



Conversations Over Coffee

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Summary

Conversations over coffee. Sometimes when you meet "the one," falling is easy
- as simple as talking. Effortless. You just have to find the words. AH

Monday

For Marvar:

Monday

"What's your name?"

She asks me this as if she's entitled to know. And maybe she is.

Definitely.

She definitely is.

"Why do you want to know?"

I challenge her, because I really want to know the answer to the question. I really *do* want to know why she would be interested in knowing anything about me.

"Well, first of all, you know my name."

"Yeah...and?" I say, playing with the little silver flippy thing on the sugar container. I briefly wonder what it's called. "Your name is on your badge, Bella."

My heart stutters a bit as I say it.

Her name.

You know...out loud and all that.

I try to ignore it.

"That's true," she says. "But secondly," her voice lowers and I find that I'm

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sitting up straighter, listening more intently. "Mostly..." Her voice is just a whisper. "Mostly...I just want to know. You know, a little more about you."

And I'm speechless.

Like an idiot.

"What do you know about me?" I ask.

I'm holding my breath.

"Well," she says, biting down on her lower lip and tucking an imaginary strand of hair behind her ear. Her hair is pulled up. It's always pulled up. I wonder what it looks like hanging down around her shoulders. I imagine that it's soft. "I know you like coffee. Black with lots of sugar."

She looks down at my hand, at my finger that is still idly playing with the flippy thing. I vow to go home and look up what it is. It's bothering me now.

"And?"

"I know that you come in the same time everyday and order the same thing. I know you like apple pie."

I wonder if she finds me boring and predictable.

"I know...I mean, I *think* I know that you like to read. You always have a book."

She motions to the worn paperback copy of *Holidays on Ice* in front of me. I wonder if she thinks it's strange because it's not Christmas. I just like Davis Sedaris. Maybe I should explain that to her?

"I do," I tell her. "Like to read."

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My heart is beating...faster. I don't think it's the coffee, though I have had three cups this evening. I wonder if she notices that I'm drinking more...that I'm staying longer.

"Do you?" I ask.

"What?"

"Like to read?"

And her eyes are looking at me. Brown and rich and deep.

"Yeah, I do."

She's biting her lip again and her nose scrunches up.

"What?" I ask.

"I just don't see what the big deal is about him."

"Who?" I ask.

I look back down again, nervous that she thinks that I wasn't listening. Nervous that she thinks I'm staring at her lips and eyes and nose. Her nose is cute.

Even when it's scrunched up.

Especially when it's scrunched up.

"David Sedaris."

"You don't like him?"

I do. I *do* like him and it makes me feel nervous that she doesn't. Like I want her to like the same things as me and I don't know why.

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"No, I like him just fine," she says. "But I mean it's almost like, we get it. You're witty. You listen to NPR and probably drink a ton of coffee."

"I listen to NPR," I mumble, as I look down at my almost empty third cup of coffee. "But I'm probably not witty."

"You could be," she says smiling. "You might be. I just don't know."

"What else?" I ask, trying to change the subject.

"What else...?"

She's confused.

"What else do you know about me?"

"Oh."

She places her finger on her lips like she's thinking. Yes. Her lips are definitely...probably soft.

"Well, I also know that you have some sort of job."

"Yeah?" I ask, smiling. "And how do you know that?"

She motions to my briefcase on the stool next to me.

"Maybe I just carry that around to make pretty waitresses think I'm important."

I wink at her.

I don't know where it comes from - this flirting. I am not a good flirt. I never have been.

"You think I'm pretty?" she asks.

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She's blushing and I fear I've embarrassed her. See? I told you, I'm not a good flirt. But the pink of her cheeks makes my mouth dry and I notice - not for the first time - just *how* pretty she really is.

Beautiful.

I think she's beautiful.

"Maybe," I tell her, and she looks down.

Why did I say that?

"Oh."

"Anything else?"

"I know that you're generous," she says softly as she leans on the counter, putting her chin in her hands. She's closer to me now than she's ever been. I can smell her perfume and it's mixed with the scent of coffee and apple pie. It's nice. I breathe in. "You always leave a twenty on the counter when your order is *always* seven dollars and forty-five cents. That's a really generous tip."

