

54.5 - Welcome to the Bright Side

“You did such a great job on the plane...!” Joyce praised the girl in the lead.

“I told you that I don’t really mind flying...” Emily muttered with half her mind hanging on something else. Minimizing her waddle.

“Mm, but even still,” a pure, sensual pride rose the inflection in her voice. An enticing whisper was warm against Emily’s ear. “No fussing? No complaints from the staff? You managed to take an *entire* nap all on your own?”

“You looked over my seat?!” Joyce leaned back fast enough to dodge Emily whipping her head around.

“Oh come on,” Joyce laughed, “Did you not do that same very thing before we even took off?” She steered them off to the empty side. “Would you have rathered I asked one of the flight workers to check on you for me?”

Emily’s eyes turned into slits. “You wouldn’t.”

“...No, I wouldn’t,” Joyce conceded with a sigh, “because then that means I can’t check you myself. Which I did, which is why I know you are...” she tilted her head to the side with a discerning look. Like she was trying to guess her girlfriend’s three sizes. “About an hour out from needing a change.”

Emily took a nervous step back, like she just witnessed black magic.

“How did you...?” Hell, not even Emily knew when she needed a change, especially in booster territory. She did wet at some point, but not tremendously. Heck, not even enough for one of her normal diapers to give up. But with so much padding between herself and rock-bottom, her diaper truly was the bottomless blue with no fathomable end.

“Well, you’ve got a little more of a waddle,” Joyce openly pondered with a testing finger hanging in the air, “You sound a *teeny* bit less crinkly,” then before Emily could react her pajama pants had been hiked up and over her disposable-covered hips, “And your jammies need some adjusting. Plus, I remember when I diapered you. Just because you aren’t ready to leak doesn’t mean you don’t need a fresh one.”

“W-wait,” Emily’s head was spinning all around herself, “was anything showing?” she nervously grabbed at her waistband.

“Nobody saw, don’t worry,” Joyce assured, though couldn’t help but keep a very obvious point to herself. Clothes could only conceal so much until they started bending to the curves of whatever was underneath them. Case and point: Emily’s diaper bum.

Emily was simultaneously trying to tug down her jacket and pull up her pants at the same time, though the pants operation fell through once Joyce had her by the hand.

“Which is why we’re gonna get you changed before we go get our luggage.”

“Can I put normal pants back on?” Emily tried as best as she could to keep the pace. “No more boosters.”

“I promise. We’ll save those for later.”

The girl made a face.

Later?

“As for pants, we’ll see what we can do,” Joyce chuckled, all while Emily gave her a look of sheer disbelief.

“You think this is—” then she remembered they were in public. “Y-you...?” she said much more quietly. “You think it’s *funny?!?*”

“Yeah,” Joyce grinned nonchalantly, “I do.”

Urrrghhh! And the seeming sheer disinterest in Emily’s concerns practically had the little woman swooning. *Wait! No! Don’t show it that we like it!*

“Pff,” outwardly, Emily miffed with her mouth.

“Ohh...?” Joyce’s no-nonsense tone was starting to rouse. “Is that an attitude I’m hearing?”

“Maybe...” a smile was starting to form.

“Hmm...” Joyce hummed. “There *was* a skirt and a pair of leggings with your name on them, but it’s sounding like you just want the skirt?”

Cue Emily’s no-nonsense look.

“I was teasing. Being *funny*,” Emily stressed and stretched her syllables. “Joyce, I’m getting the impression that you don’t know how to take a joke.”

“And yet, somehow ‘jokes’ always seem like an attitude when it comes to you,” Joyce whispered again with a chuckle. “Are we gonna behave?”

She had half an impulse to stomp her foot, so instead it was just an awkward left foot forward. “... Yes.”

“Good,” and casually, Joyce lifted Emily’s sagging disposable backside through her pajama pants, then just as easily let it drop with a heavy, crinkly slump.

“*Stoop...!*” Emily whined as quietly as she could.

