

13 - Birthday Surprises

The big day officially started when Emily could feel her shoulder being gently shaken by a hand, coupled with an encouraging, quiet voice.

“Come on, honey...It’s time to get up!”

“What time is it?” She wasn’t really aware of what was happening, but all she had to cling on to was Joyce’s voice.

“Early enough so that we can have *lots* of fun! Don’t you want to spend the day with me?”

Groaning, Emily stirred as she finally opened her eyes, as Joyce’s hair dangled over her from above, paired with the face that filled Emily with such positivity whenever she saw it. “I do, but can I please have five more minutes?” When she moved, a sudden mass between her legs became unpleasantly loud, as well as squishy. Dreading the ability to remember the past, she recalled what she’d done at some point in between sleeping; waking up long enough to wet herself and then go back to sleep. She wanted to justify it as her just being tired, but it was even less of an excuse compared to last time when she was sick. Thankfully the only other person who’d know about it praised and even encouraged her for it. Still, maybe milkshakes weren’t the best idea...

A sudden shock hit Emily when a hand pressed against the front of her pastel bottoms, certainly fishing for what was underneath the fleece clothing; for something much more plastic and wet. Emily could only lock eyes with Joyce as her hand inspected the damage, only one of the two smiling at the act, and the other blushing furiously.

“I take it you had a nice sleep?” Joyce quickly assaulted her with a peck on the cheek, finally pulling her hand away from the material covering the wet diaper.

“Can I have some coffee?” Although embarrassed, still in a dazed state, Emily briefly forgot her current role when asking for such an “adult” drink. Though, she quickly realized her mistake right after, but was too lazy to correct herself. Not only did she want to shift the topic, but if she was going to get up she could really use a booster. The kind of coffee Joyce would give her was probably that milk drink.

“I’m sure we can figure something out for breakfast...” The obvious hints of mischief danced throughout her voice, and even Emily was smart enough to pick up on that. Joyce was all smiles, like always, but there seemed to be some sort of...*fire* behind her usual passion? As if she were

twice as excited than usual? Maybe as things were moving along she was just all the more happy?

“Can I...can I be changed first, though?” Sheepishly Emily muttered her request, as she got off the bed and stood next to Joyce, dressed in a pair of jeans and a sweater. Like last night the maturity dynamic was at play and making great strides, including the height and age difference which contributed to an amazing package altogether. The added weight to Emily’s underwear was suddenly feeling like another large contributor as well.

“Of course you can!” Joyce spoke almost as if she were expecting the request, and easily slipped her thumbs in the waistband of Emily’s pajama bottoms, giving them a slight upwards tug. For the briefest moment, the stretched material slightly emphasized the curve of her underwear, and it had the sleepy Emily back to her bashful self.

“But, I don’t really think is the place to be changing your diapers...” Joyce spoke in an almost disapproving tone, giving the rest of the room a few exaggerated glances.

“Wh..what?” Awkwardly, Emily countered her statement with genuine confusion. “But...you always change me here?” The topic of diapers wasn’t high on Emily’s comfortability list, but facts were facts, and Joyce was really throwing her for a loop.

“Maybe,” Joyce looked as if she were recalling a distant thought; not one that happened just last night. “But how am I supposed to change you here? Where are all your changing supplies?”

“R...right there...?” What was she getting at? Joyce’s words felt completely foreign to Emily, as she pointed towards the dresser where the supplies likely were. Funnily enough, only Joyce was the one to go snooping in the “baby” drawers. She’d never been told not to, but Emily still felt it was unspoken her access to them was restricted or discouraged.

Joyce, following Emily’s finger, looked at her as if it was Joyce’s turn to be confused, even though deep down she really wasn’t. For the sake of appearances though she maintained the act on the surface. “What do you mean, sweetie? That’s where we keep all your big girl clothes.”

“Look at what I’m wearing, though!” Alluding to her pajamas and not the diaper, Emily looked down at herself and her attire. “Didn’t you get these from the dresser last night?” She walked over to the drawers she’d never personally touched and opened them up. Yet the inside of them was a sight she didn’t expect to see.

Nothing. The drawer was empty, and all that stared back at her was the wooden bottom of it.

“What...?” Emily voiced her confusion as it trailed off, and she looked back to Joyce who was donned with a secretive smile; amused with her little girl’s puzzled expression.

“Where did all the stuff go?”

“What stuff?” Joyce continued to play dumb.

“You know! All the...*baby* stuff...” Emily’s voice came out quietly.

“Oh! Now I get what you’re saying!” Joyce, as if something obvious was made clear to her pretended to remember a fabricated event. “Emmy,” Joyce started to chuckle. “Don’t you remember when I said this room was only temporary?”

Temporary? What did she mean?

“Temp...? What do you mean? You never said that.” And even if she did, where else did she expect her to sleep? Was this part of the game? Wait, she couldn’t be suggesting that she sleep with *her*, did she? Emily didn’t know how to feel about that...

Closing the distance, Joyce pulled Emily in for a hug, kissing the top of her head. “It’s okay if you forgot,” Though, there wasn’t anything to forget. “All I want is for you to be happy. Now come on, don’t you want your diaper changed?”

The embrace was nice, but it did no more to answer Emily’s questions. Still shrouded in obscurity, Emily accepted the strange request pertaining to her underwear, and complied with the equally as strange suggestion to leave the room. Where else was there to go?

Walking out the door, Emily instinctively turned towards the living room, but was suddenly stopped by a pair of hands on her shoulders.

“Other way...!” The excitement was impossible for Joyce to contain, as they drew closer and closer to the big reveal. Emily’s sense of loss and confusion was too adorable and wonderful to not revel in. It wasn’t the uncertainty itself that had Joyce on the edge of her seat, but for what it would transform into once things were set into motion. The countless days they’d spent together and the effort that was involved in them would finally be realized in just a few more feet. The masterful plan had been clear as day to Joyce for quite some time, and only until it had reached its climax would it be made known to Emily, and that was exactly what this moment was. It was the beginning of something beautiful, and something Joyce was fairly certain Emily would enjoy too.