"You're a really good waitress."

"Server."

"What?"

"They don't call us waitresses anymore," she explains, still leaning in. "They call us servers. It's not sexist."

"Oh," I say, hoping she won't move. "I didn't know."

"That they called us servers?" she asks. "Or that the term waitress is sexist?"

And she winks at me.

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And I smile.

Big.

"Either."

"And I know one more thing."

"What's that?"

She's biting her lip again. It's even better close-up.

"Your hair is soft," she says. "I mean, well...I think it is. I think it would be."

And I feel the heat of my own blush.

"You think about my hair?"

She nods her head yes and even though she's still biting her lip, I can see her smile.

It's beautiful like her.

The bell on the door rings and another customer walks in.

"I guess I need to help them."

She stands up straight and my heart falls slightly.

"I guess I should get going."

"Okay."

She smiles shyly and I place a twenty dollar bill on the counter. It's crisp. I went to the ATM before I came in this evening. She walks over to the other customer as I collect my things. I wait, nervously, for her to come back.

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She does.

"I guess I'll see you tomorrow," she says.

"Yeah," I tell her. "I guess you will."

"Okay."

"Okay."

I'm stalling, trying to think of something to say. She's faster.

"You never told me your name."

"It's Edward," I tell her.

"Edward," she repeats. "I like it."

I grin.

So does she.

"I like Bella."

And I do.

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A/N

Reviews are love.

Please leave me some.

A little something different.

A new chapter will post every morning this week.

Thank you for reading.

Thank you to Marvar for everything. Your mad beta skills. Your friendship...and your awesomeness in general. ILY.

Tuesday

Tuesday

"You're early today."

He smiles and it's crooked.

"I didn't know I was on a schedule."

I feel my face flush, but return his smile anyway.

"You're not," I tell him. "But you do seem to be regimented."

He chuckles and plays with the sugar container. He does that a lot.

"Is that your way of telling me I'm boring?"

"No," I giggle. "That's my way of telling you that you're *regimented*."

He laughs.

It's kind of beautiful. His voice. And well, yeah...his face.

"Regimented," he repeats.

He pulls his phone from his briefcase and types something and I wonder if he's texting someone.

I wonder who he's texting and my heart falls slightly.

I try to ignore it.

"To manage or treat in a rigid, uniform manner. Subject to strict discipline."

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"What are you?" I ask. "Some sort of dictionary?"

"No." He smiles. "But I have one on my phone."

He shows me the screen and I giggle, not because it's funny, but because I'm relieved that he wasn't texting.

His phone is pretty fancy.

Mine is cheap.

His phone would laugh at my phone.

"You think I'm rigid?" he asks.

I giggle.

Apparently, I'm a twelve year-old girl.

Or Michael Scott. You know. Whatever.

He notices.

And blushes.

I love that.

"No," I tell him. "I also don't see you as being the kind of person that's into discipline."

"Like structure?" he asks.

"Like whips and chains," I deadpan.

His eyes widen and I wonder if I've used my filter to brew the coffee.

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"Do you have a dirty mind?" he asks.

He's smiling.

"Umm..." I bite my lip. "No. Definitely not."

"Are you sure?"

"Pretty sure," I tell him. "Did you umm...want some coffee?"

"Regimented," he tells me, poking his thumb into his chest and pointing at himself. "I always want coffee."

"I just wanted to make sure, you know. I mean you're throwing me all off today with your earliness and the mobile dictionary."

"Maybe I wanted to surprise you."

And there's the heat. It covers my face and chest.

Maybe even my toes.

I turn around to grab a cup and I speak, so he can't see me.

"Maybe I like surprises."

I fill his cup and place it in front of him.

I lift my eyes and he's staring.

I definitely like surprises.

"Good."

"Good."

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Wow.

I'm a really good conversationalist.

"So, you noticed that I was early," he says. He's still smiling. "Does that mean you...notice me?"

Yes.

"I guess."

"What do you notice?"

"Didn't we play this game yesterday?"

"No."

"I'm pretty sure we did," I tell him.

