

## Twilight in Quarantine: The Cullens

Vanessa: Chapter 15, The Cullens. The muted light of yet another cloudy day eventually woke me. I lay with my arm across my eyes, groggy and dazed. Something, a dream trying to be remembered, struggled to break my consciousness.

I'm Vanessa Zoltan.

Julia: And I'm Julia Argy.

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

(theme music plays)

Julia: Another chapter. Another opening with the weather.

Vanessa: (making radio signal sounds) Do-do, do-do, do-do. This just in: there is weather in Washington. So glad you tuned in to Twilight in Quarantine. We would like for you to know in 2001, it was rainy in Washington state. That most urgent news you'll get all day today, folks.

Julia: Now moving to Vanessa with the 30-second recap.

Vanessa: That's true. That is more important than a weather update.

Julia: (giggling) Your live in 3, 2, 1, go.

Vanessa: (ticking sound throughout) Edward remembers that she has to eat. Good on you, Edward. She faints while they kiss. Charlie dismantled her car, because there weren't enough men trying to control her, so he decided to get on that bandwagon. They go over to the Cullens and she meets everyone. It turns out Carlisle is hella old. Everybody has different feelings about her. Edward is really good at the piano and he rocks her like a baby for the first like, half hour of their day. (buzzer sound signifies end of 30 seconds) And then plays her a lullaby.

Julia: Yup.

Vanessa: As if their age difference wasn't gross enough. They were like, let's make it seem like grandfather and baby. Okay Julia, it's your turn now, are you ready?

Julia: Yeah.

Vanessa: Recap in 3, 2, 1, go.

Julia: (ticking sound throughout) She wakes up and he's there and they rock about in a chair. And they say I love you! And she goes downstairs, she eats breakfast. He stares at her while she eats. She gets dressed in a navy blouse and a long khaki skirt which is "beyond tempting" and then they meet the family. And Jasper controls her mood. Even though no one asked him to. (buzzer sound)

Vanessa: Should we add a fashion update to our regular segments, because the fashion...

Julia: What she wears is fine.

Vanessa: Is it? Do you remember having a floor length khaki skirt?

Julia: No. But, that doesn't trouble me as much as him saying that it's "beyond tempting."

Vanessa: See, you and I are very different. The floor length khaki skirt troubles me. This just like, makes no sense as a garment, to me.

Julia: You don't have to want to wear it, but we all know it's not sexy.

Vanessa: (laughing) Okay.

Julia: In terms of meeting the family, maybe if you're walking into a cult situation, which I would argue the Cullens may be, wearing something that would be appropriate in a cult setting is the smartest thing to do.

Vanessa: But what if she changes her mind. This is like the introductory meeting. She should leave her options open still.

Julia: So what do you think she should have worn?

Vanessa: She should have just worn something normal, that when she is found running through the woods later and the cops are like, "Didn't you sort of want to join the cult?" she could be like, "No, look at me. I'm in jeans."

Julia: Charlie would be like, "Yeah. That's true, take her home."

Vanessa: That checks out, I'm Chief Swan. (Julia giggling) Oo! He's now a correspondent on our news show. That's an update. The crime report from Chief Swan.

Julia: I'm Chief Swan and my daughter didn't join a cult.

Vanessa: Willingly.

(transition music)

Julia: Do you have a favorite part of this chapter?

Vanessa: Yeah. I think I really love stories within stories. Like, I love Jacob's story about the vampires and now I love the Carlisle backstory. I loved hearing about Cromwell about to come to the throne and how his father was an Anglican being attacked by the Catholics. I'm like, oo, church intrigue. You look at me like that's not fascinating.

Julia: No I was just disappointed cuz I was going to say I liked when he hid himself in a barrel of rotting potatoes for a few days, as he changed into a vampire.

Vanessa: What...why do you like rotting potatoes?

Julia: I mean no one's going to look for a vampire in a root cellar.

Vanessa: Because garlic is a root and garlic keeps them away? Is garlic a root?

Julia: No, it's an allium, but they would be stored in root cellars to preserve them.

Vanessa: And just remind me, sweet peas are...?

Julia: A legume. And cucumbers are a fruit.

Vanessa: Okay, great! No one smells like a vegetable here.

Julia: Did you notice that Bella has started to make jokes, in this chapter?

Vanessa: Yeah!

Julia: Who knew, all she needed was a boyfriend.

Vanessa: Yeah.

Julia: She eats her cereal and then he says it doesn't look good, cuz he loves to be an asshole and then she says, "well it's no irritable grizzly." That was a joke!

