to say that he felt the same change I did? I couldn't assume anything anymore.

I allowed myself to wallow in my confusion on my couch to “Degausser” for who knows how long. I justified and explained things to myself over and over again, but there was one question I just didn’t have the answer for.

If I hadn’t done anything wrong, why did my stomach feel like this?

Take me, take me back to your bed

I love you so much that it hurts my head

Say I don’t mind you under my skin

I let the bad parts in, the bad parts in

When we were made we were set apart

Life is a test and I get bad marks

Now some saints got the job of writing down my sins

The storm is coming

The storm is coming in.

AN: Yeah, so I didn’t like the Jacob in the books who took advantage of a confused girl, making her feel guilty for following her heart. So I made my own Jacob. Honestly the only reason I picked “Jacob” was because it’s too much work to create an original character.

Thanks again guys, so much for the reviews. The songs for this chapter (cause if I’m going to pimp out my favorites, I might as well do it properly) are *Bright Eyes* – “*Easy, Lucky, Free*” and Brand New – “*Degausser*”. Throw in Debussy’s three part piece *La Mer* if you want.

REVIEW! Because I didn’t have Jake and Bella sleep together, and that is pretty much what you guys wanted anyway :)

Chapter 9: Angeles

AN: This chapter is dedicated to my four 19-20 year old friends who sat in the common room of my dorm with me and made string bracelets while I typed this up.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Angeles"

Bella

I alternated between excitement and nervousness as Emmett drove us to school. Our flight had gotten in at 8 the night before, but we were too exhausted to do anything besides drive Rosalie home. That, and I wasn't exactly ready to see everyone yet.

Things had been strained for the rest of the week in Phoenix. Rosalie had cornered me several times for 'girl-talk' when all I wanted to do was mope in my room. She finally gave up two days ago, and went back to glaring at me. Emmett was blissfully oblivious. He spent the break talking to Mom and Phil, catching up with old friends, and distracting Rosalie from her goal to bother me on a daily basis.

Renee had noticed something was wrong as well, but she just assumed I'd gotten in a fight with Jacob, or that I was just being moody. I was a little annoyed she saw me like that, but I let her think it anyway.

Speaking of Jake, he hadn't called me again after that night. Not that I expected him to.

The jeep bounced with every small bump on the familiar road, and I considered my options. I wasn't sure how to treat Edward since my sort-of-revelation. Should I act normally, observing his behavior a little more carefully? Should I tell that I had spent all of spring break thinking about the way I felt when he touched me? Should I show him my change of heart, behaving with more affection, and weighing his response? Or should I ignore him completely and get over whatever this was? I internally berated myself for sulking for the last week instead of figuring this out.

Emmett pulled into his normal parking spot. I was barely out the door before I was attacked by a 4'11 ball of energy.

"Bella! I missed you so much! I have so much to tell you!"

I laughed at her enthusiasm and returned her hug. "I missed you too, Alice. How's Jasper?" I nudged her in the side suggestively and she giggled.

"I saw him every day last week," she sighed wistfully, "he's amazing."

I smiled at her excitement, and hated that Edward came to mind when she spoke. Of course I had noticed his car parked several spots away. Alice must have literally sprinted from the Volvo when she saw me, and that warmed my conflicted heart. Edward sat still in the driver's seat, staring at the two of us with a peaceful grin on his face.

I focused back on Alice, who was still talking, "... and then he kissed me, and it was like nothing I've ever felt before! I think Edward is a little bummed out that his only sister is dating someone. He was in a foul mood all week." She stared off contemplatively for a moment, "maybe if he got laid, he wouldn't be so uptight."

"Alice! That's gross, he's your brother."

Her smirk faded a little, "Yeah, but just because I don't want to hear about his 'escapades'," she cringed at the word, "doesn't mean I don't want him to be happy."

Edward opened his door the moment Alice finished her speech, as if he could read her mind. He shut the door, and began his walk towards the school, all very casually. His clothes were tight enough to accentuate his lean muscle with each step, stomach contracting and releasing, jaw loose and at ease. I wondered momentarily if he knew how appealing he was. He definitely knew how he affected me. Edward paused for a moment when he reached us, raising his arm slightly before placing it on my shoulder.

"Good to have you back, Jellybean." He smiled widely, squeezed my shoulder tenderly, and then continued his walk to the school.

Alice's raised her eyebrows, forehead scrunching in confusion. "Well that was weird."

"No kidding. Wonder what got into him?" I answered honestly. I felt the blush heat up my cheeks, and prayed Alice was too baffled to notice. We rarely made physical contact in school, and never so openly.

She shrugged. "Why did he call you Jellybean?"

I rolled my eyes, my actual annoyance at the nickname coming in handy. "Emmett has called me Jelly Belly since I was little, and Edward found it comical. Hence, Jellybean."

Alice laughed quietly at her brother, "that sounds like him." Shaking her head slightly at his antics, she added, "I didn't know you guys were that friendly with each other."

"We *are* biology lab partners, and..." I trailed off, not knowing what else I could say. She seemed to accept that answer, and we headed towards class.

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My nerves were live wires by lunch. I couldn't even think about food, and sat down beside Alice with just a lemonade. Emmett, Rosalie, and Edward were already seated across from her

discussing what they had done over spring break. I was content to quietly talk with Alice and to play with my bottle cap, but Jasper sat down on her other side, capturing her attention. Edward stiffened in his chair, clearly uncomfortable with their proximity. His eyes caught mine briefly, and he smiled, but his shoulders remained tense.

Alice excitedly recounted her last week to Emmett and Rosalie, grasping Jasper's hand tightly in her own. I could see Edward's struggle to stay relaxed for Alice's sake, but he was so protective of her. After a moment's consideration, I tapped his foot under the table to silently give my comfort. His eyes shot to mine, looking slightly amazed but significantly more relaxed.

Edward looked down at the table, a genuine smile creeping onto his face. His foot moved to my ankle, caressing me through my jeans. The warmth that spread up my leg was amazingly pleasant.

I couldn't stifle my own grin, and it seemed neither could he. I looked around the table in order to appear less conspicuously content. Rosalie was frowning at me. She glanced quickly between Edward and myself, and the frown was quickly replaced with a look of determination. Then she spoke.

"So Bella."

I turned to her warily, "Yeah, what's up."

"So now that we've heard all about the ballad of Alice and Jasper, why don't you tell us about your hot date with the tan kid in Phoenix?"

If I didn't know Edward's body so well, I wouldn't have noticed that his eyes tightened faintly, or that his fingers crunched up as if he were fighting a fist.

I glared at Rosalie, "You mean Jacob? You know that wasn't a date, Rosalie."

Emmett piped in, "I don't know Bells. I mean, you guys have always liked each other right?"

Oh god, not him too. "That's not true Em--"

"Well he definitely likes you," I cocked an eyebrow at my brother. He continued, "oh don't act so surprised. And don't act like you weren't all upset after you guys hung out. I found you asleep in a ball on the couch, listening to that god awful emo music, and then you sulked around for the rest of the week."

I had to give it to Emmett. When he chose to be observant he was spot on, if slightly confused. Rosalie practically bounced in her seat beside him. If this was her way of getting back at me for avoiding her, then she really was just a bitch.

"First of all, Brand New is neither awful nor 'emo'. Second of all... I don't want to talk about it."

I knew I should have responded with something, *anything*, but my mind was completely blank. I couldn't concentrate on anything other than Edward's subtle body language and his eyes, alight with fire but firmly focused on my lemonade.

Rosalie tried to speak again, "But Bella—"

"I said drop it." Her eyes narrowed at the venom in my voice, but she clearly wasn't too disappointed. She got exactly what she wanted: a reaction out of me. I fumed silently, hating that I let her get to me.

But I stopped worrying about Rosalie when Edward slowly drew his foot back from mine. He stiffened again, and continued eating his sandwich with an expressionless face.

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Neither Edward nor myself said another word at lunch. The other two couples were too absorbed in each other to notice, except Rosalie of course, who looked both amused and concerned. To say I was getting fed up with her flakiness was an understatement.

Twenty awkward minutes later, the bell rang. I took a long time in the bathroom to avoid the inevitably uncomfortable biology confrontation.

I took one deep breath in the hallway before finally walking into the classroom. My eyes fell on our lab table... and Edward was not there. I glanced around at the other tables, thinking maybe he had switched seats today to avoid me, but he wasn't anywhere. I sat in my usual chair, fidgeting anxiously. I had no idea what was running through Edward's head right now, but it clearly wasn't good.

The bell rang, and he didn't show.

Another ten minutes, and still nothing.

Fifteen minutes into the class and I couldn't wait any longer. I stood up with my backpack, and asked Mr. Banner to go to the nurse. One mention of 'female troubles' and I was out.

Where could Edward go? He didn't seem the type to hide in the bathroom, and he couldn't just leave. He drove Alice to school.

I ran my fingers along the emblem of his hood. "Why a Volvo? I'd think a rich boy like yourself would go for something flashier."

"Hey! Don't knock my car." He smiled and patted the rooftop affectionately. "Smooth, practical, this baby's my sanctuary."

I ran towards the parking lot, stumbling down the stairs, but thankfully not falling. I spotted his silhouette in the silver car across the lot. As I neared it, I saw him more clearly, head pressed

against the steering wheel. Elliott Smith played so loudly through the speakers, that I could hear it clearly as I stood outside the passenger door. Music for when he was upset.

He didn't move when I opened the door and sat down. I allowed "Angeles" to finish. After all I'd certainly wallowed enough over this, and it was a beautiful song. But when "Cupid's Trick" started, I lost my patience so I turned it off. He glared at me without saying a word.

I never responded well to his temper.

"What the hell is your problem, Edward?"

He still said nothing, but clicked on the stereo, filling the car with music and placing his head back on the steering wheel. What was he, six?

I hit it off again. "Will you please listen to me?"

He huffed, "Fine Bella, tell me what really happened between you and Jacob Black."

"Oh yeah, Edward? Are you angry with me now? You're weren't so angry when you had little Miss Jessica all over your cock a few weeks ago." I was nearly shaking in my frustration and rage. He had no fucking room to scold me.

And then he had the nerve to *scoff* at me, "that was different!"

"I'd like to hear you explain that one."

I opened the passenger door and walked towards the school, not wanting to say something I would regret. I didn't stop walking until I reached the hallway. Edward was not done, and marched right behind me, constantly talking.

"That was different because, Christ, things were different then, Bella!"

Eloquent. I refused to answer as I walked, so he continued, "Don't pretend you haven't noticed the change between us. I know you did. You felt it as much as I did."

Finally stopping, I turned to him. "I never said I didn't!"

Edward rolled his eyes before continuing, "You know Bella, I could have gotten fucked four days ago. At the very least, I could have gotten some really good head. You know Tanya? Blonde girl, long legs, huge tits? She practically begged me to fuck her."

At this point I was so angry I was almost in tears, "Then why didn't you?"

"Because I couldn't do that to you, not now, not after that last time in my car, and certainly not before I talked to you about it."

Now I *was* crying, “Edward, you are fucking kidding yourself. That change happened before Jessica. Things have been intense and weird between us since that day in your room.”

“Yeah, and clearly that wasn’t enough to stop you from fucking around with another dick the second you got a chance.”

I instinctually moved to slap him, but caught myself. He winced back at my anger and the tears on my face.

“You don’t know anything!” I took a deep breath, my voice softening but not calming. It trembled as I spoke, “I tried to fuck him, Edward. I really did. But I kissed him, and he kissed me back, and then you were *everywhere*. My lips, my body, my fucking heart. And I pushed him off of me and cried and cried and cried.”

His face softened but I wasn’t done yet, “I spent the last week thinking about how much I hate that you watch pretentious movies, and how angry I was when you implied I was stupid for watching *Family Guy*, and how none of that is important because no matter how much I tried to resist... you are the only one that makes my heart pound.”

It was silent for a minute after that.

Edward took a step toward me, gently placing his hands on either side of my head and forcing me to look at him. His strong gaze was watery, and I’d never seen him so tortured.

“But Isabella,” he searched my face as he paused, “why did you resist at all?”

And I didn’t know what to say, because I didn’t have an answer for that. Not when he phrased it so simply, and definitely not when he was looking at me like that.

He stepped even closer, pressing me against one of the lockers. Our noses were nearly touching, and his eyes penetrated me completely, making my breath heavy and quick. “I was so excited to see you this morning,” he whispered mostly to himself as he wiped tears from my cheeks. “Bella, I won’t say I love you. Because we both know that’s not the issue here.” I wanted to protest that I didn’t even understand the issue, but I stayed mute.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, Edward had the words.

“But I wouldn’t have resisted you. Loving you would have been exactly like falling. Effortless.”

I responded the only way I knew how. I pushed my chin up until our lips connected. And it *was* effortless, as always. We melted into each other, in frustration, in sadness, in affection. Tears ran down both of our cheeks, and it pained me to know that this wouldn’t solve anything. All I had was this moment. My only explanation.

I faintly heard a door opening, and the sound of a wooden hall pass falling to the floor pulled me back before I completely drowned in him. I turned from Edward just enough to look at the interruption, not sure if I should be angry or thankful for it.

Alice stood ten feet away from us; jaw agape right outside of the women's restroom.

I reflexively shoved Edward away from me.

"Alice, it's not what it looks like." More word vomit erupted from my mouth, the cliché phrase escaping without thought.

For a moment, Edward's face was heartbreaking as he processed my instinctual rejection. But his expression swiftly cleared, all previous emotion gone from his face except for anger. His now cold eyes bored directly into mine as he replied,

"She's right, Alice. It's not."

AN: 'Midnight Sun' quote in there, anyone? Song for this chapter is "Angeles" by Elliott Smith, and I'm not exaggerating when I say it may be the most beautiful and sad modern song I've heard. The only one that may challenge it is "When I Am Gone" by Sparrow House. Real choice downers.

A quick note- a lot of you have been noting that Bella is, for lack of a better term, a dumbass in this story. I think some of that is my own frustration and problems with canon Bella coming out as I write. Otherwise all I can say is this is AU/OOC. She's immature, confused, and doesn't handle it well. But it wouldn't be any fun to read or write a story where the characters made all the right choices, now would it :)

Review because poor Edward is feeling rejected, and needs your support.

Chapter 10: The Trapeze Swinger

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

AN: Thanks a million times for the response. The last chapter got 17 reviews. Maybe we can go for 20 this time? *Hint hint, nudge nudge*

This one goes out to *10 Things I Hate About You*, because my suitemate and I just realized that Patrick Verona has the same haircut as The Joker (minus the green).

"The Trapeze Swinger"

Bella

This must have been what it felt like right before trial in the Spanish inquisition.

Alice didn't say anything in the hallway after Edward turned and left. She didn't speak in the car ride home. She didn't answer Emmett when he asked why Edward left school early. In fact she didn't speak to me until a week later, when she informed me that she was coming to my house after school.

So here we were, in my room not speaking to each other. My lip was starting to hurt from my constant gnawing, but inside I just felt numb. If I focused entirely on the Alice situation, I wouldn't be able to think about, well, everything else.

She sat silently across from me on my bed, looking so damn confused, but still not speaking. Her eyes never left my bedspread, a finger tracing the stitching. I had never felt so uncomfortable in my life. And I'd been sitting next to Edward without speaking for the last five days in biology.

"So Alice, this weather has been crazy lately, huh?"

She ignored my attempt at a joke, "It's cloudy with a chance of rain. Like every day here."

We sat in silence for five more minutes before the tension started to drive me crazy. I reached to my iPod dock on my nightstand and turned on some music. Iron & Wine diffused my anxiety, but only slightly.

"Why were you both crying?"

Her voice came out as a whisper, and she still wasn't looking at me.

I tried to tell myself that we had been right in keeping this between ourselves. If Alice and Emmett knew that Edward and I were at all involved, things would get complicated and out of our control. But the truth was, things *had* gotten complicated and out of control between Edward and myself without any outside help. And no amount of comfort or ease was worth seeing Alice right now. She looked betrayed, baffled, sad.

I could see my decisions from the last four months so clearly now, and I hated what I saw. I did not regret being with Edward. I never felt better than when I was with him, his hands and mouth all over me, filling me completely, taking me over. But it was my idea to keep it secret, because I did not want to commit to anything. It was easier to keep things physical. And I thought he felt the same way.

But Edward had made it clear last Monday that that was never the case. While I was busy fucking without emotion and distracting myself with other boys, Edward was just going along

with my wishes. Trying not to love me so I wouldn't be inconvenienced. For fuck's sake, he practically declared himself to me, and all I could do was kiss him and then push him away.

"Bella?" The overwhelming guilt was too much. I heard my sobs before I felt them.

Alice scooted towards me, and attempting to pull me into a hug, but I resisted. I didn't deserve her comfort.

"Please, remember me, my misery, and how it lost me all I wanted"

"We were crying because of me. It was my fault."

She paused, "Before I interrupted, you guys looked pretty into each other, and believe me we'll get to that," she pointed a finger at me accusingly. I laughed through my tears and nodded. "But he looked so angry when he left. What did you do to him?"

With a heavy sigh, I tried to figure out where to start. "Are you sure Alice? He's your brother, isn't that weird?"

"Bella," she placed a hand on my shoulder, "the only thing that's weird is that you didn't think you could trust me enough to talk to me about whatever's going on." She looked so miserable.

"Alice, that's not it at all, this whole thing was my own issue."

"Ok," I took a few deep breaths. "Edward and I have sort of been seeing each other since November."

"Isabella Marie Swan!"

I flinched at her volume, but continued. "We had an agreement after the first couple times. We were never exclusive. It was meaningless sex at—"

"Sex!?"

"Shit, Alice!" I shoved my palm over her mouth. "Emmett is home, be a little fucking quieter!"

She glowered at my fowl mouth and leaned towards me aggressively. "You've been having sex with my brother for months?" Her voice was quieter but just as vicious. "I didn't think either of you were like *that*."

Jeez, Alice, don't spare my feelings.

"How can you fucking judge me like that, and then ask me why I didn't say anything?" More angry tears fell down my face. I was becoming such a crybaby.

Alice shrunk back from her dominant stance instantly. "I'm so sorry, Bella. Please continue."

I would have put up a bigger fight, but I didn't have it in me.

"It was very no-strings. We both fooled around with other people, and it was really good for a while," she flinched slightly at the details, but smiled for me to continue. "But a few weeks ago things got a little weird. You know the day you came home early because dance was cancelled? You had a present for Esme or something?"

"Wow, I guess I know why he locked the door, huh." She smirked to herself, "and here I thought Edward was so antisocial and sad."

I laughed with her. "Antisocial maybe, but definitely not sad."

"But anyway, please continue."

My smile faded. That's right, I was actually doing this. "I refused to fuck him," shit, language, "sorry, sleep with him with you in the house so we just talked. For over two hours, and it was crazy cause, you know, we hadn't ever actually talked for more than ten minutes outside of class."

"Ew."

"You wanted to know."

"Ugh, fine, anyway," I giggled at her disgusted look.

"Anyway... we got along fantastically, but things were strange after that. Different. The Jessica thing happened," she looked confused, "oh yeah, she gave him that hickey the Saturday before. And head. Then I got jealous, I think, and we fu... skipped class after biology and hooked up, then there was this time in his car, and Rosalie found out, and then I tried to screw Jacob but couldn't, and—"

"Bella, Bella, Bella," Alice interjected. "I have no idea what you're talking about and I don't really need to know *those* details. Jessica Stanley? Rosalie knows?" She stared into space for a second, and then shook her head. "I just want to know what happened that made Edward so mad at you."

It was very quiet for a minute before I spoke. I was tired of running from this.

"I think I'm in love with him, Alice."