He pours a ton of sugar into his coffee.

I wonder if I should introduce him to Splenda.

"No," he says. "Yesterday, you told me what you *knew* about me. Today I'm asking what you *notice*. It's completely different."

I roll my eyes.

"It's not," I tell him. "The only things I *knew* about you *were* the things I'd noticed. Just saying. It's the same thing."

"I guess you're right," he concedes.

"Thank you."

"We could play a different game," he suggests.

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"Like doctor?" I ask...because I'm an idiot.

He stutters.

Great.

He's never coming back.

"Umm...well..." His cheeks are pink - red. They're definitely red. "Do you play that a lot?"

And I figure I need to go with it at this point.

"Well, only with the other guy that comes in every afternoon," I tell him. "But it's not that much fun with him, since he's not as *regimented* as you."

He looks around. Maybe to see if anyone is listening to this ridiculously inappropriate conversation.

Seemingly satisfied, he says, "So, you like...umm," he pauses and leans in, "men that are regimented."

I lean in, too.

My heart is pounding and I swallow.

I think it's loud.

"Yeah," I say. "And also early."

He gulps.

Even his Adam's apple is pretty.

I wait for him to say something.

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He doesn't.

My heart sinks a bit, but he's still close.

And still staring at me.

"So," I say, breaking the silence because I can't bear it anymore. "Your eyes are really green."

He smells good.

Kind of manly, but it's soft.

Tender, warm.

I like it.

I breathe in.

"Yours are brown," he says lowly.

"Boring."

"I don't think so."

My heart skips, my hand twitches.

"What *do* you think?"

I'm almost whispering.

He licks his lips.

I'll bet they taste like coffee and sugar.

Sweet, like him.

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I can't help but look at them.

"I think..."

Then, the bell on the door rings.

And I jump up like I'm on fire.

"I guess you can tell me later," I say, shrugging.

"Okay."

He smiles, it's not as crooked as before, but it's genuine.

I like this smile, too.

I like all his smiles.

"Are you staying for pie, Edward?" I ask.

I still love his name.

I love saying it even more.

"Yeah, Bella," he says. "I'm staying for pie."

"Okay," I tell him. "It's warm."

"It is," he says.

I don't know why, but that makes me warm, too.

"I'll be right back after I help them."

"I don't mind," he says. "Waiting, I mean."

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"Good."

I grin.

I turn around and his voice stops me.

"Bella?"

"Yeah?"

"Don't play doctor with them," he says. "Even if they're regimented."

I blush.

Furiously.

"I won't," I tell him. "I told you. It's just you and the guy in the afternoon."

"Is there really a guy in the afternoon?"

"No."

Crooked smile.

"Really?"

"Yeah, really," I tell him. "There's just you."

"Good."

I turn around and walk away.

Floating, really.

And yeah...it is good.

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A/N

Reviews are love.

Please leave me some.

Thank you for the wonderful response to chapter one! I was smiling all day.
I'm so happy you're enjoying this little fic.

See you all the same time tomorrow.

As always...love and gratitude to Marvar. The reason I decided to try to write
this story to begin with.

Wednesday

Wednesday

"It's quiet tonight."

I take a drink of my coffee.

"Yeah," she says. "It usually is on Wednesdays."

I think that she must not make much in tips.

And for some reason, that bothers me.

"I'm sorry."

Her face scrunches up.

I can see the white of her teeth as they press into her bottom lip.

I wonder what she's thinking.

"Why are you sorry?"

"That it's slow."

"I don't mind," she says, leaning on the counter. "It just so happens that my most generous tipper is in tonight."

I smile at her.

I wish she would lean in closer.

"Oh, really?"

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"Yeah," she says. And just like that, my wish comes true. "Really."

"What's his name?"

"How do you know it's a him?"

She grins.

"You're right," I agree. "What's *her* name?"

I grin.

And also want to reach out and touch the single strand of hair that has fallen over her face.

Instead, I hold my cup tighter. With both hands.

"Edwina."

I chuckle.

She tries to maintain a straight face.

She can't.

And that makes me happy. Like, I know that she's honest...that she can't lie.

