

Hot and Bothered: New Moon in Quarantine

Chapter 4: Waking Up

Vanessa: Chapter 4: Waking Up

„Time passes. Even when it seems impossible. Even when each tick of the second hand aches like the pulse of blood behind a bruise. (*intro music starts*) It passes unevenly, in strange lurches and dragging lulls, but pass it does. Even for me.“
I'm Vanessa Zoltan -

Julia: - and I'm Julia Argy.

Vanessa: And this is Hot and Bothered: Twilight in Quarantine.

intro music plays and fades

Vanessa: One of my updates is gonna be that time passes, so...

Julia: Oh wow, spoiler alert!

Vanessa: (laughs) I forgot that time passed, but Bella was like... No no, time passes and I was like... Huh.

Julia: You didn't get that time passes from all of those otherwise blank pages but for the months? That didn't register with you?

Vanessa: I thought I had understood it but Bella repeating it I was like... uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh.

Julia: Uh-huh, queen of clarity.

Besides time passing, do you wanna recap what else happens in this chapter?
(chuckles)

Vanessa: (speaking very clearly) Over thirty seconds (Julia snorting with laughter), it will pass as thirty seconds.

Okay, on your mark, get set, go!

Julia: (timer ticking in the background)

So, Charlie confronts Bella about her depression and she says I'm not going a therapist and I'm not going to see Renee because maybe I'll forget about Edward and that would be so sad. And then she tries to convince Charlie she's not depressed by asking Jessica to a movie. She proceeds to like, stand in the snack line for the entire movie, occasionally see a zombie get murdered. She walks out and then she goes to approach a group of scary men because it gives her some kind of adrenaline high by imagining Edward telling her don't like, go talk to scary men. And then Jessica gets rightly mad at her.

(buzzer sound, thirty seconds over)

Vanessa: You did great!

Julia: Thank you!

Vanessa: I am very confused about the Edward vision. So, it's not magic. It's not some version of Edward that's actually appearing?

Julia: I don't have a clear answer on that, I think we'll have to wait for like the „Midnight Sun“ sequel to see if Edward is actually astral projecting to try to save Bella's life.

Vanessa: (sounding confused) Wha- what is astro projecting?

Julia: It's *astral* projecting. It's like a hologram.

Vanessa: (exclaiming) Oh!

Julia: But you send your soul out.

Vanessa: Cool! (Julia laughing) Have I ever done it by accident?

Julia: I mean I haven't ever tried to approach a group of scary men in a bar but I'm sure if I did you would astral project and say "No Julia, don't do it."

Vanessa: I *totally* would! I would be like "What are you doing? Shut it down. Go home." (Julia laughs)
Okay, do you wanna count me in?

Julia: 3, 2, 1, go!

Vanessa: (timer ticking in the background)
So Charlie is like genuinely concerned. Bella is like "There is no reason to be concerned, I'm getting really good grades, I read calculus for fun." Bella apparently spent like one week being sad and then was like "No more sad, no feelings, dead inside" feelings. And um- and then this like, exploration with Jessica is about her waking back up. She's like "Oh, feelings! Now that I've thought of Edward and heard his voice am I gonna like, deal with the repercussions of really feeling and missing him?" And so it seems as though some sort of transition period is ending.
(buzzer sound, thirty seconds over)
I gave more of an emotional review- of the chapter.

Julia: Yeah, I feel like together with the plot and the emotions we really covered it.

Vanessa: Okay, Breaking News! Do you have any? Do I need to do the sound effect?

Julia: Yeah, please do the sound effect.

Vanessa: Okay, um- *Doo-doo-doo!*

Julia: Okay. Mike has been asking Bella out every Friday for October, November, December, January.

Vanessa: Is that what he's been doing? I was confused. He's been saying "Are you coming to work tomorrow?"

Julia: I think he's asking if she's working 'cause if she's free he's gonna try to go on a date with her.

Vanessa: I think that they work the same shift and he's like "Oh, am I gonna see you tomorrow?" Like, I agree with you that he's like, trying the same thing over and over again and expecting different results and like, it's weird. But I don't think he's like, literally asking her on a date.

Julia: (laughing)
He's just really hung up on the scheduling.

Vanessa: (laughs too)

Julia: I'm gonna send Mike a Google calendar. (laughs)

Vanessa: We don't have it in the budget for you to send a care package to Mike!

