Felix Culpa

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Felix Culpa

by Aussi18

Summary

Since the day Regina Mills dropped off her son at his summer camp last year, Robin Locksley has been harboring quite the crush on her, despite the fact that she’s engaged to another man. So when a series of events places Regina firmly between a rock and a hard place, Robin jumps at the opportunity to help her. As they get to know each other better, attraction quickly turns into lust, lust turns into affection, and when affection starts to turn into something more, they realize that they must learn to trust each other, to work together and face each obstacle head on, or risk losing out on a second chance for love.

A year in the life of Modern AU Outlaw Queen.

Notes

This story is complete and all chapters will be posted as quickly as possible - I will not leave you hanging.

Modern Outlaw Queen AU.

There’s some sensitive material in here - I’ll try to trigger warn at the top of the chapter but obvi can’t account for everyone’s triggers, and I don't want to give away too much of the story through trigger warnings, so please remember that you have been warned, and it is
definitely not my intention to upset anyone with the content.

Robin has a filthy mouth and he’s going to do sexy, dirty things to Regina (all of which she will like, or prompt, or… beg for) - the smut in this story is MUCH more kink/rough/intense/explorative… than any of my other stories (even SSRH), so if that's not your thing, turn back now. I’m telling you right up front that this is (mostly) not vanilla. Heed the warning.

A few lines of dialogue may be familiar (e.g. similar to the script). I do not pretend to own those or take any credit for them, I just liked the way they fit. I make no money on this, it's all purely for fun. Please don't sue me, I don’t have any money anyway.

Huge shout out to the wonderful, brilliant, and outrageously intelligent @babylawyer for the beta work. This fic would not exist without her support, honesty, and ideas, and I truly cannot express how grateful I am.

See the end of the work for more notes.
fēlix culpa

fe-lix cul-pa | \ˈfā-likz-ˈkūl-pā

A Latin phrase that comes from the words felix, meaning "happy," "lucky," or "blessed" and culpa, meaning "fault" or "fall". In a literary context, the term felix culpa can describe how a series of miserable events will eventually lead to a happier outcome.
Autumn - Chapter 1

She’s in red today, and it makes him smile from all the way across the arena.

It’s his favorite color on her.

That, and blue.

And black.

Oh, and white too.

And he can’t leave out that royal purple dress she wore earlier this fall - the one that made her dark brown eyes appear almost violet - he really fancies that color on her too.

Honestly though, anything Regina Mills wears is his favorite. She could show up in a grocery sack
and still look incredible to him.

Because Robin, Mr. Hasn’t Cared to Have a Date in Four Years, has a crush. And, oh boy, is it a
doody.

She comes here almost every Saturday morning at 8 AM sharp with her ten-year-old son, Henry -
who is usually surly and mostly asleep until he gets up on the horse - for his weekly riding lesson
with Emma. He’s a nice lad, Henry - he and Roland are the same age and when Henry attended the
two-week summer camp here last year, the boys really hit it off. Robin has never been more grateful
for the outgoing, extroverted personality of his son, and his uncanny ability to make friends with
literally everyone, because it means that after his lesson Henry and Regina usually stay for a few
minutes. Roland always has something cool he just has to show Henry, and that leaves Robin to
entertain Regina.

He sighs. If only he could.

She’s not just beautiful - stunning is actually the better word to describe her - she’s intelligent,
sarcastic and no-nonsense, educated, confident and capable, and funny and thoughtful, and kind, and
did he mention beautiful? and… and… engaged, apparently.

Bugger.

He knew she was dating that tosser from Belfast, the one who occasionally comes in with Henry for
“bonding time” but instead spends the entire morning hitting on Emma and every other woman in
sight. Robin has made it a point to call him by the wrong name each time he sees him, just to remind
him how insignificant and unworthy he is of a woman of Regina’s caliber.

It’s not that Robin thinks he’s better than Graham, truly - it’s that he’s completely flummoxed as to
how the big dumb git talked her into dating him in the first place. Robin has thought it through time
and time again, and no matter how he arranges the puzzle pieces, they just don’t fit.

Regina is an MBA - Yale, top of her class - who comes from money, manners, and all the lovely
grandiose things her politician step-father and tyrannical socialite mother (Regina’s words not his)
could afford.

Graham is a cop, which is admirable, but he’s apparently not a very good one, because he’s been
“on-the-force” for ten years and hasn’t moved up in rank at all. Robin doesn’t know his family
history, doesn’t know much about him at all, really. But he knows that no one ever taught him that
when you have a woman like Regina on your arm, you stop your wandering eye from fucking
wandering. Since the day he met her, Robin hasn’t been able to take his eyes off of her.

Robin can admit that Graham’s a decent looking bloke - he’d have to be to earn a date with her -
he’s in exceptional shape and likes to play up that hair and those sad eyes, so Robin can understand
how she might be attracted to him in the looks department. On the rare occasion they both come for
Henry’s lesson, the man seems needy and clings to her like cellophane, to which Robin has actually
seen Regina cringe in reaction to. It makes him wonder if that’s how Graham always is with her, or if
it’s all for show.

Either way, he thoroughly annoys Robin.

He knows it’s probably just his crush on Regina that gets in the way of understanding how those two
wound up together, that keeps him from coming up with what they might have in common that has
kept them together all this time, but still, he can’t help but feel like the two of them just don’t add up.
Her engagement ring isn’t large, though it catches the light nicely as she comes up next to him and places her ungloved hands on the fence near his. It’s a princess cut diamond with a smooth yellow gold band, and to Robin, it just seems kind of… lackluster - not to mention that it doesn’t fit her style at all. Regina is a platinum girl, he’s sure of it. She’s a marquis or a radiant cut center stone with as many diamonds as a man can afford to surround it with. Or possibly a large restored antique that has beautiful lines and character that can’t possibly be reproduced - unique, classy, like her. Not that he’s thought about it.

“Good morning, Thief,” she greets him, her voice a little rough in the cool air of the barn.

Robin immediately smiles. It was only the second time he’d met her that she gave him that name, and he hadn’t known she wasn’t single as he had shamelessly flirted with her, gave her every ounce of Locksley charm he could possibly muster, as he held the wallet she’d forgotten in his office behind his back and pretended like he hadn’t seen it. She knew he had it, actually laughed a little and made a few attempts at seizing it from him before she threw her hands up in mock exasperation and dubbed him a dirty rotten thief.

“Lovely to see you on this fine morning, Your Majesty,” he quips back, smirking. Her nickname had come almost three months later when he overheard Graham call her “Princess,” as he wrapped his arm around her shoulders, and Robin caught the grimace cross Regina’s face before her eyes met his. He couldn’t stop the dubious look from crossing his face - Regina is anything but a princess - and the exasperated eye roll she gave him confirmed that she obviously thought the same. It’s yet another area where she and Graham don’t add up, and it drives him crazy that Regina just goes along with it when she’s so clearly irritated by it. So out of protest, Robin has called her ‘Your Majesty’ ever since, in a last-ditch passive-aggressive attempt to prove his point that she doesn’t belong with that knobhead in the first place.

He wants to ask her about the ring, wants to know how long she’s had it and if she has a wedding date set. And, more importantly, he wants to understand why, if she does have a date set, that it feels like the end of something.

They discuss Henry instead, the progress he’s made over the past several months and how natural he seems in the saddle now as he canters around the arena, taking cues from Emma and furrowing his brow in concentration. Robin can’t help but admit that her kid is cute - he’s outrageously polite, listens well, and is actually pretty hysterical when you get him going about a subject he’s into.

“I need to reschedule a few lessons,” Regina tells him, and he turns to her, leans against the fence in his tan Carhartt jacket and faded jeans while he drinks her in.

Jesus-fucking-christ she’s pretty.

Her thick black hair is down and waving today, brushing the tops of her shoulders in stark contrast against the red of her wool peacoat, her eyeliner a little bit darker than he usually sees her with and her lips painted the exact shade of red as her jacket. She’s in tight black leggings with knee-high boots over top, and he can’t help but appreciate the look she put together. She’s always so polished, so regal, every time he sees her.

“Oh?” he asks, tilting his head a little, “Can’t get enough of us? How many times a week should we expect you, then? Four? Five?” he jokes.

Regina smiles at him in that way that crinkles the corners of her eyes as she corrects him, “Actually, we need to take a few weeks off this spring. Henry will need a break before the wedding and I want to make sure he has some time to himself to adjust to all the changes.”
Robin’s heart drops. Damn.

“I didn’t know he was getting married,” he teases, “Who’s the lucky girl?”

That pulls a soft laugh from Regina as she reaches out and rubs her hand up and down his bicep, her fingers squeezing a little as she looks up at him. Her expression is warm and amused, her hand soothing against his arm as her gaze sweeps over him, and he smiles back at her, catches the scent of her expensive perfume in the light breeze that drifts through the barn, and accidentally drops his eyes to her full lips. They curve upward under his gaze, she licks her lips - *fucking tease* - and his knees go a little weak. When he finally brings his eyes back to hers she’s wearing this sexy knowing smirk, and he wishes like hell he could kiss it off of her lips.

He re-positions himself a little against the fence, and it’s a charade - he’s only doing it to get closer to her, and she must know it, but she doesn’t move back, doesn’t drop her hand from his arm as now *her* eyes drop to *his* lips. His heart accelerates, beating wildly against his ribs as they stare at each other. He can feel himself drifting toward her, one hand lifting to brush her hair back from her shoulder then settling on the curve of her neck, definitely the moth as he approaches the flame, but she’s not moving away, she’s - *fuck* - she’s leaning toward him too —

“Hey, Princess! Sorry, I’m late!” Graham unknowingly interrupts as he enters the barn on the far side of the arena.

Robin’s eyes close in defeat and Regina immediately steps back, drops her hand and tucks her hair behind her ear. “He proposed,” she says softly, and Robin knows it’s wishful thinking but he could swear he hears hesitation in her voice. “We’ve set a date for the end of April.”

Six months. She’ll be out of the dating game for good in six months. Fuck.

“Oh,” he says stupidly. He wants to say more, wants to congratulate her and not be such a selfish idiot, but can’t seem to make the words come out. After an awkward pause, he blinks, then shakes himself out of it, gives her a smile and a “Congratulations, Regina,” then tells her it’s no problem to reschedule Henry.

Because at the end of the day, Robin truly just wants her to be happy. She deserves it - over the past year he has gotten to know her pretty well, and she is an amazing woman. So if Graham makes her feel loved, and treasured, and valued; if he gives her that - head over heels, lasso the moon, take a bullet, stop a train, walk across hot coals for a glimpse of her face - kind of love and devotion that she so deserves, then so be it.

But Robin sincerely doubts that Graham is capable of such a wonderful responsibility.

__________________________________________________________

She has to stop touching him.

It’s a terrible idea, she *knows* it’s a terrible idea, and she’s had this talk with herself in the past -
Regina, don’t touch, or stare at, or breathe in the delicious pine scent of the hot camp owner. Don’t flirt with him, or think about the hard cut of his jawline, or the roughness of his hands, and definitely don’t check out his perfect ass when he walks away.

She’s engaged to Graham and that’s good. It is. She loves him - they’ve been together for almost three years, and things are solid and steady and good. Regina and Henry moved in with him six months ago, and it’s going just fine - Henry is adjusting to his new school, they’ve put all of their deposits down for the wedding, she has her dress on order, and it’s good. It’s fine. It’s good.

So why she can’t seem to stop her hand from stroking up and down Robin’s arm like a harlot in heat, she doesn’t know.

The sound of Graham’s voice snaps her out of the little fantasy she has suddenly fallen into, and she steps back quickly from Robin, embarrassed by her behavior. She is an adult - she is a thirty-three-year-old woman who is getting married to Graham, and she absolutely does not have fantasies of Robin taking her from behind, slapping her ass, and making her come with her hands clutching hard to the metal rail of this fence.

She sighs.

She’s had a crush on him since she met him last summer, and it’s wrong - she knows that she shouldn’t think of him that way, and it’s not like she’s going to run off with him, but god, he’s just so damn handsome. He’s beautifully muscled and tall, with bright blue eyes and perfect teeth, and those laugh lines around his eyes and mouth are to die for. To top it all off it he’s funny and smart, attentive and so, so sweet. He flirts with her constantly, and he has this incredibly mischievous side that keeps her on her toes, makes her laugh and tease and feel relaxed.

It doesn’t hurt that he looks at her like she’s some kind of goddess, that he never fails to compliment her in some way, and he has this one particular look - where he stares at her lips, rakes his eyes over her body, then meets her eyes - jesus - that makes her feel like he could do dirty, naughty things to her - things that would make her breathless and swollen and sore, if only she’d give him the chance. If things were different - if she wasn’t with Graham - she honestly can’t say that she’d turn him down.

Sex with Graham is fine. It’s good. It’s just that from the start, she’s had to do all the work, all the time; so, if she sometimes thinks about fantasy Robin having his way with her, then her conscience can cut her a damn break.

Graham makes his way to them and wraps his arms around her from behind, kissing her cheek loudly and squeezing her as she looks away from Robin. She’s not a fan of public displays of affection, has never appreciated the attention that it draws, but Graham is, and arguing with him about it has never changed anything, so she lets him have his little moment. Robin greets him with a, “Hey Grady,” and throws her a smirk, before turning back to face the arena.

Graham corrects him, as he always does, looking confused as to how it’s possible after all this time that Robin still doesn’t know his name. He does, Regina knows he does, but when he calls Graham George, or Gary, or Gabe, or Gavin, and smirks at her just like that - it always makes her smile back, makes her bite her lip to hide it from Graham, as if they have some hysterical inside joke about him. Today is no different - she knows Robin catches her smile as he turns away - and she’s glad that Graham is at her back, because he can’t see her trying to tamp down the amusement before he catches her and starts asking questions.

Emma starts toward them, and Graham lifts one hand to wave enthusiastically at her. Regina bristles - she’s not a fan of the blonde - dislikes her rough demeanor and dumb quips, dislikes the way she
stares at Graham and pretends like Regina doesn’t exist when he’s around. But she’s a good riding coach, and Henry seems to like her, so there isn’t much she can do but put up with her.

Robin glances back at her and reads the situation, or he reads her (probably the latter), and asks, “Shall we go and reschedule those appointments?” He looks slightly annoyed, and that’s odd, but she agrees anyway and leaves Graham to talk with Emma as she heads up to Robin’s office with him.

He fires up his laptop and now that he has put the busy riding schedule online, they get Henry’s lessons rebooked in record time. They head back to the arena, the unusually frigid October air flushing her cheeks as Robin jogs ahead to grab the large door for her, and she takes a moment to appreciate his chivalry - it’s thoughtful and sweet, and so Robin, that she can’t help but smile at him as he ushers her in. Once inside Regina stops and looks around, Henry is walking laps on the little Arabian, working on his form, but Graham and Emma are nowhere in sight.

Robin heads off down one of the adjoining stable corridors to fetch some treats for her to give to Henry’s horse, and Regina trails slowly behind him, looking down at her phone in search of a text or some clue as to where Graham has gone. When she finally looks up, Robin is about three-quarters of the way down the corridor, standing completely still, staring at one of the far stalls.

And then she hears a loud, breathy moan.

She freezes.

“Are you fucking kidding me?” Robin says loudly.

There are shuffling sounds, then Graham comes stumbling out of the stall, his jeans and boxers around his knees, shirt open and hair mussed as he tries to catch his balance. Emma follows a second later, still pulling her pants up and hurriedly fixing her shirt as Robin repeats, even louder, “Are you FUCKING kidding me?!”

She stops breathing, her entire body begins to shake, and her vision tunnels to the scene before her.

The shock only lasts for a second, for two seconds at most, because then Graham looks at Robin and grins - laughs - as he zips his jeans and says, “C’mon man, you could have at least let me finish.” Then Graham turns his head and sees Regina, and his smile falters as he says, “Oh, fuck.”

Her anger suddenly bursts through the shock, Graham’s betrayal too much for her to process, and the next thing she knows, she’s moving, striding fast and hard, completely intent on wiping the smile off his goddamn face.
Robin follows Graham's gaze and sees Regina coming for them, and holy-jesus-fuck is Graham in trouble. He's never seen a more pissed off woman in his life, and she's closing the distance quickly, her pretty hands balling into fists as she nears, and oh no - oh shit - he's about ninety-nine percent sure she's going to hit the fucker.

And Robin is one hundred percent sure that she'll regret it later.

So he does something he probably has no business doing, something he's certain is just going to piss her off more, but he knows from experience that she's not thinking rationally, she's not considering the consequences of her actions right now because she's so bloody hurt she can't think.

So even though he'd like nothing more than to see her level the bastard, he steps in front of Graham to intercept her.

She tries to brush by him, shoving him a little bit as she goes, but he can't let her do this. It could be so, so bad for her if she hits Graham - he is a cop - so as she takes another step past him, Robin throws caution to the wind and grabs her around the waist, picks her up and swings her back the way she came.

She fights him hard, trying to wrench out of his grip, legs kicking wildly as she shoves against his chest and shoulders, snarls at him to “Put me down, goddamnit,” then looks over his shoulder to call Graham a “Son-of-a-bitch.”

Robin takes another two steps with her, his arms locked tight around her waist as she struggles and stares daggers at Graham, who is babbling like a complete twit, whining loudly as he says, “Come on, don’t be so dramatic,” and, “You don’t have to make such a big deal - you always do this - you always make things out to be way worse than they are.”

She’s getting more and more violent in his arms, her eyes have gone wet and red-rimmed, and Robin isn’t sure what to do - she’s really strong, she must work out or something, because he’s starting to strain with the effort of holding her back, is starting to feel the muscles in his arms, abs and thighs burn in his effort to lock her in place. So he lifts her up a little again, just to get her feet off the ground so she doesn’t have as much leverage, and he takes a few more quick steps away from Graham and Emma before he sets her down again, wraps one arm tightly around her shoulders to
pull her close to him, and drops his head so he can talk right in her ear.

“Henry,” he says quietly, and she immediately stops fighting. “As much as I’d like to see you tan his hide, I know you wouldn’t want Henry to see you upset, so let’s go to my office, yeah? Let’s go have a cooldown and figure out what comes next.”

He can feel her shaking against him, full of hurt, anger, and betrayal, and his own heart breaks for her. He cannot believe what Graham has done. Cannot believe that he could treat this woman so poorly. What a berk.

Regina takes in a few deep breaths against him, then turns her face into his neck and presses her forehead into the crux of his shoulder, her hands clenching hard in the rough fabric of his coat, then nods. He confirms, “My office, yeah?” and she nods again, pulls in a shuddering breath and lets him turn her around, lets him march her out of the arena and back across the gravel driveway to the safety and seclusion of his office.

“I’ll be right back,” he says quickly, “I’m going to send Henry up to the house with Roland, and then I’ll come right back.”

She says nothing as she starts pacing, her palms pressed against her forehead as she crosses the room.

“Will you promise me that you’ll stay here?” he asks quietly, and she scoffs, opens her mouth with what he’s sure is some sort of nasty retort, but he cuts her off, “I’ll support you in whatever you want to do - if you want to go back and knock him on his arse that’s fine, if you want to cry, or scream, or leave that’s all fine too, but promise me you’ll wait for me before you do anything - please, I just want to make sure you’re safe.”

She brings her eyes to his and wraps her arms around herself as she nods, and he’s out the door and back to the barn as fast as his legs will carry him. He gets Henry sent off - a little confused but too polite to argue - grabs Regina’s purse and keys from the nearby bench, and when he turns to head back to his office, Graham and Emma are blocking his path.

“Robin, I’m sorry -” Emma starts, but he’s angry, so angry, and Regina is his priority right now, so he cuts her off.

“You’re fired,” he snaps, and her mouth drops open in shock.

“What?!” she exclaims.

“I said, you’re fucking fired,” he repeats and tries to move past her, but she sidesteps in front of him.

“You can’t fire me because you’re mad I’m sleeping with your friend’s boyfriend,” she throws back, arrogant and self-righteous as she stares him down.

“I’m not,” he growls, pulling himself to his full height and staring right back. “Though I’d risk it if that was the only reason I had right now.” Emma looks astonished, is starting to look worried. “I’m firing you for leaving a ten-year-old boy alone in the arena on a horse with no supervision, I’m firing you for having sex while I’m paying you to work, I’m firing you for having zero moral character, which makes you no longer fit to be an instructor at my camp. Are those enough reasons, or would you like me to continue, Miss Swan?” he growls. He’s so angry and doesn’t have time to fanny about - Regina needs him and he doesn’t know how long she’ll wait before she does something she might regret.

“Hey come on now, we’re all friends here, no need to be so hasty,” Graham suddenly cuts in, placing his hand on Robin’s shoulder, “Look man, I get it - Regina’s upset and you’re trying to be
her buddy, but you don’t want to make this any more awkward than it already is, right? Emma and I were just having some fun - you don’t want to go burning bridges, messing up your business, and losing money over Regina’s silly little temper tantrum, do you? I’m telling you, she’ll get over it, I’ll get her under control and everything will go back to normal. Trust me,” he laughs as he drops his voice and says conspiratorially, “You don’t want to step foot anywhere near that crazy bitch when she gets like this. She’s going to be a total cunt for days now.”

Robin bristles. He didn’t like Graham before, but he fucking *hates* him now. What an arrogant, self-serving wanker. Graham thinks he can have his cake and eat it too? Not on his watch.

Robin steps back so that Graham’s hand falls from his shoulder as he says, “You don’t deserve her. You don’t deserve that woman for one second. Get the fuck off my property.”

Graham rolls his eyes at Robin and tries to reason with him again, tries to tell him that both he and Regina are overreacting and it’s not a big deal. Robin scrubs his hands across his face - he needs to get back to her, needs to make sure she’s alright. He tries to skirt around Graham, makes to pass him but Graham says, “She’s never going to fuck you, man. She’s *still* with me, she’s *still* going to come home with me, she’s *still* going to marry me. This little incident?” he waves his hands around and shrugs, “It doesn’t change anything - so take a hint and back off.”

Robin ignores him, gets almost by him when Graham grabs him roughly by the arm, snapping, “Hey, I’m warning you -” but the contact flips a switch in Robin, and before he can stop himself, before he can think those rational thoughts he was trying so hard to help Regina get to, he turns on his heel and punches Graham square in the jaw.

The Irishman staggers back a couple of steps, trips over a bench and falls on his arse. Robin is out the door in a second - it’s not a fight he wants, and fuck, he shouldn’t have hit him - he’s going to pay for that - he just knows that that cop is going to make his life hell for this. He crosses the driveway quickly and slams the door to his office behind him, twisting the padlock sharply in case Graham decides to come after him.

She’s still here, thank god, she’s on the other side of the office staring out the window, and the only thing he wants to do is hold her. Comfort her. Soothe her. He wishes she would allow it.

She turns to him, and he hates the look in her eyes, hates seeing her upset and confused, looking lost and desperate. And so, so angry. *Christ,* she’s angry.

He thinks for a second, trying to come up with a way to help her, and decides that if he can’t hold her, he can at least help her relieve some of that stress the old fashioned way.

“Come on, let’s have it,” he tells her as he drops her purse on his desk, shucks his coat and squares up. She’s got to get that energy out, she’s got to let it out before she bursts and does something as stupid as he just did.

She furrows her brow and says dubiously, “You’re kidding right? I’m certainly not going to hit you.”

“I’m offering to take it” he argues, “Let’s get that anger out now, let’s get it all out so you can breathe, and focus, and think through what you want to do next.” He wants her to do this, wants her to unleash in a safe environment so that she can be in control when she needs to be. “You’re shaking you’re so upset,” he points out, “Come over here and let it out.”

She considers him for a moment, her eyes intense as she asks him, “Are you serious?”

He barely gets his answer of, “Absolutely,” out before she’s coming at him, and he braces himself as
her hands connect with his shoulders and she shoves him hard. He absorbs it, takes one step back from the force as she shoves him again, losing her control, angry curses spilling quietly from her lips as she shoves him again, again, again.

“Fight back,” she commands, her voice quiet and ragged, “I need you to fight back.”

He does as she asks, pushes her back a little and grabs for her wrists. He gets a good hold on her, but she’s scrappy, and after quite a bit of twisting around she gets one hand free, slaps his face with a loud <smack!> and breaks her other hand loose as she slams her palms into his chest again, nearly knocking the wind out of him. She keeps coming - jesus she’s got some rage in her - and he lets her, encourages her with, “That’s it,” and, “Let me have it,” and, “Go on, give me some more.” He fights her back with more little pushes and grabs again for her wrists, but she’s even more riled up now, is starting to really let go as she slams her shoulder against his chest, and his back connects hard with the wall behind him, rattling a few photos crooked with the force. She shoves him again - again - and he’s so proud of her, praises, “There it is,” and, “Fuck, just look how tough you are.” She slaps her palms against his chest and digs her nails into his pecs, dragging them down, scratching hard enough she might have drawn blood, and he can’t help but cringe because, fuck that hurts.

She must hear him gasp with the pain, because she instantly snaps out of her fury, her hands going soft against his chest as she says, “Oh, oh god - I’m so sorry.”

They’re both breathing hard as he reaches up and puts his hands on her shoulders, slides them up to cup her face as he looks her in the eyes and says firmly, “You have absolutely nothing to be sorry for. Nothing, understand?” She looks uncertain at first, but he strokes his thumbs across her jaw as he repeats himself, reminds her that he told her to do this, and this time she nods, holding eye contact. He slides his hands down, over her shoulders, down her arms and onward until he can cover her hands, which are still pressed against his chest. She’s not shaking anymore, and that’s definitely an improvement, she’s spent her rage on him and she looks better, looks like she’s got that spark back inside of her.

Her serious eyes scan his face, then drop to where his hands cover hers, and suddenly she gasps.

“What happened?!?” she asks quickly, pulling her hands from under his and grabbing his right wrist.

Robin has no idea what she’s talking about and glances down stupidly.

Oh.

Right.

The hand Robin used to sucker punch Graham is severely bruised, has turned dark purple and is so swollen that he can’t even see his knuckles anymore.

“I’m sorry,” he says immediately, because he knows he messed up, knows that his childish outburst has only managed to make this worse for her. “I’m a fucking idiot - I know I shouldn’t have, I know there’s going to be hell to pay, but jesus, he was saying these awful things and I just, I couldn’t let him talk about you like that I - I’m so sorry,” he repeats, feeling like a complete prat.

She strokes her fingers lightly across his bruised knuckles, studying the damage it seems, as she nods. “He’s going to make a big deal out of this,” she says quickly. “Did he hit you back?”

Robin shakes his head. “No, I came straight here after, he didn’t have a chance. I don’t think I did any damage though. I’m pretty sure I didn’t get his nose.”

Regina takes a deep breath and nods again, smooths her thumbs over the purple discoloration, then
brings his hand up and presses her lips to the swollen flesh as she whispers, “Thank you, though.”

Robin’s heart about falls out of his chest.

He’s cocked everything up, made things even worse for her, and she’s fucking thanking him?

She’s perfect. Absolutely fucking perfect. Christ.

He steps into her and slides his other hand around her waist, pulling her to him as he tells her softly, “You’re going to get through this, it’s going to be rubbish for a while, I know, but you’re going to be alright, love.”

She lets him get close, brings his damaged hand up and places it on the side of her neck, then wraps her arms around him in a tight hug.

He drops his lips to the top of her head as he rubs his fingers across the nape of her neck, ignoring the pain in favor of giving her the comfort she needs right now. He’s caught up in her, caught up in the moment, and he’s helpless to stop himself as he drops his head and presses a slow, sweet kiss to her cheek.

“I’ve got you,” he whispers, kissing her cheek again, “No matter what happens, I’ve got you, alright?” He kisses her yet again, and he’s got to stop, he’s got to get control of himself because that last kiss was way too close to inappropriate, almost hit the corner of her mouth, and he could swear he felt her lips move too.

Now is absolutely not the time to kiss her. Absolutely not.

But it doesn’t mean he doesn’t want to.

There’s something wrong with her.

Everything has gone to hell in a handbasket, her entire life is falling apart around her, she has absolutely no idea how she’s going to put the pieces back together, and the only thing she can think of right now is how close Robin’s face is to hers.

His fingers are in the fine strands of hair at the base of her skull, rubbing softly, slowly, and it has to hurt his hand to do it, it has to feel absolutely terrible for him, but it feels wonderful to her. It makes her feel calm, makes her feel less shocked by the situation. The hand he has at her lower back is rubbing little soothing circles, around and around her lumbar, and he’s just, jesus, he’s just incredible.

Robin’s face is close to hers, he had dropped it to whisper reassurances to her, and it helps, his sweet words are exactly what she needs right now, because if she breaks up with Graham - she has to, right? that’s the only choice here, isn’t it? - if she breaks up with him she’s going to be homeless, jobless, and broke. Leave it to her to quit her job in the city a mere two weeks ago, to leave in a blaze of glory as she not-so-politely told her skeevy boss to fuck off, all the while thinking she had time to get something new lined up before the wedding. Thank god she has that little bit of savings that
Graham doesn’t know about. It’ll be the only thing keeping her and Henry afloat if she ends things.

He kisses her cheek, says more nice things, reassures her that she’s not alone, that he’s here with her for whatever she needs, then kisses her again. She doesn’t even realize she’s doing it until it’s done - she’s tilted her face slightly to his so when he kisses her cheek for the third time, he catches the corner of her mouth, and god, she can’t stop her lips from making the same movement, wishing she could kiss him right now. It would be such a relief to just get completely lost in someone else for a moment, to let him take her to bed and make her forget everything. To lock the doors, shut off the lights and their phones and everything else - just close the whole world out - and do nothing but feel each other. She bets he could make her feel amazing. Bets he could make her feel downright incredible.

He starts to pull back from her, because of course he does - Robin’s a good guy, he’s not going to take advantage of her right now. She’s not ready for that yet, though, she’s not ready to stand on her own, so she brings her right hand up and wraps it around the back of his neck, pulling him back down to her until their foreheads are pressed together. She’s breathing deep, breathing his air as it puffs against her lips, and she’s going to kiss him, feels herself moving in just a little, oh god, she’s going to, she’s —

“Easy,” he whispers, his hands soothing against her. “Easy, darling, there’s no rush here.”

And that only makes it worse, makes her want him more, because he’s so damn good to her, and in the wake of how completely awful Graham just made her feel, Robin has gathered up the broken pieces of her heart and put them all back in a nice, neat pile. He hasn’t mended her, not yet anyway, but at least her heart isn’t as scattered as it was, at least she has some semblance of control, that even though this situation is terrible, the world is not over. Not when he’s got her.

Regina’s a planner - has always been that way, has always made lists and spreadsheets and roadmaps for everything. So when things turn upside down like this, when the plan goes up in flames, she’s always left a little bit desperate, a little bit reckless - and that’s what she uses for an excuse when she does it.

She tips her chin up, tightens her fingers on his thick neck, and presses her lips to his.

And oh, oh god, he feels so good against her. It’s a soft, easy kiss - not desperate, not needy or rushed - just a gentle press of her lips to his. After a moment, their mouths open in sync, and she pulls his upper lip between hers, the scruff of his beard against her is long enough not to be scratchy, just pleasantly rough, so masculine and absolutely sexy against her soft, smooth skin. The kiss is perfect, slow and steady, sweet and so, so sensual, and she has to fight the urge to sweep her tongue against his lips, has to remind herself that now is not the time to feel the thickness of his bottom lip between her teeth. She finally pulls back, her eyes still closed for a second, and he brushes her nose with his as he says quietly, “Wow.”

She almost laughs at his sincerity, at the awed look on his face from just that little kiss, and she’d love to kiss him more, would love to spend hours with her mouth against his, but there is a sudden pounding at the door, and they both jump as reality comes crashing back down on them.

Regina steps back quickly, brushing her hands down the front of her jacket, then tucking her hair behind her ear, as Robin clears his throat and calls out softly, “Yeah?”

“It’s me, Robby,” Granny calls through the thick door, “Come on and let me have a look at that hand.”

He smiles at her, looking embarrassed, and it’s endearing that his grandmother has so much concern
for him, that she looks after him like she would if he were still a boy. He opens the door and lets her
in, and the old woman comes bustling into the room, then stops short when she sees Regina.

“Oh!” she says, “I thought you’d all left.”

Regina raises her eyebrows at her and says quickly, “I was just on my way out.”

She grabs her purse and makes for the door, but Robin grabs her hand at the last second and asks
quietly, “Do you have someplace to stay?”

She nods, although her prospects are not very alluring. She could stay with Mary Margaret, her step-
sister would absolutely love that, but she's not confident she can take the sugar rush of the younger,
ridiculously cheerful woman today. Most of Regina’s friends live in the city, and she’s not sure what
to do with Henry if she goes to one of them. Mal’s place is definitely not kid friendly, between the
vast amounts of top-shelf liquor and way too many photos of the female genitalia for a young boy’s
eyes to ever see, she’s pretty sure his innocence would be ruined within the first five minutes.
Cruella’s is downright frightening - animal mounts and hides consume every inch of wall space,
their creepy glass eyes stare right at you no matter where you move, she swears), except for one
room that she’s dedicated to Wiccan literature and tools - knives, chalices, wands, and the like - that
Regina is absolutely certain would terrify Henry.

“Would um,” she starts, stops and tries to tamp down the humiliation as she prepares to ask him for a
favor.

“How about we keep Henry for the weekend?” he cuts in, saving her from asking, and she could
kiss him again for being able to read her so well.

She exhales with relief and smiles. “That would be so helpful,” she says quietly, then adds, “I can
bring some clothes for him this afternoon, if that’s alright?”

Robin squeezes her hand and reassures her. “That works, but if you aren't able to, our boys are about
the same size and I’m sure we can make something work.” He grins and gives her a little wink as he
says, “I’ll just tell Roland he can’t change either - I’m sure the two of them will be absolutely
heartbroken over it.”

She gives him a knowing look, because he's right, Henry probably won't even notice his lack of an
overnight bag. She fishes her keys and cellphone out of her purse, readying to leave, when Robin
asks, “Hey, can I get your number?”

She snaps her head up, reacting stupidly as if this situation was completely different, as if he's
actually asking for her number, then has to chide herself for the little thrill it gave her. She pulls up
her contacts and says, “Of course, yeah,” gets his number and gives him hers, then finally goes, the
crunch of the cold gravel under her boots a loud reminder of the situation she now finds herself in.
As she turns the key to her Mercedes, a feeling of absolute dread fills her stomach and anxiety seeps
into her mind. It's only nine thirty in the morning and already this has been one of the worst days her
life. She's pretty sure it's only going to get worse before it gets better, and she needs some time to
think things through, to try to make the right decision for Henry, and for her.

She turns out of Camp Sherwood and heads south - there's only one person she can talk to about all
of this, one person who she can count on to help her make the right choice - her father. It's an hour
drive from here to see him, but she's certain it will be worth it, he always helps her see the big
picture, never judges or makes her feel bad about herself. The drive passes quickly, and when she
finally turns down the long, familiar driveway she already feels a little more calm.
She checks her phone before she gets out of the car - she's missed three calls from Graham and several text messages ranging from, “You know it didn't mean anything, Princess,” to a dick pic with the caption, “Miss you ;-)” and she fights down the rage within her as she deletes the picture. Her phone vibrates once more just as she's setting it down, and she almost doesn't check it, doesn't want to see what other bullshit Graham has sent her, but when she glances at the notification, it's Robin's name on the screen.

She opens the message from him and instantly smiles.

It's a picture of Henry, smiling and drinking what looks like hot cocoa with a caption that says, *Hi Mom!* She saves it to her phone, just as another picture from Robin comes through. It's the three of them, Henry, Roland, and Robin, all arm in arm with thick hats and coats on, huge white pines acting as a backdrop for their perfect selfie. Her heart stutters at the three boys, they're all grinning broadly - real smiles, not fake ones - and the caption across the bottom from Robin simply reads, *Thinking of you.*

She saves that photo too, then drops her phone back into her purse, still smiling a little as she gets out of the car. It's quiet here, is always so still and secluded, and she has the best talks with her father on days like this, when there are no distractions and she can unload her heart’s sorrows to him as he listens intently, never interrupting or judging her. She wishes she could visit him more, wishes she lived closer so she could stop by on a day that was normal, not just when she was upset. He deserves that, she thinks, deserves to see her more when she's not so worked up, not begging for answers or understanding, but she can't do anything about that right now.

All she can do in this moment is take a deep breath and put on her thick leather gloves, finally letting her tears of frustration, hurt, and betrayal fall, as she crouches down and wipes the dust and frost from her father's headstone.
Regina isn’t sure she’s ever been so disappointed in herself in her entire life. She’s not upset that she fell for Graham, no - he was all the things she was looking for when they met - sweet, handsome, steady, and fun. He was good with Henry and didn’t mind that she had a son, or that she was a widow, or that she has a temper that can run as hot as a wildfire in August. He made her feel young and sexy, and the fact that he’s five years younger than her gave her a confidence boost that she really needed then.

They are almost three years into their relationship, and nothing about Graham has changed. He’s always had a wandering eye, has never even tried to hide the fact that he still lusted after other women once they were officially dating, but Regina is secure in the way she looks. She’s a ten, and she knows it, so when he ogled other women, and he did it often, it didn’t usually bother her. He’s not good with confrontation, doesn’t like to argue but doesn’t like to be wrong, either, so the few times they disagreed, it always turned into a “Who can out silent treatment who for longer” competition, which she almost always won - usually because Graham forgot what they were arguing about, or forgot that they were arguing in the first place.

It doesn’t concern her that he hasn’t changed. What concerns her is that she has changed, apparently, because this stunt he pulled with Emma makes her feel like the only adult in their relationship, like she’s the only one taking it seriously, and when she really gets honest with herself, she doesn’t find that she is all that surprised he did this.

She’s been sitting with her father for two hours, thinking through her relationship with Graham from top to bottom. He’s been off since he proposed, has been going out a lot more with the guys from his precinct, has been staying out late and “forgetting” to respond to her texts, has wanted more and more sex (which she doesn’t mind at all), but when he gets off without her - more often than not - he certainly hasn’t been very enthusiastic about helping her finish. Regina thinks she understands now what’s been going on with him, and it’s been going on since they first started dating.

He’s immature.

They’re on completely different levels when it comes to relationships and commitment. She’s ready to commit to someone for real, she’s ready to make that leap and invest in someone, to love with all she has. Graham is still out to see what he can get, he’s still playing games and chasing girls, and sending dick pics, for god’s sake. To be fair, she liked all that in the beginning - she liked the attention and the way he chased after her, she liked the carefree recklessness that she felt when they were together. This difference between them isn’t his fault - there probably isn’t even anything he can do about it, it’s just the way he is. But that’s why she’s so upset with herself, because she knows herself well enough to realize it’s probably what drew her to him in the first place, and all this time she’s been trying to be someone she’s not.
Daniel’s death came so fast - hit by a drunk driver while walking to work one sunny Friday morning - that she had no time for the fun and games people in their twenties usually get to have. She was suddenly a single mom with a mountain of responsibilities, and she had no one to help her, no support system to rally behind her. Her mother and father had both passed away by then - not that she would have let Henry anywhere near her mother, but still - and she was never close with Mary Margaret, who up until a few years ago, was the biggest spoiled brat Regina had ever set eyes on.

She’s not ashamed to admit that she almost didn’t survive it. If she hadn’t had Henry, who was three at the time, she’s pretty sure she wouldn’t have survived it. Daniel was everything to her; she was so in love with him, had loved him since she was seventeen years old, from the moment she saw him at the country club, standing tall and handsome in the dim light of the barn as he brushed out that big mean quarterhorse no one else could get anywhere near. He was everything her mother hated - open, honest, sweet, and worst of all, middle class. Her mother despised him from the second Regina mentioned him, had done everything in her power to separate them, and when that didn’t work, her mother did what she did best. She sought revenge on Regina for going against her wishes, locked up her inheritance in a trust that she can’t access until she’s thirty-five, because “she’ll be old enough by then to realize what a mistake she made marrying Daniel.”