"Edwina?" I repeat and then lean in to whisper. "Don't tell her, but that's not a really pretty name."

"I think it's a really pretty name."

Her chin is in her hands.

My eyes drop. Involuntarily, of course.

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And I see the slightest hint of cleavage.

My eyes shoot back to hers and I wonder if she noticed.

"It's not as pretty as Bella."

Nothing is, really.

She's blushing and I don't know if it's from my words or my wandering eyes.

I hope it's my words.

"Are you on Facebook?" I ask.

"That's random."

"I was just," I say, "well, I was just wondering."

"Are *you* on Facebook?"

"Isn't everyone on Facebook?"

"Yeah, probably," she concedes. "Why? Did you want to stalk me?"

She's kidding.

I think.

Fuck, maybe she thinks that's what I'm doing.

"I wouldn't, you know...do that," I tell her.

I'm lying.

Right now my hand is itching to pick up my phone and look at her Facebook page. To look at her relationship status and see if she's single.

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She has to be single.

Right?

And then I think that she's right here in front of me. I could just ask her.

Yeah.

That's not gonna happen.

"I know," she says. "Besides, you don't even know my last name. You wouldn't be able to find me."

She smiles at me.

I think she's flirting.

I flirt back.

Well, I *try* to flirt back.

"You could tell me, you know."

My voice is thick. Like I have something in my throat.

It's probably my heart.

"What?" she asks. "My last name?"

"Yeah," I tell her.

"But how would I know that you wouldn't go looking for me on Facebook?"

"You wouldn't," I tell her.

She's leaning in closer.

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She smells like flowers and girl and coffee and pie.

I breathe in.

"I'm not that interesting," she says. "I only have like...I don't know...five friends."

"Five friends are a lot," I tell her.

She's biting her lip again and I'm grateful.

Looking at her lips means I'm not looking at her breasts.

Or the hint of them that I just saw a few minutes ago.

"Not on Facebook," she says. "You probably have a bunch of friends, don't you?"

"I have a few," I tell her. "On Facebook. Not so much in real life."

I don't know why I told her that.

She makes me say things out loud.

She probably thinks I'm weird now.

A social reject.

Awkward.

"Hmmm..." she hums. "Why is that?"

"Why is what?"

"The friend thing. Why don't you have many friends in real life?"

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She doesn't move.

She's still leaning in. In fact, I think she's even closer now.

"I'm sorry," she says. Her eyes fall. "I don't mean to...I mean, I wasn't trying to pry."

Without thinking, I reach my hand out.

I touch her elbow that's resting on the counter.

I hear her take in a deep breath and my eyes shoot up to hers.

Wide.

Brown.

Beautiful.

And she doesn't pull away.

"It's okay," I tell her.

And it is.

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

"You just seem..." she starts, "I mean. Well, I would want..."

I'm still touching her.

And her voice is soft.

And yeah...my hand is *still* on her elbow.

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I'm still touching her.

Bella.

"You would want...?"

I squeeze gently.

"Nothing."

Her skin is soft like her voice.

Warm, too.

I wonder if she uses lotion.

"What?"

"No...nevermind."

"Tell me."

Please.

She blows the stray hair out of her face.

Her breath smells like spearmint.

"I would want...to be your friend," she whispers.

And blushes.

And I die.

And smile.

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"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

I stare at her.

Like an idiot.

Like an idiot who doesn't speak.

Like a mute idiot.

It's awkward.

I try to form words...and can't.

Her words are too much.

Her words that are pretty...the same way that she's pretty.

"You need some more coffee."

And with that, she pulls away.

Taking her smile and her spearmint breath and her soft elbow with her.

Along with her words.

And I want to pound my head into the counter.

She's back in less than a minute and she fills my cup.

Her hand is shaking.

And I want to hold it.

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So much.

"Bella?" I say.

Her eyes are on the coffee pot, but then they look up.

At me.

"Yeah?"

I take a deep breath.

"I would...um...you know..."

Butterflies.

Yeah...they're in my stomach.

"You would...what?"

I clear my throat.

"I would...yeah...I would like that."

She smiles.