Admittedly interested now too, Emily staring at Joyce with her own smile for a few moments looked past her and down the other, much shorter end of the hallway. There wasn't anything special, though. All that was there was were the three doors Emily had always known. One was Joyce's room, the other was her office, and the other...? Well, the other Emily had known to be a storage room. So...so why did she suddenly start to feel so wonderfully apprehensive when looking at it now? Added more to the effect, her heart suddenly thumped heavily when she noticed the bright, red bow tied to the knob.

Wordlessly, Emily stared back at Joyce as if she were waiting for confirmation.

“Well? Aren't you going to open it?”

In all the time they'd spent together, Joyce had continuously showered Emily in gifts and surprises, but never did Emily feel such suspense when staring at a plain door. The simplicity in the covering which shrouded something much more mysterious was what screamed the most to her, and she almost wanted to turn away from the door and run; afraid she might not be able to handle the might of what Joyce had in store for her...But, so much of her wanted to see what was behind that door, and she *did* want to be changed...

Taking a deep breath, Emily edged closer and closer to the knob, trying to be mindful of the red decoration wrapped around it, and with a firm grasp gave it a slight twist, rotating smoothly in response. All that was left was for Emily to give the door a push, and the room's contents would be revealed. Once more, Emily looked back at Joyce who seemed even more eager than Emily was. Whose gift was it really?

“Are you *really* going to drag this out so much?” Joyce jokingly, somewhat broke the atmosphere as she readied herself to practically push the girl into the room.

Slowly, Emily's push formed a gap between the door and the frame, as her eyes started to adjust to the revealing scene, and Joyce slightly bit her lower lip, watching from behind. The lights were already turned on, and in almost a dramatic fashion Emily looked away for just a second to rub the lingers of agitated sleep out of them, but when they came to, and the door was fully open, what Emily had seen completely betrayed her expectations, largely because the limits she figured Joyce would go to were far lower than their actual level; the current display suggesting otherwise. She couldn't find the words as an indescribable sight was showcased to her. In soft, calming colors, plush, white carpeting, and many furniture items tailored for her exact size, staring back at the two was a fully stocked nursery.

“It’s a...” Coherent thought had completely abandoned the smaller girl as she walked inside, and her feet touched the new flooring and the thick fibers just slipped in between her toes. The first thing she could see in all its splendor was unmistakably a crib, only for an infant of a much larger size...It was propped on the traditional four legs, and the two broader sides were barred, but it wasn’t as high off the ground. Inside of it was a thick mattress dressed in bedding and a few stuffed animals had already made themselves comfortable by the pillow.

Next to it was a counter, just about the height of her usual bed but a tad bit taller, and a plastic-covered cushion ran across it. The cushion from a distance had all sorts of caricatures on it, and even some that looked familiar...From Emily’s angle, she could also see the counter’s interior was hollowed, and in it were an array of unknown bottles in varying size, an obvious package of wipes, and a cloth-draped wicker basket of thick-looking padding; diapers. But they weren’t usual ones...Or at least, not the ones Emily knew. They were much more decorated...

Beside the changing table was a tall white bin, and even in Emily’s state of disbelief could she likely guess what it was for...

Emily could also see another door, as her heart started to race faster, seeing each and every infantile item and addition to the room. It was what she could only guess to be a closet door, otherwise her heart wouldn’t be able to handle much more. Next to it was a full-length mirror against the wall, lined in a flowery trim that eased itself into the theme of the easygoing kid’s room.

“I...Is this all for...” Again, as her mind raced a mile a minute she could only murmur and look back at Joyce, who was enveloped in complete, total secondhand ecstasy from Emily’s reactions. Finding her question falling short, Emily looked back to the rest of the room, finally remembering the concept of color, and noticed how all the wooden furniture was a dark, brown, maple wood, and the walls were cream-colored which when paired with the carpet and everything else painted a wonderful combination. A few simple paintings of landscapes were hung around the room, which although a strange addition, didn’t feel totally unwelcome...And although an argument to the closet theory, there was also a wooden dresser by the door in the corner.

Turning around one last time, before she stared at Joyce, what stared back at her first were two, black spheres sewn into the massive giant of fluff contained by artificial fur sitting in the corner of the room. Lazily on its bottom, with arms by its sides and legs spread in opposite directions, a giant bear made itself comfy and was as quiet as a mouse. It was almost as big as Emily! Or maybe it was as big? Taken aback by the large stuffie, she almost didn’t notice the toy chest which was conveniently labeled so beside it. There were much finer details to the room as well,

but to put so much stock in each and every one of them would have kept Emily and Joyce there all day.

Emily, trying to ease her slightly heightened breathing, looked at Joyce who was almost on the verge of tears from induced happiness.

“It’s a...nursery?” There was little expression in Emily’s voice, as she was still ridden with shock, as the moment in itself was not only surreal, but even if the room itself was tangible Emily still could not fully grasp it.

“Yes!” Joyce’s voice erupted with joy, as she rushed in to give Emily an even bigger hug. “And it’s *your* nursery. Everything in here is meant for you!”

Weakly, Emily returned the hug. She almost felt like when she did during that fever dream; responses lagging and emotions the same. But the one thing that resonated so strongly within her was the idea of ownership. *Her nursery*. It was hers. Everything in this room, dedicated to caring for someone who *needed* to be cared for, and waited on hand and foot for the most basic things. A crib to protect her from falling out while she slept, a changing table to dedicate the craft of keeping her pants dry, colors and pictures meant to reinforce happy feelings, and toys inducted with the sole task of keeping their user bubbly and entertained.

“H..how long have you been working on this?”

“A little bit, honestly...” Joyce’s enthusiasm simmered for a small bit to remember her countless efforts and long nights. “But it was all worth it, just to put a smile on your face, and to bring us closer together.”