Julia: It can come out of my own personal savings. (laughs) He seems extremely confused. This has been going on for months. (Vanessa laughs) It's called a planner, Mike. He can get one.

Vanessa: (laughs)

Julia (laughing) What about you? What's your Breaking News?

Vanessa: Ah, I've so much Breaking News!
The movie about the woman president is not out anymore. Breaking News!
Bella is like "Hey Jessica, you wanna go to a movie even though I haven't talked to you in months? I just like, need to use you to get Charlie off my back." And Jessica's like "Fine, I guess we can go to a movie. What movie do you wanna see?"
And Bella is like "That one about the woman president." And Jessica's like "That movie hasn't been out in forever."
And so Breaking News, everyone: The woman president movie is out of theaters. Also, woman presidents are out of vogue, it's never gonna happen. We flirted with it for a minute and then we were like, noooo. So, that's my Breaking News.

Julia: I think this is like if I were like, "Vanessa, do you wanna see 'Avatar', that movie about the XXX people?". (both laugh)

Vanessa: So you think it's like, ten years old, that it hasn't been out since Bella was eight? (both laugh)
I do have one more piece of Breaking News though: That there is use of the word 'twilight'.

Julia: I noticed that.

Vanessa: In this chapter, Bella says that the film screening will be at twilight. And I'm like, I'm very curious about the newspaper where you got that information.

Julia: She's like on Edward time: Meet me at sunset. (laughs) The movie's at twilight.

Vanessa: (chuckling) So, like, the movie theater published (Julia laughing) "Screening of zombie movie - time: twilight".

Julia: Maybe this is just how Forks operates, like, no one knows how to read an analogue clock. And they like, just have to go by the sun.

Vanessa: (laughing) Yeah. So Breaking News: Films start at twilight. Did you have a moment of genuine enjoyment?

Julia: I did: Bella goes to school early to get Charlie off her back and she mentions how she got a good parking spot. And I forgot that was like, a thing that happened at high school, like, having to like, deal with a parking spot and trying to get a "good one." And so like, parking another thirty feet away is a big problem in your life. I really enjoyed that little flashback to what my life was like in high school.

Vanessa: Reminiscing. Nostalgia. All the things.

Julia: What did you enjoy in this chapter?

Vanessa: I really liked spending time with Jessica again. I loved that she called out Bella. That she was like, "Why do you want to talk to me all of a sudden, do you need help with calculus?". And yet, when Bella asks her to go out, she like, does the nice thing and goes. But she isn't disingenuous about it. And I feel like Bella is being really judgmental of Jessica and is like, basically using her for her chattiness while judging her chattiness, which I find really obnoxious. But Jessica is just like, being Jessica and she's a good person who also has self-respect. And I really enjoyed spending time with her.

Julia: Great to see her again, I missed her. After (chuckling) whatever happened last spring in which Bella stopped going to school for pages on end.

next segment sound playing

Vanessa: Okay, what advice do you have?

Julia: Well, my advice is to Bella about asking Jessica. She says to Charlie she's gonna ask Jessica and Angela to go to a movie and she then asks Jessica even though she clearly hates Jessica. So my advice is just to ask Angela, who you actually like. She spends the whole time being so mean about Jessica and like, pretending to indulge her chattiness while, you know, smirking behind her back about how annoying she finds her. If you like Angela, just bring Angela. Angela would be happy to sit in the quiet with you.

Vanessa: Yeah- but- doesn't- Bella want the distraction of Jessica talking? I feel like she doesn't ask Angela because she would actually want to open up to Angela and she can't.

Julia: Mmh, that's an interesting idea!

Vanessa: I don't find Bella's logic in this chapter entirely intuitive, but that is how I am following.

Julia: Yeah. I mean, just usually try to hang out with people I enjoy, so that's where I was having a little disconnect with her. (chuckling)

Vanessa: Yeah.

Julia: I was like, why are you setting up your only friend excursion in months with someone who you actively dislike? It is counterintuitive. (laughs)

Vanessa: Totally. Is that why you moved from living a one-minute walk from me to Michigan?

Julia: 'Cause I don't like you?

Vanessa: Yeah, 'cause you don't enjoy spending time with me.

Julia: Uh-huh. It was extremely personal.

Vanessa: I knew it.