He was her best friend, her husband, her lover, the father of her child, and so much, so very much more. Losing him was literally like losing half of herself.

She didn’t have a relationship for almost five years after he died. She dated a little, mostly when she was so tired of having to satisfy herself in the bedroom that she couldn’t take another second without a man inside of her, and never with any intention of getting serious with someone. But when she’d met Graham, well, he checked a lot of boxes on her “looking for” list.

But that list has changed.

And Graham doesn’t check very many of the boxes on it now.

When she pushes down the rawness of her hurt feelings today, she’s almost glad he’s done this. It’s given her a good reality check, made her step back and realize that she hasn’t been honest with herself for quite a while. She loves him, she really does, but it’s not the kind of love that lasts, it’s not the love of a wife, it’s not the big love she felt with Daniel. It’s the love of a friend, or maybe fuck buddy is a more appropriate description, and that’s not what she needs. It’s certainly not an example she should set for Henry.

Regina takes a moment to think of her father, to think of how helpful he’s always been to her - both in life and in death. He’s always made up the bulk of her support system, and she’s so grateful that she can still have these moments with him, can still lean on him and center herself, can get to the root of her issues through his infinite patience and comfort.

She swipes her hand across the top of his headstone, then drops a kiss to the frigid marble before making her way back to her car. She’s cold, really cold, so she lets the engine run for a few minutes while she checks her phone and warms up a little. She’s missed another two calls and three texts from Graham, a call from Mal, and another text from Robin.

She opens Robin’s first, and she’s not disappointed. It’s another selfie, the three of them all strapped into one of those four-wheel utility vehicles, giving her a thumbs up with huge grins and flushed cheeks. She smiles broadly, laughing a little at Robin’s caption that says, We all wore helmets and went really slow, I swear ;-)  

She texts him back, Thank you for showing him a good time, it means so much to me when I’m about to put him through hell, punctuated with a face palming emoji.
She checks the texts from Graham, they say, *Hey Princess, call me,* and, *About to put out APB on you ;-) and, I’m sorry baby, plz call.*

She texts him back, *I’m fine, otwh. Where are you?*

He responds that he got called into work, and he’ll be there until five, which she knows is bullshit but doesn’t care to argue with him, because it works in her favor. She calls Mal, gets her on the first ring and almost laughs when her friend answers with, *Hey babe, I already have a place picked out where we can hide the body.*

“I assume Graham called you, then?” Regina replies, “What did he tell you?”

She can hear the eye roll through the phone as Mal says, “Oh, he had his sob story ready when he called to see if I knew where you were. I told him I had no idea, although I’m pretty sure you went to visit the Greatest Man Whoever Lived,” she pauses as Regina hums her affirmation through the phone, then continues, “He tried to convince me that he *was not* balls deep in some other woman this morning, that whatever happened was a misunderstanding. I hung up on him before I could choke on the smell of his bullshit.”

Regina scoffs and agrees, says, “Yeah, there’s no getting around it. I literally caught him with his pants down, screwing Henry’s riding instructor.”

“That toad-faced blonde?” Mal asks, clearly irritated. “You’ve got to be kidding me.”

“No, I’m not kidding. And actually, I didn’t catch him, not at first - Robin caught him, then I saw it, and after Robin calmed me down, he punched him, and,” she sighs, “It’s a giant mess.”

Mal cracks up on the other end of the line and asks between breaths, “The sexy British guy defended your honor? My god Regina, that’s fucking hot.”

Regina smiles in spite of herself, because even though she’s sure it’s going to backfire on all of them, it *was* a little hot that Robin defended her. That he felt the need to put Graham at the end of his fist for hurting her. It shouldn’t be hot, she supposes his violence should be appalling, but she’s trying to be more honest with herself, and she has to admit that when she thinks about it now, she finds that it was more than a little hot, actually.

“I need a favor,” she says, seriously.

“Anything, dear,” her friend immediately responds, and it’s such a relief to Regina that she has someone like Mal, someone who doesn’t ask a thousand questions and takes her at her word.

“Can you help get my stuff from Graham’s? I want it gone before he gets home tonight - he said he’d be back around five. I’m a couple of hours from there but…”

“Say no more, I’ll have it packed before you get there,” Mal says quickly, and Regina’s eyebrows shoot heavenward.

“No, that’s not what I meant,” she tries to argue, but Mal cuts her off again.

“I’ve already got my guys on it, so just text me what you need short-term for Henry and yourself, and I’ll make sure it gets put where you can get to it. Where are you staying tonight?”

“With you?” Regina asks quickly, then teases, “Please don’t make me stay with Snow White.”

Mal agrees as she cracks up at the nickname they gave Mary Margaret when Regina’s mother had
Regina takes one last look around Graham’s house. Mal’s moving guys were thorough and accurate - they took only the things that were hers and already have them moved up to Mal’s northside storage facility until she figures out where the hell she’s going to live. Her car is packed with toiletries and a week’s worth of clothes for both her and Henry, and she’s already called his school to let them know they’re taking a “last minute vacation” and he won’t be in this week. She feels like the worst mom ever.

She has already called the wedding photographer, the venue, the seamstress, and the caterer to let them all know the wedding is off. They were all quite happy not to return any of the money she and Graham put down, but she keeps telling herself that it all costs less than a divorce, and counseling, so she shouldn’t be upset. She still has that little savings fund she can use, about twelve thousand dollars she’s stashed away, so she has some time to figure everything out, there’s no reason to panic.

No reason at all.

At half past five, the front door opens and she hears Graham enter, the sound of his footsteps loud in the otherwise silent house. He rounds the corner to the kitchen and she fights the urge to roll her eyes when she sees that he’s not in uniform - she knew he wasn’t at work. She’s leaning against the kitchen counter with her arms crossed, her engagement ring set behind her in a little white envelope, and as he nears her she can smell whiskey on him. She curls her lip in disappointment.

“Hey Princess,” he says softly, coming right up to her and wrapping his arms around her waist as he hugs her to him. “You feeling better now?”

She extracts herself from his arms and steps around him so she’s not boxed in. She feels jumpy and nervous, there’s a huge knot in her stomach and she just wants to get all this over with.
“Hey…” he says, and Regina raises her brows as Graham finally notices that all of her things are missing. “What’s going on?”

“We’re done,” she says quickly, firmly. “This is over.”

He straightens up immediately, his eyes going wide as she says the words. He quickly looks around the house again, runs his hands through his hair and starts talking fast, “Wait, wait, wait - you don’t mean that right? You can’t mean - we’re not breaking up. We’re - we’re getting married. You’re angry, I know, and I’m sorry you’re upset, but come on Regina, we’re not over.”

“This isn’t a discussion,” she says firmly, tipping her chin up and shifting a little. “We’re done.”

“Don’t do this, come on baby don’t do this,” he whines, coming toward her, his hands going to her waist as he pulls her into him again. She puts her hands on his chest but doesn’t push him away. He’s not being aggressive, just desperate, and she’s pretty sure his shock is sincere - is pretty sure he’s never been on the receiving end of a breakup.

“Listen,” she says quietly, her hands stroking the sides of his face, her fingertips brushing lightly against the purple bruise on the edge of his jaw. Her eyes water with her emotions, because even though she’s the one ending things, she’s also the one who got hurt this morning, the one who has the most to lose by ending this relationship. “We’re not right for each other - maybe we used to be, I don’t know - but we aren’t anymore. I am mad, I’m so mad at you, but that’s not why I’m ending this. I’m ending it because we aren’t a good fit. I love you, but I’m not marrying you, I’m not doing this. We’re done.”

His grip on her waist is tight as he starts to apologize, as he tells her Emma means nothing, that he’s so sorry, that Regina is everything to him and he can’t live without her. She wishes he’d said these things before, without the threat of breaking up, because it doesn’t really mean much now. He moves in close and presses his forehead to hers, his hands running up and down her back as he pleads with her to reconsider.

She closes her eyes and lets him talk, lets him plead his case and run his hands across her. He kisses her, softly, sweetly, and she lets him because she does love him, and even though he’s a complete ass, they did spend the last three years together.

He moves his hands from her back to her neck, cupping it softly and threading his fingers through the fine hairs at her nape, deepening the kiss as he swipes his tongue against her lips. He opens her mouth for him, and he tastes like Jack Daniels as he slides his tongue in to play against hers, stroking softly and flicking against her, then moves to suck her bottom lip as he escalates the kiss. It feels like desperation, it feels like need, it feels like goodbye.

It does not feel like love.

They’re kissing heatedly now, and he’s backed her up against the refrigerator, his hands running across her shoulders and arms as he presses his mouth to hers - licking and nipping and sucking - and the next thing she knows, he’s got her coat unbuttoned and his hands up under the fabric of her shirt to stroke across the bare skin of her stomach.

He smooths his hands around to her lower back, then runs them up her sensitive sides, up, up until he hits her bra, and he moans against her mouth, breaks the kiss to ask her, “The lacy red one?” When she nods, he groans and slams his mouth back against hers as his hands move up to cup her breasts.

She’s losing control, has lost control of the situation, and he honestly does feel good against her, so familiar and desperate and clearly aroused, as he slips his knee between her legs to press against her.
His mouth moves from hers to descend the column of her throat, then down to her collarbone, the deep v-neck of her white cashmere sweater allowing him access to plenty of skin to press hot kisses to.

She gasps with arousal when he rubs his thumbs over her nipples through her bra, then squeezes her mounds as his head drops further to lick as much of her cleavage as her shirt will allow. He brings his mouth back to hers, and she kisses him, slides her fingers into his hair and lightly runs her fingernails across his scalp, down his neck, and suddenly the vision of her nails running down the length of Robin’s chest earlier today flashes before her eyes, and she pulls back sharply.

“Okay,” she says, her voice breathy, “That’s enough, okay? Stop.”

Graham slows but doesn’t stop, moves his lips to her ear as he presses his groin against her, kneading her breasts as he rasps, “Come on, let’s just go upstairs and fuck it out like we used to. That’s all we need - you can ride me all night, and in the morning we’ll go get your stuff. You don’t have to be so stubborn, I know this is what you want.” He squeezes her breasts firmly, rocks his hips against her and says, “I know you, I know you want to stay.”

“No,” she says, her voice steady again. She pushes him back, and he pulls his hands from her shirt to rub over his face. “This doesn’t change anything. We’re done. This is over.”

“Jesus, Regina!” he explodes suddenly, and she jumps with the change in volume. He strides quickly to the far side of the kitchen and asks again, “You’re serious?”

She’s starting to get angry. How many times does she have to tell him they’re done?

“Yes,” she confirms, “You and I are over.”

“But what about the wedding?” he asks, his face reddening, “What about all the money I spent?”

“I called today but we can’t get our deposits back,” she informs him as she straightens her shirt and starts to button her coat.

“Fucking hell,” he snaps, “You certainly didn’t waste time canceling everything.” He’s so angry, his face reddening as he barks at her, his accent thick, “You know you’ve cost me ten grand on this? Ten grand gone over fuckin’ nothing?! And what about the ring? I supposed you’ve pawned it by now?”

Regina motions to the envelope on the counter and he tears it open, holding it up in front of him as he stares at her in shock. A beat of silences passes and he seems to regroup, changes tactics as tears well in his eyes and he says, “Don’t do this,” he pleads with her, “Don’t do this baby.”

She pulls herself together, because she thinks she’s finally gotten through to him, thinks he finally understands. “It’s done,” she says, then, “Goodbye, Graham.”

She turns for the front door, and she hears him curse, hears the sound of metal striking metal as something hits the refrigerator. She’s pretty sure it’s her ring, so she doesn’t slow at all, makes for the door and goes straight to her car. She turns the engine, steps on the gas, and doesn’t look back.
Robin checks his phone and sees he’s missed a text from Regina. *On my way, be there in 30.*

His stomach drops a little, selfishly excited to see her again today, hoping she’s doing okay and that Graham didn’t put up a fight. His hand is royally bruised, and he doesn’t want to have to punch him again.

But he will.

The roads are good this evening, are still clear despite a half inch accumulation of snow that started falling about an hour ago, and she’s true to her word - he sees her Mercedes coming up the drive right at five to seven.

He throws his shoes and coat on and jogs out to greet her, directing her to pull into the empty side of his attached two car garage so she won’t have to brush off the snow when she leaves. He drops the door once she’s in, and he takes Henry’s bag from her as he ushers her into the house, dying of curiosity as to how everything went. He wonders if she went through with it, if she really did break up with Graham. He wonders if she regrets snogging him in his office today, wonders if she’s going to feel awkward around him now. He certainly has no regrets.

“*You look good,*” he says quietly as he takes her jacket and hangs it in the coat closet. She pulls her hair up and off her neck, and he can’t stop his eyes from running over her.

She’s so pretty it should be a crime.

She’s got this long, v-neck cashmere sweater on over her leggings, and his fingers instantly itch to touch the soft fabric, to touch *her*, and he has to shove his hands in his pockets to stop himself from doing something stupid. Just leave it to a gorgeous woman to wear the best feeling fabric on earth.

“*Wow,*” she says softly, looking down the hall toward the kitchen. “*This is - this is really nice.*”

He grins, because he’s had that reaction before. Both Robin’s and Granny’s houses sit on the shared property of Camp Sherwood, all within walking distance of each other via well-groomed trails through the forest. Granny’s home is newer, built within the last ten years, but his house is almost a hundred years old, a little two bedroom ranch that was originally built by his great grandparents, and
has been retrofitted over the years for modern conveniences. The outside still looks rough, the old brick exterior slightly crumbling, not falling down - just in need of some serious TLC - but the inside? Robin has spent the last five years completely remodeling it.

So yeah, the inside is bloody brilliant.

There are hardwood floors throughout, made from oaks pulled right from this forest. Wide, heavy wooden beams cross the twenty-foot vaulted ceiling of the great room, which shares an open floor plan with the kitchen. He’s really proud of his kitchen - he cooks often and when he’s not cooking in it Granny is, so he splurged and put in high-end stainless steel appliances, built custom cabinets and installed granite countertops. There’s a large island in the center with three barstools slid under it, a half bath/laundry room on one side, and a dining area off to the other side with a table and chairs that are originals he restored and refinished to match all of his updates.

The great room is dominated by a large stone fireplace that stretches all the way to the ceiling - also original - and his furniture is all about comfort. He has a huge, dark brown, extra cushy six-person sectional that spans the room, with a long chaise on one side that he and Roland constantly fight over, and a leather ottoman in the middle of the room that holds thick blankets and a hodgepodge of other things. He loves that couch, falls asleep on it more often than he’d ever admit, because falling asleep on the couch is a lot less lonely than crawling into an empty bed night after night.

The master bedroom is large, but Roland’s room is a bit small - an office he converted into a bedroom until he gets the basement remodel completed. The master bathroom is completely redone - his second favorite room - with light colored cabinets, stone countertops, two large sinks, a dual head walk-in shower, and a deep soaker tub.

Robin shows Regina around, and he has a little thrill of pride that she actually looks impressed. He knows she comes from money, and he honestly hadn’t expected any sort of reaction, but if she’s pulling one over on him, she’s certainly good at it - especially when she sees the soaker tub. He laughs when she Oooohs! and takes a closer look - she’s such a girl - but then he has this image of her, naked and wet and sudsy in his soaker tub, and he almost moans, almost goes right to his knees with the thought, so he promptly flees from the room.

He gets them both a cup of hot tea and they settle in on the barstools in the kitchen. The boys are playing in the basement, locked into an “Ultimate Ping Pong Tournament,” so Robin takes a few minutes to sit quietly with Regina, until he finally breaks and asks, “How’re you doing? Everything go alright, today?”

She tells him that she ended it with Graham, how her friend who owns a moving and storage company was able to get all of her and Henry’s possessions packed up, and that she canceled all the wedding plans. She doesn’t cry, or look forlorn, or even all that sad as she tells him these things - she looks… anxious. So he asks her, “What else is going on? Is there anything I can do?”

She stares at him for a second, her dark brown eyes so pretty and intense in the frame of her black hair, and he’s just so caught up in her, so into her, that he doesn’t consciously make the decision to move his hand as he brings it up to brush a few heavy, thick strands behind her ear. She doesn’t move away, just watches him closely, and he wonders what she’s thinking - she’s such an enigma all the time. He realizes suddenly that she might think he’s taking advantage of her - he knows she’s vulnerable and the last thing he wants is to put her off, so he drops his hand, a bit embarrassed as he mumbles, “Sorry,” then reaches for his tea.

When he looks back to her she’s dropped her gaze to her lap, where she’s fiddling with the edges of her burgundy painted nails. “I’m having a little, anxiety, about what to do next,” she says quietly.
Robin doesn’t interrupt, just gives her his full attention and lets her talk at her own pace. “I quit my job two weeks ago, and I did it in a way that there’s no going back,” she sighs, picks at her nails some more. “I have some savings, enough to keep us going for a little while, but I don’t have anywhere for Henry to call home - I don’t even know where to look for an apartment, because I don’t know where I’m going to get a job, and I feel like I’m, like I’m…” she trails off, then brings her eyes to his and huffs out, “Failing.”

“Hey,” he says, reaching for her hand and taking it in his, “You’re absolutely not failing.” She gives him a disbelieving look and he squeezes her hand as he tells her, “You might be starting fresh, but that isn’t the same as failing, now is it? You made a decision today to do what’s best for you and your son, and that is the furthest thing from failing. That’s success if you ask me.”

She tilts her head and drops her eyes to their hands, and he wishes he could say more, wishes there was something he could do to help. “What about Henry’s dad?” he asks, “Would he be willing to take him until you’ve got things straightened out?”

She makes this awful little sound in her throat as her brow furrows, and suddenly she pulls her hand from his to wipe at her eyes, and fuck - oh fuck - she’s crying. He’s made her cry. Fuck fuck fuck.

He grabs for the nearest tissue box as he rambles idiotically, “I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean to pry, or offend you, I’m sorry, fuck.”

She shakes her head and collects herself, expertly smoothing her makeup from running as she tells him, her voice the saddest he’s ever heard, “Henry’s father died when he was three… I’m a widow.”

He knew Henry’s last name is different - Colter - but he stupidly assumed she was divorced. And isn’t that just fucking terrible? Not only has she been cheated on, made homeless, and lost a shitload of money on a wedding she’s not having, but now he’s gone and brought up her dead husband. He wishes he could fall right through the floor.

“Oh christ,” he says, “I’m sorry - fuck.”

She waves him off, but now it’s awkward silence between them and he doesn’t know how to get them out of it, so he blurts, “My wife, Roland’s mum - she died when he was three. Looks like we both had a pretty shit time that year, huh?”

She shocks him when she laughs, looking at him like he’s insane, and he probably is, because matching dead spouse for dead spouse is probably the most ludicrous way he’s ever tried to cheer anyone up. At least he got her to smile for a second, though, at least his stupidity broke the awkward silence.

“I better go tell Henry what’s going on,” she says softly, straightening her spine and looking perfectly poised once again. Robin nods, and he takes Regina downstairs to have some alone time with Henry while he drags Roland upstairs and orders him into the shower.
It’s almost nine thirty when he sees headlights coming up the driveway, and it sends dread through Robin’s stomach. Regina is still downstairs with Henry, Roland is reading in his room, and Robin isn’t expecting company tonight. He flips the porch light on, throws on his coat and boots and heads out to greet whoever it is, intent on sending them packing before they can interrupt the heavy conversation going on inside.

The SUV pulls right up to the house, and he doesn’t recognize the vehicle or the driver. The backdoors open, and two men get out of one side as two more come around from the other, and Robin suddenly wishes he had his pistol. He steps back on the porch, his adrenaline spiking with the implication of what’s happening, and he discretely checks the doorknob behind him. It’s locked, thank god - he forgot to pop the push button lock when he rushed out - and it’s a metal door. These fuckers are going to have a hard time getting through it if they try, and if they all get that far there will be far worse things going on, because Robin’s not going down without a fight.

“What’s going on, gents?” he asks casually, keeping his hands in his pockets. They don’t need to know he doesn’t have his gun.

“C’mon do’n here, ya right bastard,” he hears the heavily slurred voice of an Irishman, and he cringes as his eyes adjust to the dim light and he recognizes Graham.

“Didn’t I already tell you to get the fuck off my property today?” he asks loudly, seeing now that they’re all completely lashed. And they’re probably all cops too. He hopes the driver is in less terrible shape than the four tossers in front of him.

“You ruin’d, my fuckin, life!” Graham yells suddenly, taking a step toward him, and there’s a hysterical edge to his voice that makes Robin nervous. The man is completely off his trolley - there’s going to be very little reasoning with him in this state. “‘Gina’s gone and I’m out ten grand ‘cause of you! ‘Cause ya couldn’t keep your fuckin’ mouth shut. The least ya could do is pay me what I’m out, pay me whatcha owe me - ya fuckin’ thief!”

Robin’s brows raise. They have got to be kidding. “I’m not the one who couldn’t keep it zipped - if you want a look at the Paddy who ruined your life, I suggest you find a good mirror,” he says, knowing that he shouldn’t antagonize him, not when he’s outnumbered four to one - five to one if the driver decides to help. He walks to the edge of the porch and down the four steps to face the men, hoping that if he shows them he’s not afraid of them, they’ll all sod off and go home. “Now I’m going to tell you, for the second time today, to get the bloody hell off my property, before we have a problem. Got it?” he snarls, looking hard at every single one of them, trying to commit their faces to memory.

After a moment of silence, Robin turns to head back into the house. Suddenly he’s hit hard in the back, tackled from behind, and he hits the snow-covered ground hard on his hands and knees. He immediately fights back, because fuck these guys if they think he won’t fight to the death in his own home. He rolls to his back, swinging hard up at the bloke who jumped him, hitting him good in the nose and pulling a high pitched yelp, but then the other three are on him, kicking and stomping on him as Graham wrestles himself on top of him, screaming, “You owe me! Gimme my money!” and punches him outrageously hard right across his left eye. He feels the skin on both the top and bottom of his eye socket split open with the force, and Robin just barely sees the metallic flash of the brass knuckles Graham’s wielding before he hits him in the exact same spot, the blood rushes into his eye and blinds him, and Robin’s goes into complete survival mode.

He gets his other arm up and slaps it hard against Graham’s ear, and the other man yelps, losing his balance and falling off of him as Robin shifts his weight. He kicks one of them hard in the face as he grabs for the legs of the wanker next to him, dragging him to the ground. Graham and the fourth
bloke start to recover and begin railing on his back as he wrestles and trades punches with the tosser he just pulled down, and Robin's knuckles split as he turns and clocks Graham again.

The situation is bad - really, really bad. He’s way outnumbered and they're all legless, but they're also professionally trained to fight, and they’re definitely getting the better of him when suddenly he hears a woman's voice yelling Stop! Stop! and everyone freezes.

Robin tries to see who it is, but he still can’t see out of his left eye, the blood is running so fast that even when he wipes it, it just floods right back, so he gives up on that, and just flops onto his back, panting in the snow.

“Jesus christ!” she yells, and he actually smiles, because it’s Regina, and these fuckers are all going to get it now.

“Graham, Jimmy, Paul, and Matt - that’s enough!” she lists their names off like sins, and Robin continues to smile as he lays on his back and tries to breathe. She’s such a badass.

The three blokes who aren’t Graham actually do as she says, get up quickly and pack themselves back into the big SUV and, oh, the fifth one did join in - he’s harboring a nice split lip - but he must have been smart enough to run when he saw Regina coming, because he’s already back in the car.

“What the hell are you doing?!” she yells at Graham. “Why would you do this? What is wrong with you?!”

Graham mumbles that he didn’t know she was here, and that just pisses her off more. “WHAT DO YOU WANT?!” she repeats, getting right up in his face and shoving him. Robin almost laughs - he can’t save the stupid Mick from her this time.

“He owes me, he ruined everything!” Graham slurs, then someone is pulling at Robin’s shoulder, trying to get him up, and it’s - fuck - it's Granny. She must have been on her way over when she saw or heard the commotion.

“Inside, now;” she growls at him, tugging, “While they have some sense in their thick heads.”

He almost laughs, because he’s pretty sure he’s in shock - he can’t really feel all the places he’s sure must hurt, but he knows better than to argue with Granny, she’s old but she’s a real hard arse when she wants to be. Robin rolls to his side, gets halfway up and loses his balance, falling back to his hands and knees for a second, groaning. He tries to catch his breath as he fights the pain in his face, shoulders, and back, then feels Granny pulling on his arm, her grip ridiculously strong for a woman her age as she helps him toward the porch. He pauses next to Regina, his voice rough as he says, “Yell for me if he gets stupid again, yeah?” and her eyes lock on his one good one for a second in acknowledgment before she goes back to glaring at Graham.

It’s quiet outside as Granny gets out some towels and ice to tend to him, but she finally gives up when he pushes her away for the third time so he can keep an eye on Regina - his good hand wrapped tight around his Glock. That fucker makes one move at her, and Robin will kill him. He’ll kill all five of them if he has to. He’s done playing.

Robin watches as Regina pulls her phone out and fiddles with it, and he has no idea what she’s doing but it seems to appease Graham because he’s suddenly turning and jumping back into the SUV, which spins its tires as the driver hits the gas and tears back down the driveway.

She comes inside and speaks with Granny for a few minutes before the older woman leaves, and she locks the door behind her before she turns to Robin.
Regina walks slowly over to him, looking wary of the gun but coming to him anyway, and when she gets close, she pulls in a deep shuddering breath. “Unload that,” she commands quietly, and he does as she says, emptying the chamber and dropping the clip out. She reaches for the gun then, takes it carefully from his hand and sets it on the side table, then places her hand in his and pulls him toward the master bathroom.

She pushes him toward the tub and he feels disconnected from his body, feels like he’s floating a bit, watching the scenario from above as she gets him to sit on the wide ledge of the tub surround. Regina is concentrating hard, it seems, biting her lip as she sweeps her eyes over what is definitely a bloody mess, before she slides his jacket from his shoulders, reaches for the hem of his shirt, and pulls it up over his head to inspect him for damage.

It must be quite a sight, because she gasps a little, her hand going to her mouth as she says, “Jesus,” then leans around him to check his back. She slides her hand softly, comfortingly over his bare shoulder as she meets his eyes, then reaches for a warm, wet washcloth and starts to clean up his face. Her hands are careful, so careful as she wipes the blood from his cheek and neck, frowning as she rinses and wrings out the washcloth before coming back for more. She glides the cloth over his cheekbone, trying hard not to hurt him, but he winces anyway, the skin swollen and heavily bruised beneath her touch.

“You should have stitches for this,” she says quietly, dabbing at the cuts above and below his eye.

“I’m alright,” he says softly, and he can’t really see her - she’s got the blood wiped out of his eye but it’s so swollen now he can barely open it.

“You don’t even know what it looks like,” she chides, dabbing again.

“I know you’ve got it under control, and that’s all I need to know,” he says, blindly raising his hand to find her wrist. He grasps it, pulls her hand toward him and presses a kiss to her pulse point as he asks, “You’ve got this, yeah?”

She sighs and confirms that yes, she’s got it, as she goes back to fixing him up, and after a few butterfly bandages and some skin glue that stings like a right bastard, she’s true to her word - she’s got him patched up as good as any hospital could have. It’s just in time too, because now he’s starting to feel it. And it fucking hurts.

It’s mostly bruises, she tells him, but she runs her soft hands all across his chest, shoulders, and back anyway, feeling for abnormalities she says, for obvious breaks. Her hands are so warm as they slide over him, and he wishes for the hundredth time that their situation was different - that she was touching him like this out of want, not out of necessity.

She leaves him for a moment once she’s sure he doesn’t have any more serious injuries, and comes back with sweatpants and a t-shirt for him. Robin’s jeans are soaked through from the snow, and everything is covered in blood anyway, so he’s grateful for her help. She’s got a concerned frown on her face as he threads his arms through his shirt, cringing as the fresh bruises on his back and ribs twinge, and then she’s helping him, is pulling his shirt up his arms, over his head, and tugging it down for him. She helps him stand, her arm strong around his waist, and she’s close to him, so close that she brushes against him when she breathes. There is a moment of tense silence as she lays her palms flat across his hard abs, her head ducked and watching her hands as she slides them down to his belt, then starts to work the leather free.

Robin’s heart slams against his chest. Holy fuck. Oh god. Holy-bloody-fucking-christ, she’s pulling
his belt loose, the gentle clinking sound of the metal buckle is jarring against his nerves, the tug at his hips as she pulls it from his jeans is unbearably sexy, is killing him as ideas of other situations where she might take off his belt race through his head. She goes for the button on his jeans next, and he has to brace against her, his hand firm on her shoulder as she works it free and slides the zip down, and he’s infinitely grateful for the pain in his face for creating a diversion and stopping his body from reacting to her, because christ, he definitely wants to react to her. She hooks her fingers in his waistband and slides his jeans down his hips, letting them drop to the floor, then moves with him as he steps out of them.

Regina leans around him and grabs his sweatpants, then - oh no, no-no-no-no-no - he squeezes his eyes shut as she drops to her knees in front of him to help him get his feet into the legs. He cannot look at her on her knees in front of him, wearing that soft sweater that is giving him a perfect view of her cleavage, while he stands here in his boxer briefs, dying with want. He absolutely cannot have this image of her in his brain - he’ll never recover from it. But God must have some sort of vendetta against him, because he can’t keep his balance with his eyes closed - he sways a little and grabs for her shoulder - and the next thing he knows he’s looking right into her eyes as she steadies him with one hand firmly wrapped around his thigh.

Bugger.

They stare at each other for a moment, and he squeezes her shoulder, murmurs, “Sorry, love,” as he collects himself. She just nods, her eyes worried and serious on his before she drops her gaze and gets his feet in the legs of his pants. She slides them up to where he can reach them without bending too much, allowing him to pull them the rest of the way up, then gets back to her feet.

“Thank you,” he says quietly as she moves to pick up the bloodied towels and clothes that are scattered across the floor.

She furrows her brow and stops, gives him this broken look as her eyes flicker over the bruises on his face, and he can’t help himself - he hates that look on her, he never wants to see her look so crushed ever again - so he steps carefully to her and wraps his arms around her shoulders, tugging her to him in a light hug. He kisses the top of her head - because she smells amazing, feels amazing, is amazing, and he’s completely out of self-control for the night. He’s hurting bad from the beating he took, the adrenaline wearing off fast now and the pain seeping in, but when he feels her hands slide softly across his lower back, he manages to smile.

She steps back from him after a moment though, taking the soiled clothes and towels with her as she leaves the bathroom, giving him a chance to look over the damage in the mirror. It’s bad, the worst he’s ever had, probably, but she’s done a good job and he doesn’t think there will be any permanent damage other than a couple of little scars from the brass knuckles. He sighs and pads out to find her in the kitchen, looking through his cabinets. “Motrin?” she asks him, and he tells her which cabinet it’s in as he comes toward her. She sets him up with four of the little white pills and a glass of water, and he wouldn’t take the medicine normally, but he hurts so much right now he’ll honestly take as many as she’s willing to give him.

He drags himself to the couch and sinks down into the seat with the chaise, shifting around until he finds a somewhat comfortable position for his battered, aching body. After a moment he hears the washer start, then is pleasantly surprised when Regina sits down next to him, tucking her feet up under her as she faces him. She hands him an ice pack for his hand, which is even more bruised and swollen now than it was this morning, as she scoots in close to hold the other ice pack up to his eye.

“Henry all settled in with Roland?” he asks, breaking the silence.

Regina nods, wincing in tandem with him as the ice comes into contact with his skin. “Do you feel
like you have a concussion?” she asks softly, studying his eyes.

He’s honestly a bit surprised by it, but he doesn’t feel like he does - he doesn’t feel confused, or foggy, doesn’t feel nauseous or any more tired than he should, given the circumstances. “I’m alright,” he tells her, trying to smile and flinching with the movement of the muscles on the left side of his face.

She furrows her brow as she looks in his eyes, then moves her free hand up to stroke her fingers across his brow as she whispers, “I am so sorry.”

“I had it coming,” he says, trying his best to sound unconcerned.

“Don’t do that,” she says firmly, “You don’t have to minimize this, you don’t have to protect me. We should call the police.”

He looks her over and can see that she’s starting to panic, can see that the reality of the worst day ever is starting to sink in and drive her anxiety sky high.

“Hey,” he says, carefully, “I’m alright - banged up a bit, but I am the one who struck first. I’m responsible for this.” She purses her lips but he continues before she can cut in, “And you know, I can’t really blame him for getting blitzed and coming out here. If I’d just fucked up my relationship with you -” he clears his throat, trying to hide his slip, “- with a girl like you, there’s no knowing what sort of stupidity I might fall victim to.”

She tilts her head, obviously not fooled by him, but she drops it anyway, carefully shifting the ice against his face as she leans further into the couch.

“How’d you get him to bugger off?” he asks, unsure if it’s an appropriate question, but he’s almost certain she saved his life, and he’s curious how she did it.

She shifts her gaze to the wall behind him, and Robin immediately tenses. He doesn’t like that look she’s wearing - she looks upset, afraid, and... hopeless. A few minutes pass and he decides she’s not going to tell him - it’s not really his business anyway, but whatever she did worked, and he wonders what leverage she had over him to get him to go on his way.

“I gave him what he came for,” she says quietly, almost five minutes later.

“What he came for?” Robin is confused, and it takes him a second to remember the nonsense that Graham was spouting at him before the brawl started. It was something about money, something about - oh no - about ten thousand dollars, if he remembers correctly. “You didn’t,” he says quickly as he reaches for her hand, “Tell me you didn’t give him your savings.”

She gives him a knowing look, and for some reason, he’s angry. “I’m paying you back,” he says, reaching for his phone, “How much did you give him? The whole ten?”

“You’re not paying me anything - it’s my debt, my money, and I’m confident by the messed up state of your face that you have more than paid for your part in this,” she says, clearly irritated.

“You just told me how much you need that money,” he argues, “I can’t believe you paid —”

“What was I supposed to do?” she cuts him off, jerking her hand away, her voice loud in the quiet of the house. “You think you know so much? Then tell me what I was supposed to do, Robin. There were too many of them, and they were killing you, and I had to get them to stop. I didn’t know what else to do - so go ahead and tell me what else I was supposed to do!” Her voice is high pitched and frantic as she fights back tears.
“You’re supposed to let them!” he exclaims, leaning forward quickly and grabbing for her shoulder so he can look her straight in the eyes. He drops his voice and says fiercely, “You let them do whatever it is they came to do to me - you don’t throw away your future because I’m a fucking idiot.” She looks so upset as she glares at him, homeless, jobless, and now, thanks to him, penniless. He’s a stupid wanker who has screwed up her life, she won’t let him pay her back for it, and he has no idea what to do about any of it.

She looks away, blinking quickly as she says, “Yeah, you know what, you are an idiot,” she clears her throat, “But you’re also my friend, and you know I couldn’t let them hurt you, so stop acting like I had some other choice in this.” Her voice is so defeated, so crushed that he no longer gives a fuck about anything. He’s done with all the shit that today has brought, he’s done pretending he hasn’t been in love with her since day one, he’s done sitting here like a complete tosser while she ruins her life for him.

“Let me make this up to you,” he pleads, holding up the money transfer screen on his phone. “Let me do what’s right.”

“He brought up the money earlier today and I didn’t think he was serious, okay?” she confesses. “So I was probably going to have to pay him anyway - it’s just a lot sooner than I expected. You’re not paying me anything, I’m the one who called off the wedding, I made this mess and I don’t need your pity to help fix it.”

“It’s not pity,” he snaps, annoyed. “You just said I’m your friend, why won’t you let me help?”

“Because paying off my insane ex-boyfriend is not something I want you to do!” her exasperation bursts from her, and she’s suddenly talking fast, uncontrolled as she tells him, “I don’t want you involved in any of this, I don’t want you anywhere near it. It’s humiliating and embarrassing, and I can’t stand to think about what you must think of me now, how stupid you must think I am, how unprepared, how irresponsible I am.”

Robin slides his hand from her shoulder up to the nape of her neck, weaving his fingers in her hair as he says quickly, seriously, “I would never think those things about you. I think you’re brilliant - I think you’re fucking incredible.” She goes very still under his hand as he asks her, “Why do you care so much about what I think anyway?”

She rolls her eyes and looks at him like he’s the biggest idiot to ever walk the planet, tilting her head and calling his bluff as she challenges, “Because we’re not just friends, and you know it.”

Their eyes meet with an intensity that drives his heart rate right through the roof, and he throws caution to the wind as he pulls her to him, pressing his bruised lips to hers, ignoring the pain as he lives in the feel of her against him. Her lips part without him even asking, and he strokes his tongue in, runs it across the roof of her mouth, licking and flicking against her, then sucks softly on her top lip before pressing hot, quick kisses to the corner of her mouth. He pulls her bottom lip between his teeth and bites down lightly, moaning with the beautiful taste of her as he lets his incisors scrape across the soft, wet flesh. She kisses him back, her hands wrapped tightly in his t-shirt as she goes up on her knees and leans down into him, pressing hard to his lips and nipping him, her smooth, sweet tongue glossing along his bottom lip as she slides her lips along his, pulling softly and tilting her head to sink her tongue deeper into his mouth.

The ice pack falls from his hand as he grabs her hips and hauls her onto him, shifting her until she has a knee on each side of his thighs, the rich fabric of her sweater a perfect compliment to the sweet, deep kisses she’s giving him as she settles on his lap, smoothing her hands up and down his chest. He loves what they’re doing - she’s really bloody good at this - he could kiss her forever, could run his hands all over her perfect body for hours on end, but the pain is starting to creep in, and he’s
fighting back the distraction as he works his tongue against hers and slides his hands a little lower, not quite on her arse, but almost. She shifts forward, grinding on him a little, and it’s so fucking hot, she’s so fucking hot - he’s already half hard for her - *christ* - but then her hand accidentally presses against a bruise on his ribs and he sucks in a quick breath, flinching away with the pain.

She immediately pulls back, and he tries to keep her going, tries to keep kissing her but she’s off of him in a second, apologizing for hurting him, her cheeks flushed and lipstick almost gone as she tucks her hair behind her ears and presses one hand to her lips. If he didn’t hurt so much he’d smirk, because it’s obvious she’s as affected by him as he is by her, and now that he’s felt her, *really* felt her up against him, he wants to see just how high he can work her up. He wants to know if she likes it deep and slow, or shallow and fast. Wants to know if she’ll let him get rough, if she’ll let him fuck her with his tongue in *every* place imaginable. Wants to know what she sounds like when he hits her g-spot, wants to know how hard it is to get her off without rubbing her clit, wants to know how many times he can make her come in one night. In one hour. In one *half* hour.

“Stay tonight?” he asks quickly, shifting so he can see her better. “It’s late, and it’s been snowing since before you got here,” he reasons, his eyes searching hers. “You can have my room, I’ll sleep here - I don’t think I can lay flat anyway.”

She takes a deep breath and sinks back into the cushions as she gives him a bit of a wary look. “I’m supposed to stay at my friend’s house, she’s expecting me,” she says quietly.

“In the city?” he asks, and she nods. “That’s a long drive tonight,” he states the obvious, but follows it up with, “Wouldn’t you prefer to wake up and have breakfast with Henry tomorrow?”

That gets her to seriously reconsider, and she chews on her bottom lip before she says, “I suppose someone should keep an eye on you for a concussion. I don’t like the idea of the boys finding you unresponsive in the morning because you’re trying to be a tough guy tonight.”