A small sniffle could only escape Emily as all the random pieces from their time together started to fall into place. The days when Joyce might be an hour later than usual, or yesterday when they spent especially long outside the house, keeping this door locked, and even going to visit Amy?

“But...but why?” With a faint sense of confusion, Emily looked at Joyce with a face that suddenly broke Joyce’s sense of bliss. “Why all of this for...me?” As soon as she popped the question, an odd sensation swept over Emily. A wet sensation, and it felt as if it were rolling down her cheeks. Pressing a hand to where the feeling was coming from, she pulled it away to see a clear liquid on her finger.

Tears. They were tears.

And they didn't stop coming, as an unknown part of Emily burst from within and took control of her vision; blurring from the oncoming stream. Awkwardly, Emily gave a brief chuckle as she continued to stare at Joyce.

"I-I don't know why I'm crying?"

Without a word Joyce came back to her, only now Emily responded with a much tighter grip, as the contact had her break into a muffled sob. The physical contact was an instinctive reaction, but the emotional turmoil that followed was something completely unknown to Joyce. Why was she crying? Did she hate it? Did she not like it? A sinking feeling started to grow in her heart, but more than anything she wanted Emily to be happy.

"Do you not like it?" It was a question of concern that discarded her personal feelings, and only cared to take input from Emily's.

"N-no...It's-It's not that...!" She could only hug tighter as her words were harder and harder to squeeze out. What weighed on her the most was the very nursery itself, and to learn that while she lived from day to day, Joyce the entire time had been planning something much grander that could never be realized in the span of a single day; the span of a single week! The more Joyce did for Emily, it came with Emily's own expectations to somehow return the favor, even if Joyce only wanted it in feelings. No matter how much reinforcement Joyce could try and give, it couldn't have prepared Emily for something like this.

"Am I...am I really that special to you?" Teary-eyed, Emily looked up at Joyce's eyes. "Y-you would go so far for...for me?"

Her mighty, motherly will started to tremble from the sound of her words, as even Joyce's eyes started to water. Lowering her hands past Emily's bottom, she gripped them around Emily's thighs and hoisted her into the air, causing her legs to wrap around Joyce.

"I would do *anything* for you!" Her voice was thick as she rubbed the pajama girl's back.

"You're the best thing that's ever happened to me, and I want to do so much for you! Every day I want to make your sun shine as bright as possible, Emily, and never have I felt this way about someone before..." As the feelings in her heart poured out, so did the tears from her eyes.

"You've given me something that I never want to let go of, and only nurture and grow closer with! I love being with you, as an adult and a baby. Everything about you, from your cat naps, to your cuddling, mindful personality, playfulness, gratitude and appreciation makes me want to keep you close and never let go. We haven't been together for very long, but the things you've done for me have become so essential that I can't ignore the feelings you've awakened in me..."

Each and every sentence, word, piece of grammar, and pause were like iron fingers plucking the strings to Emily's heart, which sung only the most wonderful tunes. Although a surprise in itself, the babyish feelings and willingness to submit was what threw Emily for a loop, as well as her quickness to adapt and enjoy it in much heavier troves... But even more, beyond that, it was also coupled with a sense of happiness to be with Joyce even outside of their mommy time, which only burned stronger with every passing day that they were together.

Sudden memories of Jack invaded her mind; moments from when their relationship was in its prime, and how every moment when they were together was like walking on cloud nine. Being with the person you wanted to spend your time with the most was an inexplicable sensation, so why was she thinking of that now? Yet, asking such a question was obviously stupid, as when she was buried in Joyce the answer was too obvious.

"Y-you're important to me too..." Emily laughed through her tears, losing her entire composure over Joyce's boundless compassion. "I...I want to be with you Joyce. I want to be together."

The affirmation only sent a new wave of relief over Joyce, as she hugged tighter and showered Emily in kisses.

"That's not fair!" Joyce chuckled, trying to blink the wetness out of her eyes, "I'm the one that's supposed to make *you* happy!" The pair kept laughing as they showered each other in their love, one still in the arms of the other. Both of their hearts, standing in the middle of the nursery, had reached a point of complacency and euphoria which had never been known to either of them. Apart from the room itself being out of a fantasy book, the circumstances themselves were one in a million, and both of them in their own right felt like they were one in a million to be fortunate enough to be blessed by the other.

Another minute went by until their feelings had finally settled down, and Joyce hiked Emily up once more to regain her grip. The stretching on her bottoms made the diaper's outline a little more obvious, which brought the purpose for entering the nursery back to Joyce's mind.

"I'm so happy to hear you like it, Emily." Once more, Joyce attacked Emily with another kiss. "But what do you say we break in your nursery with its first diaper change?"

Outward emotion being her means of communication, Emily nodded her head as Joyce carried her to the changing table, setting her down on her back. Everything in the room was designed and constructed with Emily's exact figure in mind, courtesy of Amy's measurements which Joyce need only forward to the design team. Emily's head rested on the small cushion at the end,

and only from the knees down did her legs hang off the table, spread apart far enough for Joyce to get herself right in between.

“W...will it hold me?” Looking at her surroundings, Emily suddenly felt uncertain of whether or not the furniture could actually support her. It was for a baby, after all...

“Yes, it will,” Joyce dance her fingers across Emily’s palm. “Everything in this room was made for *you*, and no one else. I mean it when I say this is *your* nursery! The only reason any of this is here, or came to be is because of you.” Everything she said was true, and the greater part of it all was because of Emily. The smaller bits and pieces were things anyone could get, but the much bigger items were one of a kind and only because of Emily.

The repeated idea of ownership tickled Emily in such a pleasant way. The room she stayed in before was technically hers, but it was a thing prior to her being here. But now there was something in Joyce’s apartment that existed only because Emily did. There was something here that came to be because Emily gave it a reason to. She *was* a part of Joyce’s life, and the inverse for her own was true as well. It was yet another piece of physical evidence.