“Sorry, I just needed to double check how badly you needed a change,” Joyce innocently smiled, then sighed whimsically. “If only changing attitudes were as easy as changing diapers...”

It wasn’t as difficult making the trek to their luggage dropoff, now that Emily wasn’t working against *as* much padding between her legs.

“So what’s the plan again?” Emily gently tugged her sleeve.

“Mmm...now that we changed you,” Emily wasn’t as happy to hear that so openly and brazenly, “we’re gonna get our luggage then go rent a car, drive to my parents, then relax a little and get ready for tomorrow.”

“Do you think they already started sending out our luggage?” Emily started walking ahead, but her hand in Joyce’s slowly tugged her back.

“Maybe,” Joyce sounded indifferent. “I don’t have a lot of practice wiping you while you’re standing, so that cost us an extra minute.”

And the sheer lack of seeming care for where they were, who might be listening and what she was saying had Emily nervously looking around like a severe case of paranoia.

“Are you gonna be like this at Thanksgiving...?” Emily tugged Joyce’s sleeve who looked over with a smile.

“You mean doting? Attentive? Loving?” Joyce paused just long enough to kiss her square on the lips. “Uh-huh, yes I am,” and she let Emily stew in the pleasure just long enough before her original fears started to come back. “No, I promise I’ll behave. This is *our* secret.”

Their secret...plus one... Mary.

“But also,” Joyce couldn’t help but ogle the backside of her girlfriend. “I really like how that skirt and leggings look on you.”

“You better...” Emily answered less enthusiastically. She yet again saw another tag she didn’t recognize and a brand name she was afraid to look up. “How much did you pay for this...?”

“Not enough,” Joyce dismissed like she always did and rubbed her charge’s head. “You’re adorable, and that’s what matters.”

“I’d rather not be adorable this weekend,” Emily meekly pointed out.

“Adorable to me—” Joyce corrected. “You’re very beautiful, in fact!” she answered in a much more faux voice.

“Is that all I am to you?” Emily grinned and bumped her shoulder. “Just your bougie baby, huh?”

And the Mommy’s eyes went wide.

“What?” Joyce was quick and her tone was shaky.

“Wh-...?” Emily went confused and now she was unsure. “Did I say something?”

“S-say that again,” a small smile from a far away place was growing on Joyce. “Say it?”

“Say what?”

“What you just said!” The excitement was overflowing. “What did you just call yourself, huh?”

It was amazing how easily something could roll off the tongue, and yet trying to do the same exact thing only ended up in twisted tongues and mounting embarrassment.

“...No...” shyly, Emily turned the other cheek.

“What? No! Come on!” Joyce laughed, “please! That was so cute! Say it again!” she was lifting something in her hand, “I gotta record it this time!”

“What?” Emily’s bewildered head shot up, “No!” she started getting handsy and tried stuffing the device back in her purse. “Stop!”

“Then just say it again! Please?” Joyce begged. “Just whisper it, okay? That’s all I need!”

“Why are you making such a big deal out of this...?” Emily had a small laugh to go with her blush. “You’re making me wish I didn’t even say it...!”

“Oh no, nuh-uh. Please? One more time?”

“No...!” Emily whined with a smile.

“If you do, one of my dad’s cookies before bed?”

“Bougie baby.” It was hardly without the same kind of emotion or lackadaisical feel, but Emily did say it without skipping a beat. But the bandage she ripped was finally starting to leave an effect, because she was blushing like a sidewalk scrape on her knee would’ve been bleeding.

“Bougie baby,” Joyce repeated, grinning from ear to ear. It was the best thing she had ever heard. So clever. So fitting. Christ, it made her want to fire all the different designers that couldn’t even pull off a slogan *half* as good as that! *Bougie baby*. A little doll so pampered and protected by the finest wines and dines of life.

A princess that peed in literal designer diapers and only wore the highest playtime-grade fashion...! Only milk imported from the finest farms in the mountains and sitting in high chairs carved and etched by the finest Italian craftsman! A crocodile car seat leather and comfy velcro sneakers from Fashion Week in France...