"You would?"

She smiles more.

Lips stretching over her teeth.

Beautiful.

She doesn't even bite down.

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"Yeah."

"Okay."

"And Bella," I say.

No longer mute.

No longer stupid.

"What?"

"I would want to be your friend, too."

More.

I want to be more.

But friends...friends is a start.

Good.

A good start.

"Edward?"

"Yeah?"

"It's Swan," she says. "My last name is Swan."

She smiles.

I beam.

"Can I be your number six?"

Conversations Over Coffee

This flirting.

It's getting easier.

"Send me a Friend Request."

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A/N

Reviews are love.

Please leave me some.

All of you have just blown me away with all the love for this story.

Seriously.

I can't stop smiling.

Thank you for loving them...and me.

I adore you all...so much.

And as always...thanks and love to Marvar. Without whom, what you just read would be far less stellar. Really. WAY LESS. Also, she is the one who inspires me to write. And cheers me on when I'm not feeling up to it. Oh...and she's pretty.

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See you in the morning!

Thursday

Thursday

It's late.

He's not here.

We close in an hour.

And every time the door opens, my heart races and I look up.

Hoping it's him.

Wishing.

And it's never him.

All night.

It hasn't been him.

I put on makeup before I came in. It wasn't a lot.

But I did it.

I did it because I wanted to look pretty.

Well, I wanted him to see me.

You know...as a girl.

A pretty girl.

Not just the girl that serves him coffee and pie.

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He touched me last night. And he looked at my boobs. I'm pretty sure he thought I didn't see.

But I did.

It was only for a second...but I *did* see.

I pick up the coffee pot and I make my way over to table seventeen.

"You need a refill, Waylon?"

"I'm good," he says, "but maybe you just warm it up."

"Sure thing."

The bell rings over the door and my eyes shoot up.

Excited.

And then not.

It's not him.

"That's good."

"What?"

Shit, I forgot I was pouring coffee.

I almost spill it.

"Sorry, Waylon."

"No problem, Bella."

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I wonder if I freaked him out. He has come in every night...every night until now.

Now, that he touched me.

Now, that I told him I wanted to be his friend.

I blink my eyes furiously and force myself not to cry.

I mean, I shouldn't really *want* to cry.

I barely know him.

He knows *way* more about me.

My name.

My full name.

Where I work.

And what do I know about him?

Really?

What do I know?

That he likes pie?

That he likes his coffee so sweet, it could almost double as pancake syrup?

That he's structured?

That his lips are full and red and probably really, really soft?

That his hair is a perfect mess on top of his perfect head?

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That he really *was* flirting with me?

And touching me?

And that his hand on my skin felt like fire?

Not the kind of fire that burns you.

The kind of fire that warms you when it's wet and cold and you've been standing outside waiting on the bus for too long.

Warm.

Soft.

And flickering with perfection.

And he was only touching my elbow.

I go about my job.

I wipe down tables.

I refill coffee.

I collect my tips.

And not once - *not one more time* - does the bell above the door ring.

He doesn't come.

My job sucks.

When he's not here.

We lock up and I head to the bus stop.

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I go home.

Quietly.

My own hands holding each other in my lap.

Wondering.

Missing him.

And I refuse to log into Facebook.

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A/N

Reviews are love.

Please leave me some.

And please, don't let February 17th, 2011 be the day that the fandom collectively flounces me.

To quote the lovely and talented DoYouTrustMe, "I have a plan. A not-so-evil and not-so-diabolical plan."

The love and support has been amazing. If you didn't receive a review reply from me yesterday, it's because FF cockblocked me and told me I'd reached my

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limit. I promise to reply to each one. I love them all.

Love to my bestie, Marvar - who approved this chapter even though she loves fluff and happiness more than anyone I know.

Thank you to GreenEyedGirl17 for recc'ing this in her new chapter of Under the Same Moon.

Friday

Friday

"Hey," I say.

She's looking down and her hand is on the coffee cup in front of me.

She just came over to me. She didn't at first.

At first, I waited.

Excited.

Excited to see her because I missed her yesterday.

But she waited, too.