“And even all the little additions are meant just for you, too!” Taking hold of something out of Emily’s sight, a strap coming from the table was in Joyce’s hand, and she placed it over Emily’s stomach as it buckled into the other end; out of Emily’s visible reach.

“Hey...what gives?” Emily tried her best to make her voice sound like a protest, but the sudden sense of restriction had her giddy.

“This way when you’re still sleepy, I can make sure you don’t roll off when I need to change you!” The reminder of being so easy to handle while asleep had the girl blushing again, but almost wanting to wake up like that at some time...To be on the changing table, opening her eyes and finding Joyce drawing something new up between her legs...Never in a million years would her past self ever think of having such thoughts, much less getting excited over them! “And what’s more, it gives Mommy the advantage for tickle attacks!” With the rise in her tone, Emily suddenly felt a hand slip itself under her shirt and scurry across her skin, with each point of contact sending shocks and jolts that had her squirming and squealing. Out of reflex she kicked her legs, but they had no chance of hitting Joyce as she was already in between them; well beyond Emily’s first line of defense, and too far for her own hands to reach.

The strap kept her from going far, and despite being bigger than the average baby, not only could the strap contain her, but the table itself showed not even the slightest sign of strain in response to her weight and struggle. It was perfect.

“Stop! Stop!” With a new wave of tears Emily’s infectious giggle filled the room as she was mercilessly slaughtered by the countless waves of nailed-infantry, laying waste to her most sensitive parts. This strap was made of evil and sin, as an agent of the devil itself could it submit its victims to the greatest form of torture possible; tickle attacks.

Joyce finally relented, sounding the end with a wet kiss on Emily’s bare stomach.

“Okay, without further ado, let’s get you out of your jammies!” Starting from the waist, Joyce grabbed the fleece, pastel bottoms and slipped them off her legs, revealing the slightly discolored medical diaper. It of course still had to take much more before warranting a real change, but it was enough to count in their books.

It wasn’t Emily’s first time being changed, but certainly was it her first in a nursery setting, on top of being on a changing table...Unexpectedly it added a new element to it all...A pleasant one.

The tapes were peeled from the plastic, and Emily’s legs were lifted by Joyce and the diaper was slipped from underneath. It also became absolutely clear Emily was totally at Joyce’s mercy. The strap was more than enough to prove that, but without anything for her feet to stand on, she couldn’t even help in lifting her own bottom for a change.

“And that will be the last you ever see of those diapers, sweetheart!” Clearly she was the happiest to hear those words, and Emily suddenly remembered the decorated ones she saw beneath the table from earlier. Balling up the one which Emily was just wearing, Joyce dropped it in the white bin nearby. “These ones are *much* cuter!” Grabbing one from the basket below, Joyce held a new, thicker pad in her hand which had been decorated in all too familiar characters. Familiar faces from decades and a handful of years ago...Unfolded for Emily to see it all its splendor, Sesame Street figures danced across the plastic front, as the occasional letter block spaced them for the sake of spicing up the artistic variety. The wings were a faint green, and the tapes had bright yellow strips along the tips.

“Are those...mine too?”

“Well, I don’t know anyone else in the house that wears diapers.” Gleefully, Joyce let out a small laugh once she knew the words hadn’t hurt Emily.

Overwhelmed as things already were, the new line of diapers pushed it to a whole new level, as the plastic padding for babies stared back at Emily. Before, the medical diaper was open to interpretation, and from an outsider’s perspective could even be considered a medical condition.

But this...with these diapers...There was no room for misunderstanding, and anyone that would see it would know the person in it was of a very specific age and mindset.

Before the diaper came Joyce used a wipe to clean off Emily's lower half, and although being cold she toughed it out. Her legs were once more in the air and her bottom followed soon after, and she was suddenly lowered onto a new cloud. Instantly upon touching it a cloud received her cheeks with a cushiony hug. Compared to the medical diapers, this one had strangely gone even further beyond the comfort level those could provide, and without considering how the outside looked, it was a feeling Emily wouldn't mind having in all her underwear...

"Does it feel nice? Soft?" Joyce's questioning was not only meant to enforce positive sentiments, but also to rate the handiwork of the company's lab. Their bonuses were riding on it, after all...Much more importantly, so was Emily's satisfaction.

"It feels...nice..." It was weird admitting to the soft feeling of the diaper, but it was the truth. "How did you find these? I didn't even know they made stuff like this..." Bigger diapers was one thing, but retail ones with licensed characters on them too? How could someone have pulled that off? Well, clearly, if anyone could it was Joyce, but that didn't mean it was easy.

"Mommy's secret," Joyce pretended to grab an imaginary zipper and drag it across the seam between her lips."Don't worry about where it came from. Just let me know what you think of it as we go."

The only familiar part of the change was the same lavender powder as always, and then the front of the diaper was brought up to her crotch. In the midst of it, the bulk forced Emily's legs a little bit farther apart than the medical one normally did. Certainly these were thicker...

The four, strong adhesives were laid like metal bolts into a concrete foundation, and the plastic material used as the diaper's foundation seemed firm, but not in any way uncomfortable to the wearer. Even when Emily slightly shifted her legs though, there was a loud crinkle that had Emily wondering if it was the changing table pad, her diaper, or both.

Taking just a moment to check the leg bands on the diaper, ensuring a snug fit, Joyce capped off the change with one last look at Emily, strapped to the table, red all over, with her magnificently childish undergarment on display. It was everything Joyce was hoping for and more!

She finally unstrapped Emily, and helped her up, with her bottom crinkling all the way.

“I think these ones are louder...” Emily stole a quick look at her diaper, much more awkward to see the theme around her waist now. What it stood for was what had Emily the most excited, but how it actually looked put her mind in a weird space. In a way it was kind of cute...but every time she remembered that she was the one wearing it, those ideas were harder to cling on to.