Bougie Baby! Literal stars were shining in Joyce’s eyes, and while her gears were turning in overdrive, she gleefully bit her lower lip just glancing at her cutest and most priceless treasure.

“I’m...I’m getting a cookie tonight, right?”

“Ah-...” she finally snapped back into reality, “A cookie...? Oh...right. Uhm, no. Wait until tomorrow.”

And the bougie baby proceeded to look like she was slapped upside the head with a hanging jaw.

“You lied,” Emily pouted,

“Yeah, I did,” Joyce answered with a dreamy smile. “Oh, but look,” she sounded serious again, “our luggage should be somewhere here.”

They reached the conveyor carousel where all the remaining suitcases were still going in circles.

“This one?” Emily decided to point with her whole body in motion. And Joyce, like the watchful mommy she was, followed right alongside. Soon the bags that had yet to come finally finished their arrivals and one by one people in the surrounding crowd would pluck presumably their cases off and away.

But the longer Joyce and Emily stood there, watching the cases go, their identifiably unique design and texture didn’t seem to be coming.

“Is it over here?” Emily started walking down one end, and even Joyce was starting to peer down the other. Did they miss it or somehow not notice?

“Maybe they just didn’t send them through yet,” Emily continued to be the voice of reason, but staying worries didn’t solve potential problems, one of which was starting to mount right in front of them.

“Did...is our stuff-?”

“There you two are!” A voice unlike any other was loud and proud. It was enthusiastic, overjoyed and dragging along a plethora of memories merely made in the short span of just a few days. A kind, insistent, pestering and invasive voice that collected secrets like a hobby.

“Well look who it is!” A deep, masculine voice chuckled from the same exact way.

It could’ve been meant for anyone. Any person still left at baggage claim trying to find their luggage just like Emily and Joyce. Yet voices and fate had a funny way of itching and scratching that sixth sense. Tickled in tandem with a sound memory for voices, both women turned around with collective apprehension.

“Where’s my hug?!” Mary cried with glee as her wingspan from hand to hand wrapped around the couple and squeezed them in.

“W-wait, Mom?” Joyce sounded surprised, albeit hugging back, and Emily was just as clueless. However her eyes could see over Mary’s arm and jacket someone just as iconic as Joyce’s mom.

“Frank!” Emily didn’t hide the joy in her voice, and now Joyce could see what he had alongside him.

“So *you’re* the one I was about to send security after?” Still hugging her mom, Joyce raised her eyebrow at her dad.

“We were just testing how good it was!” Frank chuckled, but Joyce still wasn’t short on confusion.

“How did you even know which suitcases were ours?” Emily asked what her girlfriend was thinking, and finally pulled out of the hug. She made a point of straightening out her skirt, slightly more aware again of what she was trying to hide...

“Knowing my daughter, she’d make sure you both match,” Mary smirked at a stiff-faced Joyce before laughing. “Since you wrote your names on your tags it wasn’t hard to figure out!”

“But you knew our flight?” Emily kept the hard-hitting questions coming.

“Uh-oh,” Frank chuckled, “hon, I think we sound like stalkers!”

“No, that’s not what I—!” Emily hurried to deny it, but Frank was already laughing.

“I told them our flight number before we left,” Joyce apologetically explained while she gently wrenched herself from her mom. “However,” she looked far less enthusiastic in shifting her gaze to her mom, all smiles and glee. “I did *not* tell you so you could come and get us. I told you, didn’t I? We were going to rent a car like I always do!”

“But you’ve got Emily now and at least twice the luggage!” Mary rebuked.

“And since when do I get a car that can only fit a single person?” Joyce let out an exasperated sigh.

“Don’t be like that,” Mary waved her daughter off. “Now did Dad get everything?”

“We have the rest of it,” Joyce answered in a much more leveled voice. Emily’s nervous hands suddenly tightened their grip around her mint green backpack straps.