She shrieked girlishly and bounced on my bed, and then stopped in an instant. "Wait, and he got mad at you for that?"

"God, no, I haven't told him. I've never actually said that out loud before," That reality hit me. "Wow, I'm in love with Edward." My breathing became uneven, and my eyes started watering again.

“Then what’s the problem?”

“I tried to hook up with Jake because I had been trying so hard to resist these feelings, that I was getting desperate. And then Edward told me that loving me would be effortless, and that he would never try to resist me. I kissed him, and then you came and I shoved him away,” with a shaky whisper I finished, “So I practically cheated on him even though we weren’t dating, denied my affection for him, and then rejected him in front of his sister when he told me he cared for me. That’s the problem.”

“Ok that’s bad Bella, but Edward’s not perfect either.”

I sighed, “I never said he was, but this one is on me. He basically told me that he never wanted to hide our thing, and was only doing it for my sake.”

“But Bella, why didn’t he say something? Why did he hook up with other people and let you do the same?” She threw her hands up in frustration, “How are you supposed to know how he feels if he doesn’t tell you? God, and I thought he was smart.”

It was like a light bulb went off in my head. A fucking epiphany.

If Edward could be brave enough to admit he had feelings for me, why couldn’t I do the same? I couldn’t imagine how he felt. I’d been such an asshole all week, ignoring him, cowering when he chanced to look at me. It was my turn to make a move.

“Alice, can we go over to your house? I’d like to talk to your brother.”

She made that high-pitched noise again, and we laughed as we went to the car. I started the car, and heard Alice mutter, “Here I was thinking Edward needed some ass, and he’s been getting it regularly for months, Jesus Christ.” I giggled.

It felt as if a weight had been lifted. I loved him. And at the very least, he liked me a lot. We would talk through this, and we’d deal with Emmett, and I could kiss him and sleep with him without worrying about everything. The butterflies were back, and I giggled to myself.

We pulled into the driveway, “He’s home. Go, Bella. I’ll see you later.” Alice gave me a quick hug, and we smiled brightly at each other.

I ran in the door and up the stairs. I knocked once lightly on his bedroom door before pushing it open.

And there was Edward.

And there on top of him was Tanya.

Neither had shirts on, and her fucking huge tits were barely covered by his fucking beautiful hands. He broke away from her mouth and looked at the door, eyes widening when he saw me.

“Fuck Bella, knock first.”

I was speechless. I couldn't think. The wind had been knocked out of me.

“Uh... I did. Um,” I turned quickly and ran into the hallway. He was right behind me.

I was still too shocked to talk as I stared at him, my cheeks furiously red. His hair was mused and I could see hickeys forming on his chest. She marked him. But this was so much worse than when Jessica did it. This I had to witness.

“What do you want, Bella?”

Edward tapped his fingers anxiously on the doorframe, and I just stood there staring at him like an idiot.

“I just wanted...” I sighed exasperatedly, “I’m trying to tell you... shit.”

He ran his hand through his hair, as if he were annoyed, “Spit it out, Isabella, I’m a little busy.”

The ache that shot through me at that point was crippling. I barely remained standing as my heart started pounding dangerously in my chest. I could understand if he had moved past me, if I was too late with my declaration. I could even understand him being really pissed. But after everything we’d been through he had no right to talk to me like I was just an irritation. Like I was worthless.

So I found my voice.

“Fuck you, Edward Cullen.”

And I stormed out of the house before he could answer.

Or see me cry again.

AN: So I’m anticipating some very angry responses to this one. But Edward told me how pissed he was, and I can’t change his mind. He’s very stubborn. So don't be too mad at me, because you'll get some insight soon enough.

Song for this is “The Trapeze Swinger” by Iron & Wine. On a random note I'm kinda trying to edit as I go, but it's difficult. Also I want to get up the chapters as soon as I can, so if you go through again and notice a slight change or correction (nothing plot wise, purely in grammar or phrasing) that's why.

Review please because... well it leads to quicker updates (hopefully without typos) :)

Chapter 11: In A Manner Of Speaking

AN: Sneak attack Edward point of view chapter! I wasn't planning on doing one of these, but again I can barely control the direction these characters go, and he wanted to defend himself.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"In A Manner of Speaking"

Edward

I am a fucking idiot.

I'm standing outside her house at 2AM on a Monday because I am a fucking idiot.

I'm an idiot for messing around with Tanya.

I'm an idiot for putting myself out there to an emotionally unavailable girl.

And I'm an idiot because I'm going to do it again.

I had been so angry with Bella. Angry and frustrated and heartbroken because of Bella. It hurt that she had kissed someone else, but I knew I couldn't fault her that. But what killed me is that she felt the need to actively resist falling for me. Was I that awful to talk to, to be with?

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God, the first time I saw her, I thought I was hallucinating. She was walking down the hallway with my twin sister, and she was all smiles and blushes and so fucking adorable. I was a little more composed when we finally met at lunch. My heart nearly stopped when we shook hands. The combination of her beautiful voice and the spark of electricity that seemed to extend from our hands was staggering. Her brown eyes were so big and expressive, her lips full and deliciously out of proportion. Bella just looked so innocent and lovely. I would have been embarrassed that I was gaping, but she was doing the same thing to me.

Then when I actually talked to her for the first time, she blindsided me again. She watched Brando movies, she was funny as hell, and the sexual attraction between us was undeniable. She made me feel like a hormonal teenager for the first time in my life. I mean, I sang that fucking Nine Inch Nails song into her ear, and I nearly came in my pants when she shivered. She was so unintentionally sexy.

We bantered and conversed in biology for a month, and I found myself falling for her more and more each day. But she never gave me any sign that she saw me that way. I knew she was attracted to me, but other than that I was clueless.

And then I went to hang out with Emmett that day in November. And Bella answered the door in those boxer shorts that barely covered her perky little ass, and a wife beater that made it very obvious she wasn't wearing a bra. And when she stared at me with those burning eyes and told me in that husky, sexy as hell voice that we had the house to ourselves? Well I just couldn't help myself.

We both attacked each other, first with mouths then with hands, and *my god*, her hands. A little voice in the back of my head whispered that we were moving too quickly, but there was no stopping us.

It just escalated from there. The first time we actually slept together, I swore that I was in heaven. Nothing could possibly top that feeling.

We never talked about things, but she made it clear that we weren't dating. When I was with her, it was easy to pretend that she returned my affections. But it was always different outside of the moment. She showed no signs of remorse after she making out with Mike Newton in front of me a party. I managed to force out a laugh, hiding how much it stung.

But I never blamed Bella for any of this. I was too afraid to tell her how I felt, so I just agreed with her system. I would rather have her halfway then not at all.

So I found my own distractions, ignoring the irrational guilt I felt when Lauren went down on me in the janitor's closet at school. Or when I sucked face with a family friend at midnight on New Years. I assuaged my guilt by making sure Bella felt better than she ever had before, so maybe some part of her would know that this was what I wanted. She was what I wanted.

I couldn't bring myself to have sex with any of them.

The thought sickened me.

That day in my room a few weeks ago should have lead to everything I ever desired. We talked for hours, just learning about each other. I, as always, was completely engrossed in her. But this time was different. She seemed genuinely interested in everything I was saying. I didn't want to get my hopes up, so I passed it off as us getting along. We were friends. Of course we enjoyed talking to each other.

Then Bella saw that hickey from Jessica... and got jealous. I couldn't even think of another explanation. Her expression went from annoyed, to determined, to unbelievably sexy in the span of ten seconds. We skipped the next class, and sex with Bella was infinitely better than any awkward blowjob from those other girls. I couldn't stand to let her go afterward, so I kissed her hard, praying that she'd go along with it.

I got to just feel her, kiss her, touch her soft skin for the rest of the period.

It was fantastic, but again, I figured it a fleeting moment.

But I couldn't explain away the intensity and emotion as we made love in my car. That speech had slipped out without my control, and Bella's eyes darkened with every word I said. I felt connected to her on every level. If I stopped looking at her eyes or touching her, I would surely die. And after Rosalie put me on edge and I actually *hurt* her, she calmed me down, putting on the perfect music. She even made a joke, though I could tell she was a lot more nervous than she let on.

I tried to subtly ask her on a date that night, just two friends hanging out in Port Angeles, but she was leaving for Phoenix. I couldn't let her go without at least *showing* her how I felt, even if I couldn't say it. So I kissed her as sweetly and as lovingly as I could. I didn't ever want to stop kissing her. The warmth that filled me was indescribable. She looked a little dazed and confused when I finally pulled back, but I couldn't keep eye contact. If I saw her face again, I would blush, and smile, and probably kiss her again.

The next week was agony. I moped in my room for most of break, occasionally texting Bella. Alice was annoyed, but Jasper kept her attention for most of the day.

I only left the house once to go to Blockbuster. The cashier was overtly flirty. Tanya had a reputation in Forks, beautiful but easy. Her androgynous work shirt somehow looked slutty on her, the buttons on the polo opened as far as they would go, her tits desperately trying to escape. She smiled at me and batted her eyelashes. I answered her when she spoke, because it's the polite thing to do, and she slipped me a card with her number. I had to fight my eye roll when she promised me "a good time" with a wink. Think Christine Taylor in *The Wedding Singer* kind of obvious.

When I got back, I dropped her number on my bedside table, and it was soon forgotten. I only had eyes for Bella. I went back to moping until Monday morning.

The minute I saw her in the parking lot, I was whole again. I wondered briefly if Alice could sense the drastic change in my disposition, but she was out the door and tackling Bella so quickly I don't think she did. I sat in the car for a minute, admiring Bella and preparing myself to talk to her again.

I couldn't just walk by her, and I didn't care that I touched her and called her "Jellybean" in front of Alice. She blushed, and I grinned and headed off to class. That image got me through lunch, where Bella played footsie with me, smiling gently. I honestly felt on top of the world. I had missed her to death, and it seemed she missed me too. I had been waiting for this feeling for months.

Until Rosalie mentioned a Jacob.

And Bella froze up.

I only heard bits and pieces of the conversation. I just simmered in my anger, immaturely skipping biology to sit in the car. Wallowing in Elliott Smith was an easy way to ignore my problems.

My heart lifted a little when she found me, but I was too down at that point. I responded to her like a jealous boyfriend, actually following her back to the school to yet at her. I practically called her a slut, and all she'd done was kiss him.

Then she told me everything I wanted her to, that I made her heart race, that I consumed her thoughts, but she ruined it by describing how much she tried to ignore it. Even after I told her, in so many words, how easy it would be to love her, all she could do was kiss me. And of course that was wonderful. But it didn't feel right. For one we were both crying, because apparently I'm a pussy when I'm in love. And then Alice came, and Bella pushed me away, reverting back to familiar territory.

But I was done with the familiar.

I hoped Bella had just overreacted, I really did. I tried not to be mad at her for reflexively pushing me off, but then she didn't talk to me the next day. Or the next. Or any day that week. She flinched whenever I looked at her, and my mind was made up.

I told Bella I fell for her, and she rejected me.

It was over.

It was not clean cut by any means, but it seemed pretty simple.

I was in that state of mind when I called Tanya. She could make me forget, make me feel something besides this overwhelming sadness. And she did, sort of. She was everything that Bella wasn't— blonde, plastic, fake, empty. She knew what she was doing, but it wasn't as good. I had only managed to get her shirt off, and kept having to bat her hands away from my belt as we kissed. It was too much too soon. Bella still had control of that part of me.

I had two handfuls of plastic tits, and was still trying desperately not to think of Bella, when *she* opened the door with a dejected look on her beautiful face.

And then, because I was confused and angry and it was just too damn hard to keep up with her, I acted like the fucking idiot I was, and drove her away as quickly as she came. Tanya tried to comfort me and drag me back to the bed, but I ended up being horrible to her too and she left pouting and huffing.

Bella and Alice must have talked finally, because as soon as Tanya was gone, my sister was screaming at me, slapping and punching me. She cursed and swore and did a million things I had never seen her do. And then she said the words that nearly killed me.

“She was coming to tell you she loved you, you hypocritical asshole! How could you fucking do this to her?!”

There were no words for my feelings at that moment. I loathed myself.

Why did things have to be so damn complicated? Why couldn't people say how they feel, and fuck the consequences? Why didn't I just make her listen to me?

Questions like this haunted me all weekend. I drowned in self-hatred and pity for the next two days. But seeing her face on Monday snapped me out of it instantly. She still wasn't looking at me, but she didn't look nervous anymore. She just looked broken.

And it was my fault.

She was broken because of me.

But Bella wasn't Humpty Dumpty. And I would put her together again.

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So here I am, 2AM on a school night outside of Bella's house, calling her for the seventh time. She didn't answer the phone. I hoped maybe she would answer on the third or fourth try if she sensed my urgency, but she was as stubborn as me. It clicked to voicemail again.

“Bella, please, I know I already told you this, but I'm outside of your house and I'm not leaving until you talk to me. I just want to talk. Please.”

I hung up, gave it thirty seconds, and then dialed again.

“You're not going to stop bothering me, are you?”

My head whipped around to the front of the house, and there she was. Wearing sweatpants that were too big for her and that same wife beater as the first day I came here. Beautiful.

“No. I'm not.”

Bella stared at me for a minute. I could barely see her eyes in the darkness, but they looked empty and sad, which made my heart clench. It was quiet for a long moment. I focused on her deep breathing, which was only masked by the sounds of the night.

“Then you better come to the back porch with me. We can't talk in the street.”

AN: So this was an incredibly quick update, two in 24 hours. But it was in my head all morning, and just needed to come out. Tanya and Edward did not have sex- just to clear that up. Bella caught them, still wearing pants, just no shirts.

Song that inspired the title is "In A Manner of Speaking" by Nouvelle Vague.

You guys are seriously amazing for your response on the last chapter. I never thought I'd get 100 reviews on this story and you not only helped me achieve that, but also doubled the reviews I got for the ninth chapter. I wasn't able to respond to the reviews, but a quick chapter is my way of saying thank you, gracias, merci, danke, etc.

Edward, any way you want him, for all reviewers :)

Chapter 12: Field Below

AN: Here you go. This one goes out to freakyhazeleyes for telling me about the youtube video "Jizz in my Pants 2.0". Seriously. I'll never be able to watch that scene from Twilight without falling out of my chair laughing.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Field Below"

Bella

Why was he here?

I wanted to punch him and kiss him and ask him what the fuck his deal was, but I didn't.

Because everything was just so terrible and not at all like a movie, Edward didn't follow me when I left his house in a betrayed frenzy. He didn't call me to apologize or even explain. He didn't show up at my house with flowers or declare his undying love for me with a boombox outside my window. In fact, he made absolutely no attempt to contact me at all.

So when he called me at 1:30 in the morning, I ignored him, because you can't just ring me four days after the fact and make things better.

But then he called me again.

And again.

Every voicemail was the same, and I couldn't ignore him when he sounded so desperate.

So now he followed me to my back porch, trailing a few feet behind, looking so regretful and miserable. I couldn't see him like this, or I'd give him whatever he wanted so he would smile again.

It was too dark, so I pointed him to a bench and ran inside, flipping the switch. The paper Japanese lights looked so out of place against our worn suburban house. Renee had strung them up when she set out to redecorate the porch. She lost interest quickly, of course, and stopped after the lights. I guess Charlie didn't have the heart to take them down.

Edward's hair shone in the dim lighting, the shadows accentuating the sharp angles of his face. I walked to him slowly, sitting a few feet down the bench to avoid temptation. He stared at me and he looked so exhausted and worn, like he was tired of fighting. I understood. I wasn't in the mood for bullshitting either.

"You're an asshole."

"I know."

I glared at him, hoping he'd feel my irritation.

"And a hypocrite."

"I know." He ran his fingers through his hair and my heart clenched. I averted my eyes, counting the cracks on the old porch. The air was thick with tension, and my body physically ached to feel him. We had not fucked in almost three weeks, and I hadn't touched him at all in over seven days.

For several minutes, we sat in silence. His gaze never left my face and it made me uncomfortable.

Because no matter how many times I told myself otherwise, I did love him. And he was not allowed to look at me like that if he wouldn't even talk to me. I could only subject myself to this torture for so long. So I rose from my seat with every intention of going inside.

"Why didn't you talk to me after I left you in the hallway?"

I stopped walking but didn't look at him. "So this is my fault?"

He sighed harshly, "I didn't say that."

"It was okay for you to fuck someone else because I needed time to figure shit out for myself?"

"I didn't fuck her. And I didn't say that either." Our eyes locked in an angry stare. His mouth tightened, lips pursed in an uptight pout. It was so hard to be mad at someone so beautiful. But I was determined not to hide anymore. I was livid and tired as hell of this passive aggressive nonsense.

“I came to your house that day to tell you I was in love with you.”

He flinched slightly at my admission, but didn’t look surprised, “I know. Alice told me.”

Of course she did.

“Hah, I can’t fucking trust anyone, can I?”

“Don’t be angry with her, Bella. Believe me, she was on your side.”

I scoffed loudly, “Why would I believe you?”

Edward kept eye contact with me as he reached slowly towards the hem of his shirt, lifting it up his torso.

“Edward what are you—“ I trailed off when I saw the faded bruises on his chest and stomach. “Oh my god, what happened?”

He laughed lightly, “Alice happened. And she cursed up a storm as she did it.” Without my permission, my hand reached forward to trace the yellow and purple markings on his chest. My body reacted as expected as I caressed his skin for the first time in weeks. Edward shivered, and I could feel his heart beating under my palm. “I told you she was on your side.”

The words brought me back to reality and I shot back to my original spot on the bench.

After another heavy stare, I spoke again. “Why didn’t you tell me how you felt about me before I went to Phoenix?”

He scooted towards me slightly, “Believe me, I wanted to. But Bella you were always so adamant about the whole no-strings thing. It killed me to know that you were with other boys. But I had to have any part of you I could.”

I smiled in appreciation at his honesty. This was the talk we should have had four months ago.

“What would you have done if I told you?”

“Honestly?” He nodded, “I probably would have freaked out even more.”

Edward laughed and it was so nice to hear it again. “Did you really not know how I felt?”

I thought back to the first time he acted differently towards me. “I noticed a change on the day Rosalie found out. When you talked about me like that, I thought I was going to melt. Or explode. And then the energy between us was so fucking strong...” This was a dangerous route, so I skipped forward to later. “And then you kissed me goodbye that night, and it scared the hell out of me.” Edward nodded in agreement, smiling slightly.

I sighed, knowing the light mood was about to darken. “That was the night I decided I would try to be with Jacob.” The wind blew the small paper lanterns around, and I focused on that instead of his face. “Because at first I really didn’t see you that way. And I had no one to talk to once I did. There was no one to give me advice or to slap some sense into me, except for you.”

Edward reached forward slowly and grabbed my hand, letting out a breath when I let him. “You know you could have talked to me, right?”

I squeezed his fingers lightly, “I know now.”

Another hard question popped into my head, but this was the time to ask.

“Would you have fucked her if I hadn’t interrupted?”

Edward traced shapes on my palm for a minute. “I don’t know. I kept thinking of you, and even though I was so mad at you and so hurt, I couldn’t imagine being with anyone else.” He paused, “I won’t lie though. That was my intention when I called her.”

There was silence again.

We only touched hands and forearms, but there was an intimacy and sadness we never had before. I constantly fought the urge to attack him. Or cry.

“Edward?” I whispered after a few minutes.

“Yeah, Bells.”

“When did it stop being fun?”

He caressed my arm, running his fingertip from my elbow to my hand before locking our fingers together. “It never stopped being fun, Jellybean. I’m just not sure when it stopped being easy.”

My eyes started to water as I thought over my next words.

“I need some time.”

His hand tightened around mine. “I understand.”