Unable to look her in the eyes, Emily could only let out a murmur while she buried her feet into the floor. “D...does it look fine?”

Taking hold of Emily’s hands, their eyes met next, and Joyce shined a look of pure happiness with such intensity it seemed to vaporize any momentary shame, embarrassment or uncertainty Emily was feeling. “It’s perfect.” Slightly, Emily shuffled her feet, and the diaper responded in tune, which only made Joyce want to gush even more.

Emily didn’t feel like carrying the topic any further, hoping the usher things along. She *was* enjoying everything right now, but being completely honest with her feelings was a bit more difficult.

“Could we go have breakfast now?”

“Well, we can, or I can get you dressed for the day first?”

Nervously, Emily started to eye the unopened door, harboring a sneaking suspicion what might be behind it...

“Breakfast first, please.” Taking a small breath, she hoped Joyce would allow her at least a small breather. Everything was moving with such momentum it felt like she was only hanging on by a few threads. “And thank you...”

“Thank you for what?” Joyce had taken Emily by the hand, leading her to the kitchen.

“For...you know...everything.”

“I mean it, you know, when I say you’re special to me. Even if you’re my little girl right now, when you aren’t I still consider you as some irreplaceable. I just hope I’m not pushing you too far into the deep end...Please let me know if that happens.”

As they rounded the corner, Emily in just a shirt and diaper was happy to escape total babydom for at least a few moments, but those hopes were quickly stomped out when her eyes addressed the elephant in the room. Made for an adult, a high chair sat in the place of where Emily’s usual

seat would be, and the seat itself was a tad bit higher off the ground, and of course the back of the seat was cushioned and a tray was currently locked into it. Even from afar Emily knew it'd fit her...The sight had thrown her heart into hysterics once more.

“You really do go all out...” Unable to find any mental or emotional ground, Emily could only stand dead in her tracks as the contraption looked back at her.

“Do you want to try it?” Joyce poked with her question, finding it hard to mask her own bias for an obvious answer...It was Emily's day though, and there'd be plenty more opportunities in the future...

“I...I'll use it...” Again, the smaller, yet much louder voice in Emily's head was screaming to have her way, and she found herself being strung along by it and Joyce's antics.

Clearly overjoyed, Joyce took the first step to unlock the tray, sliding it out and creating an entrance for Emily to slip into. Before her was an infantile throne waiting to be occupied, and all she needed to do to claim it was take a few steps.

Shakily walking forward, Emily placed a foot on the crossbar as leverage to lift herself up to the seat, and planted herself into it; receiving her figure quite nicely. Her back became acquainted with the soft, yet firm cushioning, and the plastic seat curved into almost like an alcove for her to sink into. Her legs dangled from the large chair, and she noticed how her toes could just reach the bar she stepped off of. Sitting down now only better acquainted her bottom with the pad it was wrapped in.

“Does the chair feel nice too?” Making sure her arms were above it, Joyce then slipped the tray back into place with a click, situating her baby girl into place.

“I guess, in a way...” Again, her opinions were as reserved as the ones concerning her diaper. Joyce took it all in stride though, given how different this must have been to their usual dynamic. That being said, only time would ease the process, and like always Joyce was over the moon, and she had expectations for Emily to follow soon after. And with the chair, to Emily it also encouraged the idea of security. It was another piece that felt quite sturdy and would hold onto her quite well. The amount of detail and thought that must have gone into this was almost too much to comprehend in itself.

“And just to make sure you don't slip out by accident and get a boo-boo...” Joyce started to explain as she knelt down, beyond the tray and out of Emily's sight. She could feel forces at work beneath her, and the sound of another click as a strap found its way in between her legs and

up her crotch. “There!” Joyce clapped her hands together in a satisfied expression. “You look adorable beyond words!” Unable to escape now, Joyce gave Emily a few more kisses before moving over to the counters, knowing full well Emily wouldn’t be going anywhere. Not that either of them wanted to.

Curiously, Emily shifted around in her seat, taking note of how the crotch strap slightly pressed into her when she moved. It was funny in a way how it served as a constant reminder she wouldn’t be going anywhere...The only place she had to be was where her caregiver deemed fit. Where her *mommy* told her to be.

“Can I pick breakfast?” Emily called from her stationary point, aimlessly kicking her legs the slightest bit. Joyce hadn’t bothered to turn around while she worked with the coffee maker.

“Well, maybe...It *is* your special day, after all...”

Hearing her debate the question even had Emily giggle the slightest bit. “But you’re the one who got *me* all this stuff. How does that make it *my* special day? If anything, it’s yours!”

“Very clever, Emmy, but baby or not, I wanted to make today very special for you. You deserve it.”

Baby or not? Didn’t that have to do with today completely? What else would have made it special?

“What do you mean? Isn’t that why today’s special? Because of the nursery?”

Finally, Joyce turned back to Emily, with an almost small amount of disbelief.

“Are you kidding?” She slightly tilted her head with a smirk.

“N...no?” What was she missing that was so important? How obvious could it have been?

“The nursery was a gift, birthday girl!” Joyce even gestured to the high chair Emily was in. “I didn’t just pick a random day to do all of this, you know!”

“Birth...?” *May 29*. The date suddenly clicked, and so did Joyce’s question from earlier about her plans for today. The deeper meaning behind Joyce’s actions was suddenly revealed, and added a whole new layer of gratitude to the day’s festivities. A new wave of tears washed over

her. “F-for my birthday?” The happiness was too much to handle, and Emily couldn’t compose herself. Thankfully the chair could hold her in place while her emotions ran rampant.

“I figured you knew!” Joyce could only chuckle as she rubbed her cheek. “I’d have done this for you any day of the year, but I figured for your birthday it’d mean a bit more. Does it mean that much?”