“Well gang, parking’s this way!” Frank led the charge and all three women followed in tow.

“So, how does it feel to be in California, Emily?” Mary asked in a warm, cheery voice. The hyper focused girl blinked and adjusted her attention.

“H-huh?”

“Mom, we just got here...” Joyce said so disapprovingly. “Did you ever think that maybe we’d need some time to get ready to see you?” And that was a very legitimate reason. Thank God security wouldn’t have let them get to any actual terminal gate. Poor Emily would be marching in puffy Pampers otherwise.

“You’ve had plenty of time!” Mary’s disbelieving mother's voice started to flare. “How long has it been since we visited? How many months?”

“It’s been an amount of time,” Joyce declared in a neutral voice. As small as it was, despite their banter she still had an evergoing smile.

“Did you two do okay on the flight?” Mary had them both by the shoulders, looking at each girl every other moment.

“It was fine. We flew business,” Joyce answered and her mom promptly scoffed.

“I don’t get how you can spend so much money on plane tickets so often...!” Mary shook her head, but quickly came to. “But then again, I remember what my daughter does for work.”

“It was a good deal,” Joyce deflected, possibly stretching the truth a little when she saw Emily’s sliver of side-eye. “We were good. I did some reading. Emily slept.”

“Enough that you both don’t want to catch up on some sleep on the way home? Maybe a nap when we get back to the house? Oh– wait,” Mary looked at Emily, “Emily’ll get some rest, I’m sure!”

“N-no, that’s okay,” Emily forced a polite laugh, “I’m all set. I slept plenty on the plane. I don’t *always* fall asleep in the car, you know?”

And behind them both Joyce was giving Emily a bemused smile.

You absolutely do.

As they were transitioning from tile to concrete and asphalt, Mary asked Joyce in a lowered voice, “So no issues during the flight?”

Joyce blinked, confused and without a clue of what she was insinuating.

“No, no issues,” Joyce answered nonchalantly, albeit suspicious now in a way that she didn’t hope Emily was getting wise to. But her lack of real brain power slapped her upside the head the moment she saw Mary just briefly glance at Joyce’s girlfriend with a smile.

No issues.

No changes necessary.

Diaper A-okay.

And if there was ever a silly, insignificant thought for even just a single second that Emily might have been liberated from her reputation as a diaper-wearing girl,

“Emily?” Mary kindly spoke up and Emily could already feel another person’s hands between her arms. “Did you want some help carrying that bag?”

“Uhh...no, that’s okay,” and quite firmly Emily held it down to the point where her straps had gone taut. “I can hold this one.”

“She’s fine, mom,” Joyce insisted as backup and it was the only thing that kept them from falling behind.

“Oh, alright...” Mary relented, though her hands rubbing over themselves seemed to say that she’d much rather let her five-fingered tools find something to do than dawdle and do nothing.

“Dad, did you two wait long?” Joyce asked ahead.

“Long enough to almost get arrested,” Frank laughed. “Your mom was getting worried when she didn’t see you two at baggage claim! She was going to try and see if you were still inside.”

“You know you’re not allowed to do that?” Joyce rolled her eyes, and Mary frowned defensively.

“And what if something happened to you two?” Mary was still just as insistent. “A mother can worry, can’t she?”

Maybe one not as nosy as you... Joyce quietly thought. “We had to go use the bathroom real quick.”

“Hey Em,” Frank nodded her over with his head. “Think you could open up the back of the truck for me?”

Convenient timing was such a wonderful thing, because now only Joyce was within earshot of her mother.

“Good job!” Mary proudly remarked, and it only brought more wary confusion from within. Joyce didn’t seem quite in the know, nor did she really want to be. What could she possibly be complimented for?

“...Yeah?”