“It really hurt seeing you with her. And I know that I hurt you too.” I ran my free fingers through his hair gently. “I think we both just really need to think this through before anything can happen.”

Edward smiled, his own eyes a little glazed. “You’re absolutely right, Bella.” His palm cupped my cheek, wiping a stray tear away. “Come find me when you’re ready. I’ll do the same.” He squeezed my hand tightly one more time and loosened his grip.

But I didn't.

He chuckled, "Bella you'll have to let go of me."

I couldn't release his hand. When I let go, then this was officially over. Never again would Edward and I be together without witnesses and outside interference. Things would never be the same. And I desperately needed to feel this one more time.

"Bella? What's wrong?" I took a moment to notice I was actually crying, small sobs shaking my shoulders. He was so beautiful and worried about me, and the moment he touched my face again I was gone. I launched myself at him, wrapping my arms tightly around his neck and pressing my lips against his. He pushed me away before he could respond, and I felt the irrational sting of rejection course through me as he stared at me in confusion.

"Edward, I know I said we need to take time, and we do. But I want, no need to feel this one more time. I need you. Please?"

I didn't have to ask twice. Edward captured my lips again and moved me so I was straddling the bench, facing him. He took his time exploring my mouth, tongue tracing my teeth and gums, and wrestling with mine. After ten minutes or so of desperate kisses, he pulled back slightly.

"Right here?"

I stood from the bench, smiling as he whined at the distance between us. With shaky hands I pushed down my sweatpants and underwear in one go, letting them fall to a pile on the porch. Edward was quick to respond, pulling off his jeans and draping them over the bench to create a barrier between his bare skin and the wood. His boxers followed and he sat again, straddling the bench and waiting for me.

I walked towards him slowly, savoring the moment as his eyes hungrily grazed my naked legs. It was too cold to remove my shirt, but I knew he understood. I placed one leg on either side of his lap and kissed him. Edward placed his hands on my waist and guided me onto him, groaning into my mouth as we were finally connected. My feet wrapped tightly around his waist as we found our rhythm, rocking slowly back and forth.

Unlike last time, I embraced the intimacy of our connection. Our moans were hushed but forceful and we never disconnected our lips. Even when we weren't kissing we stayed together, simply breathing harshly into the other's mouth. I stared into his eyes when I could, running my hands along the planes of his face, or up his shirt to trace his defined back.

Edward was getting close, his hips shakier, his breathing staggering. His right hand moved between us and traced circles around my most sensitive spot. A cry escaped me. I crashed my mouth onto his again, wanting to be as close as possible when I found my release. We stiffened at the same time, loud moans filling the tense air on my porch.

This was unbearable pleasure, this was ‘I missed you’, this was ‘Goodbye until I get my shit together’.

I collapsed, my mouth unlatching from his as my head fell into the crook of his neck. He stroked the back of my hair tenderly and I returned the favor, loving the feel of his hair under my sensitive hands.

“Thank you,” I murmured into his skin.

He pressed his lips to my neck once, “Just so there’s no more confusion,” Edward lifted his head to look me in the eye. “I do love you.”

The butterflies fluttered back to life in my stomach and I kissed him chastely. “I know. Me too.” Stroking his neck softly, I continued, “All that shit that made me push you away, and made me act like a scared bitch?” He laughed lightly. “I’m going to figure that stuff out.”

One more kiss and I stepped off of him, both of us pulling on our pants.

Edward kissed me again, because he didn’t want to leave this moment anymore than I did, and told me softly, “I’ll see you tomorrow, Jellybean.”

I crawled back into my bed, head full of Edward. I didn’t like watching him leave. But it was worth it to hear him say that he loved me, and to feel him inside me again. I was eager to figure out what freaked me out the first time, and determined not to screw this up again.

With my mind made up, I fell into an easy sleep, dreaming of Edward and the way his hair felt between my fingers.

AN: The song to describe this one is “Field Below” by Regina Spektor. So what did you think? Did they get off too easily? Not easy enough? Just right? Things aren’t fixed between them yet, but they’re getting there.

You guys have been spoiled since I've been updating basically every day. But it'll be a few days before I can update again because I have a biology final Thursday and an organic chemistry final Friday. If you don't understand, take orgo. Then you will. Of course if I get lots of reviews, maybe I could update earlier...

Review because school is going to kill my spirit, but feedback makes me happy :)

Chapter 13: Young Pilgrims

AN: It’s snowing heavily in Manhattan right now. It’s beautiful.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Young Pilgrims"

Bella

"I have a plan."

Edward plopped down next to me in biology. It was Friday, three days after our talk on the porch, and things had been nice. I guess that's the word for it. Nice and normal. We were back to limited physical contact, even though it was obvious that was difficult for both of us. Sometimes I would catch him sneaking glances when he thought I wasn't looking, eyes darkening in arousal when I accidentally did something that turned him on. I would laugh but I felt the same thing when he ran his fingers through his hair... or smiled... or breathed.

I hadn't had any great personal epiphanies. But it wasn't as hard to see him as I thought it would be. Just being near him was enough for now.

"A plan for what?"

"A plan to fix things, of course!"

His eyes lit up in his enthusiasm; it was very cute. "Alright, Eddie," I smiled as he scowled, "what do you got?"

He cracked his knuckles as if he were preparing for some great revelation, and then leaned forward onto his propped elbows. "Hear me out."

Oh shit. That's never a good way to start a conversation.

"What was the biggest problem we had?"

I was glad we were keeping our honest report in school, but I never expected him to be so upfront about it. I fought back the urge to cringe and hide and ran my hands through my hair. "Well isn't that a loaded question?"

Edward chuckled and I was instantly at ease. That calm, warm feeling: one of the wonderful side effects of being in love with someone who loves you. "Let's ignore the tricky ones for a second. I think a lot of our problems came from the whole 'hiding it' thing."

I frowned in confusion, "What do you mean?"

Mr. Banner whistled, gathering the attention of the class. He switched off the lights and turned on a PowerPoint presentation, outlining lysosomes and the process of cell digestion. As soon as

Banner turned to face the board, Edward leaned towards me slightly, his warm breath hitting my cheek.

My heart stuttered. Stupid, annoying, sexy as hell boy.

“Think about it. We never had time to talk at first because we had a time limit, and there were better things to do. Like each other.” I choked on a laugh. Mr. Banner stopped lecturing momentarily.

“Are you alright, Miss Swan?”

Edward pinched me in the leg, because he’s an asshole, and I squeaked. Shaking my head clear I answered, “Yeah, Mr. Banner. Sorry. I have a bit of a cold.” He gave me a strange look before getting back to the lecture. My head whipped towards Edward and I glared at him, but he just smiled.

Instead of continued whispers, I decided to go with old faithful: my notebook.

Alright, so let’s say that was the problem. What’s the plan then?

I shoved it towards him, hitting him hard in the hand so he knew I wasn’t pleased with the pinching thing. Edward flinched, then glanced quickly at my paper. He scribbled something down and pushed it back much more gently than I had.

I was thinking. What if after school we hang out, or something?

My mind immediately scanned through other times we’d “hung out”. In the locker room, my kitchen counter, that one time on his stairs... No, Bella! Bad train of thought. I wrote my reply and slid it over to him.

How would that solve the problem?

He wrote back and pushed it to me slowly, with a hesitant smile.

Well, we’ll go to your house, of course. And Emmett and your dad will be there...

Edward noticed the shock on my face, so he continued in a low voice, “Bella if we’re going to do this, your family is going to need to know right?”

I huffed, “You’re right.”

“And,” he continued in a quiet singsong voice, “if I recall, I was the one who had to calm Alice down after our little talk a few nights ago. Plus I took some punches for you, so you owe me.”

“Mr. Cullen, please flirt with Miss Swan on your own time. Now if you don’t mind, I’d like to get back to the presentation.”

Fuck. Did we really just get called out by Bob Banner?

The class erupted in laughter and I sank into my chair completely mortified. I took a glimpse of Edward and noted that *his* cheeks were bright red. I couldn't stifle my giggles at the unusual sight. He looked at me quickly and shrugged his shoulders, eliciting another fit of giggles.

Eventually the amusement faded, and Banner, who I now had some respect for, continued talking about mitochondria or ribosomes or something. I was staring at the table when my notebook was pushed into my line of sight.

Please, Jellybean?

I glanced at Edward and he was staring at me with his lower lip in a pout, his hair wonderfully dishelved, and his face still a little flushed.

Agreeing to things you don't really want to do: one of the horrible side effects of being in love with someone who loves you back.

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Edward met me outside of my last class, which was completely new.

Emmett would be at Rosalie's until at least four, which gave me an hour with Edward. I was more than terrified of being alone with him. It was easy enough to avoid touching him in school. I'd had months of practice with that. But avoiding temptation when we were alone was something I had never even tried. Why would I pass up something that made me feel so good?

But I was determined to do this right, so unfortunately, fucking would not be an option.

Damnit.

I begged Alice last period to come to my house as well, but she was still sort of mad at me for screwing her brother behind her back. Hopefully I could make it up to her soon. Or at least before she joined Rosalie on Team 'Give Bella shit about Edward'.

I followed Edward to his car, trying to ignore the strange looks we were getting, and blushing furiously when he opened my door.

"You know you don't have to do this chivalrous shit, Edward."

He smirked, "Well maybe I like being a little chivalrous, Bella."

We drove home to The Shins. I laughed hysterically when Edward did his best James Mercer impression, singing in a high pitch and bouncing along to "Australia". As long as we kept talking I could ignore the physical part. He was a fun guy.

Thirty minutes later, Edward sat on my couch pouting.

“Edward, I swear I will watch *Breathless* with you if you can try to enjoy *Talladega Nights*. For me.” I put on my best sad face, “Pleeease?”

His face broke into a crooked smile, and I melted slightly. “Well when you look at me like that, how can I resist?”

Edward spent the first fifteen minutes of the movie sitting with his arms crossed, an irritated look on his face. But he finally cracked when Ricky Bobby said his dinnertime prayer to the baby infant Jesus. I poked him in the side, and he twitched before grabbing my hand in his.

I had never felt more content that in that moment, watching Will Ferrell with Edward as he caressed my fingers. It would be so easy to just slip into this routine, or to kiss him. I had to wonder if it was always like this when you were in love. It certainly wasn't with my parents. And Renee loved Phil, but he was always more like her loyal follower than her equal.

“Edward?”

“Hm?” he continued gently stroking my palm.

“You know how my parents are divorced?”

Edward paused before intertwining our fingers, “Yeah I do.”

“They were in love once. And everything fell apart.” I lightly ran my free hand over our locked hands to keep him relaxed. He didn't say anything, and just let me think over my words. “Charlie still loves her. I don't know if he's been happy since she left. I know having us here helps, but it's not the same.”

It was quiet for a few minutes before Edward spoke. “You know it's not always like that, Bella. Carlisle and Esme have been together for over twenty years.”

“Yeah, I know,” My mind was racing and I wanted to keep talking, so I did. “I just kind of feel like fate fucks with you. We say stuff like ‘Oh it's a sign’ or ‘we're meant to be together’. And people spend so much time working on relationships when maybe it's just not right. I mean *everything* works against you. Time, temptation, misunderstandings, fights, circumstances, so many things can happen. And what if it's like with Renee and Charlie, and only one of them falls out of love? I can't imagine anything worse than that—“

I probably would have kept rambling, but I was cut off by Edward's mouth. The kiss was chaste to start, and it transformed into something much sweeter than our usual grope-fests. His lips were a calming force, like his voice and his touch. Just him.

We only kissed for a few minutes, but it was exactly what I needed.

When he pulled away, Edward remembered our supposed bargain. “I’m sorry Bella, I really was planning on just hanging out with you.” I ran my fingers through his hair with a smile. “Thank you for talking to me. I feel like I understand you better.”

“I’m trying, Edward.”

“I know.”

The gravel of the driveway crinkled under car tires. With a sigh, I scooted down the couch, away from Edward. I chuckled slightly at the sad look on his face.

“Let’s not push him. I promise, he’ll be weirded out enough by this as it is.” Edward laughed knowingly and turned back on *Talladega Nights*.

Emmett opened the door dramatically. “My dearest Jelly Belly, finally I am home!” he quickly scanned the living room, “Edward?” Emmett’s eyes narrowed slightly as he appraised the situation, relaxing when he saw how far apart we sat. Edward, on the other hand, was trying not to laugh at ‘Jelly Belly’. Guess I was on my own for this.

“Edward was telling me in biology that he never saw *Talladega Nights*.” It was Emmett’s favorite movie, so his jaw dropped.

“Dude, how do you live?”

Emmett jumped in between Edward and I on the couch and began quoting the movie line for line. I sent Edward an apologetic smile around my brother’s broad shoulders. He grinned back, agreeing without words that this was a good start.

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Edward went home an hour later, running upstairs for a moment to grab a CD Emmett had borrowed before he left. As soon as he shut the door, Emmett turned to me.

“So Bella,” he raised an eyebrow, “I didn’t know you and Edward hung out.”

I may have been incredibly stupid when it came to Edward and relationships, but I knew my brother. And honesty was not a good idea. “Only a few times. I’m trying to take him out of his pretentious little bubble.”

He looked at me carefully for a second before smiling, “Good work Bells. Lord knows some one needs to. Now go grab *Blades of Glory* from your room, I’m in a Will Ferrell mood.”

“Oh sure Emmett, whatever you need. I’m at your beck-and-call.” I punched him lightly in the shoulder, smiling at his laughter as I ran up the stairs. I noticed my door was slightly ajar, but I didn’t think anything of it. The DVD was on my bookshelf, and since I was organized I found it easily. I turned to leave and noticed a folded piece of paper set carefully on my bed.

There, in Edward's beautiful handwriting, was a note. He had torn a page out of the notepad beside my bed.

This rather simple epitaph can save your hide, your falling mind.

Fate isn't what we're up against. There's no design. No flaw to find.

I swear to God, my heart skipped a beat.

AN: By the way, the whole Mr. Banner calling them out part? True story. Happened to me in senior year biology in high school. Probably the most embarrassing moment of my life.

Song and lyric for Edward's note is "Young Pilgrims" by The Shins. I'm not too fond of this chapter, but I wanted to get one out before the weekend. So sorry if it's subpar.

Je ne dors pas assez depuis trois jours, et j'ai écrit ce chapitre au lieu de dormir. Laissez-moi une revue s'il vous plait, parce que je vous aime !

In other words, review please :)

Chapter 14: Brighter Than Sunshine

AN: "Chansons pour baiser" means "songs for fucking". You can also say "chansons pour foutre". It just sounds classier in French. Plus I was really impressed with how many of you either knew some French, or looked up what I wrote in the author's note. Nice work :)

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Brighter Than Sunshine"

Bella

This was a stupid idea.

Edward had been so good with me, and so patient, that I wanted to thank him somehow. But it was so much harder to think of an idea than I expected. He wasn't materialistic, and had money anyway, so I couldn't buy him something. Plus I wanted something a little more significant. He meant a lot to me, and I wanted to let him know.

When did I become such a girl?

All of my ideas seemed either cheesy or impossible. I had no artistic talent so all crafts were out the window. Edward was the eloquent one, so any poetry I could write would seem lame and childish in comparison. Plus, sap wasn't really my style. The only decent idea I came up with was a mix CD. Songs that reminded me of him.

I'd been scanning my computer for an hour now. And of course, some songs were no-brainers.

There was Sublime's cover of "Scarlet Begonias", the song that was playing the first time we actually had sex. Plus it was good enough that if he didn't remember the significance, which I doubt he did, I could just play it off as a personal favorite. A few other "chansons pour baisers" made the cut, but I didn't want this to be just a sex soundtrack. God, this was so much more difficult than I anticipated.

After another hour of working, I had fifteen songs compiled, and all I needed was a number sixteen to finish it off. It needed to be sweet, but not overly sappy. Just something to summarize how I felt about him. I scrolled up and down through the lists of artists, but nothing really jumped out at me. I finally decided on an old favorite of mine. It cheered me up better than any other song, and when I listened to it I always felt warm and fuzzy. Just like when I was with Edward.

16. "Brighter Than Sunshine" by Aqualung.

I burned the disc and pushed it into a jewel case, adding the track listing and a quick note.

Just saying thanks, and... soon.

Edward would know what I was talking about. I shoved the finished project into my backpack, and ran downstairs to play Guitar Hero with Emmett. I needed something to make up for overly girly afternoon.

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I was practically shaking with nerves when Emmett and I pulled out of the driveway. I had decided I couldn't wait until biology to give my gift to Edward. It already felt like the CD weighed a ton as I fidgeted with it in my hands.

Emmett noticed. "What do you have there, Bella?"

I decided to tell the truth. Or sort of the truth. "I burned a CD for Edward. We were talking yesterday and he mentioned he didn't have it."

"Then why do you look like you're about to throw up?"

"English test. I'm really worried," the lies slipped out so easily I was almost concerned.

"Bella," Emmett hesitated before finishing his sentence, "do you like Edward, or something?"

Well shit. What was I supposed to say to that? Then I thought of something. It was never going to be painless or fun to tell Emmett that Edward and I were a thing. Maybe he would handle it better if I eased him into it.

Emmett continued when I didn't answer right away, "I mean, you've been hanging out with him a lot, and your face looks like a strawberry right now."

I sighed loudly. "Maybe. I don't know. He's really cool"

Emmett assumed that my blush and my nerves were because of this embarrassing conversation, and I let him. He was quiet for a few seconds, but didn't seem angry.

"He's my friend."

"Yes, I know."

He rubbed his eyes tiredly once. "He's also a good guy."

My jaw dropped. That was it? Seriously?

"Just please, don't tell me any more than I need to know. Like, let me know if you start dating, but I don't want any other details." It looked like it pained him to say that, but he *still* didn't look mad. I had to ask.

"That's it?"

Emmett laughed loudly and patted me on the head. "Bells, you're seventeen and I go to college in a few months. I trust you to make the right decisions." Approval with a steaming pile of guilt.

I didn't regret anything I'd done with Edward, but it was pretty obvious to me now that the fuck buddies thing had been a bad idea. And I knew exactly how Emmett would feel about Edward shamelessly screwing his only sister.

But I couldn't let that hold me down now. He didn't need to know that part. Maybe I could tell him when we were forty.

We pulled into the school parking lot and I spotted the silver Volvo immediately. Edward was still in his car with Alice. I jumped out of the jeep before I lost my nerve, ignoring Emmett's "good luck" as my feet hit the pavement, and walked up to the driver's side window. I knocked quickly and Edward rolled down the window, looking surprised.

"Good morning Bella," he smiled widely once the shock wore off. His eyes sparkled and his hair was still wet from his morning shower. Fuck me.

"Hey Edward, Alice." She waved slightly in acknowledgement. "Come on, let's walk in." The siblings opened their doors to exit, and I pushed the CD into Edward's hand before Alice came

around the car. He flipped the case over in his hands with a confused smile on his face, and I stood there anxious and so fucking embarrassed.

“Please don’t make me explain, I’m uncomfortable enough as it is.”

Edward opened his mouth to speak, but Alice got to us first. Between Edward staring at me with that weird look on his face and Alice staring at the ground, the awkwardness was overwhelming.

“Edward, do you mind if I walk alone with Alice?” I shot him a look, praying he’d understand. He glanced quickly between the two of us before smiling and heading off to the building.

Alice was still looking down at her feet next to me, as quiet as she was that afternoon in my room. Remorse shot through me as I realized that in all of my panicking and thinking, I’d never really considered Alice’s feelings. I’d acknowledged that she was mad at me, but that was the extent of it.