Okay, my first piece of advice is for Charlie: What this scene seems to be is Charlie trying to talk to Bella for the very first time about her behavior. And the way he introduces the topic is by saying "I'm kicking you out. Like, move to Florida." And then he like, backtracks and is like, maybe you should talk to a therapist. Like, maybe all these things. My advice is like, offer to do something the two of you. Like, say "Why don't you come fishing with me next time? Why don't we go down and visit Billy and Jacob?" Any number of things but you seem to be the one person who she still really cares about and she seems to need someone to reach out to her. So let it be you. Like, you can just offer up your time to her.

Julia: He also starts the conversation by banging his fist on the table and then saying he's kicking her out.

Vanessa: Yeah!

Julia: It's very aggressive.

Vanessa: Yeah! Like, there is just like, much more reasonable ways to have this conversation.

Julia: I totally agree. He also kind of flexes on her when he's like, "When your mom left me I was fine and I didn't need a therapist but you need one." (laughs) It's just not that helpful.

Vanessa: And like, also clearly not true that he didn't need a therapist because he still has the wedding photos up. (both laughing) So like, he did need some intervention here. (Julia laughing)

Julia: Yeah.

Vanessa: What second piece of advice do you have?

Julia: My second piece of advice is: There is a romantic female lead in the movie and Bella no longer relates to her. (chuckles) And she says "It was depressing to realize that I wasn't the heroine anymore, that my story was over." So my advice to Bella is to read some books in which there are heroines of stories that are not about romantic relationships of which there are plenty. Because, I can't believe I even have like, say this explicitly but you don't have to have a romantic pair to be a hero. It's an ancient, ancient wrong belief. (chuckles) So here's my reading list for her: I think the "My Brilliant Friend" series by Elena Ferrante - female friendship, it has a little bit of romance but it's mostly just about like, women. That would be great. "My Year of Rest and Relaxation" by Ottessa Moshfegh - great representation of depression and Bella sleeping all the time. And drugging yourself. All things Bella are very interested in, barely a romance in sight.

A book called "Lab Girl" in which a female scientist is obsessed with trees and talks all about her STEM work and her research in academia. As Bella is a woman in STEM and knows everything about cells and now calculus, I think this would be really inspiring for her.

And last on my list was "The Vegetarian" by Han Kang - which is a great short novel that Bella would love. Also about being sedentary.

So, there's your reading list, Bella. Do your reading, get back to me. Heroines can be doing other things than kissing boys.

Vanessa: Amen.

Julia: Vanessa, what is your second piece of advice?

Vanessa: My second piece of advice is for Bella: I would like to advise her to wallow. She seems to have skipped the wallowing phase of this break-up and because of that she has skipped to a very prolonged depression. And it seems as though Bella is pre-disposed to depression and like, that is not anybody's fault like,

you have depression and that is a real thing. But I also just think it's really important to let yourself feel the negative feelings and it seems to me that Bella interrupted that after a few days. She was like, embarrassed by it and was like, "Okay, I'm gonna commit myself to being- doing really well in school and just like, moving forward". And that doesn't work, if you skip emotions they're gonna come back and haunt you later. And so I would just like to give the advice that like, it's okay to spend a couple of months being like, *really sad*.

Julia: So what are the appropriate stages of post-break-up?

Vanessa: Yeah, I think like, eating a lot of ice cream.

Julia: That's step one.

Vanessa: Yeah.

Julia: Get dumped, immediately eat ice cream.

Vanessa: Yes. You get dumped, immediately go by four favorite ice cream in large quantities and eat it all.

Then, rent all the sad movies that make you cry and watch them all.

Then, listen to songs that remind you of the person on repeat for days.

Julia: "Clair de lune".

Vanessa: "Clair de lune", all the time, just listen to "Clair de lune", fall asleep to it. Cry, cry, cry.

Don't go out with anybody who won't only let you talk about it for like three to four weeks. (Julia chuckling in the background)

Also, like, no underwire bras while wallowing.

Julia: Uh-huh.

Vanessa: Like, only elastic things should be like, on your body.

Julia: I love that for Bella.

Vanessa: So that's my advice. Just like, be super sad.

Julia: That's great advice, I'm impressed with you on that one!

Vanessa: Thank you, thank you! I've been dumped. (Julia laughs)

next segment sound playing

Julia: Vanessa, what are you gonna put in Bella's care package this week?