He tries to smile but can’t quite manage it with his fucked up face, so he reaches out and rubs her knee instead as he says, “It might be easier to see on me, but I’m pretty sure your heart took a beating as severe as my face did.”

She laughs softly, smooths her hand over his as she agrees, “Yes, today was… challenging.”

He takes her hand and squeezes it, going serious for a moment. “I’m sorry for all the kissing,” he says quietly, and she looks a little offended so he shakes his head and clarifies, “I’m not sorry for kissing you, I’m sorry for kissing you *today*.” She smirks and looks down at their joined hands as he continues, “I just want you to know I’m not expecting anything - it’s just that I’ve been wanting to do that for forever, and after everything that happened I uh, I thought you should know.”

She nods, her eyes somber and serious as she looks him over. “There are so many things I need to take care of right now - I have to get my life back together so Henry has stability again. This,” she motions between them, “felt really nice, but um,” she lets go of his hand, “It probably shouldn’t happen again, at least not until things are a little less complicated.”

He’s disappointed but definitely understands where she’s coming from, so he agrees with her, although he’s a bit reluctant to do so. He wants her so much - wants to take care of her, hold her, kiss her, give her anything and everything she wants. So if she wants space right now, he guesses he’ll just have to give it to her.

He convinces her to retire to his bedroom for some much-needed sleep as he settles in on the couch. Factoring out the hell she went through today, and the arse kicking he took, he can’t help but be a tiny bit happy to have her here with him. And if he’s being really, totally honest with himself, he’d
take that beating again, and again - as many times as necessary - for even one more chance to feel her lips against his.

He doesn't mention that today is his birthday, he figures she's upset enough that she doesn't need the added guilt, but as he dozes off, he can't quite stop from thinking that a kiss from Regina Mills is about the best birthday gift he could have ever received.
The second Roland lays eyes on Robin’s battered, black and blue face the next morning, he bursts into tears.

Regina thought she felt terrible about the situation before, but now, as she watches Robin hold his son - who absolutely does not buy his story about falling on the ice - she feels like she might as well have punched Robin herself. She feels sick, and if she had put anything in her stomach besides coffee this morning, she’s pretty sure she’d be getting reacquainted with it right now.

Robin is so good with Roland as he speaks softly to him, kisses his brow, and rubs little circles on his back as he reassures him that he’s completely fine. As she quietly observes them from her barstool, she has to fight down a wave of jealousy for Henry, that he’s never known the love of a father, the love of a dad like Robin. Regina was always a daddy’s girl - still is - and it hurts her that all Henry has is her. She wonders what that must be like for him, to be stuck with just his mother to depend on, his mother who has upended his life for the second time in six months, with zero prospects of a safe and secure home this time.

He took it well last night, or, as well as could be expected. He was upset about having to move again, wanted to know if he could go back to his old school, and when Regina didn’t have answers for him, he turned sullen and quiet, then refused to say anything more. He does that - he clams up and withdraws when he’s overwhelmed, and it’s so reminiscent of Daniel that she has to fight tears on the rare occasion that he does it. It kills her that the occasions have been less rare lately.

Granny comes by around ten and asks if she can take both boys back to her house to assist her in baking cookies. Regina’s not thrilled about the idea of Henry eating cookies before noon, especially when she’s certain that Granny’s going to let him have as many cookies as he pleases, but she lets him go anyway, so she can start getting a plan together.

Robin asks if there’s anything he can do to help her, and he sets her up with his laptop before heading off to the bathroom with a huge jar of epsom salts to “soak the pain out”.

She searches online for over an hour in pursuit of jobs that might work, emailing them to herself when she finds one and racking her brain for any contacts she might have that can get her an ‘in’. Her speciality is finance, but she can do accounting, logistics, and, if she absolutely has to, marketing. There are a few promising leads, so she pulls her resume up and is working through some revisions when Robin returns to the kitchen.

He smells of pine as he passes her, and she loves that scent - god - she loves that scent. She spent all night wrapped up in it, tucked deep into his soft, flannel sheets and thick, cushy comforter, and she honestly passed on a shower this morning so she could savor the smell on her skin for a little longer. It’s ridiculous, she absolutely knows it’s weird for her to be so into one scent, but it’s such a comforting, clean smell, and it reminds her of him, of how there is still at least one decent man left in
the world, and it calms her. She needs to be calm right now. Calm and focused and *employed*.

Robin reaches up and opens a tall cabinet across from her, rooting around in it for a second, and the noise draws her attention. He’s shirtless and barefoot, in grey sweatpants hanging low enough on his hips that she can see the waistband of his Calvin Kleins, and Regina pauses.

*My god.*

She bites her bottom lip and tips her head down, letting her hair fall forward in an attempt to camouflage the fact that she’s blatantly staring at him. He’s covered in bruises from the night before, dark black marks that cross his back, shoulders and arms, but beneath all that, he is beautifully built. He’s broad and thick, and she can see the heavy muscles in his shoulders and biceps bunch and flex as he stretches for something high on the shelf. The action draws her gaze down to the dimples in his lower back, and — *jesus* — it’s suddenly very warm in here.

She saw him with his shirt off last night, she *took his shirt off* last night, but that was different, that was about taking care of him. This time he’s strutting around his kitchen, all freshly scrubbed and cool as a cucumber as he gets out a blender and starts chopping up various fruits and vegetables and throwing them into it. Regina forces her eyes back to the computer screen but she can’t focus, can’t stop herself from glancing up to catch a glimpse of the front of him, and *oh god* — it’s as good as the back.

He’s chiseled, not washboard but defined well enough that she can easily see the indents of his abs and obliques, and *oh god yesss* — he has that perfect vee that makes her lick her lips and snap her eyes back to the computer before he catches her following the lines to a place she absolutely should not be staring at. She has typically dated lean men, both Graham and Daniel were narrow and trim with tight, long muscles, but Robin? Robin is broad and bulky, and she wants to press her fingers against all that thick muscle and feel it move under her hands. She wonders how strong he is, what it might feel like if he picked her up, what he'd feel like if she wrapped her thighs around his waist as he carried her and—

He asks her if she’d like a protein shake, and she agrees, mostly so she has an excuse to look up at him, and when he brings the drink over to her she notices that he has a tattoo on his forearm. Without thinking she reaches for his wrist, smoothing her fingers up and across the black ink surrounding the rampant lion, and he pauses to allow her examination.

“What on earth is an Englishman doing with a Scottish tattoo?” she teases, her curiosity getting the better of her as she releases his arm.

Robin puts his hand on the back of her chair as he leans in close, dropping his voice as he asks, “What’s in it for me if divulge my secrets?”

Regina’s stomach drops out, and while she knows she told him last night that they shouldn’t kiss, she definitely didn’t say that they couldn’t flirt, so she licks her lips and drags her eyes slowly down his bare chest, then back up to meet his eyes as she says, her voice like velvet, “You tell me yours, and I’ll tell you mine.”

Robin’s eyes immediately drop to her lips, and she suppresses a smirk. He’s *so easy* to tease, and if they ever decide to take their “friendship” to the next level, she’s going to have a fantastic time working him up every other second.

He leans in then, slowly, slowly, and she’s supposed to move back, she knows she’s supposed to, can clearly hear the words *no-kissing-no-kissing-no-kissing* echoing in her ears, but she feels like this is some sort of challenge, like they’re playing chicken, and she is definitely not going to flinch first.
So she stays steady, raising one eyebrow in challenge as he tilts his head and comes closer still, lining up their lips until they’re a breath apart, and her pulse is hammering in her ears as she fights to keep her eyes from automatically closing, to keep her lips from making the motion they so want to make.

“I made a bet,” he whispers, and the movement of his lips causes them to brush lightly against hers, “That I could stay celibate for a month.” He takes a breath and shifts a little as her heart pounds hard against her ribs. “When I lost, my mates got to choose the tattoo, and since I’d fucked a lass from up north, they chose this so I’d be sure to remember the first woman I…” he trails off as he tucks a few strands of hair behind her ear.

She takes the bait before she can help it. “The first woman you…?” she asks, trying hard to control her voice, to carefully brush her lips against his without falling into the kiss. She steps up her game at the last second, trails the tip of her finger down the line of his oblique and feels the goosebumps rise across his skin as she smiles.

He bites his bottom lip, and it takes her breath away a little as his voice drops an octave and he says, “The first woman I came inside of.” He gives her a devious grin, and she’s confused - that’s way too vanilla of a statement for the look he’s giving her.

“Is that all?” she asks, sounding bored as she runs her finger back up his abs.

Robin bumps her nose with his to bring her focus back to the closeness of their mouths as he says, “I didn’t say I fucked her cunt, now did I?”

Regina’s brows shoot up, because there’s only two other places he’s referring to, and she’s pretty sure he’s not talking about that Scottish girl’s mouth.

His fingers stroke down the side of her neck, coasting along the wide collar of her shirt as he asks her, “Have you ever experienced that?”

She pulls back a little, because she’s not sure if he’s asking her seriously, or if he’s asking her teasingly. When she catches his eyes she’s a little shocked, a little excited to see that he’s being serious. He runs his fingers along the edge of her jaw, lets his thumb drag across her bottom lip as he asks again, “Have you ever had a man fill your arse with his come?”

She feels her face flush, feels liquid heat pool in her core as she looks up at him. He’s so sexy, so handsome, and apparently filthy, and it just figures that he is, that of course he’s a gentleman outside the bedroom and a heathen inside of it, because it checks every single box on her list of what she’s attracted to in a partner. Someone who can make her feel beautiful and loved in one moment, then naughty, uncontrolled, and pushed to her limits in the next. She opens her mouth to answer him when the front door opens, and Granny comes bustling in with both boys in tow as Robin jumps back from her, smirking.

The boys are a flurry of motion and excitement, sugar-rushing, she assumes, as they tear off their coats, hats, and gloves by the door.

“Yes or no?” Robin asks her from across the kitchen, and her eyes go wide - he still wants her to answer. In front of their children. In front of his grandmother.

She ignores him, so he asks again, louder, grinning at her like an ass. “Yes or no, Regina?”

He’s starting to draw Granny’s attention now, and she panics, admits, “No,” on a harsh breath as she stares daggers at him, praying her face isn’t noticeably red.

Her look leaves him completely unfazed as he takes a big gulp of his protein shake, throws her a
wink with his non-swollen eye and says, “You’re going to love it.”

Regina’s jaw drops open but she has no way to retort, has no way to get him back because the boys are running all over the kitchen now, asking for drinks and lunch and if they can go downstairs and have another ping pong tournament. Regina gets to her feet and helps Robin set them up as Granny plants herself at the dining room table, a large ledger book under one arm and an old calculator in the other. As the boys take their drinks and sandwiches to the kitchen island, Regina seizes her chance, lets her hand run across Robin’s naked lower back as she leans in and whispers, “I’m wet just thinking about it.”

His back goes very, very straight, and she hears him mutter, “Fuuuck,” as she struts from the room, grinning, intent on having that shower she passed up on this morning.

After her shower, Regina finds Granny sitting alone, still at the dining room table, with papers and pens and sticky notes strewn all about her, the large ledger book she brought in propped up in front of her as she flips back and forth between pages. Regina asks to join her, and Granny readily agrees, handing her a stack of receipts and asking her to read off the totals to her as she jots notes and takes down the numbers in the ledger book.

“Do you know anything about budgets, girl?” Granny asks as Regina proactively reaches for the next stack of receipts and starts organizing them into little piles based on categories - foodstuffs, camp equipment, landscaping, and sundries.

“Yes,” she confirms, “Up until a few weeks ago, I was the director of finance for a glass and mirror manufacturing corporation.”

“Ahh, well-educated then, I presume?” Granny asks, looking hard at Regina over the top of her glasses.

Regina nods, “MBA.”

“Harvard?” Granny asks, and gives her a little approving nod when Regina corrects her with, Yale.

Regina turns the tables on her then, because there’s obviously more to the old lady than meets the eye, asking her, “Harvard?” but Granny gives her a wolfish grin and corrects her with MIT.

Granny puts her through a relatively intense line of questioning after that, everything from her upbringing, to her career, to her son, then asks her to look through their previous year’s budget report and pick out the areas where she thinks improvement is needed. Regina humors her, because she’s surprised by how much she likes Granny, and because she suddenly feels this ridiculous need to impress the old woman. It’s silly, and she wishes she didn’t feel it, but she does.

Robin comes up from the basement after about a half an hour of Granny putting Regina through the paces, and he gives her a look of apology when he sees her buried under all that paperwork.

“I didn’t know you wore glasses,” he says, coming up behind her and looking over her shoulder.
“I don’t have another set of contacts with me,” she mutters, adjusting her dark frames and supplying, “I only need them for reading.”

He grins at her in a way that clearly implies he thinks she’s adorable, and it makes her blush as she turns her head back to the deposit slip she’s holding.

“Robby, stop flirting and ask her already,” Granny says nonchalantly, not even bothering to pick up her head as she jots down a new entry in the ledger book.

“She’s passed the inspection then?” he asks, and Regina looks back to him, her brow furrowed as she tries to dissect what they mean.

“More than passed,” Granny says, throwing Regina a knowing look as she pats her hand and gets up from the table.

Robin promptly takes the empty seat, running his fingers through his hair nervously before adjusting the zipper on his hoodie and looking over the papers in front of him.

“What?” she asks, her patience running a little thin. She needs to get back to her job search and figure out where she’s staying tonight. It’s starting to look more and more like she and Henry are going to wind up at Mary Margaret’s, and the thought is so depressing she could cry.

“As you can see, this is a bit of an outdated process,” he says hesitantly. “Not that it doesn’t work, but Granny’s getting a bit tired of doing the books, and payroll, and trying to maintain some sort of marketing presence with the local schools and youth groups. To be honest, she’d be happy just baking sweets for the campers and helping the counselors with arts and crafts.”

He pauses, looking hopeful, then continues, “I sacked Emma - I don’t need someone of that character lurking about my camp, and even before that I was looking for a part-time employee to help Granny with all of this,” he says, gesturing to the papers before them. “So I’ve got an employee and a half worth of payroll to work with, and you’ve got all the skills I need, plus the ability to pull us into the twenty-first century…”

Regina’s heart hammers in her chest. Is he asking her, is he offering her a job?

“I know it’s quite a change, and it’s not very chic - we’re more of a jeans and t-shirts kind of organization than pencil skirt and blouse, though if you still want to dress that way I’d more than welcome it,” he smirks, collects himself and continues, “It’s a salaried position with full benefits, you can set your own hours, and I’ll match paid sick and vacation time to whatever they gave you at your last job. You’d be your own boss - I’m not savvy enough to even try to pretend I know how to work the finances, Granny doesn’t care to play supervisor, and I trust you. You can start immediately, if you like, or in a week or two, or really, whenever. There isn’t anyone else I’ll even consider until you’ve made a decision.” He gives her a few more solid details, including the starting pay, and asks her what she thinks.

She supposes the right thing to do is protest. She should play it off like she couldn’t possibly accept the position, like she’s already too grateful for everything he’s done for her to ask for more. And she is grateful, truly she is.

But she’s also desperate for a steady income to support her son. The camp is only a half an hour drive from Henry’s school, and with the flexible hours she can set for herself, his schedule won’t be a problem. The pay is less than what she had, but the cost of living up here is way less than in the city, and she’s really not in a position to be picky right now anyway. If she starts tomorrow she’ll have money in the bank in two weeks, and that’s one step closer to being back on her feet that she
cannot afford to pass up.

After a series of clarifying questions, Regina accepts, and the brilliant smile that breaks across Robin’s bruised face is enough to have her grinning back, a huge weight lifted from her shoulders with the opportunity he’s given her. She could kiss him for this. She could do… a lot of things for him for this. She wants to do things, nice things, naughty things to him for this.

She takes a deep breath and tries to shake their earlier flirtation from her head as he goes over the particulars of her new job. She can’t stop smiling.

“I suppose the only thing left then, is to find somewhere to live,” she says, leaning back in her chair and stretching her shoulders.

“Right,” Robin says, “About that.”

Regina leans forward quickly. “I’ve got this,” she says, “You’ve done so much for me, you don’t need to worry about it,” she says, placing her hand over his.

“Well here’s the thing,” he says, sliding his hands around so he has hers sandwiched between both of his. “Every November Roland and I go to England for the month, so he can spend time with Marian’s family. November is the month we lost her, and it’s a bit cathartic for all of us to get together.” Regina nods, understanding. Daniel’s parents had died when they were in college, so when he’d passed she hadn’t had anyone to share memories of him with. “In two weeks, we’ll be heading over there and my house will be empty. Usually I ask my cousin Ruby to stay and keep an eye on things, but she’s a bit dodgy and I’ve had some trouble in the past with her having house parties here. So uh, if you and Henry wanted to tough it out for the next couple of weeks with us, then stay while we’re away, you’d be doing me a huge favor. The basement should be finished in a few weeks - I’m putting two bedrooms in down there with the living space, and Roland has been looking forward to moving down there once it’s done. Which means I’ll have two spare rooms, so uh, you’re welcome to stay for as long as you’d like.”

Regina blinks.

In the span of twenty minutes, Robin has solved all the problems that had her almost hyperventilating in the car last night as she drove up here. The man is a saint. A dream. A goddamn hero.

“I hope you’ll say yes,” he says softly, rubbing his fingers across the back of her hand. “There’s absolutely no pressure for anything more than friendship - I’m not plotting for anything but your peace of mind, I swear.” His voice is steady, he meets her eyes as he says this, and she can feel the honesty radiating from him.

“This is a huge change, are you sure you’re up for it?” she asks quickly, “And if the basement isn’t done yet, where would Henry and I even sleep?”

“You can take my room,” he says quickly, and he’s obviously thought this all through because there is zero hesitation in his voice as he says, “The boys can share Roland’s room for now - finally give that bottom bunk bed some use - and I’ll take the couch. It’s only two weeks and to be honest,” he pauses, looking a little sheepish, “I sleep there more often than I’ll admit. Once the basement is done the boys can move down there and you can have Roland’s room.”

They argue for a bit about whether or not she should take his room and if he’ll let her pay him rent - but he wins both points in the end, only allowing her to chip in for groceries, and the next thing she knows she’s calling Mal and asking her to send her possessions up to Camp Sherwood. Henry and Roland are completely ecstatic with the idea of it, Granny gives her this knowing look that Regina
can’t quite interpret, and Robin looks absolutely tickled to have gotten his way on all this.

She can’t help but feel relieved and so, so grateful, because she hasn’t a friend like this, like Robin, in her entire life. This evening when he catches her eye across the room from where he’s playing chess with Henry and Roland, she can’t stop the smile she gives him, feeling better than she has in days, in weeks, in months.

Regina is quickly realizing that it’s difficult to feel anything but happy when she’s with Robin, and she bites her lip to hide her grin as she recalls his words from yesterday and has to admit - he’s got her alright.
She picks up the job quickly. Robin knew that she would. She insanely smart - it’s one of the things he likes most about her - that she’s full of information and it’s nearly impossible to slip something past her. It makes it fun to talk with her, because she almost always has an opinion about whatever it is they’re discussing, and while she’s confident and often firm in her point of view, she rarely comes off as a know-it-all.

Robin has always liked smart girls. He’s never seen the appeal in dating someone he can’t hold a conversation with, and while he understands the allure of the easy prey, he’s never really had to go without when it came to finding a suitable partner.

He hasn’t had a real relationship in ages, and he’s been completely fine with that because he really, honestly hasn’t had an interest in anyone. He’s had sex, has made some friends that turned into fuck buddies, but every woman he’s met since Marian died has been missing something - that certain spark, or whatever the hell it’s called - that keeps him interested, that makes him think about her constantly, that makes him want to get to know her more, and more, and more, until his heart is completely enamored with her. For years there hasn’t been anyone in Robin’s life that has come close to eliciting that kind of interest from him.

Until now.

Now, all he can think about is Regina. What she’s doing, if she’s having a good day, what she might like for supper, what her favorite dessert is, and is he capable of making it? Living with her for the last two weeks has been outrageously easy for him, and it’s not just because he’s so into her - she’s neat and polite, considerate of his space and doesn’t take anything for granted, asks about things when she’s not sure, and treats Roland just the same as her own son. Henry is just as easy to get along with - he shares with Roland, listens well, is respectful, funny, smart like his mother, and the boy has only managed to increase Robin’s excitement to rush home at the end of the workday.

It’s been two short weeks, but he’s not at all ashamed to admit that he’s absolutely smitten with the Mills family.

It’s the night before he and Roland leave for England, and he’s got that pre-trip anxiety starting that makes him antsy, makes it so he just stares and stares at the television for hours instead of getting a good night’s sleep. His flight isn’t until the afternoon tomorrow, so there’s no reason for him to be nervous about getting up on time, but he can’t seem to muster the excitement he usually has for returning to the motherland. He suspects that a certain dark-haired beauty, who is currently asleep with her head resting against his shoulder, has something to do with that.

Once the boys had gone off to bed, Regina had agreed to watch a movie with him as a sort of last hurrah before he goes. He let her choose the film, and was not at all disappointed when she decided on *Catch Me if You Can*. He’s always had a thing for movies that involve a good heist, and it’s
touching that she considered his taste when she made her selection.

They’ve been extraordinarily well behaved since she officially moved in, and it’s taking an enormous amount of effort on his part - especially as she has started to get comfortable in his home. Take, for example, those criminally tiny shorts she wears to bed. He just about fell off his barstool the first morning she padded into the kitchen for a cup of coffee in those things, and couldn’t stop from dragging his eyes slowly up the long, golden skin of her toned legs, lingering at the curve of her muscular thighs - christ - before he noticed that she was wearing a matching t-shirt with absolutely no bra underneath. He literally choked in reaction, and she’d rewarded him with an eye-roll and a smirk, then made it a point to flounce around in some variation of that every morning after.

She’s a cock tease, and she bloody well knows it.

He hasn’t made a move though, because he doesn’t want to pressure her into anything. She’s had some serious shit go down in the last few weeks, he knows Graham has been texting her - which seems to piss her off quite a bit - and he doesn’t want her to feel like he’s pushing for a relationship when she’s not ready for one. He wants her to want him with absolutely no strings attached, and he’s willing to wait for as long as it takes. She keeps throwing little hints at him, though, little touches on his arm when they’re talking, a knowing look when a certain phrase could be taken as an innuendo, has even gone so far as to run her fingers down the line of his jaw when he’s done something for her that she’s deemed “extra nice.”

It’s killing him.

So he’d be lying if he said he wasn’t relieved when she pushed the boundary a bit further tonight. He had just settled into his usual spot on the chaise, when she casually walked over in those tiny shorts - dark purple tonight - and that thin shirt he can definitely see the outline of her nipples through, and gave him an expectant look. It took him a half a second to understand her meaning, but when he widened his legs to allow her enough space between them, she promptly slid into place with her back pressed against his chest. The position put her soft dark hair so close to his face that he couldn’t stop himself from breathing her in - she always smells so fucking amazing - and when his nose bumped the side of her head she tilted it to give him a little more room. He allowed himself to press a kiss to her temple, to nuzzle into the crux of her neck as he wrapped his arms around her, but he stopped himself there, concerned that if he kept going he wouldn’t be able to stop. Regina seemed to understand his hesitation as she smoothed her fingers along his forearms and took his hands in hers, and after that he was able to settle in and watch the movie without caving to temptation.

She was asleep in less than twenty minutes, and even after the movie ended, he couldn’t bring himself to wake her. She’s beautiful, always, but in sleep her face loses the tightness of anxiety he sees so often crease her brow, and he knows it’s probably weird, but he could stare at her perfect features for hours, could study the line of her jaw, the curve of her lips, the bridge of her nose until he has every inch of her memorized. Who needs the Mona Lisa when you can look at Regina Mills?

Around two in the morning she shifts uncomfortably, arching her back and coming awake slowly as she inhales deeply. She adjusts and starts to settle back against him, and she’s so warm and soft that he could easily have stayed like this all night, but it’s not really fair to keep her here when he knows how much she loves his bed, not to mention how much she needs the rest, so he tightens his arms around her and whispers, “Hey, babe.”

She makes a soft, low sound in her throat, shifting again, and he squeezes her a little more and says, “Let’s get you into bed, hmm?”

“I’ve been waiting two weeks for you to say that,” she murmurs sleepily, and he laughs softly behind her.
“My apologies for the delay, Your Majesty,” he says quietly, sitting them up and helping her to stand.

He walks her to his room, wishing like hell he could go to bed with her, not even to fuck her, just to lie next to her, to fall asleep with her in his arms, and he supposes he should be concerned about the level of affection he has for her. It’s so obvious he’s in deep - ridiculously deep, and he has absolutely no idea how into him she is, but he’s pretty sure he’ll scare the bloody hell out of her if he tells her how he feels about her right now.

She pauses in the frame of the door and he ducks his head, feeling like a prat for following her over here when the couch is ten steps from his bedroom, and there was literally no reason for him to get up in the first place. She looks him over, then steps into him and runs her hands up his chest to circle around his neck as she says quietly, “I can’t believe you’re going to be gone for an entire month.”

He tries but only manages to partially stifle his groan as he moves his hands to her hips and pulls her closer. “Believe me, darling,” he says as he catches her eyes, “I’m not exactly thrilled about it right now either.”

Her dark eyes drop to his lips, and that’s the last straw for him. It’s been two weeks since he’s touched her, it’s about to be four more weeks of it, and he cannot fathom having to go that long without her. So he drops his head to press a kiss to her cheek, but she turns her face as he descends, bumping his nose with hers and moving so that their lips are aligned as she tips her chin up to him. His heart flips as he takes the hint and presses a soft, sweet kiss to her lips, his pulse immediately accelerating - christ - when she meets him with her mouth already open.

It’s a slow, deep kiss, the kind where he takes his time to suck gently on her bottom lip, to work it a little between his teeth before he flicks his tongue across her lips, and he hears her breath catch when he slides one hand up to the nape of her neck to tilt her head back for him. She’s completely willing, she gives back what he gives her, her sweet tongue stroking along his as she pulls at his top lip, and he swears he can feel her smile against him when she scratches her nails up the back of his neck and he shivers. They trade kisses like this for several minutes, soft, easy, slow, and the pace is delicious, completely unrushed as he presses her into the door frame, weaving his fingers in the fine hair at her neck and rubbing his other hand across her hip and down over the swell of her arse.

Her hands loosen on his neck then, and she tips her head down, breaking the kiss and saying, “Wait,” on a heavy breath.

Robin immediately stops, stepping back a little and removing his hand from her bum as he tries to rein himself back in, fighting like hell to break through the lust that has addled his thoughts.

She reaches up to stroke her fingers along his still slightly bruised cheek, and he watches her frown, watches the way her mocha colored eyes reflect some internal battle she’s fighting. “I’m so glad your face is almost healed,” she says a bit awkwardly, and he raises his eyebrows at her blatant attempt at avoidance. She must realize what she’s done though, because she follows that with a rushed, “I’m not trying to lead you on,” as she drops her fingers from his face to take his hand in hers, “I’m just… I wanted to uh, to tell you how much I…” she scrunches up her nose and looks away.

Robin smiles and squeezes her hand as he supplies, “Where I come from, a simple thank you would suffice.”

She purses her lips and gives him one of those looks that clearly says she thinks he’s an idiot, so he smirks, brings the back of her hand to his lips and says softly, “Goodnight, Regina.”
She heads through the door and he returns to the couch to tuck in for the night, happy with what he’s got, and excited for what the future might bring. These next four weeks in England cannot pass fast enough.

Regina sighs as she flops down on Robin’s bed, pressing her palms hard to her eyes as she fights down the frustration welling up in her chest. She wants him. She wants him so much, but he’s leaving tomorrow, she’s just gotten out of a three-year relationship, and at some point, she has to stop acting like a hormonal teenager and start being the responsible adult she’s supposed to be.

She can describe these last two weeks with him as nothing other than blissfully easy. It’s like he anticipates her every need and is constantly one step ahead of her, so before she has to ask a question he’s already provided her with an answer. She’s never had someone get her so well in her life, and it’s a strange, beautiful feeling that she frankly has no idea what to do with. He’s such a gentleman, ever the good guy, and while they’ve flirted and teased and touched a little, he hasn’t made a real move on her whatsoever. She knows she’s a bitch for it, but she wishes he would - wishes he would push for it just a little so that she’d have an excuse to throw in the towel and spend these cold nights wrapped up in his arms instead of alone, curled tightly under his flannel sheets thinking of what she’d like him to be doing to her.

She rolls across the bed and checks her phone. The battery had been at five percent earlier so she’d turned it on silent and left it to charge while she watched the movie with Robin. She hadn’t wanted any interruptions, just wanted to enjoy the time with him before he jets off and she’s left with his empty house and the consequences of her actions to deal with.

She’s missed two calls from Graham and several texts. He’s been messaging her constantly, begging her to reconsider, sending her a plethora of pleading, apologetic texts, some angry, accusatory ones, and some basic ones just asking how her day is, how Henry is doing, if she has anything fun planned for the weekend. She hasn’t responded at all, except once to tell him to leave her the hell alone, and if he wanted someone to talk to, perhaps he should try Emma. She scrolls through the messages tonight, and it’s the same shit as before, so she sets her phone on the nightstand without bothering to reply and tries her best to fall asleep.

Regina has been laying there for a solid twenty minutes, still wide awake and thinking about the way Robin’s lips moved against hers, of how good his hands felt on her ass and in her hair, when she finally decides she’s had enough of this game. She likes him, she knows he likes her, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with two consenting adults partaking in a late night rendezvous to alleviate certain needs that she is positive he can satisfy. She gets out of bed and finger combs her hair into submission, then opens the bedroom door quietly and pads out into the living room. The TV is on, the blue light flickering across the room, but when she rounds the couch, he’s not on it. She feels a draft and turns, notices that the front door is cracked, and as she nears it she can hear the sound of two male voices.

The first voice she recognizes as Graham’s, and she tips her head back in exasperation, eyes looking
heavenward with annoyance and dread. He cheated on her, he’s completely wrong for her, and she’s never going to go back to him - how many times does she have to tell him that? She hears him say to Robin, “Just tell me if she’s here, I need to talk to her.”

Robin’s voice is low and tight, and he’s clearly angry as she hears his sarcastic reply, “Who, Emma? No, I haven’t seen her since I fired her.”

“Well, why haven’t you just asked her where she’s staying?”

Robin’s voice is full of mock innocence as he asks, “Well, why haven’t you just asked her where she’s staying?”

She almost misses Graham’s mumbled, “She’s not responding to my messages,” so she steps even closer to the door, curious as to how Robin is going to handle this.

There is a beat of silence, and she wonders what they’re doing, wonders what Robin will do if Graham won’t leave. Then she hears him say, “Listen, if she had any interest in seeing or speaking with you, she’s more than capable of making proper arrangements at the proper time of day. So I’m forced to assume that she doesn’t. Now, I’ve had more than enough of you lurking about my property, so sod off before I remember that a few weeks ago someone used a pair of brass knuckles to pretty up my face, and I decide to get angry about it.” A board on the porch creaks loudly as Robin takes a step, and she’s starting to worry, starting to think she may need to intervene.

“So now you’re her personal bodyguard? I’m not going anywhere until I see her,” Graham snaps.

Robin’s voice is louder now, firm, as he says, “Look, mate, it’s over. She’s told you it’s over multiple times. She’s moved on, and showing up here in the middle of the night isn’t going to change her mind.”

“Wait a minute,” Graham says suddenly, “You think,” he laughs, “You actually think you have a chance with her?”

Robin snarls, “Go home, Graham.”

But apparently, Graham has had some sort of epiphany, because his voice is loud, almost frantic as he lets loose on Robin.

“You know, you’re not fooling anybody but yourself here. I saw the way you always looked at her, the way you found any excuse to talk to her, or touch her, or get her alone when we were here for Henry’s lessons. You’ve wanted her since day one - you’ve been dying for a shot with her for over a year.” He pauses, and when Robin says nothing, Regina’s stomach drops out. He’s liked her since day one?? “But you know what, I never worried about it for a second, because you don’t stand a chance against me.” Graham’s voice grows more and more arrogant by the second. “I know her, I’ve spent the last three years getting to know her, and I can tell you that she’s not into the whole knight in shining armor bit. She’s into bad boys, and that’s why she loves me. She’s never going to fuck you, because she can’t get enough of me - that bitch begs me for it - Every. Single. Night. So wake up man, you’re in the friend zone - you’re not getting out - and the sooner you realize that, the sooner things can go back to normal. Now stop fucking around and let me see her.”

Robin starts to say something back but Regina has had heard enough. She has to get Graham to give
up, has to drive the last nail into the coffin of their relationship so he’ll leave her alone for good, and there’s only one thing she can think of that will do that.

The long sleeve flannel shirt Robin wore earlier today is draped across one arm of the couch, and she moves fast - pulls her pajama top and shorts off and slips into his shirt, purposefully showing off as much skin as possible by only doing up the one button located between her bare breasts, infinitely thankful she’s wearing somewhat sexy panties (thank god for cheeky’s). She returns to the front door in less than ten seconds, pulls it open just enough to show that she’s mostly naked as she calls to Robin, “Is everything alright, babe?”

Robin turns to her and smirks, goes along with her little game without missing a beat as he immediately responds, “Everything’s fine, love.”

She can’t see Graham from this angle, and she needs to make her point, so she steps out onto the porch, catching him just in her peripherals as she reaches for Robin’s hand and tugs him a half a step toward her. She drops her voice, makes it sultry and smooth as she says, “Come back to bed, I’m cold.”

He plays his part perfectly, wraps one arm around her waist and presses a quick kiss to her lips - acting as comfortably as if he did it every day - as he nods toward Graham and says, “Just as soon as I’m done here. We’ve a visitor.”

Regina stays pressed against Robin as she turns and lets her gaze fall on Graham, narrowing her eyes and immediately snapping at him, “Are you kidding me? What the hell are you doing here?”

Graham’s eyes are wide as he drags them over her bare legs and obviously underdressed chest, then blurs desperately, “I came to talk to you, to ask you to come home.”

She lets an intense silence fall for a few seconds as she stares at him in disbelief, then looks back to Robin, strokes her hand up his chest as she meets his eyes and says, “I am home.”

She punctuates her statement by pulling Robin's head down to press another kiss to his lips - this one open-mouthed, a little more intense - then commands, just loud enough for Graham to overhear, “Get rid of him so we can finish what we started.” Then she turns and struts back inside, trying hard not to laugh at the astonished look that is plastered across Graham’s face.
It’s easy for him to get rid of Graham after that little performance of hers. He doesn’t think he’s ever seen a bloke go from desperate to furious to done, quite so fast. Robin waits for the tail lights to fade completely out of view, breathing the cold night air deep into his chest as he tries to calm down, tries to collect his thoughts. Graham may have given up on Regina, but Robin is just getting started.

When she opened the door in his shirt and those tiny knickers, it felt like the earth stopped turning. He knows he’s being starry-eyed about it, about the implication of seeing her in just his shirt, but it took every ounce of self-discipline he had to resist the temptation of shoving Graham off the porch, then taking her inside and showing her his appreciation of her perfect body. Because _christ_ - he’s never seen a woman so completely fuckable in his entire life.

He takes another deep breath and reminds himself that it was all a show, that she wasn’t doing any of that for him, it was just an act to get Graham to bugger off. He heads back inside, confident that at the very least they won’t have to deal with that wanker anymore. She’s waiting for him in the living room, leaning against the sofa, *still* dressed in just his shirt - _christ save him_, and just the sight of her makes his breath catch in his chest.

He kicks off his shoes and hangs his coat up on the hook by the door, then turns back to her, unable to stop his smirk as he asks, “Did you see the look on his face when I kissed you?”

They both burst into laughter, trying to stifle the noise so they don’t wake the boys, and they nearly have it back together when she adds, “Oh god - when I told you to get rid of him? I thought he was going to throw up,” and then they’re laughing like idiots again. He knows it’s mean to laugh at someone else’s misfortune, but this guy really had it coming, and he just can’t bring himself to feel bad for giving Graham a taste of the hurt he so carelessly bestowed on Regina.

He’s still laughing as he closes the distance between them to pull her into a hug, rocking side to side as they laugh against each other. He kisses the top of her head and pulls back to see her face, tucking a few strands of hair behind her ear and grinning broadly as he tells her, “You should’ve been an actress. That was bloody brilliant.”

Regina gives him this shy grin, the one where she tips her head to the side then bites her bottom lip, and - _fuck_ - he loves it when she does that. It makes him want to sink his teeth into the indents her incisors have left in the soft flesh, makes him want to slide his tongue along it and soothe her with slow, sucking kisses.

He snaps himself out of it at the last second, muttering a soft, “Well then,” as he steps back from her, shoving his hands in the pockets of his sweatpants so he doesn’t reach for her again. She grabs her pajamas from the floor and heads for his bedroom, a frown creasing her brow as she takes a few steps in, turns the bedside lamp on and tosses her pajamas somewhere before she comes back to the door. She runs her fingers through her thick, dark hair, leans her shoulder against the frame, and
levels him with an intense, serious look.

“Robin,” she calls quietly.

From across the room, he brings his eyes to hers and asks, “Yeah?”

“Come to bed.”

His heart stops so fast that he actually has to take a step to catch his balance. His mind is screaming at him to respond, but he’s so gobsmacked that he can’t come up with anything, so he just repeats, “Yeah?” and feels like a complete fool. Real smooth, he thinks sarcastically, you’re a real James Bond, mate.

She smiles at him with this hot little smirk playing across her lips as she nods, unbuttons his shirt which - jesusfuckingchrist - leaves the two halves hanging open, just barely covering her tits - and says, “Come warm me up.”

He does not need to be told again.

He’s across the room in a flash, wrapping his arms around her waist, crushing his mouth to hers and using his momentum to push them into the bedroom. He kicks the door closed a little harder than he intended, but when he pushes her up against it he decides he doesn’t care. He fumbles with the doorknob and finally twists the lock just as he slides his tongue into her mouth.

Her hands are immediately at the hem of his shirt, grasping it firmly and tugging it over his head, his own hands smoothing over her collarbones and up to her shoulders to slide his shirt from her, and then - fuck oh christ - they’re chest to chest. He drops his head to kiss across the edge of her jaw, then sucks hot, wet kisses down the column of her throat, his hands running across the planes of her back, over her hips and down to grab handfuls of that round arse he’s been fantasizing about. He tugs her to him, grinding against her as she smooths her hands over his chest, over the sensitive skin of his ribs, and dips her fingers in the waistband of his pants to tease across his lower abdomen from his left hip to his right. He’s sensitive there, it almost tickles but it turns him the fuck on, and he thrusts his hips against hers as he nips her collarbone, laves his tongue down the valley between her breasts and finally gets his hands on her perfect, lush tits.

And - bloody hell - he’s not exaggerating at all when he calls them perfect, because they really fucking are. They’re large enough to give him a nice handful - overflowing his palms a bit with small dark pink nipples - he licks his lips - and a natural perk that he just knows is going to be mind-blowing if she rides him. Fuck he wants to watch them bounce - oh god. Fuck. Fuck.

He swipes his thumbs across her nipples and she sucks in a quick breath, so he does it again, a little harder this time as he presses kisses along her chest. She huffs out again and bites her lip, and he can tell she’s into it, can tell her gorgeous, full tits are sensitive - fuck yes - so he flurries his fingers quickly back and forth over her peaked tips, making her arch and moan softly as her arse bumps the door. He pinches them, tugs and twists then pinches again, and her breathing has gone ragged, her hands splaying across his obliques and pressing into him as she pants under the stroke of his hands. He’s so excited, so glad that she’s so responsive - he loves breasts, loves touching and playing and getting his mouth on them every chance he can and - please god let it happen - if she decides to let him touch her tits from now on, he’ll easily be the luckiest man on earth.