Vanessa: Yeah! She also does that great bit where he's like "is it breakfast time?" and she like, joke-protects her neck.

Julia: Yeah. He really didn't think that one was funny though.

Vanessa: Well, so, that that leads to my first piece of advice.

Julia: Please share.

Vanessa: Which is men should not criticize women's humor. Like, we are funnier than you are. And I just feel like Christopher Hitchens, who was like not funny, and when he read that article in Vanity Fair saying why women are funny Christopher Hitchens made it completely inappropriate for men to criticize women's humor.

Julia: I mean, it was inappropriate before.

Vanessa: Oh! Yeah, yeah, yeah. What is your first piece of advice?

Julia: Edward rocks her in the rocking chair that she was nursed in!

Vanessa: Correct.

Julia: So my advice is if you're in a creepy situation don't make it creepier, by doing creepy things. He also watches her from the rocking chair as she sleeps. I'm speechless.

Vanessa: It's so gross and weird. I have nothing else to say about it.

Julia: And that's where they say I love you and he says "you are my life now." Picture Edward rocking Bella in the rocking chair saying "you are my life now."

Vanessa: Well, can we also talk about their first I love you? Cuz who knows if their first first I love you even really happen. Cuz Edward says "you said that you loved me in your sleep." I would like to report to the judge that the first I love you is hearsay. He claims she said it and then she's like, "yeah, cool. I totally said that in my sleep." It's all very confusing to me. If somebody was like, "Hey Vanessa, you said that you loved me in your sleep last night," I'd be like, "sleep Vanessa thinks all sorts of shit." Anyway I have more advice.

Julia: Please.

Vanessa: My advice is to Bella: watch a movie. He's like, "do you want to meet my family?" and she's like, "I don't know. I've never been in a relationship before. I have no context for this." Maybe we can make a list and post it on patreon of the movies that I recommend that she watch. Like, the teen rom-coms that I recommend, your 10 Things I Hate About You, your Sixteen Candles, etc, etc. You don't need to have gone through something in order to have a sense for the way that we as a culture handle it.

Julia: And, maybe if she'd watched a movie she would realize that the trajectory of their relationship is totally wild.

Vanessa: Yeah.

Julia: I love you, to meet the family, first kiss, all within 24 hours.

Vanessa: Right, if she had watched a movie she would know that it's not normal for someone to watch you sleep before your first kiss. That's more of an after your second kiss thing. I don't know, with all her books reading, doesn't she have some sense of like, traditional courtship ways? I'm fine with things not being normal, but geez.

Julia: It's all the classics she's reading. She's stuck in the 1800's with Carlisle and Edward.

Vanessa: Oh no, this is all Emily Brontë's fault.

Julia: He's such a Heathcliff.

Vanessa: Yeah..

Julia: Totally unbearable!

Vanessa: Ugh. What about you, Julia? Do you have a piece of advice?

Julia: One thing that I think should happen is that the Cullen's should move to Alaska and give us the keys to their mansion so we can move in. Because it sounded soooo nice. Wraparound porch on the first floor, a river nearby, very secluded, huge. I'd probably do away with the cross, but other than that I'm ready to move in.

Vanessa: It's an antique!

Julia: I still don't want it. I mean you can have it in your portion of the house, but I'm a no on that.

Vanessa: That leads to my next piece of advice. Which is, that I feel like we see a calling arise within Bella with her ability to describe this house. Did anybody else feel like she was a realtor?

Julia: Oooo.

Vanessa: Like, "as you can tell, this used to be many rooms but they knocked down some walls and it's one, large beautiful room now. They've kept the original doors and windows, obviously refurbished and entirely weather sealed." I was like, "I'll buy it Bella!"

Julia: Unfortunately we don't have that vampire money.

Vanessa: No. That sweet, sweet vampire money. Anyway that was my advice. Bella go for you realtor's license, lady.

(transition music)

Julia: Okay, I have other things to discuss.

Vanessa: So do I.

Julia: One of the things I'm thinking about is when Jasper controls Bella's mood for no reason. He's never heard of the phrase feel your feelings? Like, you don't have to not be nervous when you meet your boyfriend's family for the first time, that's a totally appropriate reaction. And just dulling it down doesn't do her any favors in terms of her social-emotional learning. It's okay to be nervous. Let Bella do her thing.

Vanessa: Yeah, that's really good advice that like, works in the situation and in general. Like, it's okay to feel your feelings. But now I'm going to give a piece of advice that only works in this chapter.

Julia: Right.