Alice had helped me at my worst moment, even though I had betrayed her. She let me cry and talked with me until I calmed down. She even tried to beat up Edward for me when I saw him and that slut together. And I repaid her by casually ignoring her.

I was such a bitch. What did Edward possibly see in me?

“Alice, I am so sorry, for everything.” Alice made eye contact with me, intrigued. “I know I sort of apologized for keeping Edward a secret, but nothing excuses how I’ve been acting lately. I’ve been so consumed in my own stupid drama that I’ve neglected our friendship. You’re my best friend, and I really should have acted like it.” I scuffed my sneakers, needing something else to focus on since I’d pretty much bared my soul twice today. Three if you counted the CD. And it wasn’t even eight yet.

“And you said that whole thing without a single curse word.” Alice smiled brightly at me and yanked me into a tight hug. Nothing else needed to be said.

We strolled to homeroom, linked at the elbows. I’d never normally allow this, but hey, I owed it to her. “So what did you slip to Edward at the car?”

“You saw that?” Damn girl sees everything.

Alice snorted, “Do you really think you’re that sneaky? Now tell me.”

I scratched my head with my free arm and tried to sound nonchalant. “Uh, just a mix CD I put together last night. My way of saying ‘thanks for dealing with me even though I’m incredibly difficult’. It’s stupid, no big deal.”

She looked at me and answered sincerely, “He’ll love that, Bella.”

“You think?”

Alice rolled her eyes, “You’re all he talks about these days. He’d love anything you gave him.”

That surprised me. “He talks to you about me?”

“I live with the guy, Bella. He can’t exactly avoid me, like some people,” she shot me a teasing glare. “And let me tell you, that boy is nuts about you.”

That was enough to quell my nerves for now.

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Lunch was weird. Emmett asked Edward how he liked the CD. Edward just told him it was great, but he sent me a look as he answered. I had to hide my pleased giggle when he mentioned that "Scarlet Begonias" had a special place in his heart.

It was kind of weird to discuss anything about our relationship so openly after so much secrecy. Thankfully, everyone dropped it after that and I ate in peace.

Edward and I walked to biology together as we had for the last few days. We didn’t speak and I fiddled with my thumbs to cover up my discomfort. I was terrified that he didn’t like the CD, or that he thought it was weird. Maybe he was just being nice for Emmett's sake at lunch.

Halfway to the classroom, a warm grip pulled my hands apart. He ran his palm across my wrist before sliding his hand down, locking his fingers firmly between mine.

I gaped up to him, searching for some kind of explanation, but Edward didn’t look at me or talk. He just smiled easily and squeezed my hand. I ignored the voice in my head that cried I wasn’t ready for this, and just enjoyed the moment. That voice of opposition was getting quieter every day. My cheeks burned but I honestly didn’t care.

We took our seats at the back of the classroom, not letting go of each other’s hands until we reached the desk. I ignored the few strange looks we got from our classmates.

Banner started class immediately, rambling on about the movie we’d be watching. The lights switched off as the film started. The intense energy that I always felt around Edward was amplified in the darkness, and I rested my head on my folded elbows, ready to spend an hour fighting the desire to touch him.

A piece of paper was pushed into my arm.

How quiet can you be?

I answered back, a little confused about his intentions.

Very, why?

Not a second later, Edward's right hand came to rest upon my thigh. My breath hitched in anticipation and I observed the classroom quickly. Mr. Banner was reading some science journal at his desk. Most of the class was either asleep or spacing out on the movie, and the volume of the television blocked out any small noises.

Edward's fingertips danced along my inner thigh. I kept my head firmly on my arms to stop myself from shaking. He traced lines along my burning legs, alternating soft and firm strokes. After what felt like an eternity, he made his way to the button of my jeans, flicking it open with ease. I sat up for a moment, scooting in my chair until my pants came down just a little. I thanked whatever higher power gave Edward those fingers when he finally made contact with my heated flesh.

To the outside observer Edward would look bored. I would look tired. And that was so far from the truth it was almost laughable. I fought combustion as he traced tight circles around my entrance. His range of motion was limited by the confines of my jeans, but... fuck, it didn't limit his prowess at all. I pulled my feet up to rest on a higher point on my stool to give him easier access. Edward ran a finger from my most sensitive spot to my entrance before slowly pushing in, first with one finger, and then with two. I trembled as his thumb added gentle pressure to my clitoris. I have to admit, the thrill of possibly getting caught made this even sexier.

My breath was coming in short, quiet gasps as I lingered desperately on the verge of something amazing. Edward leaned closer to me and whispered in my ear, "Let go, Bella." That was all it took. I was a shaking mess as I resisted the urge to cry out in ecstasy. That was my first orgasm from him in over a week, and holy shit. I had missed them.

I turned my head slightly towards him as I calmed and Edward withdrew his hand from my pants. I shimmied them back on, fastening them quickly. He stared directly into my eyes as he lifted his talented hand to his mouth, licking his fingers clean.

Just like that, I was horny again.

I reached my hand towards his lap, ready to return the favor, but he pushed my hand away.

"Why not?" I whispered harshly.

He grabbed the paper again, adding one more line and pushing it back with a smile.

Because I can't be quiet when you're touching me.

I smiled smugly at his admission. Edward leaned forward, and rested his head on his arms, mirroring my own position. He tilted his face towards mine, and looked at me with overwhelming affection.

"Thanks for the CD, Bella," he sighed softly, "I love it."

I blushed, because I'm predictable. I couldn't think of anything staggering or witty to say, so for once, I just said what I was thinking.

"And I love you."

And his smile was brighter than any fucking sunshine could ever be.

AN: Alright, so it's a little sappy and jumpy, but they needed some relief. And hey, I gave you some sort of sex. The angst will be back next chapter... er, what?

Because I was bored, and love making mixes, I put together a playlist for Bella's CD. If you want it, just let me know in a review. It's not just the songs from the story so far. And to toot my own horn (just a little), I make good mixes :)

Review please, because 144 of you have my little story on alert, and that's awesome.

Chapter 15: Masterfade

AN: I'm in shock. 40 reviews on the last chapter alone. That's the most I've ever gotten in one chapter. You all are so incredible, and I really appreciate the feedback. Now enough of that sappy shit, let's get onto the chapter :)

This one goes out to Kitschisme for not only knowing who Andrew Bird is, but for liking him too.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Masterfade"

Bella

Edward walked me to my next class, clutching my hand tightly in his.

I tried to look at him or the floor instead of at the people around us. We passed Jasper in the hallway, and he just smirked. I wondered briefly if Alice had confided in him.

I'm sure everyone else was staring too. It was such a small school, any gossip spread like wildfire. The thought sent the familiar nerves through me. The ones that made me want to run off and pretend I barely knew Edward.

But the thing was, I wasn't willing to let go of him. I was just so happy holding onto him like this. Plus the relaxed smile on his face was completely worth any discomfort I felt from the probing eyes of my classmates.

Another part of me, petty and jealous Bella, *liked* being so forward about our affection, presenting ourselves as a united front to our peers. This was the same part that had fumed at the sight of Jessica Stanley's mark on his neck, and had proceeded to fuck him stupid until I was all he could remember. The same part that wanted to write 'Property of Bella' on his forehead.

For the first time, all sides of me were in agreement. Shy Bella tightened her grip on Edward's fingers for comfort. Sexual Bella couldn't forget the magic those same fingers had performed only thirty minutes ago. Every cell in my body was crying for Edward. And it felt fantastic.

I squeezed his hand again and he looked down at me, his smile never fading.

"Can we hang out at your house after school?"

He stopped walking as we reached my classroom and pulled me so that we were both leaning on lockers, fingers still entwined. "Yeah, no problem. We'll have about an hour or so before Alice gets back from dance." My libido soared at the thought of being alone with him, and I had to shake my head to get back on track. An hour was plenty of time to tell him about my newest revelation. And maybe for a little bit of celebration as well. Damnit, Bella. Focus.

The warning bell rang and Edward's bright grin finally fell.

"I guess I have to go to class." His hand played with mine, as if he were delaying their inevitable separation. I'm sure he thought that once we left this moment we would go back to how things were until I got my shit together, like it had every other time. I was so excited to prove him wrong.

"Wait for me after last period, okay?" Edward nodded and sighed, letting go of my hand.

"Bye Bells."

Before he could leave, I threw both hands behind his neck and pulled his face to mine, placing a single kiss on his lips. When we parted, I smiled in amusement at his wide eyes and slack jaw. He was confused, adorable, and completely fucking mine.

"Bye Eddie."

The actual bell rang, and Edward quickly kissed me one more time before running down the hall. I walked into my own classroom, catching an angry glare from Jessica Stanley. I put on my best shit-eating grin, and fought the urge to stick out my tongue.

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The rest of the day was a blur until I saw him again. I was only shaken out of my daydreaming one time, when a volleyball collided with my head in gym. I awkwardly apologized for spacing out, and rolled the ball back to Mike.

Like promised, Edward was waiting for me when I left the locker room. I chose not to grab his hand, instead folding my arms as if I were cold. His own arms folded up and a hint of disappointment marred his smile. Surprising the hell out of him at his house would be fun.

Once we were in the car he popped the mix I made him into the CD player. We both chuckled in memory of our first fuck as the song started. Edward had accidentally set his iPod to repeat one song, so “Scarlet Begonias” played over and over throughout the entire ordeal. It had been awkward, drawn out, and a little painful. I was nowhere near orgasm when he came, so he had to finger me after he calmed down. Needless to say, Edward learned quickly after that.

Ten minutes later we sat on his couch. I curled up against one arm as Edward held the remote, flipping through channels and whining that nothing was on television after school. He finally settled on MTV with a smile, and I laughed.

“So Edward ‘More Indie Than Thou’ Cullen likes *Parental Control*?”

He scowled at me, though his eyes were light and playful. And after a moment, he grinned too. “You caught me. I find it hilarious.”

We watched in silence for several minutes. Or Edward watched. I watched Edward, taking the time to memorize everything I noticed as the emotions crossed his face. A small scar on his forehead crinkled when he raised his eyebrows in laughter. His lips curved slightly into a crooked grin when he rolled his eyes. I took stock of the imperfections that made him human and the quirks that made him Edward until I couldn’t take it anymore.

I scooted towards him on the couch. His curious eyes stayed on mine as I approached him, and his lips parted when I carefully straddled him. I smiled softly, taking a second to brush the hair from his forehead.

“Hey,” I sighed quietly. His hands rubbed comforting circles on my waist.

“Hey.” My fingers wandered over his face, gently tracing every bone and connecting every freckle. I saw the love I had for him reflected in his shining green eyes, basking in this sensation as his fingers teased the exposed skin of my lower back. I continued my slow exploration and his eyes fluttered shut. His eyelashes were darker than his hair.

And I didn’t care that I was putting my heart on the line. I didn’t care that it might not work out. This was what I wanted. He was what I wanted. Right now.

“Edward?”

My fingers paused on his cheek and he released a breath. “Hm?”

“I’m ready.”

Edward’s eyes shot open and his grip tightened on my waist. He looked over my face carefully, searching for signs of hesitation, and hopefully finding none. After a few tense seconds his mouth spread into a heartbreaking smile, and he muttered, “Finally,” before flipping me over onto my back and crushing his lips onto mine.

I kissed him back with exuberance, chuckling against his lips when my tongue wasn’t otherwise occupied. Happiness burst from us both and he linked our fingers above my head on the couch. I couldn’t be close enough to him, our legs entwining tightly, my back arching up into him.

When the need to breath became overwhelming he broke away.

“What time is it?”

I glanced at the clock above his head. “Three fifteen.”

He pulled away further and went straight for the hem of his shirt, yanking it over his head. “Plenty of time then.” I grinned widely and followed suit, wiggling my pants down my legs. Once we were both stripped we crashed together in a fury of lips and tongues. Edward sat down on the couch and pulled me onto top of him. I groaned loudly. It had been so long since I had felt his completely naked skin against mine. It had been even longer since Edward and I had fucked without confusion or sorrow or agenda. We needed this.

Skipping foreplay, Edward felt me quickly to make sure I was ready before lowering me onto his length. He lifted me up and down a few times before pushing my torso away.

“Bella, love,” he grunted between moans, “lean back and put your hands on the floor.” I nodded, a little confused, until my palms made contact with the carpet. My hips were still on top of his, but my back was pressed against his legs, giving him a view of my entire body. Edward pulled my knees up so my feet were flat on the couch and then held onto the tops of my legs tightly. I thrust myself back towards him once, both of us letting out loud moans. I pulled away and back again, rocking on my hands and completely unable to stifle the sounds coming from my mouth. He penetrated me so deeply in this position. One of his hands slid down my thigh and settled on my clit, rubbing gentle circles.

“Fuck, ah, Bella, you’re so beautiful.”

“Edward,” I moaned loudly as he pressed more firmly, “I love you.”

I clenched my muscles around him and he groaned, “Love you too.” Those words combined with a firm pinch of his fingers sent me over the edge, my arms collapsing so that I was completely limp and shaking on his legs. Edward thrust in and out a few more times before finding his own release, keeping his careful grip on my thighs so I wouldn’t fall onto the floor. As soon as he stopped trembling, he slid his hands up my body and behind my back, pulling me up to a seated position. I felt a little dizzy as the blood left my head.

We sat for a minute, gasping for breath and fucking beaming at each other. Eventually I looked at the clock and whined a little before getting off him and reaching for my clothes. Once we were dressed, Edward lay back on the couch and patted his chest, raising a finger in a 'come hither' gesture. I giggled and complied, stretching out of top of him. Our legs entwined and he wrapped an arm around my waist.

Edward pulled me towards him, placing a soft kiss on my lips.

"Just so you know, now that you're my girlfriend," he paused, "you are my girlfriend, right?"

I nodded at him, biting my lip.

"Ok, well now that you're my girlfriend, I should let you know I have some demands."

My eyebrow raised, "Oh really, Eddie. And what might those be?"

"Well first of all you must watch *Breathless* with me. I refuse to have a girlfriend who has never seen a Godard film."

I rolled my eyes at him. I should have known. "Fair enough. Any others?"

"Why yes," he smoothed my hair, "I require a home cooked meal every evening, and a clean pair of slippers to greet me at the door." Edward attempted to keep a straight face, but his lips twitched slightly at the corners. Sarcastic bastard.

"I suppose you want me in a dress too, right? Full skirt with petticoat and my hair curled?"

"Of course not. I want you in only an apron. Like in that shitty *Anchorman* movie you made me watch."

I stuck my tongue out at him. "Eat me, Edward." He flipped us over so I was on my back and I shrieked at the sudden movement.

"Gladly," he whispered before pressing his mouth to mine. I grinned into the kiss and he smiled back, occasionally ensnaring my tongue, but generally keeping it light. A few times he just pecked my lips over and over until I laughed and held his face firmly to mine. Edward had never been this playful around me, and the warmth that it filled me with was staggering. Why the fuck did I ever fight this?

"I guess you were right about the holding hands in the hallway thing." Edward and I broke apart to see a grinning Alice and Jasper in the doorway.

"Er, hi Alice," I said brightly, pushing Edward off me so that we were both sitting. He had this ridiculous innocent look on his face and I had to cough to cover my laugh.

Alice nearly shrieked in giddiness and jumped onto my lap, capturing me in a hug. I was a fantastic mood, so I laughed and hugged her back. She whispered in my ear, "I knew everything would work out," before pulling back and jumping onto Edward.

Jasper just chuckled from the doorway, glancing at the television.

"No better aphrodisiac than *Parental Control*, that's what I always say."

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I was bouncing in my seat, a completely un-Bella move, with an anxious grin on my face when we pulled into the parking lot the next morning. Emmett rolled his eyes at me and shook his head with a small smile. I'd given him the no-details update the night before at dinner. He seemed genuinely happy for me, if a little perturbed

"Jesus, who are you and what have you done with my sister?"

"Fuck, shit, everything sucks, indie music, damnit. Is that better, Em?"

He laughed at my attempt, mussing my hair. "Much. You can go see him now, Bells. I'm going to wait for Rose." I waved goodbye and practically ran from the car, smoothing out my messed-up hair as I approached the Volvo. Edward exited before I got there, opening his arms for me.

"Well isn't someone happy to see me?" His face twisted into an arrogant grin, and he was clearly pleased with himself. So I changed my target.

"No, I'm happy to see Alice!" I grabbed his sister and pulled her into a tight hug, laughing with her at the annoyed look on Edward's face. As soon as we released each other, Edward grabbed my arm and pressed me against the side of his car.

"Oh brother, it starts already," Alice groaned before running ahead to meet Jasper.

Edward leaned in and kissed me gently for a second. "Well I'm happy to see you, beautiful girlfriend whom I love dearly."

My sarcastic heart melted at the endearment. I was going to be in trouble if I reacted like that every time. I pecked his lips in return before grabbing his hand. "Come on, sexy boyfriend whom I also love dearly, let's get to class."

I spent the morning blissed out beyond belief. Everything was so much easier now. I hadn't even realized how much this decision was weighing me down until it was gone. Nothing could ruin my mood. Not the impossible pop quiz my teacher had surprised us with in English. Not even Mike Newton, who felt the need to remind me that he was always there if I needed him. "For any reason," he'd added with a wink.

Well maybe that pissed me off. But just a little.

Edward was waiting for me in the hallway as I left my last class before lunch. We were still too excited about this to *not* be touching, whether it was our hands, or his arm around my waist, or even my fingers gripping his shirt as I stood behind him.

We grabbed our food from the lunch line. Edward tried to pay for mine but I distracted him with a quick kiss and shoved a fiver at the lunch lady. Holding doors was one thing, but I didn't like other people paying for me. That needed to be discouraged immediately. I smiled at the look on his face, patting his cheek gently.

Edward pouted all the way to the table but still pulled out my chair for me.

"What made you so courteous?" I asked after he sat beside me, "Did you watch a lot of fairy tales as a child, or something?"

"I was just trying to be nice to my girlfriend," Edward frowned, rearranging the chips on his plate.

I didn't mean to hurt his feelings, so I pressed my lips against his cheek and whispered, "I love that about you. I was only asking." Edward took a bite of his sandwich, smiling brightly. I finally looked up at the rest of the table and noticed Alice stared at us, a strange expression on her face.

"What?"

She shook her head, "You two are so cute."

"We'd be even cuter if you let me pay for your food," Edward mumbled. Alice, Jasper, and Rosalie laughed as he glowered at me. I tried to smack his chest but he caught my hand, placing a kiss in my palm.

My brother cringed slightly at the small display of affection, so I distanced myself from Edward. "You okay there, Emmett?"

"Yeah. Just please, God please, be discrete," Emmett grimaced as he picked the pepperonis off his pizza, tossing one into his mouth. "I don't want to walk in and see you two going at it on the couch or anything."

Rosalie scoffed and added, "Or in a parked car in front of my house." Her eyes opened widely and her hand involuntarily shot over her mouth as she realized what she had said. Edward choked on his sandwich, and I patted him on the back for a few seconds before rapidly withdrawing my hand, my face burning with embarrassment.

And Emmett looked between the three of us, quickly absorbing our reactions. Understanding and horror overtook his features as he put together the pieces of the puzzle. Me blushing wouldn't be enough. Neither would Edward coughing on a bite of food. But add Rosalie's panicky expression, and there was too much evidence to ignore.

Fuck.

Shit.

Everything sucks.

Damnit.

Emmett narrowed his eyes at Edward and me, leaning forward with fists clenched around the edge of the table as if he were fighting the urge to attack.

“That was you?”

AN: Dun, dun, dun.

The sex position I got from Cosmo... it’s called the Couch Canoodle (haha) if you want to look it up. And the song is “Masterfade” from the seriously brilliant Andrew Bird. *Parental Control*... what can I say. I'm in college where there aren't many channels. It's completely scripted and ridiculous, but we watch it anyway.