“Helping Emily out?” Mary elaborated, and far more explicitly than Joyce would have liked. Helping Emily out. Keeping her all set for the flight from departure to landing, and finally baggage claim. Keeping...keeping her clean. “Did she need to change on the plane? It was a long one—”

“*Mom?*” Joyce curtly interrupted to a point that stopped them from walking any further. The significant lack of equal understanding was already getting underway, and like witnessing a weed. Joyce was adamant to squash it fast though with this: “Look, I appreciate it that you’ve done so much to...*accommodate* my and Emily’s needs...” she glanced over at the girl in question, feeling a small sense of guilt. “But we’re fine now. We won’t need anything else, and everything that you’ve done is absolutely more than enough. So please? Think about the time and place you’re gonna ask this stuff? It’s taken care of and there won’t be any issues, and I’m sure you can understand just how sensitive of a subject this is?”

“Of course I understand, Joyce!” Mary made a far more sympathetic look. “It’s a lot, which is why I wanted to make sure you two were all set.”

And to what extent “all set” seemed to permit Mary to do, Joyce was precisely afraid because she hadn’t the faintest idea just what that limit could be. But in knowing that very danger, she was desperate to shut it down at all cost.

She was already feeling ready to go feral the moment Mary did anything directly around Emily, but her look was softened by the sight of her girlfriend standing on her toes just to push the trunk cover as high as it could go above the car. Protecting her was priority number one, and frankly

her real mission was keeping Mary from everyone else. As invasive as her mom was, Joyce wouldn't expect her to willingly share a secret that didn't belong to her, but she sure could imagine a tactless action that would do the same but only inadvertently.

Then kindly, and ever so sweetly, a curious mother asked, "So she didn't need changing on the plane?"

Then just as unkindly, Joyce sighed and trudged onward.

The eldest rode driver and shotgun while the kids got kicked to the back. Not that Joyce or Emily had any complaints. Joyce sat in the middle of a three-seat row just so she could hide Emily as much as she could, including offering a shoulder that Emily would inevitably sleep on.

Meanwhile Emily was few and far between her words. She seemed to talk when the noise was high and she could hardly hear whatever ambience moving her legs seemed to make. A crinkly diaper was hard to hear under the guise of echoing vehicles and windy parking garages, but it must have been stupid Joyce-money as the culprit for why her parent's car didn't make much sound either. While she'd never say it (although she did), like the bougie baby she was, a discerning bum even behind its padding could feel the slight difference now between expensive and expensive-r. But alas, as spoiled as she wouldn't like to admit, living a higher end life hasn't made her any less appreciative of the many things that were still above her original standard.

Right around the point a bright sun attacked them the moment they left the parking garage Emily's head was thinking about bobbing.

"Emily, so glad you could join us for the holiday!" Frank commented as he drove, and naturally Mary had a thousand things to go with it.

"He's right! Emily, oh! I'm so glad you're joining us this year! Everyone's gonna love you! You'll get to meet Joyce's brother John, his fiance Hannah, Frank's brother Mark and his wife Laura! My sister's Martha and Carol and their husbands and kids! Oh! Then you'll—!"

"Okay, okay, hon," Frank with a free hand hovering over his wife's shoulder had her simmering down. "Don't forget they have round-trip tickets; let's not scare her off before the day of?"

"I'm not scaring her!" Mary pouted at her husband, but she did dial herself back. "We're a very friendly family, Emily, and Joyce is just the tip of the iceberg!"

So you all change diapers...? Courtesy of Emily's slightly drifting mind. Joyce took the liberty of adjusting her skirt.

“I’m looking forward to it…” Emily answered with her eyes looking out the window, but she said in Joyce’s direction, “You never really told me about your other family so much…”

“I’ll quiz you tonight,” Joyce kissed her on the temple. “Dad, did John already get the turkey?”

“Defrosting as we speak,” Frank rapped his thumb against the steering wheel. “Can I count on my sous chef to help me get the rest of the cooking done?”

“Sous chef? Dad, I think I at least became co-leader three years ago,” Joyce taunted right back, and Emily tried not to make a face.