She waited until I was nervous - thinking that she wouldn't - and then she came over.

"Hey," she says back.

Nothing else.

"Hey" is a pretty stupid word.

And I said it first.

She flips the cup over and asks, "Coffee?"

Nothing else.

"Yeah, sure," I tell her. "Of course. Regimented. Remember?"

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She smiles.

It's not real.

I don't know if it reaches her eyes.

I don't know because she's not looking at me.

Not really.

"Hey," I say.

Again.

Stupidly.

She turns around and gets the coffee pot. She fills my cup and I watch her.

I miss her.

I want to touch her again.

Just her elbow.

And maybe her hand.

Definitely her hand.

And her hair.

And her neck.

"You didn't come in last night," she says as she places the cup in front of me.

Her voice is soft.

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Softer than the clank of the cup on the saucer.

The sugar sounds so loud as she scoots it closer to me and I realize that I never did find out what the flippy thing is called.

She pulls her hand back and the irony isn't lost on me.

The sugar is closer.

But she isn't.

And she is sweeter than the sugar.

"I know," I tell her. "I got stuck at work and I couldn't leave."

"Oh," is all she says.

And "oh" is just as stupid as "hey."

"You were at work?" she asks. "All night?"

"Why?" I ask and finally, she looks up. "Did you miss me?"

She blushes.

And she's biting her lip again.

"I...um..." she stammers. She's not quick to comeback.

And then I realize...

She did.

She missed me.

Just like I missed her.

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Relief.

I feel it.

"You *did*," I say, awed...happy. "You *missed* me."

"No, I didn't."

The comebacks...they're getting faster.

And also...not as sweet.

"You didn't?"

She just looks at me.

"Well, I mean...did you," she pauses, "did you...you know...miss me?"

And I am an idiot.

For not telling her first.

For wanting *her* to say it first.

"That's okay," she says. Never mind. It' doesn't matter."

It does.

"Bella?"

"Yeah?"

"I did."

And just like that...her smile is back.

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And it's bigger and more beautiful than ever before.

"You really did?"

"Yeah," I tell her. And I'm pretty sure I'm blushing now, too. "A lot."

She sighs.

And giggles.

It's perfect and happy and just the best sound ever.

"And you missed me?" I ask again.

I think she did.

Well, I'm pretty sure I know.

But she hasn't admitted it.

Not yet.

"Yeah," she admits. "I did."

"What did you miss?" I ask because, once again, I'm stupid.

She cocks her head to the side and grins.

I grin back - loving this so much - and never wanting to *not* see her smile again.

"Oh, no you don't," she says.

Playful.

Easy.

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"What?"

"I had an epiphany last night."

"An *epiphany*?"

She nods her head.

"Yes...an epiphany."

I get out my phone and quickly type in the word.

She laughs loudly...freely.

Her laugh is beautiful.

Just like her.

"A sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into the reality or essential meaning of something?"

"Yes, Dictionary," she says. "That...exactly."

"Tell me about this epiphany."

"Really?"

"Yeah, really."

"Well, I realized last night..."

"During the epiphany?"

She leans in and pushes my shoulder.

And it's the first time that she's touched me.

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I want to reach out and grab her hand.

And hold it.

And tangle our fingers together until our hands are one big hand.

But she pulls it back before I can...not that I would.

Yet.

"Shut it."

"So anyway," I say. "What did you realize?"

"That I don't really know a lot about you. And you know...that you know a *whole* lot about me."

"You know a lot about me," I say.

"Not really."

Her elbows are back on the counter and she's leaning in again.

She could be closer if the coffee wasn't in the way.

Maybe it's time for me to give up caffeine.

"You know as much about me as I know about you."

"Again," she says, "not really."

"Like what?"

"You know my last name. I don't know yours."

"Okay," I tell her. "What else?"

Conversations Over Coffee

Her nose scrunches up, but she continues.

"You know where I work and what I do."

"Yeah...and?"

"I don't know what you do."

"Anything else?"

She licks her lips and blows out a breath.

I don't know which one is sexier.

"Yeah, ummm..." she says. "I guess that's it."

"Would it make you feel better to know these things?" I ask her, teasing.