Vanessa: So, I would like to put a metaphor in her care package. We've talked about this before with Maren that Bella might need therapy and she just needs to figure out a way to talk about Edward. And I would just like to offer this metaphor idea to Bella because I think that you can still talk to your therapist without you saying the word 'vampire' and just try this.
Julia, will you play the therapist?

Julia: Sure.

Vanessa: Okay.
Hi, I'm Bella.

Julia: Hi, I'm your therapist. What's going on?

Vanessa: So, my boyfriend left me. He was 51 years old (Julia chuckling in the background) and I am 18. And I miss him soooo much. It is very true love and I wish he hadn't left.

Julia: (laughs) I don't wish he hadn't left. That sounds great. Let's figure out if you need a Zoloft. (more laughing)

Vanessa: (laughing) Exactly! See, it would really work. (both laughing)

Julia: I'm just slipping one of my care package items, which was going to be a Zoloft. (laughs)

Vanessa: (laughs) Oh my god, this is such a good care package: metaphors, Zolofts, ... Amazing. Um, you have something else for the care package, not just the Zoloft?

Julia: Yeah. The other thing I was gonna - wow, I'm really giving Bella a long reading list - but the other thing I was gonna send her was a book called "The body keeps score", which is a very famous book about trauma and its impacts on your physical health. And when she sees the men who remind her of the stalkers it's like straight out of the pages of that book. She says - she's talking about when she had been stalked earlier -, "That particular part of that particular evening was just a blur. My body remembered it better than my mind did; the tension in my legs as I tried to decide whether to run or to stand my ground, the dryness in my throat as I struggled to build a decent scream, the tight stretch of skin across my knuckles as I clenched my hands into fists, the chills on the back of my neck when the dark-haired man called me 'sugar'...." So this is like, total trauma response. And the book really goes into detail about how like, when you have a traumatic experience you can often wanna go back to an experience that reminds you of that 'cause that feels comfortable to you and ways to deprogram that. And as it seems like she's increasingly getting into like, getting herself in dangerous situations I think that book would be a good stopgap from her like, actually... I don't know, being an 18 year old who entered a bar full of scary men called like, "The one-eyed peg" or what it was called. (chuckles)

Vanessa: Yeah. That's great. And I just added that to my to-read list 'cause I have not read that before and that sounds really interesting.

Julia: You, me and Bella, little book club.

Vanessa: Amazing! Oh, Bella let's meet on Zoom!

next segment sound playing

Julia: So, what do you think is gonna happen next chapter?

Vanessa: I think that Bella is gonna realize that she likes the feeling of adrenaline. But she's gonna be like, there are healthy ways and unhealthy ways to do this. So, she is going to try things like a video game console at home where it's like, high adrenaline. I don't know anything about video games... But like, maybe like, murdering zombies or whatever. And she'll like, get that fix without actually putting herself in danger. And then maybe she'll like, start riding her like, bicycle around the neighborhood and every once in a while she'll try to like, let go of the handlebars. You know? Like, things that give you a little bit of a rush but are perfectly safe.

Julia: So, I hate to break it to you but I do think something like that happens. Like, I think you could be correct.

Vanessa: Really? She buys a video game console?

Julia: Uh, she doesn't turn into a gamer girl but there is bikes of one kind or another.

Vanessa: And she does this safely like, helmets...

Julia: No, absolutely not. Of course not.

Vanessa: Oh...

Julia: She tries to die! She's trying to die this whole series. Like, what?

Vanessa: Yeah... I feel like you weren't listening to what I think is gonna happen. I think that safety's gonna happen. (Julia chuckling in the background)

Julia: Yeah, well, you're wrong about that one.

Vanessa: She's gonna go like cliff jumping at a place where people go cliff jumping a lot and it's like very safe and there's like, a very deep thing... - Does she literally go cliff jumping?

Julia: Yeah, that's like, the climax of the book.

Vanessa: Wow. (Julia laughing) I'm so smart.

outro fading in

Vanessa: This has been Twilight in Quarantine, a Zoloft prescription from Hot and Bothered.

This episode and all episodes are executive-produced by Ariana Nedelman, and produced by Ariana Martinez.

This show was conceived of as a vampire baby by Julia Argy. And I'm Vanessa Zoltan and I'm on Zoloft.

We are a production of Not Sorry Productions and are distributed by Acast.

(Julia laughing in the background) I am on Zoloft! It's great!