What, she can talk back to her dad, but I can’t talk back to my Mommy? The world simply wasn’t fair.

“Hmm, well,” Frank made a big loud show of his heavy contemplation. “You *have* been doing alright. I’d be willing to discuss a promotion in the next few years.”

“Excuse me?” Joyce scoffed playfully.

Leaning against the window was the only way Emily could mask her outrage at such injustice. *How is she not getting scolded for back-talking?!*

“I feel like some of my prospects are being overlooked right now,” Joyce said quite plainly.

“You two and all your kitchen talk…” Mary sighed, sounding like the sane one for once.

“I’m all ears, honey, but you’ve gotta drive a hard bargain!”

“I’m bringing new blood to the kitchen?” Joyce said quite proudly, and soon enough Emily was by the shoulders and leaning in the picture against her will. “Guess who asked to help prepare for Thanksgiving!”

“W-we… I…” Emily stammered as her mind tried to catch up to a far more adult place. “W-wait, I don’t wanna affect you two unless I—”

“Deal!” Done. As determined by Frank. “As long as you bring someone in I don’t mind moving you up the ladder.”

“As much as that sounds multi-level and not really moving at all, I accept,” Joyce nodded simply.

“Wait, but I’m not that really…” She did want to help, but talking and asking were two whole different ball games!

“Good,” Frank nodded and momentum kept on moving. “Emily, I’ll need to see a resume including your qualifications and references by the end of this car ride. Understood?”

“I…” Emily was at a loss, quite understandably.

“I’ll answer to that,” Joyce volunteered just as readily. “She’s worked in our kitchen for eight dinners now. She’s an excellent potware retriever, amateur chopper in training, however she’s gone on record for workplace safety violations. She tried climbing a chair to reach our cabinets once.”

“Don’t say that!” Emily blurted out loud and the whole car but her started laughing.

“Well I can’t say I blame her for trying,” Mary chuckled. “The ceilings in your house are a bit higher than usual, Joyce.”

And who to think that it’d work out to be such a wonderful thing. Joyce quietly smiled to herself.

“Either way, we have plenty of height to get to the high places. Emily will stick to the low. Alright, I’ve heard enough. Welcome aboard, Emily!”

“Yay!” Mary cheered, and Emily blinked.

Like that her impromptu interview was over.

“Thanks for having me, I guess,” Emily mumbled, eventually feeling her own kind of smile.

But finally a hand brushed against her outside cheek, eventually bringing her down and against Joyce’s shoulder.

“*Joyce…?*” Emily whispered, sounding unsure.

“You look tired, even if you did sleep a little on the plane,” Joyce quietly explained. “Sleep the rest of the ride, okay? Or don’t, but that’s my two cents.” Because it was either falling asleep now or falling asleep at the house.

But at least among Joyce's parents it was so much of a "Mommy's orders" type of deal, although essentially "Mommy's very heavily suggested advice."

And timing was continuing to be a beautiful thing, as maybe this bougie baby just wasn't used to the ways of the other side of the country quite yet and jet lag was making a victim out of her and her bladder. The corner of her mouth tugged as it partially kissed Joyce's jacket, and as she got comfortable for a rest, so did her bladder.

As she snuggled, so did the pee into the padding of her diaper. It was a slight embarrassment to act so cutely intimate with Joyce in the backseat of the car, but it was innocent enough and Emily did fancy herself a Joyce-like pillow. That, and with a warm hug to be had, so too was she getting one around her hips.

Let it be known that Emily most certainly did not want to be wearing diapers this holiday weekend, but unfortunately this was the hand she was given, or rather, the grave she and Joyce dug. Nevertheless the best she could do was find the bright- or warm, side in all of this. And now that meant taking advantage of her portable potty privileges.

But absolutely, under no circumstances whatsoever would there be the other thing. The dreaded beast that made her quiver just from thinking about it. It made her wet diaper suddenly seem so much more pleasant now more than ever.

No number poos.