"Probably...yeah."

"I'm an accountant," I offer. "Boring, right?"

"No," she says. "Not boring."

"No?"

"I like numbers."

"You do?"

She nods her head and smiles again.

"Yeah."

"What do you like about numbers?"

Conversations Over Coffee

She looks at me and I can tell she's thinking about her response.

Fuck, she's cute.

"Well, numbers are like information, right?"

"Okay," I say. "I guess so."

"I mean...they can give you information. Know what I mean?"

I'm not really following her...but I'm willing to.

You know...anywhere she wants to lead.

"Maybe?"

She laughs again.

I do, too.

"Every evening, you come in at seven. You drink approximately four to five cups of coffee and have one piece of pie. I served you six times before I ever talked to you about anything other than your order. And the book you're reading has changed eight times since I've known you."

I stared at her.

Stunned.

"See?" she said. "Numbers are awesome because they give you information."

"I'm good with numbers, too," I say softly, still taken aback by her words...what she knew. How much she'd noticed.

"You are?"

Conversations Over Coffee

"Yeah."

"Well, you *are* an accountant."

"Yeah. I am."

"Okay."

"I came in three times before you ever waited on me. I'm sorry...I mean served me. I wouldn't want you to think I was sexist."

She smiles and leans in closer.

So do I.

"You did?"

"Yeah. And every night your hair is pulled up in one black rubber band. You always carry two pens - one in your hand and the other one in the pocket of your apron. You wear the white apron the most, but I really like the way the blue one looks on you."

She swallows and I wonder if she's as nervous-excited as I am.

I continue.

"You have four regular customers, but you never talk to them as much or as long as you talk to me. You work five nights a week and two Sundays a month. And you were right. I *do* come in at seven every evening, but did you know that I stand outside for fifteen minutes before I come in...just so I can look at you?"

"No." She's whispering. "I didn't."

Maybe *she's* stunned a little.

Conversations Over Coffee

"Did you also know that I looked at my watch every fifteen minutes while I was at work last night? I kept hoping I could make it out in time to get here before you closed."

My hand reaches out.

Tentatively.

I touch her elbow again...and I sigh when she does.

This is not without thought.

I *want* to touch her this time.

"You did?"

I nod my head.

"And Bella?"

"Yeah?"

"I got about three hours of sleep last night because I *couldn't* sleep. Not really."

"Why?"

"I couldn't get you off my mind. And I was thinking that...ummm...maybe you were wondering where I was."

"I was," she says. "I thought... I was just...I thought you didn't want to see me."

Honest.

I'm honest.

"I did," I tell her. "I *always* want to see you."

Conversations Over Coffee

I wait for her to speak.

My heart is pounding.

I hear it...loud and pulsing in my ears.

"I always want to see you, too, Edward."

I take a deep breath as my hand gently strokes the soft skin of her arm.

"Ten," I whisper.

"Ten what?"

"Ten is the number of seconds I just held my breath while I was waiting for you to speak."

"Edward," she says my name.

It's a sigh.

It's perfect.

"Bella?"

"Yeah?"

I go for it.

"What time do you get off tonight?"

"Why?"

She bites her lip again.

Her finger plays with the ceramic handle of my cup.

Conversations Over Coffee

"Would you like to do something with me?"

I focus on the way she feels under my fingers.

The fact that she's allowing me to touch her and doesn't pull away.

"Like a date?" she asks.

She smiles.

Brightly.

So bright it makes my eyes water from smiling back at her.

"Yeah," I tell her. "Like a date. Like anything you want."

Her face scrunches again.

Falls.

"It's Friday night."

"It is."

"We don't close till late."

"How late?"

"Midnight."

"Doesn't matter."

And it doesn't.

At all.

Conversations Over Coffee

"Really?"

Her eyes smile.

Just like her lips.

Both of them are beautiful.

"I'd love that."

She'd love that.

Me, too.

So much.

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

"I'll wait for you."

And I do.

Happily.

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Conversations Over Coffee

A/N

Reviews are love.

Please leave me some.