“I-it...it does...!” Between sobs, Emily managed her words. Never had someone gone to such lengths for her; someone she’d only known for such a short period of time. It only made her want to grow closer to Joyce, though, and to continue cherishing what they had. After she left her parents and before Joyce had come into her life, birthdays were just a day like any other, minus the possible call from family and maybe a few friends. Absorbing everything had her face all out of sorts as it became wet again. However, that was quick to change when a piece of cloth dried her face.

“I wanted to wait until breakfast was ready, but given you’re a little emotional today I suppose I should put one on you now...” Emily as a spectator to Joyce’s words and actions, the cloth used to dry her face then found itself around her neck, and a knot was tied with the two ends of it behind her. The sudden bib covered the front of her chest, and despite being upside down Emily could read it as “Mommy’s Mess Maker.”

“I’m not emotional!” Emily playfully spat back, wiping the tears from her eyes. “I’m just happy...that’s all.”

“I know you are,” Joyce smiled. “And I’m happy too. Don’t ever feel like you can’t be yourself around me. Crying is perfectly okay with me, and every other emotion that comes along with it too. Now, birthday girl,” Joyce played with the back of Emily’s hair, setting it behind her shoulders. “What would you like to eat today? We can do french toast, eggs, bacon, pancakes, mu-”

“Pancakes!” The answer came faster than did the rest of Joyce’s list.

“Pancakes it is!” Almost trying to mimic the thrill, Joyce moved back over to the fridge to get out the eggs.

“Can I have something to drink first, though?” The thought of coffee somehow never escaped her mind through this whole ordeal, and smelling the aroma coming from the household appliance almost had her squirming.

“I was just about to finish that part,” Joyce’s back turned to Emily, she had the milk beside her while she put together a drink Emily was already familiar with, only not in the same kind of cup.

Conveniently there was a cup holder in the tray, but it wasn’t for just cups either... Placed in the socket was a tall, plastic bottle capped by a rubber teat, and it was filled with the same, light brown liquid that the sippy cup once was during their last session.

“No more sippy cups?” Emily joked as she lifted the bottle, eyeing it curiously as she placed her mouth over the top. Again, especially strange given how much of a first it was, but Emily didn’t find herself as perturbed so much.

“This way you can bring it anywhere, and there’s no chance of spills!” Joyce took a sip of her own, much more concentrated version in a regular mug, having flashbacks to when Emily hadn’t even touched her black coffee. Seeing her warm up to a much more watered down version was fitting in a way.

Biting down on it, Emily gave it a small suck, rewarding her with a small burst of coffee-milk. It was just about as rewarding as the sippy cup, if not less, and consequently the bottle had her working even harder to fish the rest out. She was so occupied with the task, she hadn’t even considered just how precious she might look to Joyce. For that reason, Joyce was currently enjoying the view of her little girl work at a part of her breakfast, and her padded posterior peaking just beneath the plastic tray.

Despite one being much more mobile than the other, both parties equally enjoyed their current standing, and their brief interactions between the moments when Joyce had to tend to the pancakes were small, little bundles of love that revealed the sweetest and nicest surprises.

“And with that they’re ready!” Joyce announced as she set the plate on Emily’s tray. It was slightly higher than the table, but Joyce still maintained the high ground. Emily could only marvel at the final product; sliced into bite-sized pieces, dressed in butter and syrup, as well as topped with a pair of strawberries.

Emily had a small, sinking feeling Joyce was going to make her use her hands, but thankfully that premonition hadn’t come to pass, when a fork and knife followed with it. Just when she was about to dig in though, Joyce swiped the utensils from her hands almost like a tease.

“Not so fast!” Joyce happily tutted as she walked behind Emily again, who could only follow her movements for a short while until the chair prevented her from doing so.

“Were you gonna feed me?” Almost shamelessly, Emily asked, when she could feel her hair bunching up from behind, which got her thinking that walking into her blind spot didn’t support the theory so much...

“If you’d like, I can,” Joyce fastened the bulk of Emily’s hair into a band. She suddenly started to think how she’d look if she used a ribbon instead...”But I’m more concerned about keeping your hair nice and pretty. The bib might keep your clothes clean, but your hair’s a different story...” The way she spoke, as if Emily couldn’t be trusted, caused a playful snicker to escape the girl in question. Joyce kept the hair loose enough so it didn’t look strained, and still maintained its volume, but kept out of her face.

Coming back into view, Joyce looked Emily over and sized up her handiwork, cupping Emily’s cheeks, rubbing the tips of their noses together.

“I can’t tell what looks sweeter!” She laughed. “You, or the pancakes!” In her heart, it wasn’t much of a contest, and her continuous fawning was certainly starting to have its effect on Emily, who looked to be getting more squirmish by the minute, and a plastic crinkle sounded with each shift and shake. It was like the harder she tried to stay composed, it only dug a deeper hole.

“Now do you want me to feed you, or do you think you can handle it?”

Emily pondered the thought for a moment.

“You decide.” Emily really didn’t mind either way. What had her more interested were the constant opportunities to relieve herself of choice. The more she was finding it to occur, a strange addiction was starting to set into place. Somehow the moments always felt better when she knew Joyce had total control. Feeding her in a high chair; a place which Emily could only leave when she deemed it so, was something Emily oddly felt she could derive inexplicable pleasure from.

Needing no further encouragement, Joyce speared a few pieces of fluffy cake with the fork, and eased it into Emily’s part-way open mouth. As if she were the one eating it herself, she could only writhe in happiness as she imitated ‘Mmm’ing noises for Emily, which only set the other into a fit of giggles.

“Tasty?”

Happily, Emily nodded her head, with her ponytail bobbing as a chain reaction. “Can I...can I have another one?”

Instead of a verbal answer, more syrupy goodness was slipped in between her lips, sending Emily's mouth and stomach into another state of euphoria. She leaned forward the slightest bit as the fork was sliding out, trying to hang on to the taste of fresh syrup for as long as possible, but the strap between her legs and the tray locked in place prevented such. Her inability to move at all tickled them both in a weird, but positive way.