This really should have been two chapters, but I had to get back to the angst. If I had let them be fluffy and happy three chapters in a row I would have been tempted to just let them be. But they can’t run from their history... even if they’ve moved past it.

***Review please.* This is the longest chapter yet, and they make me so happy.**

PS. How hot is Rob's new haircut?

Chapter 16: Grace

AN: Warning, f-bombs aplenty. 21 to be exact.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

“Grace”

Bella

When moments like these occur in the movies, the cafeteria falls silent and all eyes focus on the disruption. Maybe a chair moves, the scrape of metal on linoleum breaking through the quiet.

Perhaps a crowd forms around the table in question, everyone tense and excited at the possibility of a fight.

But none of that happened. The few people at the end of our table continued eating their food and talking as if nothing had happened. The buzz of conversation contrasted sharply with the taciturn air around our group. That might have made it even more nerve-wracking. I was lost for words, and I was pretty sure Edward was too.

“Don’t just fucking stare at me. Answer,” Emmett’s hands had not released the table. I preferred that for now. If he held his grip on the plastic, then he couldn’t hurt anyone. Specifically Edward. “That was you?”

Between the two of us, I was by far the safer choice to speak. Edward’s hand found my thigh under the table, and I drew strength from him, my palm pressing into the back of his hand.

“Yes.”

The moment the word left my mouth, Emmett shot up from his seat and sped out the door into the hallway. The trays wobbled from his legs hitting the table on the way up. This caught the attention of Mike and Jessica, but they looked away after a vicious stare from Alice. Have I mentioned I fucking loved that girl?

I rose soon afterwards and followed the path Emmett had taken. Edward and Rosalie were right on my heels. She frantically attempted to apologize as we approached the door, but I felt nothing but my brother’s presence in front of me and Edward’s body behind me, the two most important men in my life.

We found Emmett walking frenzied circles in the hall. The doors thudded close behind us and he snapped, glare focused on Edward.

“Rosalie said she saw two people having sex in that car.”

“She wasn’t mistaken.”

“So you mean to tell me you’ve been fucking my sister behind my back for a month?”

If Edward was afraid I didn’t see it. He pushed me behind him, cool as ever, as he answered, “Four.”

“What?!” Emmett, Rosalie, and I shrieked simultaneously. What was he doing? This was not the time for such blunt honesty.

“Four months.” Bad fucking idea, Edward. I thought he was smarter than that. To protect my boyfriend from my violently angry brother, I stepped forward and wrapped my arms tightly around his waist. I positioned myself slightly in front of Edward, ignoring his protesting pull on my arm.

Because I knew Emmett. There was no way he could hurt his own sister.

Emmett's eyes flickered to me only for a second, before shooting back to Edward. "You mean practically this entire time I've been calling you my friend, you've been taking advantage of my innocent little sister?" His arms tore at his hair as he falsely interpreted the situation like I knew he would. "You stole her fucking virtue!"

The whole thing would be comical if I wasn't so frightening. Emmett defended my honor with the chivalry and bravery of a knight, but was so incredibly mistaken about the whole thing. And there was a high likelihood he would hurt my boyfriend, who had done nothing wrong.

"I stole his virtue too, dumbass."

Emmett's eyes bore into me, momentarily shocked as I scolded him. "And it's not taking advantage when I ask him to do it. Now will you relax and talk to me? It's not Edward's fault." Instead of calming him like I hoped, my words ignited a new fury in Emmett and he took a step towards us.

"Not Edward's fault? Fuck that, he should have known better. Horny little prick that couldn't keep it in his pants." Edward pushed me forcefully away from his side, and Rosalie intercepted me. I fought against her grip, but she held strong, murmuring, "Trust me," in my ear. Why the fuck would I trust *her*, of all people?

Edward stood stoic, not flinching as Emmett stepped within a foot of him. "I assure you Emmett, that was not the case."

"And that's why you kept it a secret like you were fucking ashamed of her for months," Emmett sneered at him. I started to object but Emmett spoke first. "You could get any girl in this goddamn school and you had to pick my little sister to treat like fucking garbage." He took another step forward, placing a hand on Edward's chest and shoving him into the locker. A loud clank rang out from where his head connected with the metal.

"Emmett, calm the fuck down," I begged. "Don't hurt him. I love him."

I was entirely unfamiliar with this hysterical Emmett. And apparently that was the final straw. Emmett's arm swung, connecting with the left side of Edward's head. He flinched upon impact, bouncing against the locker and sinking to the floor. Edward's hand flew to his left cheek as his head fell between his knees. Rosalie finally let me go and I sprinted to Edward's side, rubbing his back and hair.

"Do you see what you fucking did, Edward? You fucked her and now she loves you. You're going to break her fucking heart." Emmett's breath came in heavy gasps as Rosalie yanked on his arm. He started to calm when she touched him and I let out a sigh of angry relief. I had never seen that side of Emmett before, so blind with rage that he actually hit someone, and I was definitely glad to see him gone.

Edward lifted his head up, the beginnings of a bruise already forming on his cheekbone. "I swear to God, Emmett, it's not like that. I love her too."

"Ha," he scoffed, "okay Edward, you love her." Emmett gestured his fingers in sarcastic quotations as he spoke. "Then how do you think she's going to feel when she hears you messed with Lauren Mallory less than two months ago? What was it you said? She 'attacked you in the best way possible'?"

"Enough!" I jumped up onto my feet and walked toward my brother, brushing off Edward's hands when they attempted to hold my legs back. "I know about all of that stuff."

"Then how—"

"Shut the fuck up," his eyes widened at me as he caught my serious tone. He had assaulted my boyfriend and treated me like a child. I was livid. "It's my turn to speak. You don't know one fucking thing about us. Do you know that the whole 'fuck buddies' thing was my idea?"

Emmett's jaw dropped but I wasn't letting him talk yet, "Yes, you heard me. I said 'fuck buddies'. Deal with it. And do you know that when Edward tried to show me how he felt, tried to show me that he loved me, I freaked and tried to screw Jacob Black? If you had taken a second to fucking listen to me instead of taking it out on Edward, you would have known that *he* has been waiting for *me* to get my shit together. I was the one keeping us out of a relationship until yesterday."

He had finally calmed, and stood before me remorseful but hurt. "Bella why didn't you tell me any of this shit? I told you flat out I didn't care if you dated him. I told you I trusted you, and that I thought he was a good guy. Why did you feel the need to hide this from your own brother, who only wants the best for you? What did I do to make you think you couldn't trust me?"

"Huh, I don't know, maybe I thought you might react badly!" I gestured emphatically to Edward, who was still sitting on the floor, his eyes wide with concern. I took a deep breath, letting his presence relax me.

"Listen, Emmett. I was wrong to keep this a secret. Edward and I have talked a lot about this and I think we both agree that the 'fuck buddy' thing was a bad idea," he flinched again at the term and I rolled me eyes. "But I am done feeling guilty for this. I have spent the last month feeling guilty. I have lost sleep, energy, and nearly him because I felt so guilty about this. I'm done. I am in love. And he loves me too. And honestly it doesn't matter how the fuck we got there. Because I'm not going to let you guilt me into making an even bigger mistake."

"But Bella—"

"You know what Rosalie, who has no allegiance to me, did when she found out? She talked to me. And she protected us from you, because she knew you would do this. Come see me when you've lightened up." I grabbed Edward's hand, helping him to his feet. He moved so that his

arm was tightly wrapped around my shoulders and I slid mine around his waist. And we walked back into the cafeteria, leaving Emmett and Rosalie in the hall.

We walked in silence to our lunch table, and grabbed our food. Alice gasped when she saw Edward.

“Oh my God, what happened? Are you okay?” Her eyes shone with unshed tears as she looked over her brother. Edward smiled down at her, set down his lunch, and wrapped his free arm around her shoulder. As much as they bickered, they loved each other to death and I know they were fiercely protective of one another. That whole ‘nobody can hurt my sibling but me’ thing.

“I’m fine, Alice, really.” He squeezed her shoulder in reassurance. “Bella and I are going to go sit somewhere else today, so I’ll see you guys later.” Edward picked up his food again and led us to an empty table in the corner, sitting beside me instead of across.

“So how do you really feel?” I asked, now that we were away from Alice.

“My face hurts like hell,” he chuckled, rubbing the sore spot. “He’s got a wicked arm on him.” I played with the hair on the back of his neck. I didn’t touch my food, too stressed to enjoy my pizza now.

Edward’s smile suddenly disappeared, and he ran his hands over his eyes, looking incredibly morose. “I’m sorry, Bella.”

“What?”

He frowned at me, his eyes so ridiculously sad I almost wanted to look away. “You and your brother are fighting, and it’s my fault. He’s right, I should have known better.”

“You have got to be fucking kidding me.” I pulled my arm off his neck and folded them in front of my chest. After a month of being so confident and secure, I wasn’t going to let him pull this shit now.

Edward’s face froze in alarm. “What, what did I say?”

“It’s one thing for my brother to be a dumb shit, Edward. That’s not a surprise. He just found out his virginal little sister is anything but. But I expected more from you.”

He ran his hand through his hair, a nervous habit. “I don’t know what I said to make you so angry, but I’m so sorry—”

“That right there. Why the hell are you sorry? Do you regret being with me?”

“No, of course not! I love you.”

“Good, and I love you too.” I sighed, realizing that he only felt bad because I was upset. No need to get him angry with me too. “Edward, you have spent the last several months being so wonderful as I figured things out, and now I have. *We* have figured this out.” I ran my hand up and down his arm. “I’m not going to stop wanting to be with you just because Emmett’s pissed off. But I need you to be here with me. There can’t be any regrets.”

Edward leaned forward, pressing a kiss to my lips and then to my forehead.

“You’re absolutely right,” he kissed my forehead again and cracked a smile. “When did you start being right? That’s my thing. I’m the calm, collected one.”

I smacked him lightly on the arm, not wanting to give him another bruise today. “Please. That was all an act so I could jump in and be the hero at the right moment.” I grinned, pressing my lips back to his.

“I’ll write the Academy. Kate Winslet should bow at your feet.” He kissed me one last time and then sat up to finish his sandwich. His hand grabbed the seat of my chair, yanking it towards him until our chairs were touching. My chin rested on his shoulder and I looked closely at the darkening bruise. I fingered his shirt, rumpled from his time on the floor, and brushed the dirt off the back.

“You look like shit.”

Edward laughed loudly and put his arm around me. “Thank you, Bella. Just what every guy wants to hear from his girlfriend.”

“No, I’m serious, that’s going to be a bad bruise.” I ran my fingers over it lightly and he winced. “I’m sorry you got punched.”

“What did you just tell me about apologies?” he asked, mouth full of food. “Plus, I’d take a punch for you any day. I can take it. I am a man.”

He swallowed the bite and beat twice on his lanky torso as a sign of masculinity. I giggled and brushed my fingers over his bruise again.

“What if we skip the rest of the day? Watch some movies? You can ice your cheek. We can even swing by McDonald’s and I’ll buy you a home-cooked meal like a good 1950’s housewife.”

He sniggered at my joke and pressed his lips to my temple.

“Only if you’ll let me pay, Jellybean.”

AN: I wasn't going to update until at least Friday, but I busted this out for you guys. Since you all were so awesome about reviewing the last chapter, I thought I'd give you an early

Christmas (or fourth night of Hanukkah) present. The Emmett problem is far from over. Though I did listen to your wishes and didn't rough Edward up *too* badly.

The song is "Grace" by the incomparable Jeff Buckley. On the *Live at Sin-e* album, he describes the meaning of this song as "not feeling so bad about your own mortality when you have true love". I think that describes them to a T.

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday, and remember: reviews make great gifts :)

Chapter 17: Happiness is a Warm Gun

AN: This one goes out to Roswellian Vampire, for writing the 300th review and for coming up with some hilarious ways to save Edward from Emmett's wrath (a time machine?). I can honestly say I never ever expected this many people would read my story. So thank you. It's such a confidence booster.

I recommend you listen to "Happiness is a Warm Gun" by The Beatles before you read this chapter, just to get a feel for the tune and the lyrics.

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

"Happiness is a Warm Gun"

Bella

"I still don't understand what you're asking me."

Alice and I sat on the bed in her room, and she was fidgeting her fingers and acting very nervous and not at all like Alice. "You don't understand how weird this is for me."

I rolled my eyes at her, "Well maybe I would understand if you would just say what it is you need help with." Alice had jumped on me at lunch, begging me to come over and help her with some mysterious problem. I agreed, much to Edward's chagrin. But he would be okay. I had spent every minute of my free time with him since we'd skipped afternoon classes a few days ago. And I would be spending the weekend with him too. I smiled again at how pleasant that sounded.

Honestly, I needed the distraction. My fight with Emmett was hurting me more than I wanted to let on. And if I wasn't with Edward, Alice was an excellent alternative.

But since Alice and I had come in her room, she had yet to complete a sentence. She stuttered a lot and pinched her nose, a habit she shared with her brother.

“It’s just... ah... I don’t know.”

“Okay,” I fought a grin at her frustration, “how about you start by telling me what or who it’s about.”

She huffed once, trying to shake off whatever was flustering her, “Jasper.”

Alright, now we’re getting somewhere.

“What about Jasper? Is everything okay between you guys?

“Oh absolutely, I love Jasper.” She smiled brightly, and I was confused again.

“Then what do you want to talk about?”

Stuttering Alice made a comeback, so I cut her off. “Fine, can you at least tell me why you feel so uncomfortable talking to me about this?”

For the first time since we came in here, Alice looked up and made eye contact with me.

“Because you date my brother, and I know all advice you can give me is because of him.” My brow wrinkled as I tried to figure out what she was talking about. What did I learn from Edward that Alice might want to know? The only thing he really taught me... oh. She wanted to know about sex.

I couldn’t hold in my laugh, and soon I was hunched over on her bed in a fit of giggles. “It’s not funny, Bella! This is a serious problem!”

I regained my composure and patted her on the leg apologetically. “Why is it a problem?” A thought entered my head and I frowned, “he’s not trying to force you into anything is he? Because I’ll break his fucking—“

“Bella, Bella, calm down,” she chuckled. “Of course he isn’t. He has no idea I’m even thinking about it.”

“Alright. But you *are* thinking about it, yes?”

Her cheeks turned bright red. I felt bad for thinking so, but uncomfortable Alice was kind of hilarious. Embarrassment was so out of character for her. “Sometimes, when we’re... doing stuff, it’s just so hard to stop. My body absolutely craves him.”

“I know exactly what you mean,” I stated. My mind wandered to the horrible ache that lingered after the first few times Edward and I fooled around. Technically I was satisfied, but my body knew it was missing something. We were only able to deny our primal urges twice before giving into temptation. And God, it might have been awkward, but I had never felt such pleasure. Until the next time...

“Bella?”

“Hm, yeah sorry.” I shifted my legs, willing away the discomfort thinking about Edward had caused in my pants, “Do you feel comfortable enough to tell me what you guys have done so far?” She looked uneasy so I added, “I promise not to divulge any details of my sex life until you explicitly ask.”

She squirmed a little, “Just a little bit of stuff,” her voice squeaked, “with hands...”

A knock cut off her confession. Her tone immediately hardened.

“What, Edward.” I laughed loudly at the look on her face. This was the third time he’d interrupted us.

His question was muffled, “Are you done with my girlfriend yet?” The heat flared between my legs at the sound of his voice, which was both welcome and incredibly annoying. I really couldn’t be aroused if I was going to have this talk with Alice. I was shit for conversation when I was turned on, especially knowing my sex god of a boyfriend was only feet away.

Alice scolded him, “No, asshole, I told you I’d send her your way when I was done. Now go away.” I heard his gloomy sigh and my heart ached a little. That boy had way too much power over me.

She turned back to me, and took a deep breath. “So yeah, we’ve done stuff with hands. Nothing else.”

“So you guys have both gotten off?” Alice’s jaw dropped and she averted her eyes again. This would be really difficult if she got nervous again after every sentence. “Seriously, Alice, just answer the damn question.”

She nodded, her hands over her eyes so she didn’t have to look at me. “I just don’t want it to be bad for him.”

Alice looked so embarrassed and uncomfortable. “I’m sorry, Al. What can I help you with?”

She contemplated something for a second, “Okay. Let’s pretend that you’re dating... Mike Newton, or something, instead of Edward.”

“Newton?” I scoffed, “I can do better than him.”

“Fine. Who do you want to date?”

I didn’t have to think about it, “Marlon Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire*.”

Alice rolled her eyes then looked back at her bedspread, “Alright. You’re dating Marlon Brando in 1951. What does he like? What makes it feel good for him?”

“I have some good news for you, sweetums,” I hoped that the odd term of endearment would get her to look at me. “It’ll always feel good for him.” Alice giggled and nodded. “But I can give you some tips to make it... extra good for him.”

“Please.” She looked like a student. I’m surprised she didn’t have a notepad.

“Okay, Marlon,” I raised my eyebrow at her and she laughed, “really likes when I suck on his neck,” I pointed to the spot behind my ear, “right here. He also likes when I drag my nails along his back while we’re going at it. Oh, and he *loves* when I make noise.”

Her nose crinkled, “Really? I always feel so self-conscious! Like I’m in a porno movie or something.”

I shook my head, “No trust me, they eat that sh... stuff up. Especially when you say their name. It makes them feel like you can’t control your passion for them. Like ‘Mmm, Marlon Brando, that feels so good.’” I did my best sexy voice, which ended up more like a horrible impression of Marilyn Monroe. God, I hope I sounded better than that during sex.

The ridiculous voice was our breaking point, and Alice and I both fell over on her bed in fits of hysterical laughter. We calmed down after a few minutes, and Alice stood, grabbing her keys of the nightstand.

“Okay, I’m going to head to Jasper’s.”

“Right now?” I asked, surprised.

She fought off the last of her giggles, “I’m not making the move today, so to speak. But I am going over there.” She buttoned up a cardigan and slid on her gloves.

“Alice?”

“Hm?”

“Try talking to Jasper about this. I’m sure he’ll be able to help you more than I can.”

Alice blushed again and the stuttering returned, “Uh, I don’t know, Bella. How can... I don’t...”

“Trust me.” Her eyes shut tightly and she shook her head. So I tried another method, “Talk to him or I’ll tell you exactly what ‘Marlon’ *really* likes. Like when—”

“Stop! Stop, please. I’ll do it.” Alice smiled and took a deep breath. We left her room and I walked her to the door. “Good luck!” I yelled from the front steps, and Alice waved halfheartedly, sliding into her car and driving off.

Immediately after I closed the door a pair of arms wrapped around my waist. Edward's chin rested on my shoulder, his mouth just inches from my ear. His hot breath lingered on my neck, sending a shiver through me.

"My parents won't be home for two more hours."

The heat was back between my thighs, and I rubbed my legs together to ease some of the tension. My fingers linked into his and I leaned back against his chest. "And how ever will we pass the time?"

Edward shook his hands free and took a step back. I turned around quickly, staring up at him in surprise. A faded yellow and purple bruise covered the left side of his face, a constant reminder that I still hadn't spoken to my brother. My gaze moved to his eyes and I remembered my current problem. "What are you doing?"

He shrugged, "*I* am going to do my laundry." He smiled, and then walked *away* from me, to the doorway where he had set his hamper. He looked over his shoulder indifferently, "You're welcome to join me."

What the hell?

Part of me wanted to go up to his room and listen to music, you know, teach him a lesson for fucking with me. But unfortunately, the part of me that demanded I follow him was in control of my body. I ran after him to the laundry room at the end of the hallway. I stepped through the door, and Edward was, in fact, loading clothing into the washing machine. I watched him for a second as he shoved his dirty whites into the opening of the washer, and then carefully measured out detergent, pouring it evenly over his clothes.