She pushes off from the door suddenly, her hands at his chest as she walks him back, back, until his knees hit the edge of the bed and she pushes him down. He starts to slide up the mattress, ‘cause - oh god, oh fuck - she apparently wants to be on top, and she grabs for his sweatpants, pulling them down and off right along with his underwear as he moves up the bed.
She shimmies out of her knickers then climbs in after him, and the sight of her crawling up his body on her hands and knees is easily the most erotic moment of his entire life. Her dark hair frames her face, falling in her eyes, tits full and swaying as she makes her way up to straddle his waist, her wet core hot and damp against his lower belly, because apparently, Regina-fucking-Mills is a straight to the point kind of girl. He grins at her - he should have known.

She leans down to kiss him, and he runs his hands over her thighs, her hips, her stomach - whatever he can reach - as she works her sinful mouth over him. She dips her tongue deep into his mouth, stroking against his as she rocks her hips in tandem - jesus-fuck - that feels good, then grabs his jaw and tilts his head back so she can suck, and nip, and scrape her teeth down his neck.

His cock is aching, ridged and throbbing - this close - to being inside of her, and the tease of it is killing him. She’s so wet - christ she’s wet - he can feel the moisture on his stomach and he slides one hand over her thigh, turns it palm up when he reaches the hinge of her leg and skims the pads of his fingers over her slick folds.

She gasps and presses down against his fingers, nipping his pec and scratching her fingernails lightly across his ribs - and fucking hell, he’s never been more turned on in his life. He slides his fingers through her core, slipping and sliding over her, then up a little to find her clit, where he concentrates slow circular rubs against her, around and around, as she moans softly and works her mouth back up his chest.

She makes it to his mouth, kisses him thoroughly, sucking softly and using her teeth to lightly pull first his bottom lip into her mouth, then his top lip, and where the bloody hell this woman learned to kiss so well he has no clue, but her mouth is a fucking blessing.

She sits up a little to look at him, and he’s so lucky - christ just look at her, fuck - she’s so gorgeous with her cheeks flushed, her dark brown eyes almost black with her arousal, and when she asks, “Are you clean?” he’s never been so happy to have been STD tested in his entire life.

He nods, reaches up to smooth her hair from her eyes as he works her clit a little faster and confirms, “Yeah, just got tested in September, haven’t been with anyone since.”

She nods, smoothing her hands across his chest and grinding down on his hand as she tells him, a bit breathless, “I just got tested, I didn’t know, you know, because of…” He takes the liberty of sliding his middle and ring fingers up into her to save her the trouble of saying Emma’s name, and her head tips back as she interrupts herself with a quiet, “Ohhhh.”

Christ she’s tight - ridiculously, tight. He has no idea how he’s gonna fit his cock inside of her, he’s thick and she’s going to have to stretch for him, but - fuck - if she likes it like that - if she fancies being spread wide, he might die from his arousal. He works his fingers into her carefully, slowly, coating them with the slick, slippery fluid she’s making for him as she struggles to finish her sentence, her fingernails digging into his pecs as she swivels her hips and finally finishes her earlier statement with, “I’m clean.” She pauses to moan quietly as he curls his fingers and starts tapping the pads against her front wall, adjusting the depth and angle until her breath catches and he knows he’s got that spot. He increases the speed of his fingers, thrusting them a little now as he reaches for her breast, kneading the full mound before he slides his fingers to her peaked nipple and flicks across it. Her hips jerk and she arches her back, and he can’t stop from grinning at her. She’s absolutely fucking gorgeous, she’s grinding on his hand, breathing hard and licking those pretty lips, and he seriously cannot wait to watch her come, cannot wait to feel her clench on him, can’t wait to feel those toned thighs shake.

But then all of a sudden she’s pushing herself back, his fingers slipping out of her as she slides down his hips to resituate her legs between his thighs, and then - OH FUCK OH GOD - she runs the flat
of her tongue up the length of his cock.

His hands grab quickly for the sheets, his abs clenching hard as he struggles to keep himself from thrusting his hips up, and - christ - then she’s circling her pretty fingers around him and stroking slowly, licking her perfect lips and dropping down to swirl her tongue across the head of him. She takes him into her mouth, sliding her plump, soft lips over him and down, down, her hand leading her mouth and pulling the skin of his cock tight as she takes him further, further, until he bumps the back of her throat. She moans as she tightens her lips and starts to drag them back up his length, her tongue smoothing and sliding against him as she sucks, teasing against the sensitive curve at the edge of the head as she reaches the top. She slides right back down, giving him absolutely no time to catch his breath, working her mouth a little faster with each stroke, her soft hand making up the difference at the base of him then sliding down to massage his balls. Christ alive, he feels like he’s just won the lottery, like he’s just transcended space and time into some other fucking universe, because this woman gives head like she’s been sucking him off for years, like she’s studied every technique he fancies, like she can read his fucking mind. She’s perfect, and he can’t stop himself from thrusting up a little, from threading his fingers into her hair and encouraging her, “Yeah, babe, fuck that’s good,” as she licks, and slurps, and gags(!) - fuck-fuck-fuck- oh god - the filthy girl, she’s smirking with his cock in her throat because she did that on purpose - christ, oh god - she’s doing it again - bloodyfuckinghell - he moans loudly and tightens his fingers in her soft, thick hair.

She pulls up from him with a smack of her lips, grinning and warning him in a low drawl, “Quiet,” as she catches his eyes and drops a hot, open-mouthed, sucking kiss to the head of his cock - Ohhh god she feels so good - before slipping and sliding the tip of her tongue teasingly across and around him. She gives him a wink - the fucking minx - as she sucks kisses down the underside of his cock, down, down, then - Oh god, fuck - she licks the loose skin of his balls, then sucks one right in between her lips, massaging gently with her tongue before switching to the other as her hand pumps his shaft.

Annnnd that’s it - that’s all he can take - she’s got to stop or he’s going to come, going to shove his cock back in her mouth and spill in the next five seconds. The image of his come on her tongue, dribbling down her chin as she swallows and licks her lips flashes through his mind and he moans, reaches for her hand and pulls her up, panting, “Oh my god, babe, I can’t - too close, want to be in you so bad.”

She’s grinning as she settles on her side next to him, snickering a little at his desperation, and he grins back at her, because jesus - he just fancies her so fucking much. He presses his lips to hers, falling quickly back into a heated kiss, sipping at her lips then moving to the curve of her jaw. He rolls her to her back and starts to work his way down - he wants his turn now - and he’s confident that she’s met her match when it comes to oral, because he honestly loves going down on a woman. He loves the pleasure it brings, loves the way a woman shakes and moans and gets so wet, and he’s pretty sure he’s never wanted to taste a woman quite as much as he wants to savor the flavor of Regina.

Bloody fucking christ. He cannot wait.
She can’t help but think that she’s an idiot, because she should have been doing this with him for the last two weeks straight. Constantly. All day, every day.

He’s working his mouth down her flushed, heaving chest as his hands slide across her stomach, and Regina tries to pull in a deep breath to calm herself, but the air catches in her throat, so she tries again, and again, as she runs her shaking fingers through his hair. She’s too excited, shouldn’t be this worked up yet, but she can’t quell the anticipation, can’t help but arch her body up toward his mouth as he nips the dip at her collarbone. He slides both hands up her ribs to cup her breasts, pushing them together as he licks and nips across the top of one, then the other - slowly working closer and closer to her hardened tips as he squeezes and massages the thick flesh. He drops his head and sucks a series of wet kisses around the edge of one areola, and he’s so close to the sensitive peak - so close but still teasing her - that she automatically shifts her chest toward him, trying to get him where she wants him. He rewards her by dragging the flat of his tongue firmly across her nipple, and she lets out a quiet, breathy hahhhh, licking her lips and running her hands across his heavily muscled shoulders. Her breasts are so sensitive and she loves this, loves anytime someone plays with them, but the feeling of his tongue curling and flicking against her pebbled peak is just plain heaven.

She knew that Robin had a crush on her, sure, but she hadn’t known he’d been wanting her the entire time he’s known her, hadn’t known he’d go to bat for her and Henry time and time again, standing up for her, protecting her, taking care of her - until tonight. Tonight it’s clear that he has quite a crush on her, and she’s completely okay with that, because she’s falling for him too - has been falling for longer than she’d like to admit.

Especially when he - oohhhh - sucks her nipple between his lips and - ahh, ahh - flicks his tongue across it just like that. God that’s perfect, and she encourages him breathlessly, “Yeah - yeah ohhh.” He switches to her other nipple, laving across and sucking it repeatedly between his lips, pulling the little nub into a tight, stiff peak before flicking his tongue over it. She scratches her nails lightly across his back, shifting her hips under him because he’s making her so wet with this, making her ache and burn for his touch against her clt. He takes her nipple into his mouth and suckles, sweeps his tongue around and around it as her breath rushes out, and she brings one hand to the back of his head to keep him right where he is, moaning softly as he rhythmically works her sensitive peak. The suction feels incredible, the pull and stretch of her skin sends arousal shooting through her, has her chest heaving, has her throwing her head back into the pillows as he pinches her other nipple between his thumb and forefinger and twists.

He gives her breasts a few more licks and a good squeeze then leaves them, shifting down the bed as he drops kisses across her stomach, then goes lower still, nipping her hip bones and stroking his hands down the long, lean muscles of her abs and thighs, murmuring, “Bloody gorgeous” as he descends. He moves down further and she’s not paying enough attention, is too enthralled with the way he’s sucking at the crease of her thigh to realize he’s slid far enough back that his feet are on the floor. He catches her eyes and grins at her before he grabs her by the hips and yanks her down the bed, and she laughs loudly, slapping her hand across her mouth at the last second to muffle the noise as he hauls her to him. He slides his hands up the backs of her thighs, her knees going up and over his shoulders as his fingers frame her waist, then he leans forward, closer, closer, his eyes full of heat as he licks his lips and drops his head between her thighs.

The second she feels his mouth against her core she arches, both hands moving to thread into his hair, her hips rocking up to him as his tongue slides through her hot, slick folds. It’s been for-ev-er since she’s had this - Graham hated doing it, or was too lazy to do it, so lately it’s been a rarity for her, but - oh jesus - as Robin sucks at her inner lips and rubs his tongue across her entrance it feels as good as she remembers. He sucks on her clit and flicks at it with his tongue - oohhh oohhhh god - and scratch that, it feels better than she remembers. He’s so thorough, he sucks and licks and flicks against every inch of her sex, running his tongue from jesus - her rear entrance to the top of her clt,
pausing to suckle it before tracing each edge of her slit, giving her tiny, light nips, sucking hot, hard kisses to the insides of her upper thighs, his hands supporting her back when she arches and writhes against him.

She’s burning up, her nipples are tight and her chest is flushed with arousal - it feels incredible as he concentrates on her clit - molten heat spreads through her core and she holds his head down against her, her thighs shaking slightly with her excitement. If he keeps doing that, if he keeps - mmmmm - keeps rubbing on her clit hard and fast, she’s going to come, and - shitttt - she wants to, oh god she doesn’t want to wait another second.

He shifts her down the bed with another tug on her thighs, then drops to his knees as he presses kisses to her smooth mound and sucks at her outer lips. He pulls her thighs open, her knees falling from his shoulders, and Regina can’t resist, he’s so hot - she goes up on her elbows to watch him work her. He encourages her right leg to dangle over his arm, but he pushes the back of her other thigh up, her knee bending as he wraps his fingers around her foot and places it against his shoulder for her to brace against him. The new position forces her legs open and - jesus, oh god, oh shit - he’s got her sex spread wide for him now.

He holds her by the hips as he goes back to her clit, flicking his tongue fast and hard and firm against her, and Regina drops her head back, losing her breath and trying desperately to stay quiet as the pleasure builds in her. Her clit, her lips, her entire sex is swollen and pulsing for him, she’s so wet she can feel herself dripping, can feel the moisture on his chin when he fits his mouth over her and sucks hard. His lips pull and tug at her sensitive bud, his tongue relentless against her as his hands hold her firm and steady, and the familiar tingling starts spreading from her clit, her inner walls tightening, a current of goosebumps breaks across her chest as she works her hips against him, begging quietly, “Oh god - so close - don’t stop - don’t stop!”

He shifts one hand over to pull the soft pink skin of her sex upward, baring her clit to him fully, and when he flattens his tongue and rubs-rubs-rubs-rubs against it, a wave of hot pleasure shoots through her, and she’s suddenly spiraling up - up! He sucks her clit between his lips and rubs fast, firm strokes against it with his tongue while he holds the suction, and she tangles her fingers in his hair - oh god, oh fuck - she’s so close - just like that - oh god - she tightens, tightens, then - fuck-fuckkkk! - she’s coming - ohhhh god - her insides fluttering and contracting wildly, arching up hard as the pleasure overwhelms her, gasping loudly and bucking against his mouth. He presses down on her hips, fighting the clench of her thighs as he laps at her, pushing her climax on, causing her to clench and spasm again, her legs shaking and her hands in his hair as the liquid heat spreads through her and out, down his chin and onto the duvet.

She’s panting hard, trembling and still moving her hips against his mouth as he slows way down, changing to soft, light strokes against her, and - goddddd - she almost sobs with the perfection. He’s a miracle, he’s fantastic, she never wants him to stop - she wants him to lick and lick and lick her until she passes out from the pleasure.

Regina doesn’t know how it’s possible to feel even more amped up after coming so hard, but she definitely is. Her nerves are on fire, she’s aching for him to slide his thick cock inside of her, dying to feel the weight of his body on top of her. She tugs his hair lightly, rasping, “More, more,” and loves the way his eyes go dark and excited as he sucks one more kiss to her mound, then follows her as she scoots back up the bed.

She spreads her thighs for him as he crawls toward her, dropping kisses along her stomach, lapping and sucking each of her nipples back to hard peaks - god she loves that, how does he know she loves that? - then moving up until he’s at eye level with her again. His blue eyes connect with hers as he slowly lowers himself, pressing their stomachs together, his cock hard and hot, nudging at her
entrance as she leans up to catch his lips in a smooth, slow kiss. He flicks his tongue against her lips, asking for permission, and she smirks as she opens her mouth and strokes her tongue along his. She can taste herself, and although it’s probably indecent, it doesn’t bother her for a second - it’s not the first time, and when it comes with the kind of pleasure he just gave her, it certainly won’t be the last time.

He pulls back from her lips, bumps the tip of her nose with his as he strokes his fingers down the side of her face, and she mmms as she closes her eyes at his sweet touch. He kisses her again, then asks, “Condom?” and her pulse skyrockets in anticipation.

She knows she’s being reckless, knows this is their first time and she should probably be more careful, but she trusts him, she feels this connection with him like she hasn’t ever felt before, and she finds herself shaking her head no and telling him, “I have an IUD, but um, pull out just in case?”

His brow raises and he kisses her again, asks, “Have I told you how brilliant you are?”

She grins and runs her hands up his back, and god he’s so muscled, so thick and heavy on top of her. It elicits a deep feeling of safety, of security to lie under his solid body, surrounded by his forestry scent, snuggled into his soft, warm sheets. She feels so good when she’s with him - he makes her feel beautiful, makes her feel special, makes her feel like she’s in heaven.

He shifts to the side a little, runs his hand down across her hip and slides his fingers through her sex, checking to see if she’s ready, and it’s sweet that he’s concerned, but she almost laughs at the thought. She’s definitely ready. Wet, and dripping, and aching, and ready.

He rubs the head of his cock against her, coating himself with her slickness, and she can feel her pulse pounding, can feel her chest rising faster and faster in anticipation as she watches him. He pauses to drop a kiss to her lips, then guides his cock slowly in, and she tips her pelvis up, breathing out slowly as he stretches her. She’s already had her mouth on him, her hand too, so she knew he was thick and long, but jesus, as he buries himself in her, he feels huge. Robin pauses to let her adjust, and she’s grateful now that he’s such a considerate guy, because it’s been a few weeks and Graham was nowhere near his size - a close second in length, but god not thick like this. She takes a couple of breaths, moving her hips against him a little, and when she glances at his face he’s giving her that look she’s seen on him before, the one where he looks awestruck and like he wants to worship her body with his mouth. She smirks and kisses him, because he’s already done that, and she clenches on him - ready, so ready for this.

He starts thrusting slowly, working in a little deeper with each stroke, dropping kisses to her lips, her jawline, and her neck as he works his hips smoothly against hers, and - goddd - the way his cock stretches her feels so good, rubs against every nerve ending inside of her - jesus he’s thick - and it ratchets her arousal up, up. She rocks her hips up to him as he slides in and out with this easy, unhurried rhythm, and it makes her desperate for more, makes her writhe and swivel her hips as she bends her knees to take him deeper.

He speeds up as he drops his mouth to her neck, sucking hot kisses to her pulse point and down her throat as he rocks into her, then shifts his legs wide, spreading her open as he continues to thrust. She hikes her legs up, digs her heel into his lower back and grabs his ass with the opposite hand, pulling him harder into her and - ohh, ohh - the change in angle feels amazing. He runs his hand up and tangles it in her hair, thrusting deep now with hard, firm strokes, pulling out slowly then slamming back in, and it makes her gasp, makes her tip her head back and arch up to him. She fights the urge to moan each time he bottoms out, stretching her wide and deep - oh shit - and it makes her so hot, tightens her nipples as her breasts bounce, makes her breath hitch and her hips rock with need.

“Christ,” he moans softly, thrusting deep again… again… again… “You’re so fucking tight, so wet,
babe, god.”

He’s breathing hard, a light sheen of sweat has broken across his chest and shoulders, and he’s so handsome, so hot, she can’t help it - she leans up and licks across his collarbone, nips the top of his peck and urges him, “Faster.”

He immediately changes pace, grabbing her knee and pulling her leg up over his shoulder as he tips forward over her. His pelvis rubs her clit now when he slides into her, deep and quick as he kisses her. She strokes her hand up his tricep - gasping and digging her nails in as he hits that sensitive spot inside of her, bucking up and hissing out a slightly frantic, “Yeah, ohhh - right there,” and he suddenly unleashes, keeps that perfect angle and starts pistoning fast, his mouth against hers but working her too fast to actually kiss, and she breathes his air as she starts to pant - oh jesus, that’s it - as his pelvis slaps against hers, her throbbing clit taking the hit each time, making her even more wet, the dual stimulation both inside and out almost too much. He drops his head to suck her nipple, and she arches up hard, her hand in his hair, then stroking down the side of his face to wrap around the back of his neck as he drives - drives - drives, and - jesus christ - he’s a machine, he’s relentless inside of her, driving that hot pleasure up, up, up - radiating through her sex and making her obscenely wet, the sound of it loud in the quiet of his bedroom. She should be embarrassed by her neediness, by the way the hard, fast slide of his cock is pulling these desperate, high pitched, ah-ah-ah-ah’s from her lips, but it feels too good to care. She diggs her nails into his neck, thrusting in counter rhythm to him, riding him as enthusiastically as he is her, and shit - she’s suddenly close - he’s so good and big and long, and he’s hitting that sensitive spot - again, again, again - oh, oh god. He curls his back, dropping his mouth to hers, kissing and biting at her lips as he doubles down, bracing hard on his hands as he slams-slams-slams into her.

His lips move to her neck, then his voice is in her ear, and he’s rasping, “You’re so fucking hot - do you know how sexy you are?” He sucks the corner of her jaw then asks, “Got me hard every time I look at you - fuck - think you can come for me again, babe?”

His hot breath sends a shudder through her and Regina gasps, “Yes! God - don’t stop!”

He brings his thumb down to strum across her swollen clit, rubbing quickly as he slams his cock into her faster, harder, harder, and - fuck, oh god - she’s almost there, she’s almost - oh god oh god - almost there, then his cock hits her just right - Ooo ooo! - and she jerks up, her pleasure spikes and she shatters, throwing her head back and pressing her hips against his, then bucking under him as he continues to pound into her. He groans into her shoulder as her inner muscles contract on him, and he rubs his thumb rapidly over her clit, pushing her to clench on his thick length again, her slick liquid need making his thrusts sloppy and wet. He feels so good - he’s rigid and hot and perfect inside of her, and she wants him to stay, would consider letting him come inside of her right now if he’ll just stay for a few minutes and let her shudder around him, but he suddenly pulls out, Regina’s leg slides from his shoulder to his elbow, and she’s about to whine, about to complain, but snaps her mouth shut when he slides three fingers up into her. She gasps as he immediately hits her g-spot, curling and rubbing it hard, fast - quickquickquickquickquick. She’s still mid-orgasm, is totally unprepared for the new spark of heat that shoots through her - ohhhh fuck, oh no, oh jesus - as his other hand works her clit vigorously, and - shit, shit - this intense, hot, sharp pressure builds inside of her. She feels herself tighten on his fingers, her neck straining and breath catching hard as she arches up, up and he keeps on her, his fingers eliciting this sharp molten pleasure, pressure ever building - oh god - building, so much heat and pressure it almost hurts, it’s almost too intense. Robin doesn’t let up, doesn’t stop for a second, and - oh-oh-oh - suddenly something happens - oh shit, ohhhh no - the pressure releases - something inside of her bursts and she’s fucking coming again - fuckfuckfuck - a hot, fluid release running from her, soaking his hands, the sheets - oh god - soaking everything. He moves his fingers fast as her internal walls flutter and contract on him, encouraging her, “Yeah babe - fuck that’s so hot,” then his mouth is on her breast again, her nipple in his mouth as he sucks hard.
She turns her face into his pillows, trying to stifle her moans as she writhes and pants until the rush abates, and she finally catches a breath, grabbing for his hands to pull him away, because - fucking Jesus Christ - she can’t come anymore - she can’t - she’s shaking and trembling and oh god she’s just gushed like a porn star all over his sheets, and - what the hell - she’s never come like that, that’s not a real thing is it?

Jesus.

She feels him shifting over her, and her breath hitches as he sucks her nipples roughly, releasing them with loud, smacking noises as he guides his cock back inside of her, and Regina can’t stop herself - Jesus Christ - from moaning. She’s so swollen - goddamnit - she’s so tight and sensitive - he feels enormous, makes her feel so full, stretched wide as he buries himself deep. He groans and drops his forehead to hers, panting as he says, “Christ, you’re bloody fantastic,” then thrusts fast and hard a handful of times and pulls out - his hand pumping fast on his slick length as he covers her smooth stomach with thick, warm jets of come.

When he’s finished, he sits back on his heels, breathing heavy and grinning like the Cheshire cat as he lets his hot gaze sweep over her. His smile is contagious, and even though she’s flushed and spent, covered in come and still feeling the aftershocks from her own orgasm-s, she grins back at him, rubbing her hand across her eyes as she starts to laugh. They’re obviously adrenaline drunk, because there’s nothing really funny about their situation, but she’s blissed out and happy, she likes him so, so much, and if she’s being completely honest that was the best sex she’s had in years. Probably ever.

Robin leans over the edge of the bed and grabs his t-shirt, using it to wipe his mess from her before he balls it up and throws it across the room into his hamper. He smirks at her when he makes the basket, but then his face falls. Regina follows his gaze to the alarm clock on the far side of the room - it’s four-thirty in the morning, and the boys are almost always up by seven.

Shit.

She groans, pulling the covers up and sliding over to get away from the wet spot (oops), as Robin stands and goes to his dresser, grabs a pair of boxer briefs and quickly slides them on. She expects him to join her, is really looking forward to wrapping herself around his big, warm body, but then he’s pulling on his sweatpants and a fresh t-shirt, and she frowns.

He comes over to the bed and leans down, presses a soft kiss to her lips before he stands back up and says, “The boys will be up soon, and er, I don’t want them to get the wrong impression.”

Regina’s heart falls from her chest to her stomach. The wrong impression?

She grits her teeth and says quietly, “Oh.”

He heads for the door and before he goes, he clears his throat and says quietly, “This was… amazing. Truly.” Then he walks through the door, pulling it shut firmly behind him, and Regina is left with a thousand doubts flurrying around her.

She clicks off the lamp, and in spite of her state of undress, the stickiness between her thighs and on her stomach, she can’t quite bring herself to get up yet. To be frank, she’s pretty shocked that she’s in this bed alone right now. She had just been thinking that Graham was right - she usually goes for the bad boy, and maybe that has been a mistake, maybe there are perks to dating the good guy for once - like soft kisses and triple orgasms.

Except that she and Robin are not dating.
They’re living, working, raising their sons, and, as of tonight, sleeping together, but they have never discussed a romantic relationship… and all of a sudden the real world comes crashing down on Regina’s head.

She’s such a stupid girl.

Was this a pity fuck? Did he feel sorry for her? Her life is in shambles, sure, but he’s been helping her rectify that, has been her rock of support for the past two weeks and she thought, after all those kisses earlier tonight, that he was into her.

She suddenly recalls that he hasn’t really made a move on her since she moved in, and she feels even more stupid, because maybe she’s been misinterpreting his actions, maybe she’s been making more out of it in an attempt to feel loved and accepted when everything around her has gone to hell.

She sighs in frustration and gets out of bed, pulling her pajamas on and heading into the ensuite to clean up. She feels embarrassed and doesn’t want to think about the stupid decisions she made tonight by luring Robin to bed. Her life and her emotions are such a mess right now. No wonder he’s not interested in anything more.

Roland is awake early the next morning - too excited about their trip today to sleep for another second - which means that Henry and Robin are awake early too. The boys come bouncing into the living room at barely half-past six, and he knows he’s not going to win father of the year for it, but he immediately surrenders the remote to them in hopes of catching a few more minutes of sleep. He’s not used to getting only two hours rest, especially after the “exercise” he had last night, and he’s beyond groggy this morning. His plan immediately backfires though, when the boys select some obnoxiously loud program that has something to do with a team of teenage superheroes, and the neverending action scenes make it impossible for Robin to fall back asleep. He eventually gives up and drags himself to the kitchen to start the coffee.

It’s almost half eight when Regina finally makes an appearance, and that’s odd for her - usually, she’s the first one up. She’s fully dressed, makeup and hair done too, as she carries his bedding to the laundry room and starts the wash. Robin starts to smirk with the idea that maybe she overslept because he’d really worn her out last night, and as she grabs a mug and pours herself a cup of coffee, he can’t resist sliding his hand across the small of her back, then down a bit lower to the top of her arse as he says, “Morning, love,” in her ear.

She stiffens under his touch then pulls away, and he’s too stunned by her reaction to say anything as she retreats to the living room to sit with Henry on the couch. He’s confused, but tries not to get too upset, figuring perhaps she feels a bit awkward this morning, possibly embarrassed by how thoroughly he pleasured her last night. He joins them all on the other end of the couch, trying and failing to catch her eye, knowing that she isn’t the least bit interested in the cartoon she’s pretending to be enthralled with as she peppers the boys with questions about the storyline. When she slips and
accidentally does look his way, she meets his questioning smile with a narrowing of her eyes, then resolutely goes back to staring at the telly.

What the bloody hell was that for?

He replays the events of the night before, but for the life of him, he cannot understand what he might have done wrong. He thought he treated her quite well, actually - he went slow and steady at first, made sure she was properly warmed up for him, didn’t rush her, didn’t get rough, and even let her drive the pace and intensity of their lovemaking. He specifically remembers her asking him for more, begging him to go faster, and to don’t stop, so he’s pretty sure he didn’t cross any lines there. He frowns. Even if she was faking the first two times, which he sincerely doubts - she’s a good actress but no one is that good - she very obviously didn’t fake that third orgasm. The only thing he can come up with is that she must regret the decision to sleep with him in the first place, which quite honestly, makes him feel like absolute shite.

He thought she enjoyed it. He even thought she fancied him. She’s the one who asked him to come to bed in the first place, the one who asked him to warm her up, so what the fuck is her problem today? He’s thoroughly cheesed off by the time he heads for the shower, and his mood does not improve throughout the late morning as he goes through Roland’s luggage to ensure he’s packed everything he was supposed to, and winds up repacking almost the entirety of it.

It’s nearly noon, now, and they’ve got to get going soon - it’s quite a drive to the airport and even though he and Roland are dual citizens, it still takes forever to jump through all of TSA’s hoops. He hasn’t had a chance to get Regina alone today, and he’s quickly running out of time if he wants to set the record straight.

The truth is, he has no idea what to say to her. Her behavior this morning has been nothing short of frigid, and he’s feeling a bit put out, disheartened that he’s apparently gone and cocked things up already without even knowing what he’s done. He thought they were starting something last night, and although the timing is a bit bonkers, what with him leaving for a month, he was happy to entertain the idea of talking and texting her constantly while he was away. He was really looking forward to it, actually, because spending an entire month with Marian’s family always manages to make him thoroughly depressed, and he had this ridiculous notion that getting to chat with Regina every day might make him a bit less forlorn.

So much for that.

He loads the car and sends Roland off to Granny’s to say goodbye, knowing she’ll appreciate that more than any parting gift he could have given her, and he tries to send Henry too but Regina intervenes, asking her son to help her with the laundry. It’s yet another obvious attempt at avoidance, and he’s completely out of time now, doesn’t have more than five minutes before he absolutely has to leave, and his heart is aching over the thought of leaving with her still upset with him.

Roland gets back and says his goodbyes, hugging Regina first then giving Henry a secret handshake that he’s not allowed to see, then running out to the car as he yells, “Cheerio, mates!” purposefully thickening his accent and laughing hysterically at his own antics as the front door slams behind him.

Henry gives Robin a hug, then slinks off to his bedroom, looking entirely depressed that he’s got to spend the next month without his best mate, and Robin smiles after him, because he feels exactly the same way. He doesn’t want to leave them, and in spite of the weirdness that’s happening with Regina this morning, it doesn’t mean he fancies her any less, and he’s going to miss her like crazy.

He shoulders his last piece of luggage and they manage yet another beat of tense silence before Robin finally breaks and asks, “Have I done something wrong? Did I hurt you last night?”
Regina lets out this little uncomfortable laugh and shakes her head as she says quietly, “You didn’t hurt me. Last night was… I enjoyed last night.”

“Then what’s going on today?” he asks quickly, stepping toward her. “I was hoping we would be on good terms, I’ve really enjoyed our… friendship… I can’t stand to think I’ve messed things up, so whatever it is, I’m sorry, darling, truly.”

She clears her throat and glances in the direction of Henry’s room, then back to him as she says, “I’ve enjoyed our friendship too, I… don’t know what I was thinking, I’m sorry for the way I acted.”

Robin doesn’t know if she means now or last night, but the distinction is exceedingly important to him. He opens his mouth to ask her but Henry chooses that moment to come shuffling out of his room and plops down on the barstool next to where they’re standing, completely oblivious to their tense conversation. Robin balks in front of her son and all he manages to say is, “Uh, me too.”

He has to go now, he’s already ten minutes late getting on the road and they cannot afford to miss their plane, so he steps into her and gives her a one-armed hug, which she only sort of returns. She starts to pull away, so in a last ditch effort he kisses her cheek quickly and says, “We’ll talk soon, yeah?” to which she just nods with this sad look in her eyes, and then she’s walking away from him and he’s headed out the garage door. He has no idea what just happened, no idea what’s going through her head, but his heart feels suspiciously upset, as if they’ve just broken up. Which is completely ludicrous because he knows that they were never together to begin with.

As he settles into his seat on the big 747, Robin admits that while he’s never felt much merriment in making this trip, he’s never had quite this level of despondency about it either.

They’re not even in the air yet and he already wishes the trip was over.
Regina has been living at Robin’s for almost a month when Mary Margaret finally sniffs her out.

She’s been trying to keep it quiet from her for as long as possible, out of fear that her step-sister would offer them a place to stay, which she would then be forced to decline in order to avoid the diabetic shock that would certainly come from living in such close proximity to the world’s biggest goody-two-shoes. She doesn’t hate Mary Margaret, not since they’ve grown up anyway, it’s just that they have entirely different personalities, entirely different lives. Regina is practical, realistic, and sarcastic - a product of her mother’s stern and hostile upbringing, while Mary Margaret is a hopeless romantic who sees the world through a pair of extremely thick rose-colored glasses that her sleazy daddy keeps firmly in place, despite the fact that Mary Margaret is only eight years younger than Regina. There’s always been tension between the two girls, and even when things are going right, Regina struggles to find the patience to put up with her step-sister's utopian view of the world.

Sure enough, the second Mary Margaret learns of her new lodgings, she’s pounding on the front door, arms full of Regina’s favorite wine, an apple strudel cake, and several books with annoying titles like, “The Woman’s’ Guide to Surviving a Breakup,” and “Chicken Soup for the Heartbroken Soul,” and “The Smart Girl’s Guide to Starting Over.” She’s also brought almost a dozen new comic books for Henry, which he immediately grabs and runs off to his bedroom with, leaving her alone with the younger woman who is giving her those big hazel doe eyes and rubbing her arm as she asks if she’s really doing okay.

She fights the urge to roll her eyes and takes the gifts to the kitchen, depositing them on the island as she makes to open the bottle of wine. She’s willing to get this conversation over with, to bring Mary Margaret up to speed, but she’s not willing to do it entirely sober.

Regina fills her in on the details at a high level, of her new job at the camp and her “renting” a portion of Robin’s house. She leaves out the part about Graham beating Robin to a pulp, because she’s certain she’ll run and tell her politician father, and not only does she think it doesn’t warrant any interference at this point, she doesn’t want Leopold anywhere near her.

Her mother introduced her to the man that would soon become her step-father when she was seventeen years old, and from day one he didn’t even try to hide his infatuation with Regina - staring...
at her breasts and ass, touching her shoulders, her knee, her hair when she wasn’t quite on her guard, not to mention several comments about her being nearly legal whenever someone referenced her age or grade. He’s a disgusting creep, and Regina has no idea how such a wholesome girl like Snow White could have been produced with half his genetics. Her mother must have been an angel or some other kind of celestial being to have counteracted all that filth.

Mary Margaret listens with rapt attention the entire time Regina talks, turning down her offer of a glass of wine as she hops up on one of the barstools and settles in as if they’re going to Girl Talk all night. Honestly, her sunny demeanor is completely exhausting.

When Mary Margaret finally runs out of questions for her, Regina tries to take the out and makes several comments about being tired and having an early morning the next day, not so subtly dropping the hint that it’s time for her step-sister to go. She picks up on it, thank god, but that third glass of wine must be going to Regina’s head because when Mary Margaret gives her one of those insanely tight hugs at the door and tells her how much she loves her with that deep sincerity positively shining in her eyes, it’s all Regina can do not to tear up as she lightly hugs her back.

To make matters worse, when Mary Margaret invites her to come out to a nearby bar to celebrate her friend David’s birthday next weekend, she actually agrees. It’s a stupid idea, and she’s sure she’s going to regret it, but at least it will take her mind off of Robin, who she’s hardly heard from at all in the two weeks he’s been gone. The smile Mary Margaret gives her as she practically skips off the front porch shouting, “See you next week!” almost has her smiling with the ridiculousness of the situation as she closes the front door and dials Granny to see if she can watch Henry that night.

The first three weeks in England pass mercifully fast for Robin. Roland has such a bang-up time with his cousins, aunts, uncles, and Marian’s parents that he finds their schedule filled to the brim with activities every single day as they trek across the entirety of the United Kingdom. He hadn’t expected all this travel, had thought for certain that the trip would be exactly the same as it has always been - they would sit at Marian’s parent’s house the entire time, extensively reliving old stories and memories of Marian, going through photo albums and playing home videos, reminiscing on how beautiful and kind and loving she was, all of which manages to thoroughly depress Robin.

This year though, Roland has apparently been deemed old enough to sight-see, because they’ve crisscrossed the country about five times, visiting everything from fourteenth-century ruins to downtown London. It’s been exhausting, but Roland at least has a good sense of queen and country now, he thinks.

He hasn’t spoken or texted much with Regina while he’s been away. It’s not for lack of effort on his part, it’s just that the circumstances are constantly against him. He’s five hours ahead of her, and while that typically isn’t an issue, it is when you throw in multiple days of poor to no reception while they’re out touring the Cotswolds, or riding the train from Corfe Castle Station to Swanage, or tooling around Cambridge University (his alma mater), trying to get the timing just right at the Church of St. Mary the Great so they can be shaken to bits up in the tower when the bells ring.
He tried to call Regina twice but got her voicemail both times, and when she called him back his reception was so poor he couldn’t make out almost anything she said. He switched to texting, but the delay made it difficult to carry a conversation beyond anything but the basics of, *How are you?* and, *Everything alright?* So he stopped texting too and decided it would be best just to send her a group of messages once he was back at his former in-laws with proper reception and wifi.

He realizes his mistake a little too late, comes face to face with the consequences of letting her hang in limbo for so many days without much explanation, when he sends her several lengthy messages to which he frustratingly receives one-word answers. He tries to salvage the situation with a sincere text of, *Miss you so much,* to which her reply is a severely disheartening, *We miss you guys too,* so he stops trying altogether.

He knows it’s all gone pear-shaped now, but he’s helpless to do a bloody thing about it until he gets home next week, so he reluctantly puts his phone and his feelings for Regina aside, and concentrates on having a good time with his son.

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She knew she was going to regret this. Knew that she should have come up with an excuse not to go, because spending her evening with a bunch of lightweight twenty-somethings, who are YOLO’ing all over the place, is way more annoying than it is fun.

There’s a decently sized group of them, a few that she has seen around camp and on the payroll - Kristoff, Belle, David and Ruby - and some new faces - Killian, Jefferson, Tink, and Elsa. They’re all exceedingly friendly and inclusive of her, which should be a good thing, except that they’re all sitting in a huge corner booth playing Never Have I Ever, and Regina has had to start lying through her teeth to avoid downing her fourth martini. Seriously though, how have so many of them never given road head? Or gone skinny dipping? Or sexted? It’s child’s play.

She notices that Jefferson, Killian, and Ruby seem to be in the same boat she is though, and at some point the four of them make an unspoken alliance to turn the tables on this group of Puritans, and they start naming off all the ridiculously innocent things they’ve never done, Regina’s most recent example being a slightly snarky, “Never have I ever tattle-tailed on my sibling.”

It took two beers to get Mary Margaret wasted. Two. They were craft beers, mind you, but jesus, at this point in her life she should be able to hold her own for at least a few hours. It’s not even midnight and Regina can tell she’s going to be sending her home with a bottle of Henry’s Pedialyte. David is sitting between Mary Margaret and Regina, thoroughly enjoying his birthday celebration as he wears the plastic gold crown and red faux velvet cape the group got him to wear in celebration of the big 3-0. Regina could tell that Mary Margaret was into him before they started drinking, but the girl gets more and more forward with every sip of her drink, and frankly, it’s a little embarrassing.

David seems into it, sort of, but distracted too, so when he proposes a game of pool and Mary Margaret immediately jumps at the chance to play, Regina reluctantly agrees to be her partner because she honestly feels a little sorry for her. They square off against David and Jefferson, who has
that dark, emo look down pat in his black vest, floral long sleeve shirt and skinny jeans, which she normally doesn’t go for, but when paired with those smoldering dark blue eyes, and that wicked little smirk he has, she can see the appeal.

Regina is wearing a tight black dress tonight that hits her just above the knee, with a low v-cut neckline that shows off her chest nicely. She’s in sheer tights and tall black boots, her dark hair is down but curled into loose waves, and she’s done a smokey eye and dark red lip to pull it all together. She looks damn good and she knows it, but she does feel just a tinge of guilt when she leans over the table to shoot the three-ball into the corner pocket and catches David licking his lips as he blatantly stares down the front of her dress. She takes the shot, makes it, and when she comes around the table to line up for the next one, she notices the thoroughly irritated look on Mary Margaret’s face.

But hey, she didn’t tell the girl to wear that hideous lavender cardigan tonight, and it’s not Regina’s fault that she looks amazing in black.