Vanessa: Don't eat other people's tears.

Julia: Yeah, I mean, the whole scene with the piano, it's just my nightmare. Playing a lullaby, of all things, in front of your family.

Vanessa: It's so weird that he calls it a lullaby. Those are for babies.

Julia: I just don't want to be performed to in front of family ever, but also 5 minutes after meeting them for the first.

Vanessa: Yep.

Julia: I got prom-posed to in song, after an AP exam and I think I'm just having flashbacks to the public singing, and I can't, I can't cope.

Vanessa: (sing-song voice) Humble brag! Julia was in APs!

Julia: (laughing) I thought you were going to say, "Julia got asked to prom." I was like, both very unexpected, here we are.

Vanessa: Wow, Bella! Was it in Phoenix, where the education was really good?

Julia: Exactly.

(transition music)

Julia: As you know I take notes for every chapter so I'm going to read you some of the stuff that I wrote down.

Vanessa: Yay!

Julia: So, I believe that a "human minute" means that she needs to go take a poop.

Vanessa: I don't, but it's an interesting idea.

Julia: I mean, they love euphemisms, so.

Vanessa: They do, but I think she means like, brush your teeth, get the sleep out of her eyes. I just don't think Bella poops. That's all.

Julia: (making an uncertain sound) Okay, and then I was sad by the realization that Carlisle did not fight the Neanderthals. Yeah. (Vanessa laughing) That...I was disappointed by. My other thought was about vampire overpopulation. They keep making them and they never die and they say they're really rare, but what is happening to the vampires?

Vanessa: Yeah, I've also been confused about the population issues of vampires. Cuz if they've been just creating and not dying since the Neanderthals than like, there is more than a handful.

Julia: I know. It's so confusing.

Vanessa: The Earth is big but it's not that big. And it's not like they're all on an island off of Papua New Guinea, you know like. they live among us and so, I found that confusing.

(transition music)

Julia: Vanessa, what do you want to put in Bella's care package this week?

Vanessa: So, this chapter opens with Bella saying that her arm is slung over her eyes, because the muted lights, it wakes her. And I would like to get her one of those like, satin eye masks, you know. And I would actually like it to be like Holly Golightly's in Breakfast at Tiffany's, with some stitching or design on the front so it looks like her eyes are open. So that Edward can feel like even when she's asleep she's watching him back. But I think that that that that would really help with her sleep.

Julia: Yeah that would be great.

Vanessa: What about you?

Julia: So I, based on my advice to Jasper, think that Bella is not in touch with her feelings. I have never started to cry and not known I was crying. That happens all the time in books and it's always a total mystery to me. However, we see that moment and then we also see the moment where she stops breathing during the kiss. It's like, a totally out-of-body experience where her mind is not in touch with her physicality. I would like to give her some mindfulness pamphlets, VHSs to help her get that connection going. She can realize when she's crying. She can stop fainting when being kissed. Wouldn't that benefit everyone, including me.

Vanessa: So let's put a VCR in there, in case she doesn't have one. Because I'm going to send her all those rom-coms.

Julia: That's great.

Vanessa: Okay, Bella, big package coming. Oh wait! We didn't talk about how weird it is that Charlie takes apart her car so she can't leave in the middle of the night. In order to avoid having a conversation with her. Be like, "Hey Bella, I hope you're not sneaking out at night" and instead is like I'll dismantle her engine. That was so weird. I just think she has enough men in her life who are trying to control her through subterfuge. Like, someone should believe that she is capable of an intelligent conversation.

Julia: You believe that?

Vanessa: I do! I do believe it.

Julia: So what do you think is going to happen next chapter?

Vanessa: So, it's a Sunday and Charlie was up early and out. I think he is being invested by internal investigations for all of the wasted gas on like, fishing trips and airport trips. And so I think in the next chapter we're finally going to see the trial of Chief Swan on trial.

Julia: Maybe. Maybe he was leaving early to go figure out what Carlisle is up to and then Bella and Charlie are both going to show up at the Cullen's house and there's going to be a big reckoning.

Vanessa: Ooooh! That's what's gonna happen. And then afterwards Edward will meet Charlie, it'll all come out! And Bella will wish that she was in jeans so she could run away from the awkwardness faster.

Julia: All the threads woven together.



Vanessa: All the khaki threads.

(outro music playing throughout)

This has been Twilight in Quarantine, a beautiful 3-bedroom condo 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 am interested in a house that has at least a one-and-a-half bath. We are a production of Not Sorry Productions and are distributed by Acast.