The teat from the bottle came next, which Emily happily accepted, trying to outdo her performance from last time, somehow reasoning it might be possible to extract even more liquid from the bottle if she discovered the right technique. The lightly caffeinated beverage was the perfect chase to a sugary, fluffy opener, and while she sucked, Emily mischievously eyed one of the two pieces of fruit; plump, vulnerable prey ripe for harvest.

Of her own command this time, Emily removed the bottle from her mouth, setting it back into its designated place. Before Joyce could collect another mouthful of pancake, Emily snagged one of the strawberries from the top of the stack, and quickly inserted it into her mouth, forcing the fruit's juices to pool in her mouth as her teeth shred the innocent berry to smithereens.

"Ah?" Joyce raised her brow, breaking the euphoric spell Emily was caught in. Only a single look needed to tell her she'd broken the imaginary rules.

"Maybe when you're the one feeding yourself, but the fruit comes *after* you finish your food when I'm in charge," Joyce started to chuckle as she eyed the last, lonely piece of fruit. "Maybe Mommy's getting a bit hungry too...That strawberry does look good..."

"No!" In a small shout, Emily looked as if her firstborn had been threatened to be taken away, only under much sillier circumstances, as she broke out into a bashful laugh, realizing she'd just tried to protect her breakfast from certain demise.

"Just kidding~!" Daringly, Joyce wet one of her fingers, then swabbed the corner of Emily's lightly syrupy mouth and stuck it in her own. "I promise I won't touch anything on your plate."

Reaffirmed by their super serious contract, the food and drink kept coming, and as they moved along Emily started to squirm lightly for a new reason. The past night's liquid, and maybe even some of today's was catching up to her... Clearly she hadn't finished her business between sleeping fits this morning or last night. She suddenly started to feel a bit desperate once she realized just how much the feeling of restraint worked to her disadvantage now. Her bladder started to press, and it was a little hard to ignore, and her legs couldn't come completely together with the padding involved.

And as she looked at Joyce, who to Emily was shrouded in mystery regarding whether she knew of her dilemma or not, was so absorbed in the fun of feeding her that nothing could seem to break her concentration. As Emily watched, she could feel herself wanting to protect this moment more than anything, and she could feel her legs tighten a little as she pushed.

She tried her best to be discreet, but it wasn't so easy of a task. She could only feel herself having any ground against second nature itself by gripping the edges of the tray as an aid.

“Emmy? What’re you...?” Joyce’s voice trailed as the answer became painfully obvious, and Emily was reunited with a familiar feeling of shame, but it didn’t dampen her momentum. A few seconds later, she could feel the first few droplets trickle out, and soon after a growing stream followed. The small task had her exhale with a sigh, as the warm pee soaked into her diaper. Sitting back down, she could feel it creep around her waist and groin, but after a good few seconds the feeling of wetness seemed to be gone. The diaper was certainly more squishy, doing its job as intended, but it only felt warmer now. She’d just wet one of her new diapers for the first time.

“Emmy...” Joyce spoke with a tinge of surprise, but more with pride than anything else. She hugged Emily as best she could, avoiding the plate beneath her. “I’m so proud of you! Thank you so much!” It was objectively strange to thank someone for wetting themselves, but it was on such a personal level, it only heightened the positive sentiments within Emily.

The hug and praise meant everything to her, but when she unconsciously tried to move, and the strap pressed into her now squishy crotch, it had totally sapped her of all her bravado. “Can you go back to feeding me now?” The request was quiet, and of course ashamed.

Actions yet again spoke louder than words, and the plate of food was one step closer to meeting its end. The bottle was on the fast track to being empty as well, and more and more small spots of syrup started to find its way around Emily’s mouth; attributed to the disconnect between who was eating, and who was doing the feeding.

“What are we gonna do next?”

“Well, *after* I wipe down your mouth, we’re gonna get you dressed and then play for a little bit. Sound good to you?”

Again, Joyce’s words earned nothing but agreeance from Emily, who now had her sights set on what she’d be wearing. What, simple, yet cute outfit it could be had her wondering...

Already worked into a routine, Emily held her mouth open as the sticky substance was just about to be within reach, yet she was suddenly denied when Joyce's phone started to ring and her gesture was put on hold.

"And who could that be...?" Muttering to herself, Joyce set aside the fork for a brief moment to check who it was. Thankfully the mood Emily had put her in was ecstatic, because seeing the caller ID read as 'Mom' didn't have her nearly as flustered as she was last time.

"Hi Mom," Joyce spoke casually with the phone pressed to her ear, and Emily did everything in her power not to make a peep. Her underwear suddenly had her paranoid, remembering just how loud it could be when it crinkled...even when it was wet. "How've you been? You don't usually call so early..."

The other end responded, while Emily was completely oblivious to what was being said; only receiving one end of the conversation.

"Hi, honey! Have you been well? How about Emily?"

"Uhm..." Joyce, staring at nothing in particular while she talked, glanced at Emily for a brief moment, who looked to be as stiff as a board and red as a tomato; as if she were being watched by the stranger in the phone. "She's asleep right now. But she's doing well."

Emily silently stared with suspicion. So her mom did know about her? Rational thought dominated her mind, knowing the more secretive part was well-kept in the shadows...At least she hoped.

"Asleep? Isn't it almost 8:00 for you?" Her mom sounded with almost genuine surprise.

"We're not all like you, *mom*." Joyce kidded, but spoke with a tinge of seriousness that reflected her mom's past habits. "If anything, I should be asking why *you're* the one that's up so early. It must be like 5 in the morning for you!"

"Early bird gets the worm!" Her voice was a matter of fact, as if there were no fault in her habits, much less her equal expectations of others. "More importantly, you seem to be a bit more cheery since we last talked...?" Her deductive skills were acute, and at some times damning to the point it felt like nothing could escape her looking glass.