She ignores her but misses her next shot, and all is calm until it circles around to Regina’s turn again. She’s lining up for a bank shot when she suddenly feels David next to her, leaning down and politely asking if he can give her a tip on the difficult shot she’s trying to make. She agrees, but only because her partner is shit at pool and Regina wants to win. David puts his hand on her lower back as he motions toward the diamonds on the opposite side rail, adjusting her cue just a little as he quietly encourages her, and when she takes the shot and makes it, he gives her a big, beautiful grin and a one-armed squeeze around her shoulders in congratulations. He’s a nice guy, David, and obviously interested, but she’s positive she’ll never consider him more than just a friend. He’s a goody-goody, and while she’s been reconsidering her options when it comes to a certain “nice” guy, she’s not willing to go so far as to date someone quite as naive as David.

Which is why the jealous look on Mary Margaret’s face is so irritating. Regina clearly has no plans for David, but her step-sister is drunk, and the more she sips on that IPA, the more the green monster starts to get the better of her.

Jefferson pipes up across the table just as Regina’s about to take her next shot, and asks, “Hey Regina, are you seeing anyone?”

She smirks, because she knows he’s been checking her out all night, and she has no idea what’s going on with Robin, so she answers him with a teasing, “Not at the moment.”

David jumps in with an exaggerated swirl of his cape and announces loudly, “This is a travesty! Someone get this woman a date!”

She laughs at his antics, and David grins at her again as he clinks their glasses together in a little toast.

Mary Margaret cuts in suddenly with a slurred, “She just got outta r’lationship… Witha cop!”

Regina turns to her and sighs, because the girl is clearly past her limit, and things were just starting to get fun.

Jefferson says, “Now that’s a shame, surely no man would be mad enough to leave a woman like you?”

It’s a bold statement, but it doesn’t surprise her at all - Jefferson is that kind of guy, the one without a filter who doesn’t give a fuck what anyone thinks of him. She likes that.
Regina starts to reply as David throws his arm over her shoulder, and she grins broadly, because there’s clearly a turf war starting, and it’s been so long since she’s been the turf, she’s actually enjoying it. Besides, David is harmless and Jefferson, well, Jefferson is definitely trouble, but she’s not looking to get involved with anyone right now.

Except maybe Robin.

If he’d stop ghosting her.

She tells Jefferson, “That’s right - I’m the one that ended it.”

Mary Margaret’s voice is a bit shrill as she jumps into the conversation again, with, “He cheated on ‘er with Emma!”

Regina shoots her a stern look, because she knows Mary Margaret is hammered - she’s just being a jealous brat right now - and Regina is trying her best to be patient, even though it stings to have her dirty laundry aired.

No one says anything for a second, and David rubs his hand up and down her shoulder as he tells her, “Well then, good riddance to him. What a jerk.”

She smiles and nods as Jefferson seconds the statement with a raise of his glass and a, “Here, here!” before he downs the entirety, and Regina takes another sip of her martini. She’s having a good time with these guys, even if her step-sister is drunk off her ass and acting like a baby.

“Gina doesn’t have any trouble getting ‘em,” Mary Margaret blurts out, “It’s getting them to stay she has a problem with.” The girl teeters a little and grabs onto Ruby for balance as she downs the rest of her beer.

“That’s enough, Mary Margaret,” Regina warns, because she’s starting to really piss her off now with this jealous bullshit.

“Didju know she’s a widow?” Mary Margaret charges on.

Regina immediately tenses, snaps, “Watch your mouth,” at the same time Ruby catches onto the spiraling situation and quickly tries to distract the younger girl.

“Yeah!” Mary Margaret says to no one in particular, letting out a high pitched, fake laugh as she slurs, “We’re all priddy sure once Daniel figur’d out what a bitch my big sister is, he died just to get away from her.”

Everyone freezes.

Rage boils inside of Regina. How dare she bring up Daniel. How dare she say something so awful, so malicious, so completely untrue. She’s crossed way over the line of what Regina is willing to take, drunk or not, and she’s going to kill her, she’s going to put her hands around her stupid little neck and -

“Oh my gosh,” David says softly, cutting off her line of sight to Mary Margaret as he steps in front of her and wraps her in a tight hug. “I’m so sorry she said that.”

Regina freezes for a moment, because a hug from David is the absolute last thing she wants right now, but when he shifts a little more, squeezing her tightly, and she sees Mary Margaret staring daggers at her, she suddenly has an idea that really will make her the bitch her step-sister just labeled her as.
She slides her hands up and down David’s back, then reaches up to wrap her arms around his neck as she draws out the hug, makes it much more intimate as she strokes her fingers along his shoulders and buries her face in his neck. She knows without looking that it’s killing Mary Margaret, knows it’s twisting the dagger more than she ever could have with words, and all she can think is - good.

Mary Margaret’s outburst has put a damper on the evening, it seems, because everyone starts packing up, donning coats and hats and figuring out who is sober enough to drive. Regina was supposed to catch a ride with Mary Margaret, who had sworn she wasn’t going to drink tonight but is currently throwing up in the bushes, so when David offers her a lift, she gladly accepts, wrapping her arm tightly around his as they walk toward his truck, hoping like hell that Mary Margaret gets a good eyeful of them leaving together. The little bitch deserves it.

David is a perfect gentleman on the way home (surprise, surprise), and when he leans in to softly kiss her goodnight at the door she almost backs out because she’s still not interested in him. But then she hears Mary Margaret’s cruel words bouncing around in her head again, so instead of backing out, she goes all in. She kisses him deeply, runs her tongue along his soft lips and when he slides his tongue into her mouth and strokes it against hers, she’s honestly surprised at what a good kisser he is. She lets the kiss heat up, lets him press her into the front door, even lets him grab a good handful of her ass before she finally backs him down with a few softer, easier kisses and a hand on his chest.

He’s panting and flushed as they part, and she wants to laugh because he’s way, way too innocent for her, and it’s going to be so easy to string him along as she takes her revenge on her crappy step-sister. When he asks for her number she gives it to him, and she encourages him to use it before she places one more slow, lingering kiss to his lips and sends him on his way.

Mary Margaret has no idea how bad Regina is prepared to make things for her. She won’t stand for anyone speaking of Daniel, of her beautiful marriage, of Henry’s father, in such an awful, hateful way, and she’s determined to put her back in her place so firmly that the brat will never have the audacity to trifle with her again.
It’s been awkward since Robin returned, but she thinks she’s finally getting used to their new dynamic. He hadn’t had much to say about their complicated relationship when he came home from England, just mentioned how much traveling they’d done and how he’d struggled for cell reception, but he didn’t apologize for his lack of communication, and she didn’t push him to. She’s given up on the idea of having something more with him - it’s been three weeks and he hasn’t bothered to make a move, hasn’t come close to kissing, or cuddling, or even touching her unless it’s absolutely necessary. Every day that passes makes her feel more and more like he really did sleep with her out of pity, and she blames no one but herself for it. She practically threw herself at him that night, had
forced him to cuddle with her on the couch, threw his intentions for a chaste kiss on the cheek right out the window, then stripped down to nothing and beckoned him to her like a damn siren.

So she accepts that she’s to blame for her hurt feelings. She was raw, emotional, still reeling from her breakup and all of the subsequent changes, and she put herself in a situation that was certain to collapse on her. For god’s sake, she kissed him in his office before she’d even broken up with Graham. If that doesn’t exemplify her stupidity she’s not sure what does.

She admits that seeing David is equally stupid, it’s not fair to him - she really doesn’t have that much interest in him - but she can’t quite find the maturity to forgive and forget when it comes to her brat of a step-sister. It doesn’t hurt that David makes it so easy - he’s completely into her, is obsessed with her body and acts like everything she says is insanely interesting. To be honest, it’s pretty annoying - he doesn’t challenge her, doesn’t even try to disagree with her opinion, and it makes for a rather boring evening when she does let him take her out. On the other hand though, he’s handsome and she likes kissing him, likes flirting and teasing him, and chasing her around certainly seems to make David happy, if his constant texts and invitations for dates are any indication, so really, Mary Margaret’s misery is just icing on the cake.

Regina has been mad at Mary Margaret hundreds of times since she’s known her. It was bound to happen given their circumstances, upbringing, and severely different personalities, but Regina has never been this angry. She knows deep down that Mary Margaret didn’t mean the nasty things she said, but that doesn’t stop Regina from hearing it, it doesn’t stop her from wondering how long her step-sister has harbored those thoughts, and who else might think the same thing.

Regina knows she’s no walk in the park - her temper can be short, her patience thin, and she doesn’t hesitate to make tough decisions - even when they’re unpopular ones. But that doesn’t mean that’s all there is to her. It doesn’t mean she isn’t good to those she loves. It’s quite the opposite actually - she gives everything, every ounce of goodness, love, and care to the few special people she holds dear, which is why there is so little left over for anyone else.

She’s hurt, really, seriously hurt by the things Mary Margaret said, and she doesn’t know how to deal with it. She can’t get past the feeling of betrayal she feels from being judged and attacked by arguably the world’s nicest person. So she reverts to what she knows, goes into bitch mode for self-preservation, and decides she’s going to keep seeing David until he’s either over her, or her step-sister gets down on her hands and knees and begs for Regina to give him up.

She has another date with him tonight, and she’s not looking forward to it. Robin and the boys aren’t supposed to be back until later, so she’s hoping to be gone before they get home. She’s not hiding the fact that she’s seeing David, but she’s not advertising it either, and she knows it’s because she’s still crushing hard on Robin, still hoping he’ll change his mind about her.

There are headlights coming up the long driveway and Regina hurries herself along, completes the finishing touches on her mascara and checks herself in the mirror one last time before she heads for the living room. She’s going all out with this, dolling up for David even though she knows she doesn’t have to, because there’s a chance they’ll run into someone they know and she wants the gossip to be real - wants it to look like she’s giving him the one hundred and ten percent she would if she were really, really interested. She opts for a royal blue dress with an asymmetrical neckline, and a zipper that runs the entire length of the back - it’s a tease of a dress, fits her like a glove, her dark hair always pairs perfectly with the color, and she knows it will drive David crazy. She tops it off with sheer black thigh highs and black stiletto ankle boots, then rushes from her bedroom (formerly Roland’s, but now hers thanks to the basement remodel), intent on grabbing her warm, long coat and meeting David on the porch.
She comes around the corner of the hallway as she slips her earrings in, and stops short.

_Shit._

It wasn’t David coming up the driveway, it was Robin, home early from Granny’s with Roland and Henry, and he’s openly staring at her with his mouth hanging open like a trout.

“Wow, Mom!” Henry says, “You look pretty!”

Roland and Henry immediately start interrogating her with ridiculous questions and innuendos, and this is _exactly_ why she had wanted to be gone. Robin looks stunned as he continues to stare at her, and she feels self-conscious. Self-conscious and anxious and… guilty?

There is a knock at the front door and she startles hard, then a wave of dread ripples through her as she realizes that it’s David, and now Robin is going to know. She shouldn’t feel bad about him knowing, she hasn’t made any commitments to him, but she _wants_ _to_, she _would_ - would absolutely say yes to him in a second if he’d just ask her out.

But he hasn’t.

Regina finds her confidence again and straightens her back as she slips into her coat, gives Henry a kiss goodnight and ruffles Roland’s curls as she heads for the door. She says nothing to Robin, who has gone a little red-faced as he clenches his jaw, and she suddenly decides that she doesn’t owe him a damn thing. So if she slips out the front door a little quicker than usual, if she pushes David toward his truck with her hand on his arm, if she scurries around the side of it without waiting for him to open the door, it’s only because it’s so cold out tonight.

The date was boring, just as she expected it to be, but she let David keep her out anyway, stayed at the nice restaurant and had an extra glass of wine because, to be honest, she was trying to run out the clock. She was hoping that the boys, all _three_ of them, would be in bed when she got home, so she wouldn’t have to answer any more questions.

It looks promising as David walks her to the door, the interior is dim and there are no obvious signs of life, so she lets him kiss her. He’s not bad at it, is actually pretty decent with his mouth - though his hands could use some instruction - and she lets him pull her in close as he slides his tongue into her mouth, runs his hands through her hair and whispers how beautiful she is as he sucks light kisses down her neck. She strokes her hands along his back, playing it safe, not stopping him but not necessarily encouraging him either. She’s trying to make it seem like she’s interested without enticing him to go for more, because while she knows she’s a bitch who is more or less using him as a pawn in her little revenge plot, she really doesn’t want to do anything more with him than kiss. She’s not _that_ mean.

She finally pushes him back, acting shy as she thanks him for the nice evening, then ducks inside, swiping her thumb across her mouth to correct the edges of her smeared lipstick as she locks the front
door. She slips out of her coat and boots, thankful for the quiet house, then turns to head down the hall for her bedroom, and jumps.

Robin’s there, standing in the kitchen in just his sweatpants, sipping from a glass of water, and she feels her face heat as his eyes rake over her.

“Have a nice time?” he asks quietly.

She can’t discern his tone, and his face is half shadowed, so she goes with a simple, “Yes,” and nothing more.

She makes for her room - she has no interest in having this conversation with him - but she only gets three steps down the hallway before she hears him say sarcastically, “Really?”

She pauses, irritation creeping up her spine as she turns back to him, asking, “Pardon?”

“That blockhead?!” he says, his quiet voice full of skepticism as he sets his glass down and takes several steps closer to her. “That’s who you’re dating? The world’s most accomplished boy scout? Prince- fucking-Charming?! Are you having a laugh?”

“The last I checked, it isn’t any of your business,” she snaps.

“He’s wrong for you,” Robin growls, stepping up to her, “He’s completely wrong for you and you know it.”

“Maybe I need a little wrong,” she baits, anger rising, “Maybe I’m tired of waiting for what’s right. Maybe I don’t know what’s right anymore.”

He shifts closer to her, only a few inches between them now, his gorgeous bare chest radiating heat at her like her own personal sun as he tucks a lock of her hair behind her ear. “I know what’s right for you,” he rasps, ducking his head to look in her eyes. “I know what you need.”

Her stomach drops as her pulse flies through the roof, and - god - she wants him so much, but she just doesn’t get it. If he wants to be with her so bad, what is he waiting for?

“You do, huh?” she asks quickly, challenging him, “You know what I need?” He nods, opens his mouth to reply but she cuts him off and barks a little too loudly, “Then make a goddamn move!”

They stare at each other for a moment, and when he doesn’t move, when he doesn’t try to kiss her, when he doesn’t ravish her here in the hallway, she loses her temper and she’s just fucking done. She steps back, glaring at him in the dim light as she nods and snaps disappointedly, “That’s what I thought.”

She turns on her heel and heads straight to her room, twisting the lock tight behind her as she fights the frustration and confusion that only ever seems to grow when it comes to her relationship with Robin.
She’s the most confusing and frustrating woman he has ever met in his life.

One minute she’s hot, pulling him to bed and shagging him senseless, the next minute she’s completely frigid, glaring daggers and rebuffing his advances, and the minute after that she’s going on dates with Captain America as if nothing is, was, or ever has been going on between them.

If he didn’t love her so fucking much, he’d throw in the damn towel already.

That’s right - he’s said it, he’s admitted it. He fucking loves her and there’s not a thing he can do about it.

The most frustrating part of all of this, is that outside of the drama that invades their every attempt at romance, they’re a perfect fit. They work completely in sync, both at the office and at home - she’s brilliant in every way, helps the boys with their homework, shares the cooking duties and compliments him on his skills in the kitchen, does more than her share of chores around the house, is a wonderful mother to Henry and to Roland, and he cannot get over how dedicated, how loving, and how invested she seems to be in their little makeshift family.

They have so much in common - they both come from messed up families, are well educated and share a love of literature and art, both love horses, the outdoors, and the smell of fresh snow. She’s funny, so smart and just bloody perfect for him in so many ways, and it’s exceedingly frustrating that they just can’t seem to make it work.

He’s had it up to here with being the good guy after her outburst tonight. The outburst that he caused. On purpose. Because he can’t stand another minute not knowing if she does, or does not, want to be with him. He knows she’s not serious about David, he’s not her type at all and he heard a rumor about some sort of fight between her and Mary Margaret - who he knows has been pining for David for years - so he there’s definitely more to the story than she’s letting on. The fact that she’s been hiding the relationship from him - yeah, he knows that’s what she’s been doing - only manages to reinforce his hunch that he should continue his pursuit of her.

But apparently slow and steady is not the way to win her over.

He wonders how much worse he’s made the situation tonight. If he’s waited too long and she’s given up on it all. He was trying to be patient, he had just wanted to be sure that she was over Graham, that she would date him because she wanted to and not because she felt like she had to. He doesn’t want another heat of the moment rush of adrenaline on which they can lay blame. He wants them to make a thoughtful, mature decision about all this, because she’s the kind of woman you keep forever, the kind you gladly give everything you have for, the kind of woman you get down on one knee and pray to god that she will find you worthy enough to let you call her “wife.”

But first he’s got to convince her to let him call her “girlfriend,” and boy has he got his bloody work cut out for him.
Winter - Chapter Ten

Robin loves winter at camp. He loves the way everything goes quiet, how the snow illuminates the forest, the way the short days fade into long nights and fill the world with more hours of starlight than any other time of year. Most people hate winter. Most people yearn for the heat of summer and the raucous activities that accompany bonfires and late night swims in the lake. He likes summer too, but it’s nothing compared to the beauty of winter.

He thinks of Regina this way - as his own personal winter, and he thinks she’d probably take itoffensively if he ever told her that. He supposes she’d relate herself to the cold and darkness, when his meaning is entirely different - she is the glitter of fresh, powdery snow, the shine of icicles catching the sun, the strength in the formidable blizzards that they sometimes endure.

He’s gone poetic for her. Gone poetic, and soft, and silly. But he can’t seem to stop himself, can’t stop thinking of something Granny used to tell him when his drunkard father had pushed him past his limits, when Robin’s life was so completely ruined that he was certain that there was no hope for him.

“You’ve got to rise and rise again, Robby, until lambs become lions.”

There is really no better phrase to describe his affection for Regina - it continues to intensify no matter what sort of challenges they face, and the gentle, sweet lamb is quickly turning into the feral, pursuant lion.

So he’s switching tactics. He’s done waiting around, done playing it safe, done trying to make sure everything is ready and perfect, because all that’s done is make things messy and confusing. He’s starting fresh today, he’s starting over with her whether she likes it or not, because he’s not some straightlaced pretty boy for her to go prancing about town with. He’s not exactly a “bad boy,” but if she knew the things he was ready to do with her, to do to her, he’s positive she’d throw David right out the window and come be with him. And he’d make her come multiple times. Just like he did that first time.

There are some things he likes to do, things which aren’t necessarily accepted by the general, vanilla population, that he fancies in bed and desperately wants to try with her. He wants to push her to her limits, wants to see what kind of deviant is underneath those prissy pencil skirts, thigh highs (so sexy), and silk blouses, wants to see what she’ll let him do with her and wants to know where she
draws the line. He wants to find out if there even is a line, because she gives him this vibe that maybe there isn’t, that maybe they can do it all, and christ wouldn’t that just be the cat's pajamas? Wouldn’t it just be brilliant if her tastes align perfectly with his both in and out of the bedroom? He’s sure that if he can just pin her down (god he hopes so), that he can make her blissfully, ecstatically, outrageously happy. So the next chance he gets - he’s already decided that he will get one - he’s jumping in with both feet.

It’s Christmas Eve and a slow start for him this morning. There’s a fresh six-inch blanket of snow from a little winter storm they had last night, and he’s got to shovel out both his house and Granny’s before he can get started on the day’s activities, of which there are many because he’s given everyone at camp the day off, paid. It’s the season of giving, and just because his family doesn’t have plans today doesn’t mean that’s the case for everyone else. Kristoff already had the horses and that bloody reindeer, Sven (who Robin swears eats his weight in carrots every day), taken care of before Robin could stop him this morning - the perks of having a handful of employees who actually care about their jobs - but the rest of the daily chores are up to him.

He comes in around noon in response to a text from Regina, which is a simple question mark accompanying a picture of a giant pan of chocolate chip cookies fresh out of the oven. Those are his favorite - she knows this, knows that there’s no way he could have passed up on them once he knew they existed, and the smirk she gives him when he meets her in the kitchen confirms it.

“Are you going to eat real food or just cookies for lunch?” she asks with a raised eyebrow, transferring the latest batch of cookies from a dark gray baking sheet to a little wire rack.

“Cookies,” he mumbles with his mouth full.

“Better not!” Roland pipes up from his seat at the island, where he and Henry are concentrating hard on the giant Christmas tree shaped cookies they’re icing. “Gina said we can only have two cookies now, but if we ‘at least eat sandwiches,’ we can have some more after - so you’re better off eating.”

Henry agrees with an enthusiastic nod of his head, but doesn’t break his concentration to contribute anything more.

Robin looks to Regina and she’s smiling softly while she moves about his kitchen, her dark hair up in a ponytail, long bangs falling into her eyes just a bit as she scoops up a spoonful of chocolate chip cookie dough and discretely hands it to him. Jesus, she’s wonderful, and so fucking pretty it honestly hurts not to reach for her.

He goes to the fridge with the spoon in his mouth and pours a giant glass of milk, then watches the boys make their cookies “Santa worthy,” providing a few suggestions and ideas on which types of sprinkles they should use. Regina’s gone all out - she’s homemade them about ten colors of frosting and bought every kind of Christmas-shaped sprinkle available - tiny trees, candy canes, snowflakes, even reindeer. He knows the boys are a little old for Santa, but Robin doesn’t have the heart to take away the magic of it, and neither does Regina, apparently, so the tradition continues for another year.

After a few minutes and a promise of building snow forts later, he gets the boys to agree to distract Regina so he can grab a few more cookies when she’s not looking. It works, mostly, until she turns unexpectedly and catches him mid-theft. She gives him a sharp slap across his knuckles with the spatula she’s wielding, and he gets kicked out of the kitchen with the threat of finding his head on a pike should he steal from her again. Still, he can’t stop himself from grinning as he rejoins the boys, and he catches her smiling too even though she drops her head to hide it.

Robin takes the snowmobile out right after lunch, needing to run the forest trails and ensure they’re clear after last night’s storm. Regina convinced him to sell horse-drawn sleigh rides to the general
public this winter, usually couples and families looking for a fresh source of entertainment, and it’s been great for business. The activity is such a hit that almost every time slot is sold, and it brings in some unexpected profits in the off-season that he’s planning to use to give a boost to the summer camps later this year.

He makes it all the way to the last trail, which happens to be the furthest from the house - a solid thirty-minute ride deep into the forest, and - bugger - there’s a downed ash tree blocking the last third of the trail. He considers leaving it, they don’t start sleigh rides back up until the day after Christmas, but he’s very experienced at cutting trees, and it’s just going to drive him mad if he doesn’t take care of it now. The way the tree has fallen is a bit of an issue though, it’s hung up on several smaller trees, bending them at ninety-degree angles or more - he’ll have to cut those first in order to get the ash to fall the rest of the way, and it makes him nervous. Those bent over trees are a real threat - when the larger tree comes loose, the spring-back action of the smaller trees is unpredictable, and the consequences of being in the wrong place can be deadly. He walks around and takes a look at the ash from all angles, and he’s fucked no matter what he does. It’s a big tree, tall and wide with several huge branches way up, and with this type of wood being so brittle, if the tree shifts there’s a good chance for those to break off and drop on his head - branches like that are called widowmakers for a reason.

He gets the chainsaw and his come-along out of the sled he towed up here and starts hooking up to the ash, but he’s got an uneasy feeling in his stomach about this, and he’s (mostly) sure it’s not from all the cookies he ate. He fires up the saw and starts to cut one of the more predictable little trees, but almost immediately the big ash tree shifts and he drops the saw, dodging backward just in time as several branches come crashing down.

He decides he won’t take the risk of doing this alone - the tree still has to get cut, there’s no getting around that, but it would be bloody stupid for him to charge forward knowing the threat and not taking the proper precautions. He checks his watch and it’s almost two. Regina should be done with cookies by now, he thinks, and he’d really like her to come up here with him, just in case he gets slapped around by one of these killer trees and isn’t able to call for help.

She agrees to come with him without any resistance, and he shouldn’t have expected anything different. When it comes to matters of safety Regina always sees reason, and though she asked him a multitude of questions, it was clearly so she could gain a full understanding of what her supervising duties were to be. She also questioned him about the risks, and what types of trouble they might encounter, and by the time she was zipping up her black winter coat and sliding that cute red snow hat down over her ears, he felt comfortable that she could handle whatever situation they might find themselves in.

He drives them up there at a nice, easy pace, and he can’t deny that he loves this, relishes the feeling of her pressed tight to his back, her arms wrapped snugly around his waist and her face tucked against the back of his coat to avoid the wind as they ride. It’s warm, just below freezing, and it’s cloudy but with all the new snow it’s still a gorgeous day in the forest. He’s just thinking of commenting on it when she pipes up behind him and says, “It’s so beautiful out here,” and he laughs at how alike they are.

It takes over an hour but he finally gets the blasted ash tree down and cut up enough that he can roll it off the trail. He’s hot from all the activity, his coat unzipped and hanging open, gloves tucked into the pockets as he packs the chainsaw back in its case and secures the sled. It’s not until he’s got everything all squared away that he takes a good look at Regina, and he suddenly feels like the world’s biggest arse, because she’s quite obviously freezing. *Fuck.*

“Christ, I’m sorry, darling,” he says immediately, stepping up to her and rubbing his hands.
vigorously up and down her arms. “Why didn’t you say something? I’d have given you my coat if I’d known you were cold.”

She smiles but is obviously miserable as she responds, “I didn’t want to get in the way while you were working your woodsman magic on that tree.”

Robin raises his brows and grins. “My woodsman magic?”

She rolls her eyes and starts to slide back on the snowmobile, making room for him to hop on in front of her, but he has a sudden thought and says, “Would you like to drive back?”

She declines, claiming that she doesn’t know how to drive it and that she won’t be able to hide from the wind as they go. Robin is forced to concede the fact that her face will be exposed, but when he tells her about the warmers in the handlebars and the seat, she starts to cave.

“If you drive, I’ll be at your back, so you’ll be all tucked in - it’s definitely the warmer of the two seats, if that’s what you’re aiming for,” he says honestly. “And besides, at the pace we’ll be going, there’ll be hardly any wind at all.”

To his absolute delight, Regina agrees, and Robin launches into a user safety chat before going over the details of how the vehicle works, what the gauges all mean, and of course, the acceleration and braking mechanisms. It’s pretty easy to drive, so within five minutes he’s settled in behind her, his arms tight around her hips and his face tucked in by hers as they crawl along the trail. He keeps his mouth close to her ear so he can encourage and give her tips until she’s smoothly operating the machine, snaking back and forth down the trail to get a feel for how it turns. He’s proud of her for this. For taking a chance and trying something new, for coming out here with him in the first place, for being - well, for just being her.

When she’s got it down to a smooth, easy ride, he relaxes behind her, drops his hands from her stomach down to the tops of her thighs and rubs up and down as he enjoys the ride. They have quite a distance to go, but he’s in no hurry. The boys are fine up at the house, it’s a gorgeous day, and he’s wrapped around a beautiful woman who’s smiling and obviously having fun, and fuck if things aren’t perfect right now.

Perfect…

Isn’t that what he’s been waiting for all these weeks? Waiting for just the right moment to make a move on her, to give her what she dared him to just a few short days ago? No one said the move had to be conventional.

He scoots up a little in the seat, pressing tightly into her back and stroking his hands up and down the tops of her thighs. She’s concentrating on the drive it seems, looking relaxed and confident as they mosey down the trail, her cheeks flushed from the cold air, lips just a little chapped, a few locks of that gorgeous black hair peeking out from under her hat, and yeah, right now is the fucking time for it.

He rubs his hands a little more firmly over her thighs, sliding as far forward as he can reach without being awkward or too obvious, then back up to her hips, around the outside edges of her legs and back down to her knees, creating a nice circular motion on her toned thighs. She doesn’t react at all, just keeps driving along, so he continues, nice and easy for a few minutes. He makes the circles a little more firm, smoothing around and around, and this time when he circles down by her knees he lets his hands slide inward a bit, so that he’s dragging his hands up the inside edges of her thighs, skirting back over the top where the leather seat is pressed against her. He keeps the same, slow pace as he circles back to do it again, and this time she slightly widens her legs to give him more room,
and arousal shoots through his belly and straight to his cock.

His breathing picks up in his excitement as he circles his hands again, so glad that he doesn’t have his gloves on even though his fingers are a bit chilled. He strokes up her inner thighs again, then slides up over the top, his fingers dipping in and dragging along the crease where her hip and thigh meet, then down to squeeze her arse before he’s circling her thighs again. He wonders what she’s thinking right now - she gives nothing away as she navigates the trail, and her calm demeanor urges him on, because he’s absolutely positive that if she wanted him to stop, she would tell him as much.

He drags his hands up her inner thighs again, but instead of circling this time, he runs them straight back down and up again, and again, letting his hands go higher and higher with each stroke. On the next pass he goes for it, lets his hands come together over her jean-clad sex, and he presses in, then rubs his fingers up and down against the material. The snowmobile jerks a little - she must have squeezed the break - but when she doesn’t stop their journey he gets even bolder, presses the flats of his fingers against her firmly and starts rubbing in earnest. She’s still at first, but then he feels a little roll of her hips, and that’s all the encouragement he needs.

He slips his hands up under the hem of her coat and dips his thumbs under the waistband of her jeans, her smooth skin hot against him as he slides back and forth across her hips. He moves his hands to the middle and flicks open the button on her jeans, and - christ - she still not stopping him - holy fuck - so he pulls her zipper down and immediately slides his right hand in to cup her. Whatever kind of knickers she’s wearing are smooth and silky, and as he presses his fingers against her he can feel the moisture right through them. He slips his middle and ring fingers under the satin and down through her slit, and - bloody fucking hell - she’s so wet - christ - she’s drenched, and he can’t help but rub his groin against her arse in reaction.

He starts playing with her, slipping his fingers over and through her hot folds, stroking firmly, then moving up to rub little circles against her clit that make her rock her hips and press back into him. He slides his fingers down to tease her entrance - fuck she’s so warm - pressing his middle finger in, further, further - as deep as he can get - then stroking out slowly, rubbing at the sensitive flesh around it, dipping in again and swirling, smoothing pressured strokes around and around her entrance before diving back in with two fingers this time, still shallow because of the angle he’s at, but deep enough that when he curls his fingers and pulses them, she suddenly lets off the gas and arches into him, her head dropping back against his shoulder with the movement.

He continues to flex his fingers inside of her, switching between quick curling motions and swirls, and - oh god, fuck yeah - she’s getting into it now, working her hips and tipping her pelvis up to try to help him get deeper. God, she’s brilliant.

“That’s it,” he says, loud enough for her to hear over the rumble of the engine, “Feels good, yeah?”

Her mouth drops open but she doesn’t respond, just continues to work her hips against his hand as he manages to slide into her a little deeper.

“You want me to make you come?” he asks, sliding his fingers out of her and moving to her clit to rub rapidly up and down. Her back arches again and he doesn’t give her time to respond before he commands, “Turn the engine off, so I can finger you properly.”

He works the pads of his fingers over her clit a little faster - riling her up - then slows way down, purposefully teasing her while she makes her decision. His fingers make slow, lazy strokes through her sex, gliding and slipping easily through her wetness as she opens her eyes and looks heavenward.

Then she leans forward quickly and turns the motherfucking engine off.
FINALLY is all he can think. He’s finally got a real chance at this. Thank god.

The engine dies, everything goes quiet around them, and fuck this really is perfect, because they’re literally in the middle of nowhere - no one will interrupt them, no one will hear them, and now he can whisper in her ear as his fingers resume their quick little swipes across her clit.

Robin can hear her breathing now, and it’s elevated, but not quite where he wants her. She’s so wet - christ - he’s certain he could rub her clit like this for a few more minutes, probably less than that, and she’d come - but it’s not quick that he’s going for here, he wants intense, he wants unforgettable. So it’s a good thing he’s got an idea of how he can get her there.

He pulls his hand from her pants suddenly, and she groans with the loss of him, but then he’s standing her up, turning her around and getting her to sit so she’s facing him, pulling her in close and getting her to wrap her legs around his waist. The change in position is quick, and he can see she’s a little startled by having to come face to face with him when a second ago they weren’t anywhere near this intimate. Robin grabs her by her arse and tugs her even closer so she’s right up against him, their puffy winter coats pressing together as he looks her in the eyes and says, “In case you weren’t sure, and to avoid any misinterpretation,” he leans in close so that his lips are almost on hers, his voice an octave lower as he says, “I’m making my fucking move.”

He crashes his lips against hers, and the bloody minx, she’s already got her mouth open for him, is already wrapping her arms around his shoulders and pulling herself in closer, tilting her head and accepting his tongue as he swipes it into her mouth, delving deep and exploring, before sucking hard at her bottom lip as he pulls back. He’d forgotten - christ - how much he loved kissing her, how bloody good she is at it, how she - oh fuck - nips at him and does that flick with her tongue that feels so hot, makes him think of her tongue on his cock, and thank fucking god they’re finally doing this.

He works his way across her jawline back to her ear, sucking that sensitive spot that makes her breath hitch, then pulling her earlobe between his teeth and scraping across it. She tastes incredible and it’s ridiculous that his mouth waters for her, but - fuck - she just looks and smells and tastes so good that he can’t not crave her.

His hands go to the zipper on her coat and he quickly slides it down, pulling the sides open wide, hoping she had a chance to warm up because he doesn’t want her to be uncomfortable but he’s got to get his mouth on her tits. He knows she’s sensitive there, knows how responsive she is and he wants her completely worked up, wants her needy for him, wants her begging and arching and shaking.

He rucks her navy blue sweater up and doesn’t bother to unfasten her bra, shoving it up too so her tits press out the bottom, and - oh fucking christ - Regina’s tits are so perfect he’s pretty sure he could come just from staring at them. Fuck. He drops his mouth to her chest, squeezing her breasts together and immediately going for her nipples, sucking them both into his mouth at the same time. She gasps and leans back, pulling her clothes up further, exposing more of her breasts and tucking her shirt into the straps of her bra to get it to stay put, thrusting her chest toward him as he increases suction on her nipples and pulls back with a slick pop. Her sensitive tips are pulled into tight peaks from the action, and he flicks his tongue across them, swirling around each one several times, then running the flat of his tongue back and forth across them with firm licks.

Her hands are in his hair, holding him to her as he nips at the swells of her breasts, and he shifts forward so she’s leaning with her back pressed against the front of the snowmobile, only half sitting up now, as he continues to suck on her plump tits. He could stay at them forever, wishes he could, wonders if he can make her come just from playing with them - wonders if he spent a few hours licking and flicking and pinching them - oh god - just like this, if she could get turned on enough to come without him touching her sex. He at least wants to try.
He pinches each of her nipples between his thumb and forefinger, twists roughly, pulling hard on them, and when she arches up and whispers, “Oh fuck,” his cock twitches with arousal, straining hard against his jeans. He runs his hand down her stomach and into her knickers, and - fuck yes - this is what he wanted, now he can slide his fingers way up into her, and he does just that.

Her breath comes out in a whoosh, her hips thrusting up against his hand as he starts to pump into her, and - christ - she’s so hot, so slick and swollen - he wishes he could slam his cock into her right fucking now.

He moves his mouth up from her breasts to suck kisses along her throat as he slides his fingers out of her to flurry across her clit. She moans loudly, dropping her head back as he works her fast, and - god she’s so hot - he doesn’t want to fuck around anymore, he wants there to be no chance of a misunderstanding. He rasps, “Let me make this clear,” as he slides three fingers up into her and pumps fast. “I want this tight, wet cunt,” he pistons his fingers fast and deep, uses his other hand to pinch her nipple hard, harder, harder, until she jerks up toward him, then he switches and pinches the other one as he says, “Want these sweet tits, too.” He drops his head down and sucks several love bites into the smooth, creamy flesh of her breasts, just outside of where the marks might be seen but will be absolutely noticeable to anyone who gets her out of her bra (take that, David). He pulls his fingers from inside of her to rub fast, firm swirls over her clit, and grits out, “This swollen, throbbing little clit? Fuck - want it so bad.” He rubs her faster, faster, “I want you, Regina - your body, your beautiful mind, your heart. Now be a good girl and tell me what you think about that.”

She’s positively writhing under him, arching and panting and working her hips against him, her mouth dropping open on a whimper as he continues to rub her clit, firm and fast. His other hand jumps back and forth between her nipples, twisting and strumming across the hard peaks, her legs locked tight around his waist as she gasps, “Jesus, Robin.”

“Tell me,” he rasps, his forearm starting to ache as his fingers slip and slide over her clit - christ - this woman can take it. “Tell me what you’re thinking.”

Her legs are starting to shake around him, and he slides his fingers back into her, dropping his mouth to her breast to suckle a nipple in tandem with the strokes of his fingers. He can feel the flutters beginning inside of her, can feel the way her thighs are clenching and the tremble in them as her hips start rocking hard and fast. He curls his fingers in her, commanding her again to tell him what she thinks, and she’s breathing hard, moaning and panting these hot little ah-ah-ah’s for him as he thrusts his fingers faster and she finally admits, “Yes - oh god - want it too - ohhhh.”

A rush of excitement, of pure bliss flies through him, and he pulls his fingers from her, flurrying frantically across her clit - fast-fast-fast-fast - she’s close - he knows, he knows, and suddenly she grabs his forearm in a vice-like grip, arching up hard, her head thrown back over the snowmobile windshield and exposed tits thrusting up into the cold air as she climbs, climbs, climbs, then flies apart - her inner muscles contracting wildly as he thrusts his fingers back inside of her, hammering in hard shallow strokes and rubbing across that extra sensitive spot as she wrings his fingers, his palm slapping against her clit with each thrust. She’s making the hottest sounds on earth - high pitched gasps and low, throaty moans, pulling in deep shaking breaths as her fingers dig into his arm and she grinds down on his hand, riding out her ecstasy, taking everything he so wants to give her.

She’s just coming down, just starting to breathe easier when he pulls her up to him, kissing her deeply, licking at her lips and sucking hard, letting his teeth scrape against her as he dives in again and again. She shifts, and - ohfuckingchrist - she’s unzipping his pants, pulling him out - fuck - he’s aching and so hard for her - god - and all he can do is stare, utterly slack-jawed, at the sudden shift in power. She starts pumping him fast, twisting at the top of his hot length as she keeps her mouth against his, kissing him with slow, lingering kisses as her hand moves faster and faster, and now
Robin is panting for her, is thrusting his hips forward into her hand as she strokes him faster, switching to quick, short pumps, her grip smooth and tight, brushing the sides of his head each time - oh god - so good, her pretty fingers snug around him as she says against his lips, “Come for me.” She works the sensitive head of his cock and his hips jerk as she swirls her fingers over and over it, his breaths coming out hard because fuck-fuck-fuck he’s so close - oh christ - and when she commands, “Now,” he actually starts to come - bloodyfuckinghell - groaning a slur of - oh fuck - yeah babe - ahhh - against her lips.

He jerks hard over her, spilling quickly as her hand slides over and over him, until finally he finishes with one last spurt of the hot, thick fluid, pulling back a bit to get one more eyeful of her exposed breasts, suddenly realizing she just made him come all over her hand and perfect stomach, and he moans, because it’s the hottest fucking thing ever to know she just purposefully covered herself with his come - christ. He wants to rub it all over her, wants her to lick it from his fingers, wants to watch it drip out of her, wants to - fuck - he’s got to get it together or they’ll never make it back to the house.