It was awkward and tense for a few seconds until Edward spoke.

"So can I ask who Marlon is? And what he does that you like so much?"

Edward's face looked so serious, staring daggers into the washing machine, and I couldn't help it. My amusement escaped in a loud burst and I wrapped my arms around my stomach, which was clenching from my violent laughter. "Were you eavesdropping?" I managed to say between gasping chuckles.

He frowned, "I don't see what's so funny, Bella. Why were you talking about another guy to my sister?"

His jealousy sparked another fit of laughter and I had to lean against the wall so I wouldn't fall over. "Edward, I was talking about Marlon *Brando*." His eyes widened in genuine surprise, and I laughed harder. This time he joined me. Edward walked over to me, wrapping his arms around my shoulders as he chuckled. I rested on him for support while I calmed down, tightening my grip on his waist. I looked up at him and tapped him on the nose with a teasing grin, "I can't believe you were jealous of Marlon Brando."

Edward smiled down at me, and brushed the loose hair from my face. “I don’t know, he is pretty dreamy in *A Streetcar Named Desire*.” He wiggled his eyebrows and I giggled furiously.

“That’s what I said!” Edward laughed and pressed a kiss to my cheek. The atmosphere changed the moment his lips hit my skin. My body abruptly remembered that I was pressed against Edward completely, and that we were alone. His smile faded and his eyes burned with lust. My favorite look. Then he took a step away from me and shook his head.

All together now, what the hell?

Edward shut the lid on the washing machine, turned the knob to *hot* and pressed *start*. He turned back to me with the burning eyes and took a step toward me.

“Take off your pants.” My heart stuttered at his dominant tone, and he didn’t have to tell me twice. The linoleum was cold against my feet as I quickly removed my jeans, shoes, and socks. “Underwear too.”

Yes, sir.

He took another step closer and reached for the hem of my sweatshirt, yanking it over my head in one quick movement, and leaving me in a thin camisole. Edward’s hands pulled at his belt before shoving his jeans and boxers down in one quick movement. He stood before me, erect and ready, and staring at me with such desire I could barely breathe.

I reached up silently and pulled out my ponytail, fluffing my hair as I let it tumble down my back. I knew he loved playing with it. Edward placed his hands on my hips and, holding the intense eye contact, lifted me up and set me on the washing machine. The only noises were the falling water inside the appliance and our shallow breaths. He pushed my legs apart, and I noticed how perfectly the height of the washer lined up with Edward. *Thank you Mrs. Cullen for buying a small washing machine.*

He continued to stare into my eyes and ran a cool finger up my slit, causing me to inhale sharply. He traced around my heat, ignoring the two places I needed him to touch me most. And then, he started *humming*. The tune sounded very familiar, but it was hard to focus when he was touching me like that. I shifted my hips, forcing his fingers to graze my entrance.

When he pushed a single finger into me, he started to sing quietly and I was overcome with lust. “Happiness is a Warm Gun”. Edward was singing me “Happiness is a Warm Gun”, because he knew exactly how much that song turned me on. I tried to press my lips to his but he pulled back just out of my reach, still penetrating me with his gaze and his fingers.

“When I hold you, in my arms,” he pressed his thumb against my clit and I moaned his name loudly. I saw his rigid length twitch slightly, but he never stuttered in his movements. Edward smirked during the next line, “and I feel my finger on your trigger.” He added another finger, curling them slightly and twisting. My hips bucked forward toward his hand and he placed a kiss on the side of my mouth, “I know nobody can do me no harm, because...” He repeated the

motion a few more times, and kissed around my mouth, but never on my lips. His hand moved more purposefully, drawing moan after moan from my throat. His voice was husky with arousal when he sang the next part, "Happiness is a Warm Gun." He was driving me *absolutely crazy*.

The washing machine began the first cycle, and it started shaking rapidly. "Holy shit, Edward," the words came out in a strangled moan. The vibrations heightened the sensations from Edward's skilled touch and it was too much to handle. "Edward please," I begged, "I need you inside me. Now." He didn't need anymore convincing.

Edward grabbed my hips and then slammed into me with so much force, it knocked the washer against the wall.

"Fuck fuck fuck, oh my God, Isabella." I'm sure he felt the vibrations from inside me, and I was so close to orgasm that my muscles clenched around him erratically. I finally forced his lips to mine and we instantly deepened the kiss. Our tongues fought aggressively. Edward pulled out and thrust back into me, his pubic bone hitting my clitoris, and I was gone, coming long and hard, and shaking around him as he pounded into me. But the ecstasy didn't fade like it normally did. As soon as my high dissipated slightly, another wave of pleasure crashed down onto me even stronger than the first. My body jerked out of my control and I felt Edward begin to lose it. I lowered my lips to below his ear and sucked hard, whispering in a shaky voice, "Bang bang, shoot shoot."

Edward groaned my name loudly and shuddered against me, his head falling to my neck as he trembled in bliss.

I pushed against his shoulders after a moment. I needed to get off the washing machine; the steady vibrations felt uncomfortable on my hypersensitive flesh. Edward helped me off the appliance and slid to the floor with me in his lap. I pressed a kiss to his new hickey and smiled.

"Love you."

"Love you too."

"And I'd pick you over Marlon Brando any day."

Edward smirked, pleased with himself.

"Damn straight."

- - - - -

I opened the door to my house hesitantly, hoping my messy bun would hide my sex hair. Not that it would matter much now. I walked towards the kitchen with my backpack, really needing a drink. I passed the living room and looked in briefly. Emmett and Rosalie were cuddled up on the couch watching television. My brother slept soundly underneath a blanket, his head in

Rosalie's lap while she smoothed his hair. Her eyes shot to me, and I quickly looked away, speeding down the hall.

Only one more night of this awkwardness, and then I'd been staying with "Alice" for the weekend.

I grabbed a glass from the cabinet and filled it with water from the sink. The water slid down my throat easily and I drained it within seconds, refilling the glass with cola this time. My legs still felt shaky, and my stomach muscles hurt from the hysterical laughter and the two mind-blowing orgasms. Totally fucking worth it.

I finished the last of my soda, cleaned out the glass, and turned to go up to my room. Rosalie stood in the doorway, leaning against it with elegance and intention.

"Hello, Bella."

I raised a hand, and waved slightly. "Rosalie." I tried to walk past her, but she switched sides, blocking my path. I smoothed my hair, and folded my arms defensively. "Is there something I can help you with?"

She raised a blonde eyebrow at me, blue eyes serious. "We need to talk."

"Not now, Rosalie." I tried to walk past her again, but she grabbed my arm.

"Please, Bella. For Emmett." I looked at Rosalie's face carefully, searching for malice, anger, annoyance, *anything*. But I only saw apology, with a hint of desperation. Releasing a heavy sigh, I walked towards the kitchen table and collapsed in a chair.

"Fine. Speak."

AN: I think this is my favorite lemon so far. The Beatles give me all kinds of funny, tingly feelings. I realize that a normal washing machine would probably be too tall for this to work, but let's just say it's a small washing machine, and Edward's a tall guy haha.

I have a new one shot called "The Clanking of Crystals". It's pure fluffy smut for New Years. So if that's your thing be sure to check it out. Shameless promoting aside, thanks again for all your support with this story. There's only a few chapters left (sigh), and I'll do my best to make them amazing for you :)

**Review please, because happiness is a warm gun..
Bang bang.
Shoot shoot.**

Chapter 18: Whispering

AN: “I think an unplanned pregnancy will definitely set Emmett on the path of killing Edward with a machete... after 'bang bang, shoot shoot'-ing Edward in the balls with an AK-47.”

Born2dance94’s hilarious review brings up an interesting, and so far unaddressed point. Bella’s taking birth control pills. There won’t be any unplanned pregnancies.

Now, onto the chapter.

Disclaimer: I don’t own Twilight.

“Whispering”

“Had a sweetheart on his knees, so faithful and adoring, and he touched me, and I let him love me. So let that be my story.” – Wendla Bergman, from Spring Awakening

Bella

Last time Rosalie and I really spoke, it was nice. We girl talked, we bonded, and she tried to help me figure my shit out when I didn’t even realize I had a problem.

Not this time. Once she figured out I wasn’t leaving, Rosalie’s face turned hard and she sat down across from me without a trace of emotion. It was a little fucking nerve-racking, because Rosalie Hale *can* be a cold hard bitch when it comes down to it. Her long fingernails tapped a rhythm on the table. That made me both anxious and annoyed.

And we’d been sitting here for at least thirty seconds without a word. I didn’t have time for this shit.

“If you’re not going to talk to me, I have homework to do.”

I moved to stand and she glared at me, intimidating me back into my chair.

“I’m sorry I ratted you guys out. I know you trusted me, and I honestly didn’t mean for it to come out like that.” The tapping stopped and Rosalie fell silent again, waiting for my acceptance. Eh, I really didn’t feel like talking to her right now, and she did seem repentant.

“Apology accepted–”

“But that’s no excuse for how you’ve been treating Emmett the last few days.”

The urge to run and hide was overwhelming, but my anger at her assumption held me in place. “Excuse me?”

“You heard me, you’ve been ignoring your own brother, just because he hit your boyfriend. And frankly, Edward had it coming. Come to think of it, you deserve a good smack too.” I felt bile in my throat as the rage consumed me. Who did she think she was?

So I asked her, “What the fuck do you know? Just because I talked to you about my thing with Edward one time a month ago, it doesn’t mean you know me. And you definitely don’t know anything about us.”

She scoffed, “Please, Bella. You’re too easy. You started this thing with Edward for the thrill of it. It was fun, it was a little rebellious, and it felt good. You ignored the feelings of everyone around you to fulfill your own selfish needs, *including* those of your precious boyfriend. You’ve been acting like a child.”

“Then what the fuck was that talk in Phoenix? You told me you understood! I thought of all people, you got it.”

“I don’t care if you fuck up your life. And Edward’s a nice boy, but he’s a big boy too and he can take care of himself. Plus as nice as he is, I’m sure he loved the easy and constant sex. But when your decisions start to affect the man I love, that’s when we have a problem. Can you imagine how it felt to find out that his little sister, who he loves more than anyone, has been screwing his friend in secret?”

I wanted to hug her for being so good to my brother, and I wanted to punch her for personally insulting me. “What would you have me do? You agreed Emmett would kill Edward if he found out. And look! I was right. He resorted to physical violence. If anyone was a child here, it was Emmett.”

Rosalie shook her head, “You know Bella, after your little speech in the hallway, I thought maybe you’d finally grown up. I’m happy things worked out between you and Edward, and sure, it’s awesome that you guys are ‘in love’ now and whatever.” She actually used fucking airquotes and I reverted back to my safety net.

“Fuck you.”

She continued as if I hadn’t spoken, “But since then, you’ve avoided the house. Whenever you’re here you lock yourself in your room. You haven’t even tried to talk to him.”

“He hasn’t tried to talk to me either!”

“I know and I told him he should. But Bella, he feels like an asshole, a total prick.” Rosalie took a deep breath, and then went to the sink to grab a glass of water. “Did you know that Edward talked to him?”

I blanched, the shock forcing me back into my chair. My voice came out in a shaky whisper, “What?”

“Yeah. The day after Emmett punched him, Edward called. He apologized, like an adult, and tried to explain the situation calmly and honestly.” She took her seat again, a little more relaxed than she had been a second ago.

“And?” I couldn’t form long sentences. I wasn’t sure if I was pissed at Edward for not telling me this, or if I just loved him more for making an effort.

“And Emmett accepted. Though if I were him, and Edward had been fucking my sister, I would have done so much worse. I would have had his balls.”

“Stop it. Stop it now.” Rosalie gave me a condescending look, like I was a child stomping around the kitchen in a temper tantrum.

“All of you guys, every fucking one of you, look down on me for this. You, Emmett, even Alice. God, Alice tries to pretend it doesn’t bother her, but I know she thinks less of me because of it.” At this point I *was* circling the kitchen, fingers frantically dragging through my hair, trying to release some of this tension. “You talk like what I’ve done is so dirty and wrong, and that I acted like a slut or a child. Stupid, horny little Bella, who lies and cheats and does whatever she wants whenever she wants. And not a single one of you gets it.”

I leaned against the table, in a dominating position over Rosalie. She just sipped her water unaffected and listened. “Do you want to know what happened? Do you really want to know what sinister and blasphemous things I’ve thought and done in the last few months? Do you want to know why I’ve acted like an idiotic bitch?” My eyes stung with traitor tears, and I took a second to wipe them away. “I fell in love, Rosalie. And I did it in a backwards and fucked up way, but I wouldn’t change any of it. Not a single thing. I don’t regret sucking face with other boys, I don’t regret keeping it a secret. I don’t regret the tears or the heartache or anything else. Because it all led me to where I am now.”

I couldn’t stifle my tears now and they fell to the table, leaving a wet spot on the dull wood. “So there. There’s your big explanation. I fell in love with a wonderful boy, and it made me do stupid and spiteful things. And I’m sorry that Emmett got hurt in the process, but that’s it. That’s my story, and it’s all I have.”

Sobs took over me, and I hunched forward, burying my face in my arms. I shook with the pure drama of my speech and with the pain of having to explain myself, but mostly because *I* finally understood, even if she didn’t. A large hand clamped down on my shoulder, rubbing soothing circles onto the tense flesh, but it only made me cry more.

“How much did you hear,” I managed between gasping, teary breaths.

“All of it. And I’m so sorry, Bella,” Emmett sounded closer to tears than I had ever heard him as he comforted me. His hand was so warm and familiar, soothing me just like when I was a child.

Like if I had fallen and scraped my knee. But I wasn't a child anymore, and Emmett wasn't what I needed. My cries quieted a little, but the desire to see Edward grew stronger with every heartbeat. I wanted him to hold me and tell me that I was okay.

I took a deep, shaky breath to control myself. "I'm sorry too Emmett," I sniffled and shrugged his arm off my back before rising to my feet, "but I really can't do this right now."

Emmett looked miserable, and that wasn't my intention at all. So I threw my arms around his neck before he could say anything. His arms tightened around me instantly, engulfing me in one of his bear hugs that I had missed so much. "I'm coming back, and we will talk about things, but there's only one person I want to see right now." I squeezed him one more time, "I really am sorry though. For ignoring you."

"Me too, Bells." Emmett ruffled my hair with a teary smile. "Please just text me or something when you get there."

I nodded and was out the door in a flash.

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"God, pick up pick up pick up," I begged into my phone as the rings approached voicemail for the second time. Alice hadn't answered her phone either. I assumed the drive over would calm me further, but it only made me more upset. I needed Edward.

"*Hey, it's Edward—*" I hung up and shoved my phone in my pocket in frustration. It was after ten, and I felt entirely awkward about ringing the doorbell when I hadn't been officially introduced to Carlisle and Esme as Edward's girlfriend yet. They knew me because I knew Alice, but it wasn't the same. I contemplated climbing to his window briefly, and then remembered that I could barely walk on a flat surface without falling. There was no fucking way I could climb to a second story window without injury. I pulled my cell out again and dialed, praying that this time he'd hear.

"*Hey, it's—*"

Damnit. I hesitantly approached the front steps, knowing I couldn't go home without seeing him. Not if I wanted to sleep tonight. My fist rapped lightly on the fancy wooden door, hoping that was enough. I really didn't want to wake the entire house.

To my surprise, Edward's father answered my knock after only seconds, wearing scrubs and a white coat.

"Bella?" Dr. Cullen took in my appearance and his eyes widened. "Are you alright? Come in, come in." I stepped into the foyer, smiling a little at the cozy warmth of the Cullen home. I looked up at the good doctor and realized it was a little late for him to still be in uniform.

“Just getting home, Dr. Cullen?” My voice sounded sad and unsteady, completely contradicting my casual greeting.

He smiled, “Please Bella, call me Carlisle. And no, I actually just got called into work. But are you all right? Are you hurt or anything?”

I sniffled again and shook my head. “I’m fine. And I’m so sorry to just barge in here so late, but Edward and Alice weren’t answering their phones. Are either of them home?”

“Yes, they’re both in their rooms.” Carlisle appraised me once more then glanced at his watch, “I’m sorry Bella, but I really must go. You’re welcome to stay here until you feel better. My wife is asleep, but don’t be afraid to wake her up if you need her.” I sort of wanted to hug Carlisle for being so nice, but he was too attractive, and that would have been really fucking weird of me.

“Thank you, Carlisle.” He smiled and then left, and I bolted up the stairs to Edward’s room. I cracked it open slightly. Edward was passed out on his bed, a book on his chest. I walked quietly towards his bed and closed the novel, setting it on his nightstand. I sat beside him on the bed, and ran my fingers through his beautiful hair.

Edward stirred at my touch, nuzzling up into my hand, and I smiled. He rubbed his eyes sleepily and cracked one open, sitting up quickly when he saw me.

“Bella? What are you doing here? What’s wrong?” he asked groggily. His hand went to my cheek, diligently wiping my face free from old tears and catching new ones as they fell.

“Rosalie told me you talked to Emmett.”

Edward stiffened but continued to console me. “Yeah, I did. I’m so sorry, Bella. I never wanted to go behind your back with it, but you were so distressed about fighting with Emmett, I needed to do something.”

And I kissed him. Because I didn’t know what to say, but I knew that I loved him. Edward leaned back on the bed, pulling me on top of him and we kissed languidly. Tongues met slowly and intimately. He caressed my back and ran his fingers through my hair as I did the same. Edward let me have this kiss, wiping the tears from my eyes when they fell, and never removing his lips from mine. But when I reached for the hem of his shirt, he pulled back.

“But Bella, you’re still crying.” He gazed at me with so much love and concern.

“I know,” I ran my fingers along the skin of his stomach, “but I promise you everything is okay now. Or it will be. I just really need to feel you right now. I need to remember that this is real, and that you love me too.”

Edward stared at me intently, and then pulled his shirt over his head. I leaned forward and pressed my lips to his. Edward ran his hands over me like he was discovering new territory. He kissed every inch of my skin as he revealed it, removing further clothes only when he had

searched all new parts. “Beautiful” and “I love you” slipped from his lips as he dragged them over my body, and I took them in greedily. I was being worshiped again and I reveled in it. I took my time in my own exploration of his body, pouring my love for him into every touch.

When we finally were naked together, it wasn’t rushed. And it didn’t matter that we had school in the morning or that Alice slept across the hall. There was no rabid search for release. Only a desire to feel each other. We came together in the most primal of movements, kissing when it felt right, sometimes just looking at each other: our eyes, our lips, our joined bodies. Edward sighed my name with a heavy passion, his lips returning to mine as he palmed my cheek, his other hand laced with mine above my head. And in that moment I realized it didn’t matter if no one understood us. It didn’t matter if they never understood. It all would be okay as long as he was by my side.

Edward and I made love until morning, in his bed, in the missionary position.

And it was surreal.

AN: So yes. The song is “Whispering” by Lea Michele and it’s from *Spring Awakening*, a completely amazing musical. If you like the songs I used in this story, you’d love it too. It’s incredibly modern... more like a rock opera. I wouldn’t normally pick these songs, but the quote at the top was just too perfect.

I’ve put up links to videos of all the songs mentioned in this story. They are listed on my profile page, so check that out and give them a listen.

I try not to think about this, but I’m only human. Fifteen more reviews and I’ll be at 400, which is crazy and incredible.

Review please, and hope you liked the chapter :)

Chapter 19: On Love, In Sadness

AN: This one goes out to the-glory-days who left an incredibly nice review that inspired me to get off my ass and get writing this chapter.