“Maybe I’m just a morning person?” Mindlessly, she started to squeeze Emily’s foot, who was trying her hardest not to incite a response. Emily could only send a prayer of silent thanks it wasn’t another tickle attack.

“Maybe I’m finally starting to rub off on you, after all!” Her mom laughed, while Joyce silently smirked, keeping the true secret to her happiness under safe wraps.

“I don’t want to be rude, and it’s always nice to hear from you,” Picking the fork back up, Joyce reunited Emily with her food, already practiced enough to collect more onto its prongs without needing to look too much. “But why are you calling me so early?”

“Just a wellbeing check, I suppose?” Her mom’s voice was somewhat genuine, but seemed to be alluding to something else...

“Uh-huh...?”

“And, I wanted to give you some fair warning before we arrive at the airport.”

“Ai-airport?” Slightly, she stammered, taken aback by the sudden news. “Wh...what do you mean?”

“Well, we just talked about how your dad and I haven’t seen your new place, and you don’t visit very often. That’s why we’re coming to see you! Fair compromise, right?”

“M-mom, you can’t just show up out of the blue!” Her relaxed tone quickly devolved into a small panic. “I need time to prepare, get you a hotel, plan out your stay-”

“But you have a guest room, don’t you?” Her mom quickly interjected. “I don’t see why your father and I can’t use that. A hotel wouldn’t be an issue, if you really don’t want us staying in your home, though...” The hurt from rejection was obvious, and whether it was a clever tactic of her mom’s or not, Joyce wasn’t intending to be rude.

“No...it’s not that. You can stay if you want to. I didn’t mean to turn you away.”

“Perfect!” She bounced back from sadness to joy like the flick of a switch. How manipulative her mom could be at times... “And as for plans, don’t worry! We’ll figure it out as we go.”

“How long do you plan to be staying?” A sinking feeling washed Joyce all over. She tried to feel like she had *some* control in the conversation, but it was obvious who was setting the pace.

“Only a few days. Three, at most? Your dad needs to be back for a cooking thing with his buddies. Like I said, you know how he can be...”

“That’s good though,” Joyce countered. “You know,” She clearly directed her words at someone in specific. “Still being invested in your own hobbies, friends, and interests. Not dropping in on your kids unannounced and giving them time to plan in advance?” Her annoyance was mild, but she knew her mom wouldn’t be affected by it. It was all in good fun. For the most part. She loved her mom very much, but if she couldn’t be a thorn in her side sometimes...

“And to think, that Emily was really starting to have a positive effect on you...Maybe if you wake her up it’ll put you back into a good mood?” She snickered on the other line.

“Anyways,” Joyce ushered things along, not appreciating the teasing. “When are you guys going to be coming? A week? Two? Just let me know when so I can have my driver pick you up.”

“About that,” As she started, Joyce lifted the fork, unintentionally bringing it to Emily incredibly slow; an unintended consequence from her attention being divided. “The plane is scheduled to land at some time around noon.”

“Okay? Noon is fine. Noon, when?”

“Tomorrow.”

“Tomorrow?!” Joyce suddenly exclaimed, losing control of her secondary task, looking over to Emily who let out a small meep. Her sudden shock had caused her to clearly miss the mark, when a large splotch of syrup covered Emily’s cheek was evident, and the dented pancake was still on the fork. All she could do for the poor Emily was mouth an apology while she addressed the other pressing issue. Her surprise had also affected Emily too, who was slowly piecing together from Joyce’s words what was going on... “You’re kidding, right?”

“I told your dad we should have done it after his cooking thing, but he can never resist a good deal on airline tickets...Isn’t this better for you, anyway? That way we can only be in your hair for so long~!”

“Mom! One day is barely enough time to prepare!” Joyce’s heart started to race, thinking of the countless, incriminating things laid about the apartment. The nursery, the high chair, the bottles, bibs, pacifiers, toys; Joyce eyed Emily’s wet diaper. Too much evidence... “And what time did you say you’d be landing?” She tried to stay optimistic and maintain a calm thought process.

“12:45, to be exact. Like every airport though you can never really trust those times. Just have someone ready for 1:00. We don’t mind meandering if need be. And don’t worry about cleaning up the place, if that’s the issue. We’re not hard to please!” If only she’d known how wrong she could be...Disappointingly, Joyce mentally summarized the list of things she’d now need to put into hiding again. It’s not that she didn’t want her parents to visit, but this truly was the worst timing possible...Despite that, it *could* have been worse, but only by a slight margin...On a tangent, she tried to amend her misdeed with Emily by feeding her the last strawberry.

“See you sometime then,” Joyce kept her tone level, although being so dejected; caught in a crossroads between her feelings. “Love you.”

“See you soon!” Her mom was the first to hang up.

Finishing the vocal gymnastics, Joyce let out a sigh as she set the phone down, quietly looking at Emily.

“Are they coming to visit?” Blankly, Emily asked, as it didn’t take a rocket scientist to decipher the conversation by then.

“Yes, and in a very unannounced fashion, too!”

“So...so what are we gonna do?”

Completely? Joyce wasn’t sure. Without a doubt, everything related to the nursery needed to go there, and the door needed to stay locked. If her parents were going to be staying over, she’d need to give them the room Emily was staying in...Could Emily stay in the nursery in the meantime? Fat chance. Watching Emily innocently sit there, covered in her breakfast, wearing a bib, she knew that’d be an unrealistic demand. As fun of a fantasy it was to entertain, she had yet to even take her first nap in the crib. Something like that was too unfair, and shouldn’t occur out of forced circumstances. However, after shooting down that idea, from its ashes a much more plausible one was born...

Seeing as her plate was pretty much polished, Joyce ruffled the hair on Emily’s head.

“*You*, only need to worry about being happy.” Joyce turned on the faucet, wetting a dishrag. “As for me? I’ll figure it out.” She smiled, draping her hand in the wet cloth, coming closer to Emily.

“Such a sticky baby...”