He catches his breath, finally, digging in his coat pockets for the tissues he brought earlier in case of a runny nose from the cold, and he carefully wipes the mess from her. She sits up and they take a quick second get their clothes straightened out, but then he can’t wait anymore, he’s got to kiss her again.

She leans into him and he can feel her hands shaking against his neck. He hopes that’s a good sign, because he knows that he’s completely infatuated with her, knows he loves her, knows that he’s in love with her, and his hands are shaking because his emotions are running completely amuck as they trade sweet, slow kisses.

After several more kisses, she pulls back to catch his eyes and says softly, “We should get going.” He nods, stealing another kiss from her lips and nudging the tip of her nose with his.

They make their way back up to the house, and Robin can’t stop grinning, can’t tame his enthusiasm for the rest of the afternoon, because today is the day that Regina Mills told him she wants him, and if that isn’t a bloody miracle he doesn’t know what is.

Wow. That was… Wow.

That was some move, Robin Locksley. Where the hell has that been, she wonders. Because this version of him - the one who straight up tells her what he wants, while he’s giving her what she wants, is the guy she’s been waiting for, been hoping for, for years. Jesus christ.

The boys are “in bed” now, although Regina is positive they’re not sleeping. They were way too amped up, were practically vibrating in the matching Transformer footie pajamas she bought them (thank god those are in again, they’re so adorable), as they watched Christmas movies - The Grinch, Elf, and regrettably, Home Alone. She likes that movie, but it was the first time either of the boys had seen it, and she’s pretty sure that now they’re down in the basement doing their best Kevin McCallister impersonations and plotting to catch Santa in the most outlandish way possible. She should probably reprimand them, should probably tell them that Santa won’t visit if they’re awake all
night, but she just can’t.

Regina shouldn’t think things like this - she absolutely shouldn’t, it’s not safe - but all she can think is that this is Henry’s first Christmas as not an only child.

And it’s Roland’s too.

Her heart is so close to bursting with how happy that makes her that she just cannot bring herself to be one bit mad, or annoyed, or upset that the boys are obviously not sleeping. She’s so happy, so thrilled that Henry has someone to laugh, and play, and talk with, so happy that he doesn’t have to go to her with everything - that he has options now. As a single mom, it’s a huge relief - it’s not that she wouldn’t give him whatever he needed, it’s that she doesn’t want him to be stuck with just her all the time, doesn’t want him to have to totally depend on his mother for the simple reason that he doesn’t have anyone else. She doesn’t want Henry to go through what she did, to grow up the way she did when her father died and it was suddenly just her and her mother, Cora, because that was absolute hell.

People think that when you grow up with money you no longer have a right to be unhappy. That because you are surrounded by all the material things you could want, you waive the right to have feelings, to be a real person with hopes and dreams and emotions, with struggles, and bad relationships, with doubts and fears. It’s a lot like being a celebrity, where you’re put up on an impossibly high pedestal and critically judged for every action, every word, every idea. You must be beautiful, flawless, and happy, because those are the only options that fit inside the gilded cage you’re living in.

Mary Margaret is a perfect example of this, has always been a perfect, shining example of all the things Regina is not. She’s perky, pretty, and punctual, always has a smile on her lips and a laugh in her lungs, can charm the pants off of anyone, and lives in the perfect paradise her father provides for her.

Regina, on the other hand, did not turn out the way her mother expected, the way her mother insisted. She’s an only child, Cora never failed to remind Regina of how difficult her pregnancy was and how she couldn’t possibly think of producing another ungrateful child - and her father died of a heart attack when she was sixteen.

She remembers it clearly, remembers everything in stark detail even after all these years. She came home from the country club at nine, kissed him goodnight and told him she loved him, and awoke the next morning to find her mother giving a press conference in the living room as a crew of auctioneers swept the house, collecting her father’s personal effects. She was standing in the hallway for a solid thirty minutes, completely confused, before anyone thought to ask her if she was alright, and when she confessed that she had no idea what was going on, one of the auctioneers - a total stranger - awkwardly informed her of her father’s death.

Having money didn’t stop her from losing her loving, wonderful father, didn’t stop Cora from using every opportunity to tell Regina how worthless, how stupid, how selfish she was - how she was such a disappointment for falling in love with a middle-class stable boy. Money didn’t stop Cora from playing every mind game imaginable to gain Regina’s trust just to rip it painfully away for the fun of it - didn’t stop her mother from constantly losing her temper and throwing the nearest object at Regina’s head, and she has the scars to prove it.

So she knows first hand that money doesn’t buy an ounce of happiness. She’s never been more poor in her life, but as Robin tugs her down to the couch, settles her between his knees so they can cuddle and watch White Christmas as their sons laughter floats up from the basement, she is truly, deeply happy.
And maybe a little bit in love, too.
Regina wakes slowly, the lights of the Christmas tree shining in her eyes as she shifts uncomfortably and rolls over to swap her cold front side with her overheated, slightly sweaty back. Apparently, she and Robin fell asleep together on the chaise, because the last thing she remembers is watching Rosemary Clooney sing about how Bing didn’t do right by her, but now the television is off and just the quiet sounds of the house surround them.

She snuggles into his bigger, warmer body, pressing her face in close against his chest and tucking her arms in as they lay on their sides, facing each other. It’s nice to wake up like this, surrounded by his touch, his forestry scent, the thrum of his pulse under her hands and the slow rise and fall of his chest with each breath. It’s calming and peaceful, and she presses her palms to his chest to better feel the steady tha-thump of his heart, letting herself get just a little quixotic as she envisions doing this every morning - of having the very first thing she feels be the beat of his heart. She imagines waking to kisses and sensual touches; can almost hear his voice whispering, *Good morning, darling*, as he slowly slips inside of her while she’s still half asleep; she dreams of him making her come before she has a chance to do anything more than open her eyes.

Regina sighs and tries to pull herself back to reality. She’s not really sure what they “are” now, and there are so many in-between relationship levels anymore that it makes her head spin. Are they friends? Fuck buddies? Seeing each other? Dating? *Together*-together? He made his move yesterday and it was perfect, hot and so uniquely him, but they didn’t have a chance to talk about any of it and were both too tired last night to even try. She wonders how it will all feel today, Christmas Day, if it will be awkward or insanely easy, because her relationship with Robin always seems to be either at one end of the spectrum or the other - there is no in-between. She supposes then, that they’re either *together*-together, or not at all, and the thought makes her a little nervous, makes her bite her lip and cringe against him as she suddenly remembers she’s technically still “seeing” David, and shit, she needs to break that off as soon as possible - especially if she's going to go around getting handsy with every lumberjack she meets.

Regina finally finds the will to check her watch and it’s almost five-thirty. She’s reluctant to break up their little snugglesfest, but they still have to put the boy’s presents from Santa under the tree, get rid of the cookies and milk - she’s sure Robin will gladly tend to that - they should change clothes, and probably not be entangled in each other’s arms when the boys inevitably come flying up the basement stairs screaming, “He came! Santa was heeeeere!”

She flattens her palms against his chest and smooths them softly up and down. He’s so muscular, so warm, she loves how he feels under her hands and scolds herself for not dating a guy built more like him in the first place. Graham and Daniel were a little too skinny to cuddle up against for long, there was always a hip bone, a shoulder, a collarbone digging into her somewhere, but Robin is built so differently - where her other men have been lean, Robin’s muscles are thick and wide. He’s broad-shouldered, his chest and thighs are laden with muscle, his arms beautifully built. She runs her hands
over his stomach, excitement racing through her veins as she reaches the hem of his shirt and gives in to temptation, slides her hands underneath, skimming across the smooth skin of his abs, rubbing her thumbs in little circles against the muscles there as she revels in him. She could lay with him like this, or better yet, spread out on top of him - chest to chest - for hours. Regina fits perfectly against him, her smaller body framed by his, and it’s just one more thing about them that goes together seamlessly.

She feels him wake as her hand strokes across his ribs, his arm tightening at her waist as he breathes in deeply, pulling her closer. Robin threads his leg between hers, sliding his hand down from her waist to her ass, squeezing before continuing south to the back of her thigh, where he stops to pull her leg up over his hip. She can feel his morning erection against belly, and she shifts against him, hiking her leg up a little higher to rub herself against his thigh.

“Hello, gorgeous,” he says quietly, his voice rough, accent thick.

She smiles, leaning back from his chest to see his face as she says, simply, “Hi.”

Robin brings his hand up to stroke her hair out of her eyes, letting his hand rest against her neck as he looks at her for a moment, then asks, “What time is it?”

She sighs dejectedly, because time really is of the essence this morning, and tells him that it’s just past five-thirty.

“Plenty of time,” he says, surprising her as he scoots his body down to align their faces, then presses a slow lingering kiss to her lips.

“Time for what?” she teases, knowing full well that they absolutely do not have time for whatever it is he’s thinking.

“Time for me,” he pauses to kiss her again, “to get you,” another kiss, “to come,” he slips his tongue into her mouth, strokes for a second, then finishes, “on my cock.”

She grins, blushes, but pulls back as she says, “You know we don’t have time,” he interrupts her with a kiss, “The boys could be up at any second.”

Robin slides his hand down from her neck to palm her breast, squeezing lightly and thrusting his hips a little so his erection bumps her belly. “Oh there’s time, darling,” he argues, “There’s always time to make you feel good.”

Her stomach drops as his fingers start to play with her nipple, her sex warming in anticipation, and she tries to fight her desire, but when he slips his hand up her shirt to smooth over her bare breast, she can’t stop the gasp from sliding from her lips.

“We shouldn’t,” she says, arching into his touch as he pinches, twists her nipple, then flicks across it.

“We can be quick,” he rasps, working her sensitive peak, his thumb rubbing circles around and around it. “I’m confident I can get you off in the next five minutes.”

She smirks - his confidence is sexy and she’s so eager, can feel her clit getting sensitive, knows she’s a little wet already - but five minutes? She highly doubts that.

“Don’t start what you can’t finish,” she warns quietly, kissing him, sucking his bottom lip for a second as she grinds down on his thigh.

“Oh, you’ll finish,” he smirks, pinching her nipple hard and holding it as he kisses her deeply,
stroking his tongue into her mouth. Their tongues duel for a moment and he shifts them, rolling so she’s more on her back and he’s leaning over her. He tugs her nipple, still pinched hard between his thumb and forefinger, then squeezes even harder, dropping his head to suck kisses just above the neckline of her t-shirt as she gasps, arching her back up to him.

He finally releases her, the blood rushing back in and making the hard tip throb - *ohh that’s good* - then slides his hand down her stomach to skim the waistband of her shorts. “Just say the word darling,” he murmurs against her neck, “and you can have your Christmas gift right now.”

His hand feels so good on her stomach, his mouth sucking slow, hot kisses down her neck, her collarbone, and - *godd* - he feels incredible all over her. She knows it’s risky - too risky - but then he slides the tips of his fingers just under her waistband and she hears herself saying, “Okay - five minutes,” on a shaky exhale.

His hand dives under her shorts and underwear, right down to slide through her sex - *ohhh* - and she really is wet for him already. He strokes his fingers through her folds, coating them thoroughly and rubbing around and around her entrance, up to press circles right on her clit, then down again, repeating the pattern over and over as she spreads her legs wider for him and tilts her pelvis up.

Four minutes.

“So fucking needy,” he whispers in her ear, “Did you wake up wet for me?” he asks, licking the shell of her ear then sucking softly just behind it, making her breath catch. He dips two fingers into her, and she lets out a breathy, “Mmmmm,” with how good it feels as he strokes slow and smooth.

“Dreamt about this,” he says, kissing across her jaw, slipping his fingers out to rub back and forth quickly over her clit, “Dreamt about your hot little cunt dripping for me as I fucked your mouth.”

Regina shudders - *jesus* - who knew his mouth was so dirty? And now she can’t stop picturing it, picturing herself down on her knees, spread wide apart at his command, as he thrusts into her mouth, her own desire seeping from her. *Fuck.*

Three minutes.

He slips his fingers back into her, three this time, and the stretch feels so good, especially when he curls them, starts pulsing them against her in quick beats that make her spread her thighs even further, letting him slide in a little deeper - *godd* - as her breath catches. He curls and uncurls his fingers inside of her, fast-fast-fast, relentless as she swivels her hips and throws a hand over her eyes, shocked by her behavior but far too aroused to stop now.

“So fucking tight,” he murmurs, suddenly sitting up and sliding back, tugging her shorts and panties down off before she can think better of it, before she can remember the reasons why this was a bad idea. He shifts so he’s kneeling between her legs, sitting back on his heels as he slides his fingers through her sex. With one hand he pulls her outer lips wide, and with the other hand he starts up these sharp little slaps directly against her exposed clit, the smacking sounds unnaturally loud in the otherwise silent living room.

She gasps, “*Quiet - oh god!* - *shhh!*” even as she thrusts her hips up to him in pleasure. Robin smirks, staring at sex as he gives her clit several more sharp slaps, then goes back to frantic back and forth rubs against it.

Two minutes.

And fuck - *god* - that was - that shot her way up way fast - she’s close now, her sex hot and wet -
Jesus she’s wet - her assaulted clit throbbing under his thick fingers as her chest heaves with her excitement.

“Close, aren’t you, darling?” he rasps, and she shakes her head yes - her clit is throbbing - ohhh god - she’s close, just a little more - shit - just a little more. She twists her hands in the fabric of the couch, works her hips frantically, and he brings his other hand over to slide up inside of her, oh god, four fingers this time, and she jerks up as he gives her quick shallow thrusts - fuck - that’s it, so close, god just like that.

“So fucking hot,” Robin murmurs, his hands working fast inside and outside of her as she writhes on the chaise, oh god.

One minute.

She’s tightening, ramping up - oh god it feels so good - the pleasure building, rushing up faasst. Regina tilts her head back and rocks her hips up to him, gasping, “Oh god, don’t stop, right-there-right-there-right-oh-ohhh!” Her thighs shake, so close to tipping over the edge, so close, but suddenly he pulls his fingers out of her and her eyes snap open - he’s still working her clit but - fuckfuckfuck oh god - he jerks his sweatpants down, grabs his hard length, smoothing his slick fingers over the head of it then shifting forward to slam himself deep into her. Regina cries out loudly - instantly shatters - her abs, thighs, everything shaking hard as her inner muscles spasm on him. He’s thrusting slowly, buried deep, still flurrying against her clit as her internal muscles squeeze him - mmmh, oh god - he’s thick, she’s so stretched with him inside of her, it feels incredible to clench on him like this - jesus. She works her hips against him, rolling them up to take him a little deeper, his fingers finally leaving her clit to wrap around her waist, both hands lightly pushing and pulling her, working his cock nice and easy, in and out of her soaked sex as she slowly, slowly comes down.

Robin increases the speed of his thrusts, and Regina puts her hand over her mouth to try to shut herself up, because she was so stupidly loud when she came, and fuck he feels so good, so good as he slides in and out a little faster, a little faster, ooooooh he feels good.

“Fuck babe,” he pants, pulling her harder and harder to him with each thrust, “Feels so good, so wet for me, so tight. Christ.” He speeds up, rolling his hips into her and pulling almost all the way out before he quickly slips back in, watching himself penetrate her. “Gonna come, oh fuck, where you want it?” he rasps, and she rocks her hips up to him, considering letting him come inside of her - wanting it more than she should - but then there is a noise that’s completely out of place, and they both freeze.

“C’mon, Henry!” Roland calls down the basement stairs, “Get up! We have to check if Santa came!”

Robin is out of her and on his feet in less than a second, shoving her shorts in her hands as she comes up off the couch like she’s on fire. She hurriedly unbunches her bottoms - shit-shit-shit - this was so fucking stupid, and he hisses, “Stall them!”

“What?!” she gasps, hopping two steps as she gets her shorts and underwear up past her knees, then finally to her hips, already headed in the direction of the basement.

He motions to his very blatant erection and says, “I can’t bloody do it! You stall, I’ll get the gifts and cookies.”

There is a second of silence as they stare at each other, then burst into muffled laughter as Regina nods, because it truly is their only option - he absolutely cannot go stall the boys with that waving around. She smooths her hands through her hair, using the elastic band on her wrist to sweep it into a messy ponytail as she approaches the door that leads to the basement, scrubbing her fingers over her
eyes and trying to not look like she just got fucked in the living room.

Through the door she hears the sound of Roland’s groaning frustration, then the heavy stomp of his footsteps as he heads back down the stairs, on his way, no doubt, to get Henry out of bed. Regina has never been more relieved to have a son who is so not a morning person in her entire life.

By some ridiculous stroke of luck, a Christmas Miracle perhaps, Robin manages to get all the gifts under the tree and the cookies and milk put down just in time, so when Regina epically fails at stalling the boys, all is perfect and waiting for them, just as it should have been.

Regina looks guiltily at him as he sits next to her on the couch, a blanket bunched up in his lap as he encourages the boys to open another gift. She leans over while the boys are both busy tearing open a slew of matchbox cars, drops a quick kiss to his cheek and whispers, “Sorry.”

Robin grins, kisses her lips with record speed then pulls back as he whispers, just as quietly, “I’m hoping you’ll make it up to me later.”

Regina drops her eyes to his lips, fighting the urge to kiss him again, but then Henry is asking for help with some of the plastic packaging, and she shifts immediately back into mom mode, getting a big pair of scissors and helping the boys free all their new toys so they can play with them.

It’s a perfect Christmas morning, well almost - poor Robin - and she’s excited for this afternoon, when Granny and Ruby are set to come over for a big meal and more gift giving. Regina hasn’t ever been a part of a family like this. She’s had some wonderful Christmases with friends, with Daniel, with just her and Henry, but she’s really looking forward to seeing how this whole family gathering thing works.

You know, just in case.

Overall the day is really fun - exhausting - but fun. Regina enjoys hanging out with Granny and Ruby, has gotten to know Robin’s cousin quite a bit better over the last several weeks and she likes her - she’s spunky, passionate, and doesn’t bat an eye at going toe to toe with Robin or Granny.

Everything is fine until Ruby asks her how things are going with David, telling her all about how excited he’s been that’s she’s seeing him, how much he likes her, how he can’t wait for their next date - then on and on about what a great guy David is. Regina feels her face heat as she nods along with Ruby, trying not to contribute much, just agreeing where it’s appropriate and trying to change the subject as fast as possible. She can see Robin staring at her out of the corner of her eye, and she hates this, hates feeling like she’s a great big cheater.
She hasn’t broken it off with David yet because it’s been less than twenty-four hours since this thing with Robin started back up, and she hasn’t had a chance to speak with David. Plus, she doesn’t want to end it with him via text or over the phone. They’re not serious, it’s not like they’ve even discussed being exclusive, but she thinks that after all the bullshit she’s put him through just to mess with Mary Margaret, the least she can do is break it off in person. Plus, it’s Christmas - how big of a bitch would she be to break his pure, innocent heart today?

They’re all excuses, and she knows that, but she’s not willing to do anything about it today. It’s Christmas damnit. Christmas is not a day for breaking hearts.

Ruby brought mistletoe with her, immediately strung it up in the kitchen when she arrived, and Regina’s pretty sure it’s only so she has the excuse to kiss her date, a girl named Dorothy, every five seconds. It’s cute, and Ruby is obviously enamored with the girl, but it’s done nothing but send terror through Regina every time she accidentally almost steps under it. Already tonight she’s wound up kissing Roland, Henry, Granny, and Ruby about thirty times, and if she has to kiss Robin, she’s not sure what her reaction will be. Of course she wants to kiss him - she kissed him all morning - but she still doesn’t know what they “are”, she’s still with David as far as anyone else is concerned, and she knows with one-hundred percent certainty that if Robin catches her under that damn plant, he’s going to give her one hell of a kiss.

She knows this, because he’s been sneaking them from her every opportunity he gets - in the hallway, the basement, and the garage, just to name a few places. Any time she steps out of sight he’s suddenly right there with her, sliding his hands through her thick, heavy hair as he presses his mouth desperately against hers, or running his hands over her ass and tugging her hips to his, pressing her hard against a wall and sucking hot kisses down her throat, or slipping his arms around her from behind, sucking the side of her neck as he palms her breasts. It’s like he can’t get enough of her, and she feels the same - she does - but she doesn’t have a clue what they’ll say if they get caught, doesn’t have any kind of decent explanation for why every time she reenters the living room her cheeks are flushed, hands shaky, lips swollen, panties wet. Jesus.

Currently, she’s in the kitchen, topping off her second glass of eggnog this evening. Regina has always been a fan of it, her father used to drink it during the holidays and it just feels so nostalgic, so Christmassy to her that she makes a point to drink it in his memory every year. She thinks he would have liked that.

She turns to head back to the dining room table where the boys, Granny, and Dorothy are all playing a ridiculous game Granny got them called “Loopin’ Louie”. The game is hilarious - a little guy in a biplane swirls in a circle around the board, and players use levers to boost him in the air before he hits their little chicken medallions out of their holders. The game is fun, but the group is way too competitive for it, so it has turned into a hilarious battle where they’re all yelling, jumping up and down, and threatening each other as they try to get “Louie” to kill each other’s chicken medallions.

Regina won three times in a row and was subsequently banished for being a “ringer.” It’s just as fun to watch as it is to play though, and she pauses in the doorway, cracking up as Henry shrieks out his victory, arms going up and waving wildly as he gloats.

“Hey you two!” Ruby calls to her, and Regina’s brow furrows just as Robin’s hand brushes her lower back. “It’s mistletoe time!” she says excitedly.

Shit.

Shitshitshitshitshit.

Regina looks up and sure enough, she’s under the stupid mistletoe, and Robin looks entirely too
excited for her liking.

They turn toward each other, and he must see the fear in her eyes or something because all he does is
lean in and press a soft kiss to her cheek, which she returns.

There. That was perfectly chaste. Perfectly acceptable. Absolutely nothing to write home about.

They pull back and he smiles softly at her, nodding as they both turn to go back to the dining room.

“That’s not how it’s done!” Roland calls loudly. “You’ve got to kiss her properly Dad! That’s not a
real kiss!”

“Yeah!” Henry pipes up. “A real kiss! No cheating!”

Regina looks helplessly at Granny, but she’s giving her calculating look, and Ruby is grinning at her
like she knows their big secret, and fuck, she cannot figure out how to get out of it. At least Dorothy
has the decency to look sympathetic.

Regina turns back to Robin and he smirks, shrugs his shoulders and reaches for her. She goes
willingly, already used to being in his arms, already in sync with the way he moves and touches her,
so that when he leans in and kisses her - open-mouthed - her mouth just happens to be open too.
He’s aggressive, pressing his mouth hard against hers, one arm wrapping around her waist, the other
around her shoulders as he slips his tongue into her mouth. It’s a good kiss, deep, thorough, with a
good amount of tongue and several sucking pulls at each other’s lips. Just when she thinks he’s done
making such a big show of it, he shocks her - swings her quickly to the side as he dips her, tilts her
way back and completely ravishes her. His tongue strokes and flicks as he sucks at her lips - jesus -
and she’s helpless to do anything but let him, helpless to do anything but kiss him back and hold him
tight so she doesn’t fall on her head. Finally, he swings her back to her feet and they separate, both
breathing a little hard, her lipstick smeared all over his mouth and very likely hers too, and Regina is
acutely aware that everything has gone completely silent as they stare at each other.

“Damn,” Ruby says quietly.

Suddenly the boys erupt into, “YUCK!” and, “AGHH! and, “GROSS!” and several other shrieks of
disgust before they go running into the living room.

Regina licks her lips, still unable to look away from Robin, who for some reason appears to be just as
stunned as she is. Granny clears her throat loudly, and they both jump, turning away from one
another and heading off in different directions. Regina quickly shuts herself in her bedroom to fix her
makeup, panicking a little - okay - panicking a lot, because that was way beyond what she thought
Robin would do. Eons beyond it. Jesus. She has no clue what to tell Henry if he asks her about it, or
Roland, or any of them - jesusfuckingchrist - did he have to kiss her so… so… so BIG?!

She slinks out of her room about five minutes later, her lipstick perfect again and her hands no longer
shaking, but her temper is up, she’s twitchy and nervous in a way she hasn’t been all night. She’s
angry with Robin for putting her in an awkward position, for taking advantage of the situation and
drawing so much attention to them, because none of the adults here are idiots, and she’s fairly certain
that now they all know she’s sleeping with him.

Ughhhhhhh.

When everyone finally heads home for the night, Granny asks Robin to drive her the short distance
to her house so she doesn’t have to walk through the snow in the dark. Regina puts the boys to bed,
they’re exhausted and don’t put up much of a fight, and she waits for a few minutes, intent on giving
Robin a piece of her mind when he gets back. But he’s gone a long time, a really long time, and she doesn’t know what the hell that means, so she goes to bed instead, flipping the lock on her bedroom door for good measure before flopping face first into her pillow, dragging the covers up over her head, and praying that things don’t get any more awkward from here on out.
Robin spends the majority of boxing day with Kristoff getting the horses, equipment, and trails ready for the afternoon sleigh rides. He enjoys it - loves working with the two easy going Percherons, a smart black gelding named Falco and a sweet dapple gray mare named Rosie. It’s nice to spend the time with the big animals, getting them brushed out, untangling their mane and tails and generally loving on them - they’re wonderful horses and he wishes he could spend more time with them, vows to make it more of a priority this spring.

The work causes him to miss lunch, and by the time he heads in for the evening, he’s honestly in a bit of a mood. He’s probably just hungry, tired from the work, and he knows that the fact that he hasn’t had a chance to talk to Regina today certainly isn’t helping.

He was disappointed that she hadn’t waited up for him last night, but he can’t blame her - it was a long day and when Granny gave him an earful outside of her house regarding his behavior under the mistletoe, his subsequent explanations took a lot longer to give her than he expected. Granny’s worried, and he can see her point. Robin hasn’t dated, really dated in years, so the way he’s fallen arse over elbow for Regina is quite a surprise. It certainly didn’t help that he slipped and mentioned that he loves Regina, which managed to shut Granny up but apparently opened the floodgates for Robin, because he went on and on for about ten straight minutes listing off all the things he adores about the woman. By the time he was done, Granny had tears in her eyes, and Robin was a bit stunned himself. Apparently, he’s serious about Regina - really, really serious.

He wants to tell Regina this, wants to sit with her and have a real conversation about being together, because he still doesn’t know what her plan is with David, though he’s pretty sure she intends to break it off with him.

Robin heads up to the house and straight to the shower. He’s got that deep cold in his bones from being outside all day, so he spends some extra time warming up under the hot water, takes a few minutes to shave and trim up his beard and other things, just in case, then throws on a hoodie and jeans and heads back out to join the rest of the household.

Granny’s over tonight, and he didn’t really expect her but doesn’t mind either. Perhaps she can watch the boys for a bit while he has that talk with Regina.

Except that apparently, Regina’s not home.

Apparently, Regina’s on a date with David.

Because the gods are laughing at him. Because the world is laughing at him. Because he’s a big stupid git who has spent every opportunity with his hands down her knickers instead of speaking with her like a civilized person.
A hot wave of jealousy washes through him, and the next thing he knows he’s changing into his navy blue suit, cinching up his tie, and heading for the front door. Granny calls to him, warns him to rethink what he’s doing, of how he’s acting like a big possessive idiot, but he’s not thinking clearly, all he can think is *fuck* and *wait* and *mine*.

What’s even more frustrating is that he’s not usually a jealous man. He’s secure in his looks, in his ability to get and keep a woman, in his skills of satisfying a woman, but there’s something about Regina, about the way he feels when he’s with her that just pulls this outrageous testosterone filled need up to the surface. He wants to provide for her, protect her, hold her, sleep next to her, *fuck* her *and* make love to her, give her his heart and never ask for it back. He wants her to be with him exclusively, wants her to be part of his family, wants to be part of hers.

So if David-bloody-Nolan thinks he’s going to swoop in and snatch her away from him, just when he’s finally taken his shot with her, he’s certainly got another thing coming.

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Robin arrives at the restaurant - a nice Italian place in the next town over - and it’s thankfully quite busy inside. He tells the hostess he’s meeting someone, then skirts around the room until he can see Regina and David’s table, and slips into a small, two-person booth where he can clearly see Regina, but David’s back is to him.

She looks absolutely stunning.

Her dress is smooth black, with cap sleeves and an off the shoulder neckline that’s more than generous, showing off the tops of her perfect tits and the pretty gold necklace she’s laid against her chest. Her hair is down but curling softly, makeup perfect as always, and she’s leaning forward as she speaks to David, sipping a glass of red wine as she smiles at him.

Robin has to force his hands to unclench as he watches them, trying to calm his temper, his jealousy, trying to rein in this ridiculous possessiveness of her that is boiling through his veins.

A waitress stops at his table and asks him if he’s had a chance to decide, so he orders a glass of wine and tells her to come back in a few minutes for his dinner selection. He has no intention of eating anything, and, now that he thinks about it, he has no idea what his plan is in the first place. Rational thought floods him, embarrassment at his terrible behavior making him slam his eyes shut tight. What the *fuck* is he doing here? What the *fuck* is he doing?!

He thinks to leave, but the waitress is suddenly setting his wine down in front of him in record time, and he has to send her off again so he can think. He’s got to pay for the wine now, can’t just leave - he’s never dined and dashed and he can’t bear the thought of behaving even more poorly tonight than he already has. He pulls his phone out, and his wallet, thinking to throw some cash on the table and make a run for it, when he sees a text notification on his phone. He opens the message and, *Oh Fuck.*
**Her Majesty: Please tell me you have a reason to be here**

Robin cringes and does his best not to look at her - he’s certain that if she’s looking at him she’s staring daggers, and he already knows he fucked up - fucked up so bad. Bloody hell.

He tries for nonchalance, hoping she’ll drop it.

**Robin: Had a craving for lasagna**

The three little dots pop up and he sneaks a glance at her table. Her face is passive as she quickly taps out her message while David prattles on and on across the table, totally oblivious to the conversation they’re having.

**Her Majesty: Liar**

Robin takes a deep breath, because she’s calling him out without hesitation, and he realizes there’s no getting around it now, no escaping the situation. He decides he might as well ask her what he’s so dying to know.

**Robin: How’s your date? Having a nice time with Prince Charming?**

He hits send and immediately regrets it. He’s being childish, acting like such a prat, and he starts to type out an apology but then her next text comes through and he stops.

**Her Majesty: It’s wonderful, really glad I accepted it now**

Dread rushes through him. Is she being serious or sarcastic? He shoots a glance at her table but she’s looking at David, pretending she’s interested. He’s about to apologize, but he remembers that she hasn’t really responded to niceties, to patience and understanding. The one time he actually did get his point across, he was much more firm handed, told her what he wanted and then took it. And she liked it. He’s already in trouble, so he might as well go for it, might as well try something else to see if he has any better success. It’ll either work, or it’ll send everything up in flames - and since he can already smell smoke, he goes for it.

**Robin: You won’t be so happy tonight when I’m spanking your arse for being such a naughty girl**

The three dots appear and disappear several times, and he looks over at her as he sips his wine. Does he detect a blush on her cheeks? He smirks. Alright love, game on.

**Her Majesty: What makes you think you’ll be anywhere near my ass tonight?**

He tries hard to stop the grin but can’t quite. She’s playing along. She’s bloody well playing along.

**Robin: Not just your arse - first I’m going to suck on your pretty little clit while your writhe on my face**

**Her Majesty: First?**

**Robin: Then I’m going to shove my fingers inside of you, going to stroke against that spot that’s so sensitive, going to work you until you’re dripping, until your slick juices are running down my hand**

There’s a break in the texting as Robin finally places his order with the overly attentive waitress. When he looks back to his texts he almost chokes on his wine.

**Her Majesty: And where does my ass come into all this?**
Christ - she’s more than playing along now, he’s starting to think she’s just as filthy as he is.

Robin: Once you’ve made my fingers nice and slick, I’m going to slide them into your arse while I bury my cock in you. Would you like that? If I fingered your arse while I fucked your soaked cunt?

A few minutes pass without a reply, and he wonders if he’s crossed the line. Not every woman is into arse play, but - fuck - he hopes Regina is - she has such a beautiful, perfect one, not teasing and playing with it would be such a shame.

Robin: Are you wet right now? Are you wet thinking about how I’m going to fuck you tonight?

He hopes he’s got it right, wants to push her but if he fucks this all up again he’s not sure how he’ll come back from it. Her response is surprisingly quick.

Her Majesty: Yes

Robin’s jaw drops and he immediately looks to her. She’s staring right at him, and when his eyes meet hers she licks her lips and takes a sip of wine without breaking eye contact.

Bloody fucking hell.

Robin: What kind of knickers do you have on?

Her texts are coming fast now, almost in immediate response and he vaguely wonders how in the hell David isn’t put off by it, how he’s not asking her just who she’s paying attention to while she’s on a date with him.

Her Majesty: Lace thong - red

Robin groans softly to himself, reading and re-reading her text as he scrubs his hand across his mouth. He’s starting to get hard, is almost half mast based on just a few lines of text.

Robin: tights or stockings?

Her Majesty: Thigh highs

He’s harder now, fuck she’s hot - sitting there in her sexy little thong and stockings that are meant for fucking. He imagines pulling up her dress, tearing off her thong and sliding into her, and fuck he wants her so much.

Robin: Touch your tits, pinch one of your nipples

He wonders if she’ll do it - it’s risky and he can see why she absolutely might not, but he hopes she does, hopes she’s such a bad fucking girl for him. He watches carefully as her napkin suddenly falls from the table, and as David bends to pick it up, she pinches her left nipple, even twists it a bit as she locks eyes on him.

Holy fucking god. Oh fuck she’s hot. Oh god, he’s not going to be able to stop now.

Robin: Got me so hard

Robin: Want to suck on your tits

Robin: Want to pull your nipples into my mouth and make them red and raw and aching

She doesn’t respond but when Robin looks over at her, she’s running one finger around the top of
her wine glass slowly, shooting glances his way as she speaks to David.

Robin: Slide your fingers through your cunt and show me how wet you are

He’s pushing his luck now, because that is a much more difficult maneuver, much more lascivious too. He angles his body so he can watch her, and when her hand discretely drops from the table into her lap, his spine immediately stiffens. Is she doing it? Is she touching her hot, swollen folds? Gathering up that slick need on her fingers? Oh god, he fucking hopes so.

Her hand reappears on the table a moment later, and he’s really too far to see if her fingers are wet or not, but she - holyfuckingbloodyhell - slides her fingers into her mouth when David’s not looking and he instinctively drops his hand to his lap, rubbing down his hard cock and trying to keep his shit together.

Robin: You filthy girl

She receives his text and glances up at him, a hot little smirk on her lips, and he can’t help himself, he sends her another text before she has a chance to respond.

Robin: You need my cock in you right now, don’t you?

Regina gets up from her table and walks to the back of the restaurant toward the loos. He hopes that she’s drenched those tiny knickers, that she needs to go and clean up or risk soaking right through them. He knows this restaurant well, has taken dates here before, so he knows that the loos are all single person - thank god. He slips out of his booth and follows her, careful not to cross David’s line of sight as he makes his way back, noting which room she went into.

He knocks on the door - it takes a second knock before she opens it, and her eyes widen in surprise as he pushes her in, then turns them and presses her up against the door, flipping the lock with a loud click.

He drops his mouth to hers immediately, and she’s ready for him, her lips parted as she tilts her head and wraps her arms around his neck. They don’t have much time, he doesn’t want them to get caught - or really, he doesn’t want her to get caught, he doesn’t give a flying fuck if they ban him - so he rocks his hips against her as he pulls his mouth from hers and says, “You’re such naughty girl - can’t go another minute without my cock inside of you, can you?”

She digs her nails into his neck and bites his bottom lip hard, but doesn’t protest, and he’s so excited, christ he’s excited, he’s gotta get inside of her right now. God.

He grabs her hips and spins her around, rucking up her dress to her waist and squeezing her ass cheeks hard in both hands, then gives her a hard slap that echoes in the little bathroom. Regina gasps, but thrusts her arse back to him - fuckohfuck she likes it - so he spanks her again and growls, “You’re gonna take this cock - you’re gonna take it, and take it, until I’ve wrecked this tight little cunt - got it?”

She’s breathing heavily in front of him, and she doesn’t say anything, so he slaps her arse again, his palm stinging a little from the contact but she gasps out, “Yesss,” and it’s all the confirmation he needs. He unzips his pants, shoves his boxer briefs down and strokes his cock a few times, then pulls the string of her thong to the side and slides up into her.

They both moan - fuck she’s tight - and she wasn’t lying about being wet - she’s so, so wet it’s obscene, it’s amazing, it’s hot as fuck.

Robin starts to thrust, fast and smooth, pulling her back a half step from the door so she can bend
forward a little. He’s fucking into her fast and deep as she pants in front of him, and when she widens her stance to give him a little more room, to let him get deeper, he praises her, “Oh yeah, take it - that’s my girl.”

And his Regina? She fucking *moans* when he says that.

*Christ.*

He thought she might have this hot little submissive side to her, but fucking hell, he didn’t think he’d get *this* lucky. He changes his thrusts from smooth to punctuated, sharp raps of his hips against her arse as he slams her hips back to him - *christ she feels so good* - and he can’t help but continue their little exchange of words from earlier.

“You’re dripping, babe,” he says quietly, “You’ve been creaming your knickers for me all night, haven’t you? Hoping I’d follow you here, hoping I’d come pound this hot little cunt for you, isn’t that right?”

She gasps, “Ohh,” on another thrust, and then, “Feels so good.”

“Your Prince Charming out there?” he growls, fucking her harder, *harder*, “He’s never going to fuck you like this, he’s never going wreck this pussy like I am, never going to slap your arse and give you the punishment you need.”

Regina’s breath catches and she lets out a choked sob as she arches her back.

“Break up with him,” Robin commands, and he’s an absolute prick for making demands while he’s doing *this*. “I want you,” he’s starting to pant, starting to feel that tightening his balls, that tingling sensation radiating through his cock - he’s not going to last much longer. “I want you and me, just you and me - together - dating - I want you to belong to me and I want to belong to you.”

Regina’s tightening around him, and he knows she’s close, so he wraps one hand around her and shoves her panties aside so he can rub the pads of his fingers across her clit.

“I want you in my bed at night and I want to wake up next to you in the morning,” he increases his thrusts, “I want to be the only one to make you shake, and moan, and come all over my sheets. I want dinners, and movies, and dates - I want it all, Regina - have I made myself clear?” His voice is strained as he finishes, he’s so close - *fuck* - he’s gotta speed her up. He asks, “Still have that IUD?”

It takes her a second but she confirms it, gasps, “Yes?”

Thank fucking god for that. He says, “Good, ‘cause I’m gonna fill you up, gonna come deep inside of you, and you’re going to sit through the rest of your fucking date with my come in your knickers, got it?”

Her hips buck against him as she lets out these loud little, *ahh, ahhh’s* and her internal muscles start to tighten on him, her legs are shaking as he rubs her clit faster, faster, positively pounds into her, and asks, “Is that what you want? To be on a date while another man’s come drips out of you?”
She climaxes hard - jesus fucking christ - she comes so hard, clenching and spasming around his thick length, flooding his cock with liquid heat and she’s telling him, babbling, “Yes-oh-fuck-yes-yes-come-inside-me-fuck!”

He’s helpless at this point to stop, but her confirmation makes him moan, makes him lose control and slam into her a half a dozen more times and then - fuck - jesus christ - he’s coming inside of her, his cock pulsing and throbbing as he empties, as he pulls her hips tight to him so she doesn’t miss a drop, giving her four, five hard spurts - bloody fucking hell - he’s never come so hard, he groans as another thick jet gushes into her, and christ - she’s going to need more than just those tiny knickers to catch all this, and he really hopes that IUD is effective because it’s got its work cut out for it tonight.