“On Love, In Sadness”

Bella

Waking up in Edward's arms was the greatest feeling in the world. Or it would have been if I weren't so damn exhausted. Edward and I ended up falling asleep around five in the morning after a quick shower. The alarm went off at six. He groaned loudly and tightened his arms around me, our naked limbs coming together under the warm comforter. Glad he agreed with me. I needed to sleep more. I was about to drift away again when there was a soft knock on the door.

"Edward, sweetie," the warm voice of Edward's mother came in from the hallway, and I sat up quickly from his warmer embrace.

"Shit, shit, shit," I searched the floor frantically, throwing on my tank top and zipping up my sweatshirt. My jeans were on in a flash. There was no time to look for my underwear. I glanced over at Edward and he was just *laughing*.

"Why aren't you freaking out right now?" I hissed at him.

He smiled widely and mouthed, "The door's locked." Oh. When had he done that?

Edward looked towards his door, yawning as he spoke, "Yeah, Mom. I'm awake."

"Okay good. I have to head into work early today. I had an idea last night for this house and I want to get it on paper as soon as possible."

"Alright." Edward rolled his eyes. He had once told me that Esme was as enthusiastic about interior decorating as Alice was about shopping. The two of them together must be a nightmare.

"Have a nice day sweetie, love you."

"Love you too Mom."

"Oh, and have you asked Bella and her father to have dinner with us yet?" My eyes widened at Edward as an embarrassed blush appeared on his cheeks. He ducked his head and ran a hand through his slightly wet hair.

"I'll ask her today, Mom. Bye."

I heard her footsteps as she bounded down the stairs. Edward stood from the bed and walked to his dresser, giving me a lovely morning view of his perfect ass. Goddamn I was a lucky girl. He pulled a new pair of boxers on, shaking me out of that trance. Wait, Charlie and dinner. Right.

"So you're asking us to dinner?" Edward pulled a t-shirt over his head and glanced at me nervously.

"Yeah, sorry about that. Esme heard me talking to Alice about you and insisted we have you guys over for dinner sometime soon. I completely understand if it's too soon and I can tell her 'no' if it makes you uncomfortable." He was talking very fast, and the blush had yet to leave his cheeks.

“You’re adorable.”

His head cocked slightly and possibly looked cuter. “Huh?”

“Edward after all of this, do you really think an awkward evening with our parents is going to be the thing that freaks me out?”

He smiled softly and relaxed, “Yeah I know. I’m just a little terrified of your father. Even more than I’m scared of Emmett.” My grin fell slightly, and he noticed. Edward came to me, wrapping an arm around my waist and palming my cheek. “About that, what happened at home last night? Are you feeling any better this morning?” I could have told him the horrible things Rosalie said to me. Edward would be furious and would most likely confront her, causing a bigger divide between Emmett and myself. Plus no matter what she had done recently, she had at one time saved Edward from serious injury. So I took the high road.

“I just talked to Rosalie for a little, and then Emmett and I apologized to each other. And I feel a thousand times better this morning.”

There, universe. Rosalie Hale and I are even.

Edward didn’t look entirely convinced but just placed a kiss on my lips, taking my hands in his.

“Edward?”

“Yeah?”

“Last night was...” I struggled to think of a word that could adequately describe the passion and love that had surrounded us as we moved together, but I came up short. All I knew was I had never felt closer to him. “Last night was... totally worth the miserable day we’re going to have at school.”

Edward laughed lightly and kissed me again, “I love you.” I smiled widely at him, attempting to tame the hair on the side of his head, the side he had briefly slept on.

“I love you, too. And... thank you.”

Edward had dark circles under his eyes, but looked completely content. “Bella, I know getting here hasn’t exactly been easy, and I know I’ve done things to hurt you. And you’re certainly no picnic either,” He squeezed my sides to show me he was teasing. “But I’m really glad you’re here with me.” His eyes were molten, and I couldn’t look away. “You make me really happy.”

“You make me happy too, Edward.”

I leaned up towards him again and pressed our mouths together. His tongue ran against my bottom lip and I opened up to him. We kissed lazily for a few minutes until Alice’s voice screeched through the door, accompanied by a banging fist.

“Edward I know you have Bella in there, which is totally gross and I’m going to pretend later it didn’t happen, but I need to get her dressed! We need to leave soon!”

We grinned at each other and Edward chuckled, “You better go. She won’t stop until you do.”

“Sending me to the slaughter, are you?”

“Hey, better you than me.” Edward turned me around and patted my ass lightly, pushing me towards the door. I looked back at him and raised an eyebrow. He waved his hand toward the door, “Go on, woman.”

“Woman? Have fun having sex with yourself, Edward.”

“I love you, dear sweet girlfriend! My heart aches until you’re with me again!”

I met Alice outside the door, and she stared at me with barely contained amusement. I rolled my eyes at her, gesturing back at his room with my thumb, “Men.”

“Tell me about it,” she giggled before dragging me towards her closet.

- - - - -

It had been near impossible to say goodbye to Edward before first period. We were becoming one of *those* couples who had their sappy farewells at the door, even though we’d be seeing each other in only a few hours.

“Is it disgusting that I don’t want to leave you?”

Edward squeezed my hand, “Absolutely. You’re so clingy I can barely stand it”

“Well Eddie, if you must know, I’m only dating you cause you sex me up.”

He smirked and tried to think of another remark, but was distracted by my exposed collarbone. Alice had forced me into this preposterous purple V-neck sweater. “Well next time you feel the need to have a sleepover with my brother during the week, you can bring your own clothes,” she had scolded.

“I’m not sure whether to thank Alice or to beat her up for putting you in that.”

“Edward it’s just my chest, and not even all of my chest. You’ve seen a lot more of me than this.”

“Yeah but the other boys haven’t. Plus I know what I’m missing right now.”

“Were the six hours last night not enough for you?”

“I can never get enough of you, Jellybean.” On that sentimental note, I kissed him goodbye and went to class, fully prepared to pass out on my desk as soon as the lecture started.

A few hours and several brief naps later, it was time for lunch. Emmett smiled easily at me when I sat down next to Edward, patting my hand across the table. It was nice to have my brother back. We ate in comfortable silence, Edward and Emmett occasionally exchanging words. I leaned heavily against Edward’s shoulder, almost ready to fall asleep again. To Emmett’s credit, he didn’t make a single comment about how tired we both looked. In fact he almost looked as exhausted as I felt.

“Bella, did Emmett ever tell you how he met my father?” I glanced up at Rosalie, shocked that she had the audacity to talk to me so casually after last night. Maybe this was her way of making peace.

Emmett coughed on his food, turning red, “Rose...”

Emmett blushing? Well that made things a little more interesting.

“No, he didn’t.”

“Rose, please.”

She ignored him, “We were in my living room, you know, doing stuff.”

“Ew.” Edward chuckled and buried his face in my hair.

“Yeah, anyway my dad came home and caught us with our shirts off. So what does Emmett do? Stands up, walks over to my father, puts out his hand and says ‘Emmett Swan, nice to meet you.’” Rosalie giggled, something I had never seen her do. “I thought my dad was actually going to kill him.”

“Well what would you have me do, jump out the goddamn window?” All of us laughed at the story, and Rosalie rubbed his back comfortingly. Edward tightened his arm around my shoulder. I patted his knee and tapped Emmett’s leg under the table, laughing more when he scowled at me. Alice and Jasper were caught up in their own conversation, staring at each other in a way that made me feel intrusive for watching.

And for the first time in a long time, everything felt... perfect.

And it was pretty fucking great.

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“Bella just tell him.”

“Wow Alice, thanks for the great advice.”

“Hey, you asked me to be here for moral support. If he takes it badly, are you going to stop seeing Edward?”

“Of course not. Don’t be fucking ridiculous.”

“Watch your language. And you’re staying at my house all weekend anyway. He’ll have a few days to calm down.”

Charlie was in the living room watching basketball. He was on his second beer, and he was in his chair, so he was pretty relaxed. There would be no better time to do this. I grabbed Alice’s arm and dragged her behind me, and we sat down on the couch. For a few minutes, the three of us just watched the game. Alice soon grew impatient and pinched my arm, hard.

“Fuck, Alice, don’t do that.”

“Bells you know I don’t like when you swear like that,” Charlie took a drink from his bottle, setting it with a clunk on the table.

“Hey Dad, can I talk to you for a second?”

“Sure.”

I coughed lightly, trying to quell my nerves. “Do you remember Edward Cullen?”

“Yeah, Emmett’s friend. Nice boy.”

That was a good sign. “Okay, well... um, we’ve sort of decided to start dating.” It was definitely necessary to downplay the seriousness of our relationship. Charlie sat there, quiet and a little stunned, and it was making me pretty fucking nervous. Might as well get this all out now then.

“Also, his mom wanted me to invite you over there for dinner sometime soon.”

Charlie still hadn’t said anything. I glanced at Alice, begging her to help me. My dad loved Alice.

“Yeah, Charlie. My mother makes a mean chicken stir fry.” She bounced on the couch excitedly and Charlie chuckled, taking another swig of his beer.

“Well I’m never one to turn down free food.” His attention went back to the game, and the conversation was over. Thank god.

“Dad, I’m staying over Alice’s the next two nights alright?”

“Sure Bella, you girls have fun.” Charlie sounded a little resigned, and I knew he wasn’t stupid or naïve. I’m sure he figured I’d spend a lot of the weekend with Edward. But he never hovered

and he didn't intrude, and I loved him for it. I gave Charlie an awkward one-armed hug and went up to my room to pack an overnight bag.

My phone buzzed while Alice unloaded my dresser into the small duffel bag, complaining constantly about my unoriginal wardrobe.

Why aren't you here yet? I miss you.

I smiled, shaking my head.

I saw you three hours ago. And you call me clingy.

My phone snapped closed and I looked up at Alice. She zipped up my bag and stared at me with a stupid grin on her face.

"You have it so bad, Swan."

"Fuck off, Cullen."

AN: I sort of hate this chapter. Maybe it's just the story coming to a close, and the tedium of tying the loose ends. Or maybe I'm just bummed it's almost over. There's one chapter left and then possibly an epilogue.

The song is "On Love, In Sadness" by Jason Mraz, who I've been obsessively in love with for about six years. Also there's a line "It's not falsified to say that I've found God", which sort of concludes "you get me closer to God" from "Closer". I thought that was kind of cute :)

I posted the prologue to my new story, "Cascade & Cyanide", so check that out. It's a complete 180 from this story, but I have high hopes for it.

Review please, because I woke up extra early (see 9am) to get this out for you guys :)

Chapter 20: Float On

AN: And here it is, the final chapter. Watch this video from *It's A Wonderful Life* before reading if you haven't seen the movie – [youtube\(dot\)com/watch?v=_Y-PlhlhBNU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Y-PlhlhBNU)

Happy New Years!

Disclaimer: I don't own Twilight.

“Float On”

Bella

“God, will you stop laughing?”

I couldn’t help it. Cool, calm Edward was so ridiculously worried about this dinner, which was stupid, because it was sort of his idea. Or at least he hadn’t rejected Esme’s idea. Whatever. Charlie had to work a little late, so he was meeting me at the Cullen house at six. That gave Edward thirty minutes or so to fidget like a nervous wreck.

Edward mumbled to himself, “I can’t believe I wanted to do this,” as he smoothed out his blue button up shirt for the hundredth time.

“I told you there’s nothing to worry about. Sure it’ll be awkward as hell, but Charlie likes you already. Just don’t mention you’re fucking me and we should be good,” I teased.

Edward sighed, frustrated. “Seriously, Bella, why aren’t you more worried about this?” His hair was a mess from his insistent hands, and he glared at me in confusion.

“Oh trust me, I’m anxious too, but come on. Your parents already love me. My job is easy.” I lounged back on his bed, running my hands over the soft comforter. He had such nice stuff. I finally took a good look at his ensemble. The shirt fit him perfectly, and the dark dress pants accentuated his muscular legs. He was so sexy. “Plus, it’s fun to see you all dressed up.”

Edward smiled, “You’re one to talk, my little Donna Reed.” I groaned loudly and flopped back onto the pillows. I had made the mistake of asking Alice for help. Even if I wasn’t as freaked out as Edward, I still wanted to look nicer than usual. I don’t know why I was surprised that she forced me into a dress. It was a dark purple, and fit tightly to my waist. From there it flowed out gracefully, giving the illusion of a petticoat. And even after twenty minutes of arguing, she had somehow gotten me into a pair of kitten heels. My hair was curled and I had make up on. Disgusting.

He came and sat beside me on the bed. “I can’t believe she found this dress. It’s like you stepped out of *It’s A Wonderful Life*.”

“Please don’t remind me,” I pleaded. I went to rub my eyes and then remembered I was wearing mascara. Damnit. Edward stilled my hands, gazing at me affectionately.

“You look beautiful, Jellybean.”

“You’re a liar, Eddie, but thank you anyway.”

“Hm,” he hummed contemplatively, “what can I do to convince you?” He ran a hand along the side of my face, a blush lighting up under his fingertips.

“You could throw a lasso around the moon and pull it down for me, George Bailey.” He poked me in the side and I twitched, a quick laugh escaping me. He did it again, eliciting another giggle. An evil smile crept onto his face.

“Don’t you dare, Edward Cullen...”

Edward dove at me, pinning me down to the bed and tickling my ribs. I shrieked. I *hated* being tickled. And he definitely knew that.

“Edward!” I laughed loudly, “get the fuck off me!”

“Will you admit that you look beautiful?” His fingers were ruthless, and he laughed with me.

“Edwardddd!”

“Say it and I’ll let you go.”

“Fine I’m beautiful!” Edward released me and I pushed on his shoulder to free myself. He had other ideas, his hands tight around my waist as he rolled onto his back, pulling me on top of him. A huge smile lit up his face and I couldn’t help it. My mouth crashed down onto his and he chuckled against my lips. His finger ran gently through my loosening curls, his tongue twirling and twisting with mine gently. We’d been kissing like this a lot more recently. It was nice.

“You have got to be kidding me, Bella. It took *so* long to get your hair right.” Alice glared at me from Edward’s doorway. “And you’re wrinkling your dress!”

I rolled off Edward with a sheepish smile, not at all repentant. “What’s up Alice?”

“Your father just pulled up.”

Yikes. “Okay, we’ll be down in a second.” I looked in the mirror and fixed my dress. My hair wasn’t as easy to straighten out. Edward stood behind me and smoothed the tresses, separating some of the strands so that it appeared curlier. I smiled at him in silent thanks. “Ready to face the music?”

“You know it.” He took my hand and led me down the stairs, squeezing it once, and then releasing it right before we reached the living room. Charlie was in the doorway, shaking hands with Carlisle and Esme, and looking even more anxious than Edward.

His face relaxed the second he saw me. “Hey Dad, how was work?”

“Long. I’m excited for a home cooked meal,” he smiled awkwardly at Esme.

“Well let’s go eat then.”

The six of us filed into the dining room. Carlisle sat at the head of the table. I sat beside Edward and across from Charlie, who was next to Alice. Esme brought the food out, setting the chicken stir fry and rice on the elegant wooden table. It smelled fucking delicious. Absolutely mouth watering. We all took our servings and began eating.

“This is amazing, Esme,” Charlie said reverently, stabbing a snow pea and putting it into his mouth with a hum.

“Thank you, Charlie. I love to cook.” She smiled brightly and everyone continued eating.

And saying nothing.

It was incredibly uncomfortable, but I had no idea what to say.

“So Charlie,” Carlisle finally spoke, “what’s it like being the chief of police for such a small town?”

“It can get a little boring, but it’s nice to be somewhere with such a low crime rate.”

And the awkward silence resumed. This was awful.

I glared at Charlie, hoping he got the hint to make an effort. He sighed and looked to Edward, who stiffened in his seat. I placed my hand on his leg to calm him. “So Edward, how did you meet my daughter? Through Emmett?”

He cleared his throat, “Uh, she’s actually my lab partner in biology.”

“So you’ve known each other a while, then?”

“Yes sir.”

Charlie stared at him warily. “And you waited until now to begin... dating her?” It sounded like it pained him to say the word. I was his only daughter, so I sort of got it. But that didn’t make it any less irritating.

Edward took a bite of his food. “Well Chief Swan—”

“Charlie,” I smiled at my father’s small attempt to be polite.

“Right, Charlie. I’ve always been very fond of Bella. But Emmett was my friend and I tend to over think things. My family can vouch for me on that one.”

“It’s true. He’s ridiculous,” Alice chuckled, nodding her head.

Edward smirked at her, “Plus I had no idea how Bella felt about me. Then a few weeks ago I mentioned in biology that I hadn’t seen *Talladega Nights*, and she insisted I watch it with her. After that I knew I couldn’t ignore my feelings any longer.” Edward squeezed my hand under the table, and I wondered if he was making this up on the spot. If so, I was really impressed. I glanced at Alice, who obviously knew he was bullshitting, and she was trying to stifle a smile.

Edward spoke once more, “I am very easily stressed, and Bella’s helps me. She’s the only thing that works for me. She helps me get away from myself.” He grinned at me, too sweetly, and I saw the mischief in his eyes.

No. Fucking. Way.

He did *not* just quote fucking “Closer” to my father. What if Charlie had heard that song on the radio? I would absolutely die of embarrassment. Thank God, Charlie just looked a little moved and a little more relaxed.

I smiled innocently at Edward, but tightened my grip on his leg under the table, sliding my fingers a little nearer to his inner thigh. He sat up straighter, but gave no other sign of discomfort.

“That’s so sweet, honey,” Esme cooed from the end of the table, patting Edward’s hand with motherly affection. I clenched my fingers closer to his nearly engorged flesh and he hissed. I suppressed my smile.

“What’s wrong, Edward?”

Edward glanced at his mother, and grabbed his hand from under hers. “Sorry, paper cut from earlier.” He sucked gently on his finger for effect. “Still stings a little.”

Damn, he was good.

Dinner was more comfortable after that, especially after the subject turned to sports, which was possibly the only subject Charlie felt passionate about.

“I just don’t understand how you could support the *Celtics*! Sure they’ve done well recently, but they overall they cannot compare to a team like the Lakers.”

Carlisle chuckled, “Believe me, I can appreciate the Lakers as a good team. But I got both my undergraduate degree and my medical degree in New England, and I have to stay true to my teams.”

“That makes a little more sense,” Charlie smiled, taking the last sip of his water.

“Tell you what, I believe the Celtics play the 76ers tonight. Why don’t we grab some beers and head to the living room? The flat-screen has quality you won’t believe.”

“You read my mind.”

Charlie and Carlisle walked into the kitchen, chatting like old friends, which was both welcome and weird. It was nice to see Charlie, who was even shier than me, getting along with someone so easily.

Edward grabbed my plate, and leaned towards my ear, “Why don’t you and I take a walk?”

I nodded and blushed at his proximity.

He placed a chaste kiss on my cheek, “I’ll go grab your jacket.” He handed the dishes to Esme at the sink, whispered something to her, and ran upstairs. I walked into the kitchen after he left.

“Do you need any help, Esme?”

“That’d be lovely, dear. How about I’ll rinse, you put them in the dishwasher.” I smiled at her and we began the routine. We worked in silence for a few seconds, but it wasn’t awkward. Esme had such a comfortable air around her.

“Bella?”

“Yes, Esme?”

She handed me a plate, “I just wanted to thank you.”

I frowned, not understanding what I did. “For what?”

“Edward’s always been so independent, ever since he was a child. He didn’t make friends easily and he didn’t really care to. Even in high school, he kept people at a distance, and he was always so caustic. But since you and your brother moved into town, Edward’s been so much different. So much lighter and friendlier. And this last month or so?” She shook her head with a smile, “it’s like he’s a new person. I’ve never seen him so happy. So thank you.”