You all have made my entire week with all the love and tweets and support in general. I'm pretty sure I haven't stopped smiling. At all. Thank you just doesn't seem to be enough...but it's all I've got.

Well, that...and the promise of seeing you all in the morning.

Same time.

Same place.

Marvar - I ran out of words for you a long time ago. Somewhere around Chapter 17 of Retail Therapy when I fell in love with you. Thank you for everything. For your time, your honesty and talent...and your friendship. I love that most of all. Just like you. xoxo

Saturday

Saturday

The doors are locked and we're standing outside.

It's raining.

And I don't have an umbrella.

Perfect.

"What do you want to do?" I ask her.

"I don't know," she says. "Maybe get some coffee?"

I chuckle.

She laughs.

"I'm sorry," I tell her. "I don't have an umbrella and we'll have to walk."

"I don't mind," she says.

She reaches out and takes my hand.

And just like that, our fingers tangle and I am holding Bella Swan's hand.

And also just like that, it's not enough.

I have to kiss her.

I pull her and we're running.

She's laughing.

Conversations Over Coffee

I'm giddy.

Trembling with it.

We duck into an alley on a side street.

I'm standing in front of her.

She's leaning against the wall.

Out of breath.

Her chest rising and falling as she breathes.

Wide eyes looking at me.

Wet hair and skin...and fucking beautiful.

"There's something I want to do," I tell her.

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

Closer.

She doesn't move.

Closer.

"Do you...?"

She pauses.

"What?"

Conversations Over Coffee

"No...nothing."

"What?"

Rain water drips from her lip.

I stare.

And want to taste it.

"Do you want to kiss me?" she asks.

"I'd be happy with holding your hand."

It's the truth.

That *would* make me happy.

She smiles and looks up at me.

Her eyes blinking from the rain.

"That's not what I asked."

Closer.

"Ask me again."

"Edward?"

"Yeah?"

"Do you want to kiss me?"

"So much."

Conversations Over Coffee

Her hands reach up and wrap around my neck.

My hands circle around her waist.

I lean in and whisper, "I'm sorry it's raining."

"I'm not."

And then my lips are on hers.

Soft.

Wet.

It's more than I ever imagined.

And yeah...I've imagined it.

Nights and nights of imagining.

Suck.

Kiss.

Sweet and wonderful and warm....just like her.

My hand strokes her cheek and she opens her mouth, whimpering into mine.

I die.

And live.

And life is good.

I'm breathing her breath, sweet and spearmint and longing that's finally required.

Conversations Over Coffee

Our tongues touch softly...exploring and tasting.

So good.

So, so good.

And all those nights.

All the coffee and the pie and the nerves and the waiting...

Wanting then.

Wanting still.

They were all worth it.

This kiss is worth it.

Bella is worth it.

I pull away, panting.

So is she.

I don't let go.

And neither does she.

"Wow," she says.

And I agree.

Wholeheartedly.

"Yeah...wow."

Conversations Over Coffee

She giggles.

"I almost forgot," I say.

"What?"

"Cullen."

"What's that?"

"My last name."

"Edward Cullen," she says.

"Yeah," I tell her, kissing her lips once more.

"I like it."

I smile.

"I like you."

She smiles.

"A lot?"

More.

I say it.

"More."

"Me, too."

"And Bella," I say. "Now you know everything."

Conversations Over Coffee

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A/N

Reviews are love.

Please leave me some.

So, this is the end. Or the beginning. Depending on how you want to look at it. This was always intended to be a short fic. About quietly getting to know someone. Honestly. Realistically. With no fanfare or drama.

Just simple words, true emotion and lots of coffee and sugar.

(I reserve the right to revisit them, however.)

Thank you for the massive love this week. I am truly astounded with a perma-grin attached to my face. And I adore you all so much for reading and taking the time to tell me what you think.

Marvar is amazing. I would write her poetry, but it would suck. So, I am left with little love notes at the bottom of all my chapters. But please know that I am currently drawing puffy hearts with my pink gel ink pen and writing her name in the middle of them. I love you, sweets. xoxo

And in case you didn't know: I do not own Twilight. Well, I do. But it's just a hardback edition of Stephenie Meyer's book.