He stays in her for a minute after, keeps a firm hold on her hips because even though everything they just said was arguably due to the heat of the moment, he meant every fucking word. She starts to straighten but he corrects her and says, “Oh no, I’m not through with you yet, love.”

Her breath rushes out fast as he stays in her, smoothing his fingers across her reddened arse as he says, “I meant everything I just said. Everything.”

She takes a shaking breath and says quietly, “Me too.”

“You’re gonna keep my come inside you, in your knickers now, yeah?” He confirms, rotating his hips against her, and she ahhhs for him, as she nods, says, “Yeah.”

He pulls out, and quickly shoves her knickers back over so she literally doesn’t let a drop fall, then pulls down her dress, smoothing it for her before he turns her around.

Her lipstick is mostly gone, her eyeliner a little smudged, and she’s fucking beautiful, absolutely gorgeous. He kisses her softly, and drops his forehead to hers as he asks her, “Why didn’t you break up with him, if you want this too?”

She smirks, running her hands up his chest to his shoulders, pushing him back a little so she can cup his face. “That’s why I’m here tonight, so I can let him down in person.”

Oh.

Oh fuck.

His eyes go wide with realization, and bloody hell, he is the absolute worst. What an idiot. He’s so, so stupid.

“And if you follow me like a jealous, possessive, asshole ever again,” she warns, her voice dropping and becoming serious, “I’ll walk away from this so fast you won’t know I’m going until I’m gone. Got it?”

He nods, and she pats his cheek roughly before she steps over to the mirror to fix her makeup and dismisses him with a, “I’ll see you at home.”

Robin pays his check quickly and slinks home, completely embarrassed by the awful choices he made today, by the priggish way he acted and the insane jealousy he let cloud his judgment. He’s so thankful she’s a forgiving woman, so glad that she’s still giving him a chance that he could do cartwheels all over the living room. He can’t imagine she’s going to be much further behind him, and the boys are already in bed, so he sends Granny home and tries to make up for his stupidity.

He pours her a generous glass of wine, runs a hot bath with lots of bubbles, sets up the Alexa to play her favorite playlist, and lights as many candles as he has in the house and sets them all over the
bathroom.

When she gets home less than a half an hour later, she looks tired, and a little wary of him, so he takes her hand and walks her to the bathroom, and leaves her to it without a word.

He’s a prat, and a jealous fuck, but there is one good thing that came out of all this madness.

He now knows that she likes to be sexted, spanked, fucked in public, filled up with his come, and dominated like hell. He cannot wait to see what else she’ll do with him - christ - the possibilities are endless. And fuck - if she’ll let him, he’ll try every single thing with her - there is absolutely nothing he’d like to do more.

He’s tucked up on the couch when she comes out of the bathroom about an hour later, smelling like apples and incense, her dark hair wet and waving, all traces of makeup removed from her pretty face. It never ceases to amaze him how gorgeous she is - whether she’s dolling up or playing it down, she’s a stunner, there’s absolutely no doubt about that.

“"We need to talk,” she says quietly, sinking down next to him on the couch, her chocolate-colored eyes serious as she tucks one leg under her.

Robin cringes, because he figured she wasn’t going to let him off quite so easily for his stupidity tonight. “Yeah,” he agrees, but doesn’t say more. He wants her to speak, doesn’t want to assume he knows what she wants to say.

Regina nods and tucks a few inky strands back behind one ear as she looks him over. “That was pretty stupid tonight,” she reprimands, but her voice is soft, low - not angry. “I don’t appreciate being treated like a piece of property.”

Robin nods, makes eye contact with her as he rubs his hand across his mouth, because fuck – he’s such a prat. “I’m sorry,” he says quietly, not daring to touch her. “I don’t know what came over me, I just, they said you were on a date with him and I lost my bloody mind.”

“Apparently,” she chides, but she reaches for his hand, holds it lightly between both of hers.

A moment of silence passes as he looks at her in the dim lamplight of the living room, and while he knows he was a complete idiot, he can’t help but feel just a tad defensive. She’s much too good for him in every sense of the word, that’s obvious, and he thought he was losing her, thought he’d fucked it up all over again without knowing what the hell he did wrong. It reminds him of their first time together, and it makes him cringe. He still doesn’t know what happened there.

“We have a problem,” she sighs, her thumbs running across the back of his larger, rougher hand. He starts to worry, starts to interject but immediately shuts his mouth when she continues. “We um, we’re so compatible in so many ways, but… I feel like we don’t communicate very well. At least, not when it comes to this.”
She brings her dark eyes up to his and her sincerity, her hopes, and fears are positively shining in them.

“I agree,” he says quietly, scooching a bit closer to her and rubbing his hands on her knees in what he hopes is a comforting gesture. “I don’t understand what’s happening,” he admits, “It’s like every time I start to think we’re on the same page, Christ, it’s like I fuck everything up without even realizing what I’ve done. You can ask anyone, I’m not even a jealous bloke - or at least, I never used to be.”

She smiles softly and murmurs, “I guess that could be taken as a compliment,” but then her features turn serious again and she says, “I feel like that too, though. And I’m not just talking about today.”

Robin sees his opening and takes it. “What happened, what really happened after our first time?” he asks, studying her face carefully. “I thought we had a smashing time, but the next day you were obviously quite upset with me, and I can’t figure out why.”

Regina sighs dejectedly and tucks her hair behind her ears. He watches silently as she summons her courage, wishing this was easier for her, hating that he’s causing her distress yet again. “It sounds stupid now…” she mutters, but he squeezes her knees encouragingly and she finally blurts out, “Why didn’t you stay in bed with me?”

Robin furrows his brow, so confused. “I told you, I didn’t want the boys to get the wrong impression,” he says softly. “I knew if I got back in bed with you, I’d never get on the bloody plane the next morning, and there’s no way I could’ve explained that to Roland.” He smirks, and she gives him this annoyed look, like she thinks he’s joking.

“I’m serious -” she starts, but he cuts her off.

“As am I.” Robin grabs for her hands again and tugs her closer to him. “Regina I…” now it’s his turn to be nervous, “I was so completely taken with you, I honestly didn’t trust myself to get back in bed. It was already four-thirty in the morning, and you know how the boys are up early. I was absolutely certain that if I got back in bed with you, I wouldn’t be able to let you go, and I knew you wouldn’t want the boys to see us uh, like that.” He gives her his best Locksley grin, hoping she understands his reasoning.

“I thought maybe it was a pity fuck,” she mumbles, looking away, but when Robin laughs, her eyes snap back to his, angry.

“A pity fuck?” he wraps his fingers around the back of her neck, catching a little in the damp, jet black strands as he laughs again, “If anyone was getting a pity fuck that night, it was clearly me.”

“You?” she asks hotly, “How on earth could you think that?”

Robin kisses her lips quickly, he can’t help it, she’s so fucking cute when she’s annoyed, and says, “Darling, have you seen you? Christ, when you pushed me away the next morning I was certain it was all a dream. I spent four weeks in England thinking I’d gone completely insane and made the entire thing up.”

That gets her to smile for him, finally, and he kisses her again.

“I’m sorry about that,” she says softly, her fingers playing with the collar of his v-neck t-shirt. “I thought you felt sorry for me, and I felt like an idiot, like I seduced you into something you didn’t want to do.” Regina looks abashed, and it just cracks him up more.

“Of course I wanted to do it,” he laughs, “I didn’t come on to you because I didn’t want to pressure
you into anything, didn’t want you to think all I wanted was to get into your knickers,” he tells her honestly. “And that’s the truth, I swear it,” but he can’t stop the smirk, can’t stop himself from leaning closer to kiss her cheek as he adds, “But you definitely seduced me, love. For two weeks straight. Christ – those tiny pajamas? It took everything in me not to jump you twice a day, and I had the sore wrist to prove it.”

Regina laughs and a pretty blush rises in her cheeks. “Oh,” she says sweetly, her fingers stroking along the sides of his neck. Then she turns serious again, but there is hope in her eyes as she tells him, “We really need to get better at this – at talking.”

He nods, and to his relief, she scoots over to cuddle up between his knees. Robin automatically wraps his arms around her, his nose in her still half-wet hair as she leans back against him, and he can’t help it, he has to tease her just a bit more as he whole-heartedly agrees. “Yeah, we’re rubbish at it,” he smirks, “So it’s a good thing we’re so bloody good at other things.”

Regina laughs against him, and as they relax together, he can feel the tension leaving them. It was a weird day, and he knows he’s to blame for this round of idiocy, but he can’t help but smile, can’t help but revel in this warm affection he feels, in how bloody lucky he is to hold her in his arms once more.
Henry comes down with the cough first, but Roland isn’t far behind him. In the span of twenty-four hours, both boys are a mess - coughing, their little chests wheezing, with stuffy noses and upset tummies, not to mention their bad tempers. They’re thoroughly pathetic, and Regina has the week off between Christmas and New Years, so she takes care of both the boys throughout the day and switches off and on with Robin at night.

Taking care of one sick boy was always stressful for her - she loves Henry so much, worries constantly even when he’s healthy, cannot imagine what she would do if something were to happen - and she feels that way now, but double. It’s so scary to watch both boys struggle, and she’s trying to be strong, calm, and put together, but it’s such a hard thing to do. Being a parent doesn’t mean she’s infallible, certainly doesn’t mean she doesn’t make mistakes, and when a little life depends on you - two little lives in this case - it can be downright nerve-wracking.

She’s had them both to the doctor and they’ve been on antibiotics and inhalers for a few days, so they’re starting to turn the corner back to good health, but it’s the night before New Year’s Eve and all four of them are thoroughly exhausted at this point. Robin’s been working extra all week due to so many camp staff being on vacation, so he’s gone by six every morning and often doesn’t get home until after eight at night. Between the two of them, they’re averaging about three hours of sleep, and their lack of rest is starting to take its toll on them. Both Regina and Robin are unusually reserved, going through the motions of their evening with their minds solely on the boys, when there is a knock at the front door.

Robin trudges over to let the guest in - it’s Granny, carrying a large tote bag in one hand and a giant container of soup in the other. She lets herself in quickly amid Robin’s protests, and starts unpacking her tote on the kitchen island while she barks at Robin to go out to the car and get her other bag. Regina is so relieved to see the old lady that she can’t find the will to protest when she informs them she’s staying tonight, and tomorrow night, so that Robin and Regina can finally get some rest. She sets them all up with steaming cups of chicken soup, complete with homemade noodles, and the salty broth does wonders at soothing the boys’ raw throats and filling their bellies, which have been extra sensitive thanks to the medicine. Regina has a little rush of nerves when Granny obviously notices she’s wearing one of Robin’s camp hoodies, and although her sharp blue eyes are clear and knowing over the top of her glasses, the old lady doesn’t say anything, and neither does Regina.

The boys beckon Regina over to the couch when she’s done eating, needing cuddles, apparently, because as she sinks down onto the chaise, Henry curls up between her knees, his head pillowed on her thigh, while Roland stretches out perpendicular to her, his little body sprawled across two seats of the couch as he drops his head in her lap. She relaxes back with them, stroking through Roland’s curls with one hand and Henry’s straight dark hair with the other as the television plays, and both boys are asleep within minutes.
She wakes as she feels the warm weight on her lap grow cool, and when she opens her eyes Robin is carrying Roland to the basement, the boy still sleeping as he shifts him in his arms. Robin returns after a moment, and Regina figures she’ll have to wake Henry - she can lift him but not when he’s a limp noodle like this - but Robin beats her to it - bending and picking her son up just as he did his, and carrying him to the basement without a word.

She’s still sunk deep into the couch when he comes back, a little awestruck by the way he treats Henry like a father would - god it makes her heart hurt and soar at the same time - and he smirks at her as he says quietly, “I suppose you’d like a lift as well?”

Regina laughs softly and shifts forward on the couch, taking Robin’s hand and letting him pull her to her feet. Without warning, he bends his knees, grabs her by the backs of her thighs and picks her up too. She laughs again, wrapping her legs around him, her arms tight around his neck as he shifts her up his body so her legs are at his waist, then starts for his room. She smoothes her hands over his neck, up into his hair, scratching softly, and drops a kiss to his lips, then to the bridge of his nose, his forehead, his temple, holding him close as he shuts his bedroom door, flips the lock, then turns and climbs into bed with her still wrapped around him.

They shift so he’s laying right on her, his hips nestled between her thighs as he braces on his forearms to take his weight off her chest, and they trade soft, soothing kisses for a few minutes. He strokes his fingers across her brow, her jawline, then cards them into her thick hair, and everything feels so good, so calming, that she knows she’s not going to stay awake for long.

“I should head for my room,” she whispers, running her hands up his back. “I don’t want to risk a scolding from Granny,” she teases, squeezing his ribs.

Robin drops another kiss to her lips and murmurs, “Lucky for me then,” he kisses her again, tugging at her bottom lip, “That she’s already asleep in your room.”

Regina’s brows shoot up, and Robin pulls back to bump the tip of his nose against hers, “It was all her idea, I swear.”

She smiles, because even if it was Granny’s idea, she’s certain that Robin didn’t fight her on it. “Is that right? Granny’s okay knowing we’re in your room, alone, in bed together?” It comes out of her mouth and she snickers, her nose scrunching as she adds, “Oh my god, I feel like I’m seventeen.”

Robin laughs too, nodding before he drops his head to press kisses to her chin and up her jawline toward her ear, pausing to suck softly at that sensitive spot just behind it. Regina breathes deeply, slides her hands up his arms, then moves one hand to his neck to pull his mouth back to hers. She slides her tongue against him, flicking and teasing before his lips part, then stroking slow and smooth through his mouth. He feels so good on top of her, so solid and warm, but she’s just so tired, she can’t quite muster the will for sex tonight.
Robin kisses down her throat to her clavicle, then sighs against her damp skin, raising goosebumps across her chest. “Would it be terrible if we just… cuddled tonight?” he asks quietly, looking a little embarrassed.

“Oh, thank god,” Regina rushes out. “I’m so tired.”

Robin smiles and sits back between her knees, pulling his shirt off and reaching for the hem of hers. She grins, slightly confused as he divests her of it, so she asks, “I thought we were just going to cuddle?”

“We are,” he says quietly, reaching for the button on her jeans, “But no one said we have to be dressed for it.” He slides the zipper down and she lifts her hips for him, eyes going a bit wide when he hooks the waistband of her panties too and drags everything down and off.

“Naked cuddling?” she asks, arching up to unclasp her bra as he works on his belt, then slides his jeans and underwear off.

“My favorite kind,” he says simply, returning his hot body to hers, their bare stomachs connecting and making the air in her lungs catch. God, he feels good against her.

Robin drops his head to kiss along her collarbones, from one side all the way to the other, muttering, “Christ, you’re so soft.” He pauses so his tongue can make a little circle in the dip between them before he sucks lightly, then presses kisses down her sternum. His touch is gentle, sweet - how he manages to make her feel so good, so beautiful, she doesn’t know, but it’s certainly one of the many things she loves about him. She strokes her hands through his hair as he places a few more kisses to her chest, then slides down a little more, kissing across the tops of her breasts as her pulse quickens. If the plan is to cuddle and sleep, he’s getting into dangerous territory quickly. Regina opens her mouth to tell him that, to warn him to move back up before he gets too carried away, but he sucks her soft nipple between his lips before she has the chance, and she squeezes her eyes shut as her breath rushes out. Jesus that feels good.

He works her nipple between his smooth lips, running his tongue around the sensitive skin, flicking at the tip until it tightens for him, growing more sensitive as he runs the flat of his tongue over her then goes back to sucking. Regina fights the urge to roll her hips - they literally just agreed to cuddle - but what he’s doing feels so sensual, so perfect and - goddd - she knows she’s being selfish, and lazy, but she kind of hopes he gets her off like this before they go to sleep. He sucks slow, hot kisses along the swell of her breast, then slides over, going right for her other nipple now and sucking on it in long, slow pulses. She lets out a soft, mmm as he works his mouth over her, the wet heat and slow suction feels incredible, erotic and soothing all at once. He teases her sensitive tip until it’s nice and hard, laves over and around it, then peppers her breast with kisses, causing her nipple to tighten further when the cool air hits her moist skin. He sucks on her again, a little more intense this time, tugging her sensitive peak into his mouth and rubbing at it with his tongue as he sucks - arousal shoots through her, and she can’t stop her hips from swiveling up against him this time.

“Hey,” she breathes as he switches back to her other breast, “Feels so good,” she murmurs as he kisses her nipple then looks up at her, “But if you keep going I’m gonna to be too worked up to sleep.”

He looks sheepish and gives her a guilty little smile as he says, “Sorry, I got a bit carried away - haven’t seen these in ages, and fuck, I just couldn’t help myself.”

She laughs softly as he gives her another little suck to each sensitive tip, before he crawls back up her body to kiss her lips.
They snuggle in after that, he pulls the covers up and spoons her from behind, tucking his knees right against hers as she scoots back into him. He smooths his hand over her hip, up her ribs, and she smiles into the dark, knowing right where he’s going, and sure enough, he slips his hand around to cup her breast, leaving it there as they drift off to sleep.

She doesn’t want to go.

Robin and Regina were both invited weeks ago to attend Killian’s annual New Year’s Eve party, but for the life of her, she would so prefer to stay home. The boys are better today, are even up to playing with a few of their toys in the living room as Granny makes dinner for them, and she knows that she shouldn’t worry anymore, but she can’t help it. She just wants to stay home with her boys in her pajamas all day, even though she knows that she can’t back out on the RSVP.

She slept great last night, wrapped up in Robin. It was the first time they’d shared a bed all night, and it felt surprisingly natural, comfortable. Usually it takes her a long time to get used to sleeping next to someone - it took months of Graham staying over for her to finally get a decent night’s rest - but with Robin, god, it just feels so easy. She slept harder than she’d hoped, though, because they both overslept and didn’t have time for any extracurricular activities this morning before Granny was knocking softly on the door and telling them the kids were up.

So, if she can’t back out of the party, she figures that she might as well go all in. It takes her two hours to get ready, to perfect the look she’s planned for tonight, but she is instantly reassured that it was worth all the work when she struts into the living room and all four mouths - Robin, Granny, and both boys - drop open. She grins in response, because that’s what she was going for. She intends on teasing the hell out of Robin tonight, on driving him absolutely crazy for her so that despite even his best efforts, he won’t be able to keep his hands off of her. Not that he doesn’t struggle with that now, it’s just that she’s burning up for him just as much as he is for her, and after his stunt at the restaurant earlier this week, she wants to push back a little.

And this dress? This dress was made to push everything.

It’s a tight, bright red party dress that barely hits her mid-thigh, long-sleeved but completely backless, with a deep vee neckline that goes halfway to her navel. She’s paired it with sheer black tights and four-inch strappy black stilettos, straightened her thick hair and parted it to one side so it’s falling in her eyes a little, painted her lips to match and topped it off with an extra smokey eye.

The boys throw praises her way as she shrugs into her long, off-white wool coat, does up the buttons and cinches the belt, while Granny elbows Robin and asks casually, “What’s higher than a ten?”

Robin answers quietly, “You’re looking at it.”

She pulls her gloves on, and shoots Robin a smile, but the poor man, he’s still frozen with his mouth open.
Robin?” She calls to him, and he jerks his eyes from her legs to her face. “Are you ready?”

He breaks into a huge grin, runs his hand across his mouth as he laughs softly and says, “Not by a long shot.” He grabs his coat and they head to the garage, where he helps her up into his truck, and he grabs her hand as she settles in, looking up at her.

“You look bloody brilliant,” he says quickly, kissing the back of her hand, “Fucking gorgeous, jesus christ, babe, I’m never going to make it through the night.” He turns her hand over and kisses the inside of her wrist, and she can’t help but tease him as she strokes her fingers across his jawline.

“Who said you had to make it through the night?” she smirks.

He groans, leaning into the truck to kiss the corner of her mouth, careful not to smear her lipstick as his hand dives under her coat to stroke up her inner thigh. “Don’t tempt me love, or we won’t even leave the garage.”

“Just wait until you see my swimsuit,” she baits.

Robin makes this dramatic whining sound in the back of his throat, closing his eyes and tipping his head back for a second before he steps back and heads around to his side of the truck. He turns the engine and backs out of the garage, dropping the automatic door, then reaches for her hand and pulls it into his lap. He’s hard under her fingers, and she laughs softly, her fingers smoothing along his length as she says innocently, “Oops.”

Robin laughs, nodding and gently pushing her hand away as he starts down the driveway, “Oops?” he laughs, “Is that all you have to say for yourself? I’m going to be hard for the rest of my life thinking about you in that bloody dress.”

For all of Robin’s playful griping about how she’s killing him in this dress, he’s certainly not doing too bad of a job himself. He’s all cleaned up, hair gelled and pushed up in that way she likes, his neck clean shaven and beard trimmed just right, so that it’s not scratchy against her cheek when he leans in to whisper every dirty thought in his head to her. He’s in a light gray suit, no tie, so the top two buttons of his crisp white shirt are undone, and when he tugs on his cuffs a little like that, well, she can’t quite help herself from clenching her thighs in anticipation.

He’s so damn handsome with all of his clothes on, it makes her ache to see him with all of them off.

She’s pleasantly surprised that it’s a pretty good party. Killian has decent taste, if a bit eclectic, and he has a thing for topsail schooners, judging by the vast collection he has scattered throughout the place, but his music is on point and the house is full of people. It’s a lot like a college party for thirty somethings - there’s an enormous amount of top shelf liquor, a keg of some sort of craft beer (a hefeweizen from the fruity smell of it), a ton of confetti poppers, foil horns, top hats and eyeglasses with the year on them, and people darting in and out of the house in bathing suits to grab a drink before jumping back in the giant hot tub. It’s a pretty sweet house, and Regina is relieved that Killian
and Robin are such good friends, because they called dibs on one of the three guest rooms way in advance, to which Killian has locked and given them the key to, to keep it safe from salacious activities.

She’s standing in the kitchen, leaning against the counter as she chats with Jefferson, who looks exceptionally good in his paper top hat, while she works on her third Martini and starts to feel a little warm. He’s hilarious when you get him talking - he can hold his drink and likes to push the line around appropriate and inappropriate conversation. She’s having a good time pushing the line right back at him, and if she can judge by the way Robin has started sliding his fingers across her bare back, up and down her spine, it’s driving him a little crazy.

She doesn’t mind him touching her like this, it’s not like he’s dipping her in the kitchen for everyone to see this time - it’s a soft, light touch and her back is to the counter anyway. No one knows that she and Robin are together yet, and they agreed not to make a big deal of it for David’s sake. He really is a nice guy who let her off the hook without any hard feelings, and god, if he knew she broke up with him while Robin’s come was drenching her panties, she’s not sure he’d be so understanding. So they’re playing it cool, trying to keep their hands to themselves for the most part, although the way Robin’s skirting his fingers across the low dip in the back of her dress now is a little less than innocent.

Jefferson heads off to refill his drink, leaving Regina alone with Robin for a moment, and he can’t quite seem to help himself as he steps into her, lets his fingertips drag lightly down the deep vee of her dress, then dips in to caress the side of her breast. She moves closer to him, because his touch is magic, makes her feel so excited, so aroused, and he leans in to press his lips to her ear to tease, “Jeff’s as mad as a hatter, but at least he has good taste in women.” She laughs, because yeah, Jefferson definitely has a weird, dark side, but he’s been completely unashamed of checking her out and complimenting the hell out of her all night, all while seeming to understand she’s with Robin without any of them talking about it. It’s strange, because while Robin was so insanely jealous when he thought she was with David, Jefferson’s antics haven’t bothered him much at all. She thinks that’s a good sign - is infinitely grateful that Robin doesn’t seem to be a jealous idiot all the time, because she knows from experience that she’s way too good looking for that to be the only opportunity for jealousy, and she normally doesn’t put up with that kind of shit.

She’s pressed up against Robin, thighs touching, their faces close as they talk, his hand wrapped around her hip, when she hears something that makes her groan and close her eyes. It’s a high pitched giggle from the other room, and Regina knows without looking that it’s Mary Margaret. Damn.

She didn’t know that her step-sister was invited, but she should have guessed it. Almost the entire group of friends from David’s birthday are here, so the brat was bound to show up, but she had secretly been hoping she wouldn’t. Regina doesn’t want to talk to her at all, so when Robin suggests they join a few others in the hot tub, even though she knows it’s going to ruin her carefully straightened hair, she doesn’t hesitate in agreeing.

She changes quickly in the bedroom they reserved, and as Regina opens the door, her breath catches. Robin’s standing in the hallway, leaned back into the wall with one leg crossed over the other, talking with Belle as he waits for her. His chest is so gorgeous, god, and seeing him but not being able to touch him in the way she wants is thoroughly annoying. She’s hoping Belle will go away, but when she sees Regina she just greets her and keeps on chatting with Robin, who looks like he’s honestly trying to pay attention to Belle, in her cute yellow one piece with the ruffle at the top, but his eyes keep flickering back to Regina.
Regina’s suit is definitely not innocent. There’s no chance in hell anyone could look at her in this and call it anything short of sinful. She raises one arm in the frame of the door and leans into it, letting her eyes rake over Robin slowly, stopping at his abs to admire the hard cut of his obliques, a little relieved that his swim trunks are a solid powder blue and not something ridiculous like Killian’s, which have pirate ships and waves all over them and say _Thar she blows!_

Hers is a bikini - a halter with more than generous push-up and bottoms that tie on the sides. The suit is technically black, but it’s really a black lace over a nude lining, which on first glance, makes it appear like she’s showing off a lot more than she actually is. And did she mention that the bottoms are cheeky’s?

Robin finally gets rid of Belle, Regina’s not sure how, she hasn’t been paying any attention to their conversation (was too busy staring at his abs), and the second the other woman turns the corner of the hallway, he’s on her.

He pushes her right back into the room she just came out of with his hands on her hips, his lips on her neck as he mutters, “Fucking christ,” and “Bloody hell,” and “Ohmygod,” as he drags his mouth all over her. She had pulled her hair up in a high ponytail - she doesn’t color it but she knows how bad chlorine is for it - so he has completely unrestricted access to her neck, which he takes full advantage of. He licks and kisses and sucks her soft, sensitive skin, nipping a little in his excitement, and _jesus_ she wants him, she wants him bad - he’s so hard and muscled under her hands, hot to the touch - _god he feels good_ - but - _mmm_ - oh god, if he keeps marking her up like this they won’t be able to rejoin the party at all.

She pulls back from him, and he follows like a magnet, unable to extract his mouth from her, which makes her laugh a little and say, “Hey, easy - _hey_.

Robin finally comes up for air, and she grins at him, says, “If you leave teeth marks all over me, we won’t be able to get in the hot tub.”

He dives back in, his hands framing her face and tipping her head back as he presses hot, open-mouth kisses up her throat, nips at her chin and kisses her lips hard before he says, “Fuck the hot tub.”

She laughs again, a little breathless, “We’re supposed to behave tonight, remember?”

Robin groans and drops his hands from her, takes a step back and tries to collect himself.

“You know,” she says, stepping up and wiping her lipstick from his mouth, “There’s something about delayed gratification that just makes things so much more… rewarding.” She runs her fingers over his groin, smirking when she finds him half hard for her - god he’s easy to get hard. Apparently, he wasn’t kidding about the effect that her dress and her bikini have on him. “C’mon,” she says, grabbing his hand and leading him to the doorway.

When he finally sees the back of her, finally sees that her bottoms only cover half her ass, he groans loudly and says, “Oh god, you’re serious with this? Are you sure you didn’t confuse your lingerie for your bikini?” He steps up close and palms both cheeks for good measure.

Regina gives him a sultry smirk and says, “Oh, no, my lingerie is much more revealing.” He groans again, and she laughs as she opens the bedroom door and drops her voice, letting it go a little raspy as she flashes her eyes at him. “Let’s go get wet.”
He’s not sloshed. He knows he’s not, has experienced first hand how a hot tub amplifies a buzz and has been careful to slow down, to even grab a water to split with Regina as they enjoy the hot water and jets, but it feels like everything is blurry around him. Or rather, everything is blurry except for her.

She’s funny, so smart, is able to get along with all of his friends, and it’s such a relief to be with someone that doesn’t create a bunch of drama. Marian hated all of his mates in England, called them bad influences and constantly gave him a hard time about them. It was so frustrating, made him feel insanely lonely and like a total prat when she made him choose between his friends and her, because of course, he always chose her. As he watches Regina integrate so seamlessly, as he watches her fall in and out of conversations like she’s been a part of the group for years, he thinks that maybe he had it a bit wrong with Marian right from the start.

Regina isn’t necessarily an outgoing person, not an extrovert certainly, so it’s not like she’s the center of attention - it’s this calming steadiness she brings to the group, a dry humor and biting wit that has them cracking up when she throws out a one-liner at just the right moment. Her thoughts and speech are refined like a queen, but she has this ability to put a devious little twist on things, on certain words and phrases, and fuck, it makes him hot. It’s also fun to watch, fun to see her create her own space in his circle of friends without him having to jump through hoops to make it happen.

She is so beautiful next to him - it’s snowing and the big white flakes are falling fast enough not to melt until they hit the water, so her gorgeous black hair is speckled with them, there are ice crystals in the little wisps at her neck and temples, and he knows she’s not cold but all he can think about is getting her warmed up. Getting her hot. For him. Right now.

He’s been dying for her all night, and he’s certain she knows what she’s doing to him. He’s positive she selected that dress on purpose to rile him up, and she’s doing a bang up job of that. Take, for instance, the hand she’s currently stroking up his thigh. Because being mostly naked in the hot tub with all her wet skin pressed into his side wasn’t nearly enough of a tease, oh no, she’s got to stroke the inside of his thigh while he tries in vain not to have an erection.

He fucking loves it.

He gets her hesitation - in spite of what she’d like everyone to believe, he knows she cares about other people, tries to be considerate and decent about not ruffling feathers unless they need ruffling
(in which case, she has no qualms about stirring things up). Her relationship with Mary Margaret is a good example of this, he thinks. He finally got the story of what happened out of Ruby, and after hearing the nasty, unprovoked things Mary Margaret said, Robin cannot blame Regina for taking a bit of revenge on her spoiled step-sister. Mary Margaret is a sweet girl, a wonderful employee at camp and never causes any trouble, so the fact that she could get so irritable, so envious of Regina over something so small speaks volumes to their complicated relationship. Robin doesn’t want to pry, so he doesn’t ask unless Regina brings it up, but he can tell that she was really hurt by the things Mary Margaret said to her, and the lack of apology that followed after didn’t help.

The hot tub is already full when a group of five more people come splashing in, and everyone shifts around to try to make some room. This leads to Regina sliding over onto his lap, and dear god, her tiny swimsuit bottoms make it feel like she’s starkers from the waist down. Christ.

The hot tub is deep and full of people so they’re both submerged up to just below their shoulders, and Robin takes advantage of the opportunity and drops his hands to her waist. Her skin is so soft under his fingers, Regina is built beautifully and he can’t help but admire her. She works out at home, uses his all-in-one gym in the basement on days that she’s not out running the trails, and all that effort pays off - she has long, lean muscles that are still pleasantly soft, with rounded curves that he cannot stop running his hands over. He splays his fingers over her stomach, stroking softly, casually, just relishing the feel of her smooth skin under his hands as she settles into him, chatting with Elsa as she sips on her martini. Elsa’s nice - pretty and very smart - he’s not surprised that Regina gets along with her, they’re both strong women with fiery tempers and a dry sense of humor - he wonders if they’ll turn out to be fast friends. He’s mulling it over, trying to think up activities the two of them might enjoy doing together, when he hears a woman’s boisterous laugh, accompanied by a thick Scottish accent and a slew of profanity, and a shot of dread rushes through him.

Bugger.

If it’s fiery tempers and passionate ideals up for discussion, Merida is the lass for the job. She’s a bit too raucous for Robin’s taste, a bit unruly, but she’s beautiful in her own way, even with all that barmy red hair frizzing about as the humidity hits her. He likes Merida, knows her well, so her presence isn’t what has him worried, it’s the ink on his forearm that does.

He wasn’t entirely honest with Regina when she asked him about his tattoo - he had embellished certain elements to rile her up and never bothered to correct the story after that. He has a terrible feeling that Merida will though - she’s a bloody loudmouth and once she notices he’s got Regina on his lap, he’s pretty sure she’s going to try to embarrass him.

Robin has known Merida since they were children. She’s quite a bit younger, but he was best mates with her older brother, William, until, well, until he wasn’t.

Robin doesn’t harbor ill will toward Merida, she didn’t have much to do with anything that went down between her brother and him, but, if Robin is being honest, she wound up being collateral damage. It’s completely his fault, he admits it, because he knew she had had a crush on him for years, and he took advantage of that like a right bastard.

See, the reason Robin knew so much about how Regina was feeling when she caught Graham and Emma, is because he felt exactly the same way when he caught Will and Marian.

Only he didn’t react nearly as gracefully as Regina did. Oh no. After pummeling Will half to death, he threw himself into a week-long drunken binge, swore a vow to celibacy, broke the vow to fuck Will’s sister (cue Merida) for no other reason than spite, then got his tattoo to remind him of how he could never trust anyone again. It had all seemed appropriate at the time, seemed like it might heal his broken heart, but it only made him feel worse, made him feel like he deserved the hand he was dealt.
He was going to leave Marian, was going to take Roland, who was two, and start a new life, but then Marian got the test results, the ones that told her that her body rejected the transplant and she was terminal, and everything just collapsed around him while he stood in the center of it, trying to protect his son.

Robin and Merida get along well enough now - the little hellion has slapped his face, quite literally, enough times in the years since that all happened to somewhat make up for his poor behavior. She moved to the area a few years ago to pursue her graduate degree - he doesn’t remember what it was in - something about bears, he thinks? - and she wound up staying. They don’t talk about their history - well that’s not true - Robin doesn’t talk about it. Merida likes to throw barbs at him whenever she has the opportunity, but she’s not nasty about it, it’s more like she just enjoys pushing his buttons, likes making him remember that he’s not a saint, and he figures he deserves it.

And fuck, now she’s eying Regina across the hot tub, and Robin knows he’s only got seconds to warn her.

He brings his hand up quickly, sliding it across the side of her neck and guiding her head back so he can get his mouth against her ear, frantically whispering, “The redhead there, she’s the lass I told you about with my tattoo - but the tattoo isn’t about her, it’s about her older brother who royally fucked me over, and she’s going to come down here and give us a hard time, I’m sor -”

“Who’s this dark slice of heaven?” he hears. Sure enough, Merida has worked her way over and is now planted on Jefferson’s lap, diagonally from them. Her bright blue eyes are sharp on Regina as Robin quickly stops talking and slides his hand down Regina’s shoulder and back into the water.

Robin makes the introductions and can feel himself tensing as Merida immediately starts asking Regina for her life story. He’s so uncomfortable with this, he hasn’t told Regina hardly anything about Marian except that she died, and he doesn’t fancy the idea of his pathetic life being presented to her by some vociferous hen.

Regina shifts so she’s turned to face Merida, sitting sideways on his lap, her left arm and shoulder pressing against his chest, and with her right hand she starts running her fingers over his knee as she fields Merida’s questions - answering a few, deflecting several, and downright fibbing through the rest. He loves it, loves that she’s playing games with Merida, is subtly giving it back to her for being so forward. Regina’s hand stroking over his leg makes him feel better, and he’s just starting to relax when he takes a sip of his beer and he sees Merida’s eyes light up - fuck - he’s certain now that she’s up to something.

“Say Robby, have ya brought yer bow outta retirement yet?” Merida asks, smirking.

“You know I haven’t,” he snaps. God, he really doesn’t want to talk about that.

“Such a waste,” she says, tilting her head, “I was hoping since you’ve started drinkin’ again, that maybe you’d be up for some of those other activities we used to do together.” She smirks, wiggling her eyebrows and making direct eye contact with him as if Regina isn’t in his lap.

Robin grits his teeth. He deflects, changes the subject with, “Haven’t you got some other poor sod to rake across the coals tonight, Mer?”

Merida grins and settles into Jefferson a bit more as she says simply, “Nope.”

A few side conversations bleed in and Regina is distracted for a moment, so Robin makes faces at Merida, trying to tell her to knock it off and leave them be, but it only seems to encourage her.
Beneath the water, Robin feels Regina take his hand, pulling it toward her, and he threads his fingers through hers, trying to stem his annoyance, trying not to let Merida interrupt the good time they’ve been having. Regina’s touch is soothing, she instantly makes him feel better, and he almost drops a kiss to the top of her shoulder before catching himself and having to pretend he was just shifting beneath her.

After a few minutes, her fingers smooth over his, unthreading them so she can run her fingertips across the back of his hand, stroke down each of his thick digits and rub little circles into his palm. She shifts her hand on top of his and brings his palm over to slide back and forth across her stomach, then tugs his hand down to her upper thigh and gets him started there with a few long strokes. Touching her helps - it helps a lot, actually. It takes his mind off of his worry, his embarrassment, the fear that comes from wondering if his past will ruin his future with Regina.

Would she date a man whose history involves so much failure, so much violence, so much stupidity? Would she let him anywhere near Henry if she knew how he had lost his temper, lost his mind? Would she understand it, when even he can’t explain it all? No matter the answers to those questions, he’s certain that it will change her opinion of him, and god, he knows how selfish he’s being but he’s not ready for that. Right now Regina looks at him like he’s something special to her, like she wants him as much as he wants her, like she might let him help her raise her son right along with Roland, and he cannot bear to think about how that might change if Merida doesn’t keep her bloody mouth shut before he has a chance to explain it all.

“So how long have you two been together?” Merida asks Robin.

He goes very still, completely unsure what to say. They agreed not to showcase their relationship, but they didn’t talk about this question. He doesn’t want to lie or make Regina feel uncomfortable, but fuck, what is he supposed to say?

“My dear, where did you say you’re from, originally?” Regina asks Merida, holding eye contact with the redhead as she sips her martini, pretending she didn’t hear the question.

There’s no way for Regina to have known it, but that question is about as perfect as it can get when it comes to distracting Merida. Her family has a rich history up in the highlands, and thankfully, she launches into her heritage and forgets about her own question.

As Merida animatedly regales them with the legends of her Scottish ancestors - going all the way back to the fourteenth century, mind you, he feels Regina’s hand on top of his again and she strokes his hand up and down her thigh a few times, slow, easy. She moves his hand a little inward - surely that’s unintentional - to stroke up her inner thigh, slow… smooth… steady, back and forth, back and forth. God, she feels good. Her skin is so soft, she feels amazing under his fingertips - he wishes he could kiss her, wishes he could run his tongue along the path of his fingers, wishes he could slide his hand up a little further...

She’s asking Merida questions, acting as if she’s interested in the stories (he can tell by the barely noticeable edge to her tone that she’s not), when he feels her fingers tighten around his, and on the next upstroke of her thigh, she slides his fingers - oh fuck - seriously? - bloodyfuckinghell- up under the edge of her swimsuit bottoms. He thinks he might start hyperventilating - is this - is she for real?

Her hand leaves his, apparently leaving the decision up to him, and christ - they shouldn’t. It’s obscene, completely inappropriate and crosses every boundary of decency. There’s fucking in a public bathroom and then there’s exhibitionism, and this is precariously close to the latter. So he really, really should not slide his fingers in further to smooth across her mound, he should definitely not stroke over her outer lips, and by no means should he slide two fingers through her slit to stroke her from clit to core.
But he does.

He’s been thinking about her for hours, been stealing touches and fantasizing about her all night. He runs his fingers through her folds slowly, trying to keep his breathing even, trying to stay included in the conversation so no one suspects anything. He presses his thumb to her clit, creating a little pressure, a little friction against her as he works the bundle of nerves back and forth. She doesn’t let on at all, just keeps on with the conversation as if nothing is out of the ordinary, and god, he wishes he could kiss her, wishes he could put his mouth on her - *fuck* she’s filthy and unbelievably hot.