I was overwhelmed with emotion, and I didn’t know what to say. So I hugged her. It was completely out of character, and I felt a little strange doing it, but I didn’t care. “I care a lot about him, Esme.” My voice almost cracked.

“That’s good to hear.” We released each other with small smiles and finished the dishes before Edward came back to the kitchen. He was carrying my jacket and a pair of sneakers. I fucking love that kid.

“Ready to go, Bella?”

“Yeah,” I walked toward him and grabbed my shoes, slipping off the heels, and pulling on my old Chuck Taylors. He held up my jacket, helping me into the thin sleeves. As soon as it was on, he slid his hand down my arm and linked our fingers.

“We’ll be back later, Mom.” She glanced at our hands and smiled widely, unshed tears still shining in her eyes from our conversation.

“Okay, have fun you two.”

Edward pulled me slightly in front of him and whispered in my ear, “Oh, she has no idea.” I shivered.

We headed out the front door and strolled down the sidewalk. It was unseasonably warm, and my light jacket was enough. I swung our hands obnoxiously between us and he laughed freely.

“My mom especially loves you, you know.”

I nodded, “Yeah, I think she may like me more than she likes you. I’d watch your back.”

Edward grinned, squeezing my fingers tightly. “I think I won Charlie over, too.”

I scowled, remembering the shit he pulled in from of my father, and yanked my hand away. “That’s right, asshole. What the fuck was that?”

“What ever are you talking about, Bella?” He stared naively at me.

“Oh really.” I folded my arms over my chest. “Let me see if I can remind you.” I walked over to Edward, and turned him around, ignoring his confused look. I leapt onto his back and he held my legs up tightly while I rested my chin near his ear. Edward continued walking until I spoke.

“Help me, I broke apart my insides,” I sung the line quietly into his ear. Edward stumbled a little, and then quickly caught his footing. I tightened my arms around his neck, “Help me, I’ve got no soul to sell.” I could feel his breath quickening and I knew I was winning. I rarely sang in front of him, but if it got this reaction, maybe I’d do it more often. “Help me, the only thing that works for me. Help me get away from myself...” I pressed my lips to his ear for the next line, “I wanna fuck—“

Edward pulled me around and captured my lips before I could finish the line. He kissed me eagerly, opening my mouth to his almost instantly, and wrapping my legs around his waist. He broke away from my mouth, and I whimpered, which made him groan and press his lips back to mine. He pulled away again quickly and set me down, grabbing my hand tightly in his, and walking onto the grass between two houses.

“Edward, what are you doing?” I whispered, my breath coming hard.

He yanked me very close, so that our foreheads were almost touching. “I’m going to fuck you like an animal, Bella. Just like you wanted.” Edward turned and jogged into the backyard of a house. There was a small playground, and a tire-swing hanging from an old maple.

“Do you know these people?”

“Nope,” he replied before pulling my lips back to his. We kissed frantically and he backed us towards the tire-swing. My stomach clenched in anticipation. It was around eight, so it was dark out, but definitely not too late for us to be safe from interruption. The taboo-ness of it all was such a turn on and I ground my hips onto his the moment he sat on the tire.

“Fuck, Bella, I’m so glad you’re wearing a dress.” I quickly unbuttoned his pants and pulled down the zipper, pulling his boxers down and releasing his erection. I jumped off of him only to pull my underwear off, pushing it down into the pocket of Edward’s shirt.

“You are trying to kill me.” Instead of answering, I pressed my lips back to his and straddled his lap, grabbing him with my right hand and moving in slow, firm strokes. Edward groaned and I thought briefly of the last time we had sex because of “Closer”. The movements were frantic, like right now. And we were animalistic, like right now. And that was straight fucking, just like this would be.

“I love you, Bella.”

But that was the difference. It didn’t matter if we were fucking instead of making love. It didn’t matter if we were fighting, or bantering, or crying, or laughing. We loved each other, and that was the difference.

“I love you too, Edward,” I whispered and then positioned myself, sliding down slowly onto his length with a moan. Edward pushed off the ground with his feet as I pulled up and then slammed back down again. The movement of the tire-swing made him thrust hard against my G-spot while his pubic bone hit my clit, and I felt my orgasm building quickly. “Oh my God.” I used the rope of the swing for leverage, lifting up and down with Edward’s assistance as he kissed and sucked at my neck, sending shockwaves through me. The cool air hit my overheated body, and the breeze chilled the wet spots on my neck, a delicious contrast.

“Edward, kiss me.” He moved up to my lips without another word, his open mouth exploring mine in an instant. I took his bottom lip between mine and sucked hard, earning a loud moan from Edward. I felt him begin to shake underneath me and I lost control. My legs trembled wildly while I clenched around him, our mouths never separating as we rode out our orgasms together.

Edward pressed his lips against my lips and then my neck and collarbone. “Bella that was ama—”

A porch light brightened the area, “Hey!”

Our eyes shot to the house where a middle-aged man stood, fuming.

“What the hell are you doing? Who are you?” I jumped off Edward and yanked my dress down, while Edward zipped up.

“Fuck, run!” he clasped my hand tightly in his and we sprinted away from the house and down the street. The man didn’t follow us, but I could hear him yelling still. We ran until his cries had

faded, and then slowed to a walk. I looked to Edward, completely disheveled and out of breath, and we both burst into hysterical laughter. He pulled me close against his chest and I wrapped my arms tightly around him, burying my face in his now wrinkled shirt.

“How the fuck are we going to explain this to the parents?” I asked between giggles. Edward smiled brightly at me and smoothed down the back of my hair.

“Maybe we say we raced back?”

I grinned, “Well we wouldn’t want to be liars, would we?” I kissed him once, and then pushed away, bolting down the street towards his house. I heard his loud laugh behind me, and the slapping of his shoes against the pavement. Edward caught up to me quickly because, hell, I was no athlete, and grabbed my hand in his.

We ran down the street, laughing and holding hands all the way back to his house.

AN: The song is “Float On” by Modest Mouse. Key lyric: “Don’t you worry, even if things end up a bit too heavy, we all float on. All right.”

Did you guys really think I was going to say goodbye to these characters without some sex? Of course not! That one goes to Rita-Bernadette, who asked a few chapters ago if there was any place Edward and Bella *haven’t* had sex. There you go. They hadn’t had sex in the playground of a neighbor’s back yard.

Just the epilogue after this. I want to thank you guys again for being so amazing in your support of this story. The only reason this ever got finished is because of your kind reviews. I mean 344 people have this on alert right now. Amazing.

Please leave me a review to let me know what you thought of the story. Or because I ended with the longest chapter. And well, because I love you guys :)

Chapter 21: Epilogue: Five Years Time

AN: *Tear*, here it is. Remember it's just an epilogue. Longer author's note is at the end. Joel McHale hosts *The Soup*. Michael C. Hall stars in *Dexter* as Dexter and starred in *Six Feet Under* as David Fischer.

Disclaimer: I don’t own Twilight.

Epilogue – “Five Years Time”

Bella

Five years later

“That didn’t take you long, did it?” I grinned widely as I watched Edward hang his diploma next to mine on the wall of our new apartment in New York City. He stuck his tongue at me and continued adjusting the frame in our new apartment. It was a fucking beautiful thing to say. *Our* new apartment.

I had somehow pulled incredible SAT scores out of my ass the second time around, actually scoring higher than Edward. That was a fun day for me when we got those results. I was accepted into Middlebury College, a small but excellent liberal arts university in southern Vermont. Edward got into Dartmouth with ease, thanks to his absurd GPA and a hefty donation from his father. He probably would have gotten in without the money. My boyfriend was always too smart for his own good.

The schools were ninety minutes apart, which sucked a lot, but one of us made the drive almost every weekend. And it made the fucking particularly fantastic because we had time constraints, and we missed each other like crazy. My roommate hated me freshman year because of that, and because she was a bitch. I was thrilled when I secured a single for the next year.

The distance ended up being really good for us. We made our own friends and I know I always had plenty of opportunity to stray, but all the available and willing men just reminded me how much I adored the boy eighty-two miles away. Four years later and I was ready to take a more permanent place by his side.

The first two years of school were the hardest. I took mostly core classes, which required a lot of reading but not an impossible workload. I didn’t have any actual English major classes until the spring of freshman year. Edward, however, wanted an early start on his medical studies and doubled up sciences the first three semesters. He was so stressed during the school year, more irritated and tired than I’d ever seen him.

On a Wednesday in November of our sophomore year, Edward shocked the hell out of me, showing up at my dorm at ten at night. He confided in me that the idea of continuing with pre-med made him almost physically ill, and that his heart just wasn’t in it anymore. He surprised me again when he mentioned his newest passion: music composition. Edward told me he had played piano as a child and loved it, only stopping after another student teased him for it in middle school. The practice room in his dormitory had an old baby grand, and it had become a source of stress relief for him over the previous months. The years of practice came back easily and he soon found himself playing and composing instead of studying for his sciences. That day in class, his organic chemistry professor had mentioned the necessary procedures for securing a laboratory job, and Edward had to leave. It was too much.

I held him while he let it all out, actually crying in frustration at his perceived failure. And I ran my hands through his hair and told him it was better to do something he loved, even if it was risky, than to torture himself like this just because it was what his father wanted. Edward stayed

with me at Middlebury until Sunday night. Monday morning he switched his major. The change in him was instant, almost all his stresses melting away. And Carlisle was proud of his son, regardless of his choices, like I knew he would be.

Right before graduation, I secured a job at a literary agency in Manhattan. Edward was thrilled for me, calling different piano bars in the city until he found a job. It wasn't much money but he was happy, and I couldn't have asked for anything else. Plus I made enough for the two of us.

Our relationship certainly isn't perfect. But considering how childish we... well I was at the beginning, we handle our spats pretty damn maturely. The longest we had ever ignored each other was two days after a particularly bad fight, and I ended up driving to Hanover to apologize only to receive a phone call from Edward halfway there. There was no point in being petty if we wanted this to work. Make love not war, and all that crap.

So here we were, setting up our first home together. I hadn't stopped smiling in hours. If anyone had asked me six years ago when I moved to Forks that I'd be where I was now, I probably would have laughed right in their face.

I watched with a confused smile as Edward set up his keyboard a few feet from the nightstand. *Our* nightstand, in *our* new apartment.

"Any reason it's so close to the bed, Eddie? You know I'm going to trip and fall into that in the middle of the night. It'll be on your conscience if I break an ankle."

Edward scoffed, "Please, Bella. I think you know me enough by now to know I wouldn't let you hurt yourself. Plus you're clumsy, not disabled."

I ignored his comment and jumped onto the mattress, relishing the fluffy comforter that we had bought at Bed, Bath, and Beyond. Edward and I had enjoyed that trip, playing old married couple as we picked out soap dishes and shower curtains and this blanket together. Sometimes it worried me how grown up we were becoming, and I felt old Bella creeping her way back in. I mean, I was 22 and moving in with my long-term boyfriend three thousand miles away from our families. I had a real job and a real life. But all it took was once look at my Edward and all my fears dissipated. Well, most of them anyway.

I glanced at a framed photograph on the nightstand, recalling the night it was taken: the first time our parents had dinner together. Since then, Carlisle and Charlie had met up about one time a week to watch sports and drink beer. That had definitely weirded me out at first.

When the picture was taken Edward and I were sweaty, disheveled, and wildly out of breath, having ran the twenty blocks back to his driveway. We burst in the front door, still laughing loudly. Esme came in from the living room to see the disturbance and chuckled in amusement at our appearances, grabbing her camera from the foyer table. I stood in front of Edward, his arms wrapped tightly around my chest and midsection. My hands clasped over his on my stomach and both of us wore shit-eating grins. It was my favorite picture of the two of us, even though we

looked a mess, and the first one we'd taken together. Our parents never found out my hair was more mussed from Edward's eager hands than from the run.

22-year-old Edward laid down beside me, wrapping his arm around my stomach much like in the picture, and pulled me to his chest.

"I wonder what Charlie would have done if he knew your underwear was in my pocket?"

"He probably would have had you arrested. Maybe planting some Peruvian blue on you when your back was turned, and then calling the drug dogs."

Edward snorted, "Never underestimate a small town cop with a beautiful daughter, I guess."

I wriggled around in Edward's arms so I was facing him. "I have a question."

"Shoot."

"Now that I'm your sugar momma, do *you* have to make *me* a home cooked meal every evening? You know, get me my slippers while you walk around in only an apron?" I smiled at him so he would know I was kidding.

"Oh, you think you're funny, don't you?"

"I've been told that, yes."

Edward squeezed my sides lightly, which tickled like hell, and stopped with a smile when he saw my warning glare. "Well if you must know, Bella, once you're my wife I plan on milking you for everything your worth."

I rolled my eyes. He did this all the time. I wasn't exactly opposed to the idea of being Edward's wife, but I wasn't ready to tell him that yet.

"I already told you, Edward. I'm not marrying you. I'm holding out for Joel McHale."

He groaned, "What is it with you and that guy?"

I shrugged, pinching his stomach, "He's hilarious. *The Soup* is the best show on television."

"It just plays clips from other bad shows! How is that good?"

I clicked my tongue and shook my head. "I wouldn't expect you to understand, Jean-Claude Godard."

Edward sighed loudly, "I've told you a million times, Bella. It's Jean-*Luc* Godard. The only Jean-Claude I know of is Jean-Claude Van Damme." I giggled at the correction he had to make every time I tried to say his name. "Besides, you know you're marrying me."

“Nope. If Joel falls through, there’s always Michael C. Hall. Serial killers and gay funeral directors are the dreamiest.”

He laughed, hugging me closer to his body. “Just you wait, Jellybean. I’m going to propose to you some day and it’s going to blow your mind. You won’t know what hit you.” Edward stared at me more seriously, running his fingers along my cheekbone, “I am going to marry you, Bella Swan.”

I leaned forward and pressed my lips to his, agreeing with him and asking for a little more time without a word. He pulled me closer, holding my chin as he coaxed my mouth open. The tingles that spread through me, though completely familiar, made me feel warm and loved. He still put butterflies in my stomach. And of course, he still did *other* things to me.

“So, Edward,” I asked once we broke apart, my face still just inches from his. “Which room do you suggest we christen first?”

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Five hours later Edward and I were snuggled in our bed, completely exhausted and completely satiated. He fell asleep within minutes, mumbling “I love you” before losing consciousness, which made me smile. I had more trouble, the enormity of our day causing my mind to race.

I was happier in my life than I could have ever dreamed. And it was even better knowing my family was happy as well. Emmett and Rosalie were settled just outside of Seattle. They opened their own car shop a few years earlier and made a decent living. Alice and Jasper had married at nineteen after Alice got pregnant. She faced that challenge like only Alice could, staying in school in Washington and finishing her degree on schedule. She worked as a stylist in San Francisco, dressing people up like her own private Barbie dolls for a living, which was really perfect for her. Jasper was in graduate school, and expressed interest in becoming a professional student and a stay at home dad. Even Charlie had found happiness, falling in love with a woman from La Push during my senior year of high school.

And Edward and I? We were fucking golden.

I pulled away from Edward’s warm embrace, giggling quietly at the lazy whine that escaped his lips, and grabbed the picture again from the nightstand. So much had changed in five years. I was far from the stupid girl who had actively pushed away a great guy because she was afraid of getting hurt. I studied the picture, feeling pretty damn nostalgic, and noticed what looked like an indentation from writing with a pen on the top corner of the photo.

Huh, I’d never seen that before. I pulled the back off the frame quietly and removed the photo. Edward had given it to me in the frame before we left for school and I had never taken it out. If I had I would have noticed the inscription on the back in Edward’s handwriting.

*“In five years time, I might not know you.
In five years time, we might not speak.”*

*In five years time, we might not get along.
In five years time, you might just prove me wrong.*

Love you, Jellybean. Always. No matter what.

I slid the picture back in its frame and climbed back to Edward, grinning when he tightened his arms around me in his sleep. I placed a kiss on his naked chest, my heart overflowing with love for this wonderful man. I buried my head into the crook of his neck and smiled softly in contentment.

I was going to marry him.

AN: The End. Cheesy and romantic and happy, because I needed these guys to have a cheerful ending. The song is "5 Years Time" by Noah & The Whale- the happiest song I've ever heard.

I'm going on the record right now – I'm not writing a sequel. A lot of you guys have asked about it and I'm sorry. Their story is over. I'm going to let them be happy. However I may do a separate set of one-shots connected to this story of just lemons for when I get writer's block. They can be from before YGMCTG, or maybe snippets of how they christened their new apartment. You guys can even request stuff. It'll be purely for fun- no plot.

Check out my new story– "Cascade & Cyanide", with a very different Edward and Bella. I have a prologue and the first chapter up right now, and I'm already working on the next few. It should be interesting. And of course there's "The Clanking of Crystals" and "Ghosts" if you need some one-shots of Edward/Bella fluff to fill the void.

I don't even know how to thank you guys for the support you've giving me throughout this story. It wouldn't have gotten past the first few chapters without your kind reviews- particularly freakyhazeeyes, Madison Carthy, Sakiel-Norn, and vladibunny who reviewed from the beginning when no one had heard of the story and gave me enough motivation to continue.

Leave a review, because a lot of you read this (still so incredible) and I really want to hear from you.

Plus, you know I love you guys and I'm just as sad to see this story go.

Chapter 22: AN: Companion set of oneshots

AN: Sorry for the fake out. Just wanted to let you guys know that "My Whole Existence is Flawed" is up, the companion set of one-shots for this story. It's pretty much just smut, so

check that out. Again, it's purely to help with writer's block and has no impact on the plot of the story.

Thanks guys :)

Also, thought I would put this here instead of on the profile page, cause it's getting pretty cluttered there.

Music mentioned in "You Get Me Closer To God"

"Closer" - Nine Inch Nails
"Nights in White Satin" - The Moody Blues
"Enjoy" - Björk
"Young Lust" - Pink Floyd
"Weekends" - The Perishers
"We Looked Like Giants" - Death Cab For Cutie
"I Was A Kaleidoscope" - Death Cab For Cutie
"My Manic & I" - Laura Marling
"Easy / Lucky / Free" - Bright Eyes
"Degausser" - Brand New
"Angeles" - Elliott Smith
"The Trapeze Swinger" - Iron & Wine
"In A Manner of Speaking" - Nouvelle Vague
"Field Below" - Regina Spektor
"Australia" - The Shins
"Young Pilgrims" - The Shins
"Brighter Than Sunshine" - Aqualung
"Masterfade" - Andrew Bird
"Grace" - Jeff Buckley
"Happiness is a Warm Gun" - The Beatles
"Whispering" - Lea Michele
"On Love, In Sadness" - Jason Mraz
"Float On" - Modest Mouse
"5 Years Time" - Noah and the Whale

Bella's Mix CD de chapitre 14:

1. "Scarlet Begonias" - Sublime
2. "I've Just Seen A Face" - The Beatles
3. "Fake Palindromes" - Andrew Bird
4. "Closer" - Nine Inch Nails
5. "Blood, Sex, and Booze" - Green Day
6. "Tap At My Window" - Laura Marling
7. "Lola" - The Kinks

8. "Made Up Lovesong #43" - Guillemots
9. "I Bet You Look Good On the Dance Floor" - Arctic Monkeys
10. "School Uniforms" - The Wombats
11. "1921" - The Who
12. "Passenger Seat" - Death Cab For Cutie
13. "Fairest of the Seasons" - Nico
14. "Say Yes" - Elliott Smith
15. "5 Years Time" - Noah and the Whale
16. "Brighter Than Sunshine" - Aqualung