He flattens the pads of his fingers against her, smoothing up and down again, teasing her entrance, pressing in slightly and swirling around and around, then sliding back up to press against her clit. Her hips swivel beneath the water and - *fucking christ* - he’s getting hard for her, can feel her slickness on his fingers as he dips shallowly in and out of her again. She’s still sitting sideways on his lap, and if they’re going to do this - *he really wants to fucking do it* - he needs more room to really work her up, so he stretches up to whisper in her ear, “Open your legs, you cheeky little minx.”

Regina smirks as she slides her right leg off his lap, letting it dangle in the water, and it does the job, gives him just enough room that he can slide two fingers up into her. She takes a deep breath as he does it, parts those pretty red lips in the shape of an O as she exhales, and *christ*, he wants her. He’s seriously hard now as he curls his fingers and starts to pulse them inside of her, working in and out a little, making slow strokes of his fingers at first, steadily increasing in speed.

He thinks that her cheeks have gone a bit pink, but it’s hard to know for certain from the glow of the hot tub light, which changes colors every five seconds or so, red-purple-blue-green-yellow-orange then back to red again. It’s a nice mood light, the change in colors and the turbulence of the jets make it impossible to see beneath the surface of the water, and it’s making him bold, letting him work his fingers faster in her - *curling and slipping in further* - trying to find that one spot - in a bit deeper - perhaps just a little to the left - she sucks in a quick breath - and he’s got it, smirkimg as he wiggles his fingers again, just to be sure, and feels her hand come up to splay across his abs, clutching at him as her hips thrust forward a tiny bit.

Robin stares at the smooth curve of her neck, at the graceful profile of her face and feels awestruck that he’s allowed to touch her, that she’s *asking* him to touch her. He circles the curl of his fingers, pressing against her sensitive inner wall, around and around, loving the way her hips are moving for him now, the way her fingernails are digging into his stomach lightly - *fuck* she’s hot - as her breathing gets shaky. He can tell she's aroused, taking deeper breaths than usual in an attempt to overcorrect for the quick breaths she wants to take, biting her bottom lip and sliding her eyes to his when he speeds up.

“More?” he asks quietly.

She lets her lip slip from her teeth as she takes in another deep breath, then nods.

He wants to groan - touching her like this, so intimately without being able to do much else is killing him, the thrill of getting caught, *god*, it’s got him so hard it nearly hurts. He wants to put his mouth on her, *all* over her, wants to stroke his hands over every inch of her gorgeous body, and he’s starting to lose some control, his own hips pressing against the side of her thigh to try to bring his aching cock some relief.

She must feel him against her, because her hand drops to him, starts to smooth and stroke over his length through his swim trunks. His breath catches as her hand moves over him, as she squeezes and rubs him as much as she can given their circumstances. He works his fingers inside of her a little faster, then slips out to press firm, steady swirls against her clit.
Regina’s back arches slightly, her fingers pressing down on him, and when he looks at her face she licks her lips, one corner of her mouth quirking up in a mischievous little smirk as she rubs her thumb over the head of his cock.

“Ten minutes to the ball drop!” David calls from inside, and everyone cheers, immediately getting up and out of the hot tub, grabbing for towels and sprinting the two steps across the deck back inside.

Everyone, except Robin and Regina.

His fingers are working over her clit quickly, rubbing, rubbing, rubbing, and the second the sliding door swooshes shut behind the last person, Robin grabs her by the hips and turns her around to straddle him.

“Fuck, you’re so hot,” he groans, pulling her head down to him for a kiss. “Such a tease - wanna be inside you, christ babe, gotta get in you.” He flicks open the buttons on his swim trunks with one hand, the other still wrapped around the back of Regina’s neck as they kiss deeply, as his tongue slides and plays against hers. He frees himself from the nylon fabric - fuck he’s hard - giving himself a couple of strokes to provide a bit of relief to the oversensitized flesh, then shoves the edge of her bikini bottoms to the side and pulls her down as he thrusts up.

Her breath catches on a high pitched, punctuated, “Hahhh,” and he fights the urge to moan - fuck she’s tight - she’s so soft and snug around him he can hardly stand it - he knows she needs a second to adjust but it’s taking every single ounce of self-restraint he has to stay still. Regina strokes her fingers through his hair, trading kisses with him, and when she drops her forehead to his and rasps, “Rub my clit, jesus, I’m close,” he can’t stop his hips from swiveling and driving up just a touch.

He brings his thumb to her clit at her command, swirling fast, the entire length of his cock buried in her as she drops her head back and moans. She starts to work herself on him, swiveling her hips around and around, then rocking back and forth, her fingernails biting into his shoulders as she loses herself in the feeling. It’s beautiful torture for him - she feels amazing, he can feel every move, every tremble - god he wants her to feel good, hopes she’s as into this as he is. He drops his free hand to her arse and palms one perfectly toned cheek, his fingers digging in as he encourages her to grind down harder on him.

He’s studying her face, memorizing the curve of her gorgeous full lips when a flicker of movement catches his eye behind her. Robin grabs her hips fiercely with both hands, trying to stop her so they don’t get caught, but she whines and gasps, “Oh god, don’t stop - I’m so close - please,” just before the sliding door opens. Regina immediately drops down on him, trying to make it look less obvious that they’re fucking, leaning her upper body back so it looks like she’s sitting in his lap just talking. He lets out a fake laugh, smoothing back a few flyaway strands of her hair as he says, “Is that right? I had no idea you liked to ride so much.”

Her eyes go wide for a second, then she catches on to his double entendre and says, her voice strained and a bit shaky, “Oh definitely, I’ve been riding for years. I really enjoy it.”

“We should do it together sometime,” he smirks.

Regina smiles, parts her lips to say more but is interrupted by a loud, high pitched, “Regina! I’ve been looking all over for you!” and her smile instantly falls.

Bloody hell. It's Mary-fucking-Margaret and there’s no escape, his cock is still buried inside of Regina, who looks like she’d rather drown than talk to her step-sister.

He slides his hands up and down her thighs comfortably as Mary Margaret launches into an
apology, obviously a bit knackered, but he thinks she's sincere as she drones on and on about how sorry she is. Regina rolls her eyes and Robin shifts under her, sliding out a little then back in a bit deeper. She clenches around him, and he remembers how close she was, a salacious thought running through his mind. If she's going to be forced to listen to her brat of a step-sister, he figures she ought to get some enjoyment out of it too.

Robin slides his has hand around and down, finds her swollen little clit with his thumb and re-starts those swirls he knows she fancies. Her breath catches as her eyes go wide, and he raises his eyebrows in challenge. She doesn't stop him, slides forward ever so slightly and works her pelvis over him, careful to stay still from the chest up, as his thumb whorls over her clit, fast and steady.

He feels her breathing pick up again, and when Mary Margaret asks her, “Can you ever forgive me?” all Regina manages for a response is a breathy, “Yes.”

Robin grins, because her inner muscles are starting to flutter around his cock, her hips getting a little jerky and thighs trembling as she digs her fingers into the tops of his shoulders as he speeds up on her clit.

“Are you sure? I just feel so awful about all of it and I can't bear to think how much I hurt you, I'm so sorry,” Mary Margaret continues, apparently completely unaware of what they're doing.

“Yes,” Regina breathes, her voice slightly high pitched, grinding down on him now, sinking as far down his cock as possible as she rocks her hips, his thumb pressing and rubbing fast on her clit, a flurry of motion against her. He brings his free hand up and shoves it under the cup of her bikini top, squeezing her breast roughly then pinching her nipple, twisting and pulsing the squeeze of his fingers around the little nub. Her lips part, and he switches sides, tugs on her other nipple then flicks across it with his thumb, matching the speed of his swirls on her clit.

“Oh thank you Regina!” Mary Margaret gasps, taking a step further in their direction.

Regina gasps, moans a desperate, “Mmm-hmm!” and starts to contract around his cock, the squeeze and release fast and hard on him as she comes - oh fuck- her fingers digging painfully into his shoulders as she drops her head down, burying her face in the side of his neck, gasping and shuddering around him. He speeds up on her clit, working the little bud fast and pulling another hard spasm from her as he grits his teeth with the pleasure, she's clenching hard, grinding so fucking hard on him as she comes undone - fuckfuckfuck - she's so bloody tight, feels so good, oh god.

He hears Mary Margaret ask, “Regina, are you okay?” and by some stroke of genius he manages to say, “Why don’t you give us a minute, Mary Margaret? It’s a lot to process.”

Thankfully, the younger girl takes the hint and says, “Oh, yeah I totally get it, okay,” then heads back into the house.

When the sliding door closes, Regina lifts her head, panting, eyes wide as she stares at him and says, “Oh my god, I can’t believe -”

He cuts her off with a kiss, because he refuses to regret it, absolutely refuses to allow her to feel anything but good. She shifts and he pulls out of her, he’s still ungodly hard but he doesn’t care, he just wants her to be happy, to feel good.

“Listen,” he says, cupping her face and kissing her again, “I know that was… borderline inappropriate…” she gives him a dubious look and he grins, “But I hope you don’t regret it.” Regina purses her lips but kisses him quickly, so he adds, “Plus, it was fucking hot.”
She breaks into a grin, reaching for his cock and giving him a few slow strokes. His jaw goes slack, but he can hear them counting down inside, and although he loves her hands on him, he really, really wants his New Year’s kiss with her. He bats her hand away gently and tucks himself back in, doing up the buttons quickly then grabbing her hand as he says, “C’mon.”

They make it inside with five seconds to spare, standing at the back of the crowd wrapped up in fluffy white towels, and when the clock strikes midnight he has absolutely no qualms about grabbing a hold of the terrycloth and tugging her to him. She kisses him back hard, kisses him much deeper than he expected, sliding her tongue against his lips so that he opens his mouth, her tongue sweeping against his several times before she finally pulls back. She’s grinning at him and he cannot stop from smiling too - fuck she’s pretty, he’s so lucky, god - then he dives in for a few more slow, lingering kisses as he wraps his arms around her, hugging her to him. The other guests are shooting off the confetti poppers and blowing on cardboard horns, the noises filling the room as everyone runs around, laughing and cheering and kissing each other. Robin takes Regina’s hand and skirts around the edge of the group, careful not to draw attention until they get to the hallway, where he breaks into a run, pulling her along behind him and into the guest bedroom, locking the door behind them.
Robin grabs her hips as he pulls her into the room, spinning her so her back is against his chest. His mouth descends on her neck, sucking and nipping as he walks her forward, his hands sliding up to palm her breasts. When they reach the foot of the bed he wraps one arm around her waist and puts his other hand between her shoulder blades, shoving her upper body down fast as he bends her over, pressing her stomach and breasts down hard into the soft quilt. He can’t see her face but she’s grinning at his desperation, and she lets out a throaty imeo when he grinds against her ass, pushing her hips back against him, encouraging him, trying to rile him up as she asks, “Oh god, can we do it like this?”

“Christ,” he mutters, his fingers slipping under the waistband of her bikini bottoms and tugging them down to her knees, then adds, “Yeah, babe, I’m gonna fuck you just like this.” He slides his hands over her round cheeks and squeezes, “Fast or slow?” he asks, kneading the muscles.

She knows he’s hard for her, knows that he’s needy and as desperate for release as she was a few short minutes ago in the hot tub, and she likes it rough, wants him to give it to her, so she says, “However you want,” and when his fingers tighten on her she amends, “Fuck me hard.”

She hears the rustle of clothing, then feels him pull her swimsuit bottoms off. He tugs at the knot on her bikini top, undoing it quickly and freeing her from it before he strokes his hands from the tops of her shoulders to the bottoms of her ass cheeks. He lightly kicks her feet apart, then she feels the slick slide of his hand against her sex followed shortly by the nudge of his cock, and her pulse hammers in anticipation.

He dips his tip into her - she rotates her hips in encouragement - and he slides in a little further, then out, working into her slowly. She’s grateful for it – she’s tight and still a little swollen from their hot tub activities, and he feels good as he gets deeper and deeper. When he’s finally buried in her, his pelvis pressing against her ass, he leans forward and kisses down her spine as he smooths his hands across her ribs and down to the flare of her hips.

“Ready?” he whispers against her, pressing a hot kiss to her back and swirling his thumbs in the dimples above her ass. She mmhmms in agreement and rocks her hips back, more than ready, wanting him to unleash – jesus – he’s always so controlled. She wants him to lose himself the way she just did, wants him to take what he wants, because she wants nothing more than to give it to him.

He starts to move slowly, sliding in and out at a nice, easy pace, and she groans against the sheets, turning her head and commanding, “Damnit – give it to me how you want to, I’m not going to break.”

“Really?” he asks, excitement and disbelief evident in his rough voice, his thumbs sliding into the cleft of her ass and spreading her cheeks a little.
“Now,” she demands, voice firm.

On the next thrust he slams into her, and she loses her breath, a loud *Uhh!* spilling from her lips as he bottoms out, and he hesitates, but before he can question her she tells him, “More.”

He starts thrusting in earnest then, his hips slapping against her ass as he holds her hips and strokes in hard, deep, his pace a fast staccato against the slow bass of the music bleeding in from the living room.

He feels so good – she’s wet for him, is getting slicker by the second as he slides quickly in and out, and she tucks her arms under her chest, propping her upper body up so she can breathe a little easier, so she can encourage him with little breathy gasps of *more* and *harder* and *just like that*.

He’s panting, his fingers holding tight to her hips as he fucks her, and she’s a little impressed that he’s lasted this long. She’s not ready to come again, isn’t close even though he feels incredible, and for the first time in years she’s not upset about it, isn’t worried that if he beats her to climax that she’ll have to go without. She *knows* he won’t let that happen, *knows* that he’ll take care of her, he’d do anything she asked of him, and it helps her relax, makes her want to push him along, knowing how long he’s been hard for her while he patiently waited his turn.

She starts pushing back against him, bracing her knees against the edge of the bed and using her arms to shove her body toward him, and he moans, lets out a slur of curse words as his hand smacks her ass, making her jump under the sting of it. God, she loves that, she likes to mix a little pain, a little adrenaline, a little risk in with sex, so she tells him, “Again,” and has to grit her teeth at the hard spank he gives her next.

“Fuck,” he grits out behind her, “Are you close?”

She shakes her head no, but adds, “Make it up to me later, want you to come.”

He groans, “Oh god,” as he raps his hips against her -hard-hard-hard-hard- *jesus* he’s strong, driving her into the bed as he moves, then suddenly he pulls out and is gone from her, grabbing for a handful of tissues as he comes, and she’s left draped over the bed, breathless, her ass reddened, and grinning in her triumph.

Regina pulls herself up and sits on the edge of the bed as he takes care of his mess, enjoying the view of his naked form as he crosses the room to throw the tissues in the trash. He comes back to her quickly, his fingers lifting her chin as he bends to kiss her then pulls back to bump his nose against hers.

“Shall we?” he asks, urging her back on the bed.

She wants to, but it’s just barely after midnight and she’s certain their presence will soon be missed. She bites her lip, considering, then stands, pressing her body to his as she kisses him and strokes her hands down his chest. “We should get back to the party,” she says quietly.

His brow furrows, and he slips his hand between her thighs, rubbing lightly through the slickness he finds there. “But you didn’t come,” he says quickly, thumbing her clit, frowning as if the notion of leaving her hot and bothered is absolutely preposterous.

She grins - god she likes him *so much* - kisses him again and says, “I did - not now but in the hot tub -” he starts to object, his other hand sliding over her ass as he tugs her against him, sliding his thick fingers through her slit, but she charges on with, “Make it up to me later hmm? When it won’t matter if you leave marks where people might see.”
That gets him to pause and she takes advantage of it, stepping back and heading for her overnight bag as she tells him with a little smirk, “It’ll give us something to look forward to.”

They dress quickly and rejoin the party, relieved when no one questions where they were, although Jefferson gives her a knowing look and she can’t stop herself from winking at him, grinning when he raises his glass in approval. They get fresh drinks and as Regina slides past the beer pong table Killian suddenly asks her to throw a “celebrity” shot. There’s only one cup left on each end of the table, Killian and Elsa versus Mary Margaret and Merida, and if they had been playing anyone else she would have declined. But she cannot pass up the opportunity to beat Mary Margaret, and especially that loudmouthed ginger who was purposefully trying to make Robin uncomfortable in front of her.

She steps up to the table and takes the ping pong ball from Killian, drying it in her hands and holding it out for him to blow on it before she takes aim, tosses the ball to the other end of the table, and sinks the shot. Everyone around them bursts into cheers - some of excitement, others of despair as bets are paid and several people congratulate her on her beer pong prowess. Regina can’t help it - she has exceptional hand-eye coordination, is naturally good at most sports - especially tennis, and it’s certainly not the first time she’s played beer pong.

Robin gives her a one-armed hug, kissing her temple before remembering himself and letting go of her, a guilty smile on his face. She’s not worried about it, she’s finding it harder and harder to keep her affection for him under control, is starting to feel like she might burst from holding it in. Thanks to the hot tub her hair is down but no longer straight, instead waving softly, and when he brushes a few rogue strands from her eyes then rests his hand on the bare skin of her lower back, she leans into him, unable to pull away from his sweet touches.

The party game changes to flip cup, and despite their best efforts, Robin and Regina’s team is eliminated early - she blames an exceedingly (and surprisingly) drunk Belle for the loss, but forgets about it entirely when Robin pulls her into the living room, where half the guests are having a dance party. It’s an excuse to touch, she knows, and she’s actually grateful for the opportunity to dance off a little of the alcohol before her buzz grows into something more. Not to mention that she’s curious if his rhythm in the bedroom stems from some other talent she’s unaware of.

The music is a mix of dubstep, pop remixes and some ‘oldies-but-goodies’ thrown into it. It’s fun and upbeat, there are enough people dancing that the living room is packed, and the lights are off except for the color changing LEDs on Killian’s entertainment center. They work their way into the middle of the crowd, a heavy, rhythmic beat hammering out of the surround sound speakers, and she feels Robin’s hands at her hips. She’s a good dancer - a perk of growing up with money, she supposes - she’s been dancing since she was five or so, one of Cora’s many things that a lady must be proficient at.

They move well together, he’s a decent dancer, can stay on beat and does more than grind on her ass, which is more than she can say for most of her dance partners. Like so many things, he makes it fun - spinning her once in a while, pulling her close and running his hands over her stomach, her ass, her thighs, pulling one leg up around his hip grinding - it’s all relatively tame, he’s not crossing enough lines to draw too much attention but she’s definitely letting him get away with more than she’d let just anyone. Regina can’t stop smiling, can’t stop laughing, a little shocked at how much fun she’s having at a party she didn’t want to go to in the first place - thank god she didn’t cancel.

The music drops to an unhurried beat, almost a slow song but with deep, dragging bass that vibrates through the room, and Robin pulls her in close, his hands splayed just above her ass as he drops his face next to hers.
“Having fun, darling?” he asks, lips against her ear.

She grins, pulls back a little to catch his eyes and nods. He tugs her a little tighter to him, their bodies pressed together from hip to chest. “You look so fucking good,” he says, the brush of his lips against the shell of her ear is enticing, and she smirks as she runs her hands in from his shoulders to play with the collar of his shirt. He’d taken his jacket off before flip cup and rolled up his sleeves - he looks classy and masculine, the scruff of his jaw against the clean, crisp white lines of his shirt is extremely attractive, and before she can think better of it, she slips the next button on his shirt open and places a kiss to the corner of his mouth. Woops.

Robin grins and slides his hands up her back, doesn’t try for anything more but is obviously happy about her lack of control as he turns her in his arms to press his front to her back. They move to the beat, and Regina raises one hand up to wrap her fingers behind his neck to pull him close, her other hand running down the side of his thigh as the bass thrums. Robin slides his hands across her ribs, up to brush the bottom of her breasts then down again to slide over her upper thighs. She works her body down against his, then slowly slides up, sure to stay in contact the entire time. When she ascends he drops his lips to her neck and sucks slow, hot kisses to the sensitive skin, and she closes her eyes at his warm, wet touch.

Regina lets the music move through her, lets her body shift against Robin as they dance. The party is loud, a few guests have gone but the majority are still going strong, so they’re relatively inconspicuous in the middle of the crowd as they touch and press against each other. The music picks up again, and when she turns, Robin nods in the direction of the guest bedroom, and she immediately agrees. They slip away from the party, both a little buzzed from the alcohol and the adrenaline high of dancing and touching so much.

Once alone, he steps up to her and Regina’s hands immediately raise to unbutton his shirt, her fingers swift and adept as she slips each one free. He keeps touching her hair, tucking loose strands out of her eyes, threading his fingers through the thick locks, stroking his thumb along her hairline as she undresses him. She loves the way Robin touches her - so unlike any other lover she’s had. Daniel was sweet and loving, always, but even he didn’t look quite so awestruck, quite so enraptured with her. It’s a little unnerving - appreciated, certainly - but the way Robin looks at her makes her feel things deep down in her belly that she’s definitely not ready to think about yet. She slides his shirt from his shoulders and pulls his undershirt up and off, immediately stroking her hands across his chest once he’s bared to her. God, she loves his build, loves how strong he is, how solid. She drops her head to kiss across his collarbone, her hands smoothing along his ribs and lower, dropping to work on his belt as she glides her mouth over the cut of his pectorals, stopping to flick her tongue at each of his nipples, getting excited when his breath hitches.

When she gets his belt off, she quickly flicks open the button and zip on his trousers, sliding everything down at once, no longer willing to take things slow. She wants to feel his body against hers, wants to press her lips to his hot skin. Robin kicks off his socks as she unclasps the back of her dress and peels it off, shimmying out of her panties and tights in the next second, and then there is nothing - no barriers, no prying eyes, no judgement - standing in the way of them. She wants to let go of everything and just live in the feel of him, let him take control so she can forget the stress, confusion, and anxiety of the past few months and be reduced to her baser instincts. She just wants to feel - no thoughts, no concerns - just feeling. She shuts her eyes and concentrates.

**Hot** - his hands as he pulls her to him, his tongue as he flicks her earlobe, his breath as he whispers in her ear.

**Firm** - his teeth as he nips across her shoulder, his thumb as he rubs circles on her clit, his cock as he grinds against her stomach.
Wet - the sweat at her brow and lower back, his lips as he sucks each of her nipples, her sex as he slides two fingers inside her and starts to thrust.

The thrum of the music that’s blasting in the living room deprives Regina of peripheral sounds, directs her focus to the rasp of Robin’s voice as the heavy bass vibrates through her chest in pulsing, constant rhythm. The lighting is dim, the only source coming from a small bedside lamp, and the warm glow makes his skin look beautifully golden as he moves up and down her naked body.

She strokes her hands across his back, over his broad, thickly muscled shoulders, up the sides of his neck and into his hair, scratching lightly against his scalp and running her fingers through the soft strands. Her body is hot, flushed beneath him, and she needs more, needs to feel him inside of her, needs that stretch within and the slap of his hips against her. As his mouth skates across her breasts, his tongue stopping to swirl and lave at the smooth, undersides, she wraps her fingers in the short strands of his hair and tugs. He moves up her body quickly, sucking hot, wet kisses against the edge of her jaw, up her throat to her chin as he threads his fingers in her hair and tips her head back.

“My god,” he breathes against her lips, “I’ve never seen such a beautiful woman in my entire life.” He pauses to kiss her, then pulls back again. “Can I… May I ask you something?”

His voice is quiet and serious, piquing her interest as she slides her hands across his lower back, nails scraping slightly as she nods.

He swallows thickly and she fights the urge to smile. He’s adorable when he’s nervous.

“Would you be my girlfriend?” he asks in a rush.

Her breath catches. She knows that’s where they’ve been headed, but having him ask makes it suddenly seem real. Fear washes over her - what if they break up? Where will she and Henry go this time? How will she earn a living? She doesn’t want to be in the same boat she just was with Graham - she wants to learn from her mistakes, wants to be a good mother.

Robin must see her hesitation, because he smooths his fingers across her forehead and backpedals, says, “I don’t need an answer tonight, darling, but it’s what I want, and I need you to know that, alright?”

Regina whispers, “I’m not…” licks her lips and tries again, “I’m not ready.”

Robin nods and gives her a small smile, “I’m in no rush - I just want to be clear, want you to know where I stand.”

“I want to,” she adds quickly, “I - like you… a lot. I just, I can’t risk it with Henry right now, I need, he needs stability, and I can’t…” she takes a deep breath and squeezes her eyes shut. “He’s so happy right now and I can’t fail him again.”

He’s looking at her like he wants to argue, but it’s nearly three in the morning and she doesn’t want to spoil the good time they’ve been having tonight, so she cuts him off with a kiss.

Regina slides her foot up and down the back of his calf, rolling her hips up as she kisses him deeply, her hands tight on each side of his neck. He’s hard against her hip, and she snakes one hand down to stroke him, sliding her hand up and down the length of him, feeling him harden further in the circle of her fingers. She shifts her hips and aligns them, rubbing him through her wetness then sliding his tip into her, swiveling her hips as he sinks in. His breath puffs out against her lips, and she lets out a soft, low Mmm when he’s all the way in, rocking her hips up in pleasure. He kisses across her chin, her neck, up to suck the lobe of her ear, and she likes the slow, sweet pleasure, but she wants to give
him more - knows that she’s just hurt his feelings - so she reaches for his hands, threads her fingers through his and whispers, “Hold me down.”

His eyebrows raise as he pulls up and asks, “You sure?”

She smirks, “You won’t break me.”

Robin tilts his head, a cocky edge to his voice as he says, “We’ll see.”

He jerks her hands up by her head, fingers still threaded together, and she grins as he presses his body weight onto her, his hips moving slow and steady as he starts to thrust.

“You want it hard, babe? You like it rough?” he asks, slowly pulling out of her then driving in fast, repeating the motion again and again, her breath huffing out with each stroke.

“Is this supposed to be hard?” she baits.

Robin grins, increasing the speed of his thrusts, sliding his hands down to her wrists and pinning her to the bed as he speeds up.

He feels fantastic, his thick length stretches her wide, the way he’s rocking into her strokes along her sensitive insides, lighting her up, pulling heat to her center to pool and lubricate him. She pushes up against his hands, testing him, and he holds her steady, doesn’t give an inch. She wants more though, more.

“Let me know when you decide to get rough,” she drawls, feigning boredom.

He furrows his brow for a split second before he twists her arms down and shoves them under her lower back, pinning her with her own body weight as one of his hands grabs hard at the crux of her neck to pull her down on his cock with each thrust.

“Better,” she taunts, but it’s high pitched and breathless, and he smirks when she rocks her hips up to meet him as he slides deep.

“Careful what you wish for, love,” he says quickly, rapping his hips and driving into her quick-quick-quick.

His fingers at her neck slide over, more central, stroking down her throat, and her pulse accelerates. When his fingers squeeze lightly she arches and breathes, “Yes,” watching with amusement as his eyes light up. He wraps his fingers around her neck, not tight, just letting her feel his hand around her airway, and when he does nothing more than that, she looks him straight in the eyes and challenges, “Do it.”

Tight - his fingers on her throat, her eyes as she squeezes them shut, her inner muscles as he slams into her again, again, again.

Sharp - her nails digging into her palms, her breaths when he allows her to gasp for air, his teeth as he sinks them into the top of her breast.

Throbbing - her clit as he flurries his fingers against it, her pulse in her ears when she gets light-headed from the lack of oxygen, her bottom lip where she bites down when he hits her g-spot.

She arches under him each time he slams into her, shoving her hips up to meet his, unable to stop the soft moans from forming in the back of her throat when he allows her to breathe. He suddenly pulls out, flips her over and hauls her up on all fours, then slams into her from behind, bending hard over
her to wrap his hand around her neck.

“You like that?” he asks, pounding into her.

Her breasts shake as he fucks her and she can’t - *ohhhh* - can’t answer, his grip on her throat is too tight for that, but he seems to realize it, shifts to wrap both hands around her shoulders so he can pull her back to him with each - *ahh, ahh* - thrust.

“You want more?” His voice has dropped an octave, accent thick and scratchy with exertion. “Think you can take it?”

In response, all she can manage is a throaty moan, her entire body shuddering with the force as he slams into her. She feels his hand in her hair and he twirls his fingers, grabbing it up tight as he pulls her head back, his cock sliding deep and *staying* deep as he tugs on her hair. She gasps, arching her back - *oh god* - he’s so deep, she’s tightening inside, her clit throbs and she’s so sensitive, tingling sparks jumping through her with every stroke.

The music is still thumping in the living room, so when he brings his hand down hard on her ass, the loud >smack< is almost entirely muffled. It makes her jump, makes her let out a hoarse sounding, “*Ooooh,*” and hiss through her teeth when he immediately does it again.

“You like that, love?” he asks, rotating his hips against her, his cock thick and deep inside of her.

“You like when I slap your arse?”

She *Mmm’s,* in response, and he slaps her other cheek, her hips bucking under the sting.

“You need this don’t you?” he growls, “Need a man who can take control, who’ll paddle your arse and pound your needy little cunt - you’re a bad girl who needs punishing, aren’t you?” he releases her hair in favor of grabbing both cheeks of her ass as he continues to fuck her, the - *ohhh, oh god* - slide of his cock a pleasurable burn that builds and builds as he starts to hit that - *mmm!* - sensitive spot inside of her.

A hot flush breaks across her chest, goosebumps rising under another slap of his hand, her skin warming. He slides one hand around to rub her clit and she whines with the sensation - *ohh, goddd that’s so, that’s mmm* - she’s so swollen, so hot for him, *jesus* it feels good. Robin presses down between her shoulder blades, pushing her chest into the soft comforter, her ass presented to him as he strokes his fingers through the cleft, fucking her hard as his other hand works rapidly over her clit.

He spanks her again - *fuck* - again - *jeeesus* - and she starts to tremble with the intense mix of pain and pleasure.

The sensation spikes suddenly - *oh god* - her clit throbbing as she clenches inside. “That’s it,” he encourages, thrusting **hard-hard-hard,** “Be a good girl and come for me.”

He switches his rhythm, giving her those long, deep strokes where he slides in balls deep, the press of his hips firm against her ass before he pulls out and does it again, again - *jesus* - as his fingers work her clit - *oh, oh god* - she’s there, just - *fuck* - one more thrust - *godd* - then she comes fast and hard, clenching everywhere - spasming around his cock, her hands balling into fists, her toes curling tightly as the rush runs through her - *fuck* - the pleasure intense and incredible as she contracts around him again - *ohhhhh* - and again. She vaguely hears his voice behind her, telling her, “*Yeah - that’s it, fuck, babe,*” then he pulls out, and she groans with the loss of him, her body sliding forward so she’s stretched out on her stomach as he grunts behind her and spills on her ass and the backs of her thighs.

After a few seconds of catching their breath, he cleans her up and they throw their pajamas on, just in case someone decides to come bursting in, and they spend several minutes wrapped up in each other,
tongues brushing, lips pressing soft, slow kisses, pushing and pulling at each others’ mouths. God, she loves kissing him, loves the way he feels next to her, on her, in her - *jesus* - he makes her feel good. She cuddles up against him, her head on his chest and his arm around her, the steady thump of the music lulling her, and she can’t quite wipe the smile from her lips before she falls asleep.
It’s easy to fall into a sort of steady state after New Year’s. Everything at the Mills-Locksley residence is basically the same, except that at night Robin either sneaks into Regina’s bedroom, or he pulls her into his. It’s not all about sex - it’s more about having some time alone to cuddle, talk, and just be together. It’s a bit like dating without leaving the house, and without clothes, so really, Robin thinks it’s better. He knows she deserves more, deserves fine wine and fancy dinners and nights out at the theater, she deserves it all, but with full time jobs and two kids it’s hard for them to find the time or the energy to do things like that. So they take what they can get - they have macaroni and cheese and Netflix, she steals his hoodies every chance she gets, they get a few quiet hours in bed together every night, and for now, it’s enough.

Robin has never felt so connected to someone. He loved Marian, he thought the world of her until the affair, and honestly, he forced himself to love her even through her unfaithfulness, forced himself to stand by her til the end, and tried his best not to hold anything against her. What he feels when he’s with Regina is different - it’s seamless and easy. He doesn’t mean it’s easy in a way that they never disagree - on the contrary, there are many things they don’t see eye to eye on, but there’s an unspoken acceptance that they’ll figure it out. They talk it through, sometimes they discuss things until they’re blue in the face, until one person gives or they agree to disagree. It’s a beautiful thing, to disagree and not have it mean the end of the relationship, and Robin feels relieved by it - the frustration and ultimatums he’s been given with Marian and in other long-term relationships is non-existent with Regina.

She’s taken the boys into town today to do some clothes shopping - both Roland and Henry are growing so fast these days it’s hard to find pants and shoes that last for more than a few months. He’d handed her his debit card as they left, and though she gave him a look like he was insane, he told her to use it for both boys. She argued pretty heatedly with him about it - she’s got pride and she doesn’t want charity or pity - but once he’d finally convinced her it was neither - merely payment so that he didn’t have to go shopping (which he loathes), she agreed but insisted that she would buy him dinner and something special if he’s good, whatever that means. It’s got him on edge, excited for whatever she’s planning, so he’s in the shower, cleaning up and ‘manscaping’ himself when the doorbell rings.

He towels off quickly and throws on a pair of jeans, foregoing his shirt because it’s probably just Granny, and immediately regrets his decision when he swings the front door open without bothering to check who it is.

It’s two women - two beautiful women - one tall, pale blonde with thick red lips, dressed in a pinstripe business suit, complete with a matching hat, and the other a thin woman with two-tone hair - half black, half platinum blond - in a heavy fur coat, way too much makeup, and bright red high heels. He stares at them for a moment then asks stupidly, “May I help you?”
“Hello, handsome,” the thick-lipped blonde says, raising an eyebrow and dragging her eyes down his bare chest.

“No wonder we haven’t heard from her,” the one in fur murmurs with a surprisingly proper British accent.

“Be a dear and do invite us in,” the other one drawls, stepping forward before Robin can extend the invitation. He finds himself stepping back for them before he realizes he’s just let two strangers right into his home.

He takes their coats and hangs them by the door before he finds his voice and asks, “Friends of Regina, I presume?”

“Of course, darling,” the Brit says. She’s wearing a white tiger striped blouse and tight leather pants beneath her big fur coat.

He starts to introduce himself when the other one cuts in and says, “Oh, we know who you are, Robin, allow us to introduce ourselves. I’m Regina’s oldest and dearest friend, Mal,” her tone is amused, almost teasing as she walks around his living room, checking things out.

“The friend with the moving company?” he asks.

Mal nods, praises, “Very good,” and he has a ripple of something shoot down his back, her tone and the look she gives him bringing to mind a riding crop and leather. He swallows.

“Cruella,” the other says, extending her hand to him so he can kiss the back of it. Quite the pair, these two.

“My apologies, ladies, but Regina isn’t at home, she’s taken the boys for a bit of shopping,” he says quickly, hopeful they’ll leave. They make him uncomfortable, jumpy, make him wish he had a shirt on.

He excuses himself to run to his room for just such a thing, quickening his pace a little foolishly when he hears their teasing protests, hoping that when he returns they’ll have decided to come back another day. Instead, they’ve both settled in at the island of his kitchen, and for the next hour and a half, he finds himself pouring wine while avoiding their ridiculous flirtations and answering their half-serious interrogation of his life.

They’re good friends, he thinks, to have come all the way out here from the city to visit her, to check him out and make sure he’s up to snuff for their Regina. Once he’s satisfied most of their questions, the three of them actually fall into a fun bantering conversation. The Brit is a bit creepy - she asks a lot of questions about horsehide and he wonders just what kind of fashion she works in, but he rather likes Mal, even though she intimidates the hell out of him. The garage door opens around six and the boys come barrelling in, Henry pausing to high five Mal and Cruella as he makes for the basement, and when Regina appears, she stops short.

The two other women immediately get up, sweeping over to her and dragging her off to her bedroom for a bit of catching up before Robin even has a chance to say hello to her, so he joins the boys in the basement for video games. He’s rubbish at it, can never get the little go-kart to stay on the track regardless of which character he chooses, and the boys take particular joy in bumping him off the track or throwing those stupid red turtle shells at him whenever he gets close to winning. It’s still fun - he likes spending time with them, likes that they can all do something together - and he loses track of time so that when he finally heads back upstairs, it’s almost nine. Regina’s door is closed, but a quick check of the driveway shows that the Rolls Royce the two women showed up in is gone. He
knocks softly on her door and finds her sitting in bed with his laptop propped up in front of her, glasses on and a furrow in her brow as she stares at the screen.

“Everything alright, love?” he asks softly, stepping into the room and closing the door behind him.

She *Mmm*’s in response and drops her eyes back to the computer screen.

He’s not sure what that means, and when she continues to ignore him he asks, “Shall I come back?”

“No, sorry, just a second,” she murmurs, tapping away on her keyboard for a few minutes before she mumbles a *goddamnit* under her breath that she doesn’t bother to explain, then flips the laptop screen down. “Come here,” she says, taking her glasses off and reaching her hand out to him.

Robin goes quickly - she has a strange, concerned look on her face and he wants to kiss it away. He climbs into bed with her, urging her back against her pillows as he presses his lips to hers, fitting his hips snugly between her thighs as he settles on top of her. “Your friends are scary,” he says, widening his eyes in mock fear, and she laughs against his lips.

“Maybe a little,” she concedes, stroking her hands up and down his back, “You should be happy they like you,” she pauses to kiss him, sucking softly on his top lip before adding, “They hated Graham, you should have seen the way they terrorized him.”

He makes an exaggerated grimace in response, then goes back to kissing her, unable to resist after having gone all day without her. She pulls away after a few minutes, pushing him to the side a little so she can reach for a small bag on the floor next to the bed. She holds it up to him, letting it dangle from one finger as she drops her voice to a sexy hum and says, “I bought us something.”

Robin pulls his hand from beneath her shirt and reaches for the bag, settling on his side next to her as he peers within. There’s a small box with a ribbon tied tightly around it, and he drops the bag back over the side of the bed as he gets to work on it. He gets the lid off quickly and pauses, looking to her face in excitement and shock.

Regina is smiling shyly, biting her bottom lip as he returns his eyes to the box and pulls the item out. “For me or for you?” he asks, running his fingers along the weighted chain that connects the two adjustable clamps.

“Me,” she says quietly, and he can’t help the little moan he lets out, picturing her wearing the nipple clamps, the rose-colored metal pinching the perfect tips of her breasts into hard peaks, the weight pulling on them as she rides him - *fuck*.

She smiles at him and adds, “I didn’t think you’d be the type of guy to mind.”

“Mind?” he says, “I definitely don’t mind, *christ*, I can’t bloody wait to see you in these. Tonight?” he asks excitedly, thinks better of it and amends, “Now?”

She grins. “We might have to wait until a night that the boys aren’t home - I’m not sure how quiet I can stay with those on.”

Robin lets out a pained little moan of protest then carefully replaces the clamps in the box. “Gonna kill me with anticipation,” he says, kissing her.

“My birthday is coming up,” she adds, giving him a sly smile. “It’s Friday.”

“What do you have in mind?” he asks, not wanting to presume that she wants to spend her birthday without the boys.
“Well,” she drawls, her fingers trailing down his jawline as they shift, him moving onto his back as she slides over him. “I’d like to spend Friday night with all of my boys,” his heart swells so fast he almost loses his breath, fuck he loves when she talks like that, when she says, my boys. “But how about Saturday night?”

She punctuates her sentence by dropping her lips to his neck, and there’s no way he can argue with her, not when she makes promises like that. And it’s not like they have to go without until the weekend, it’s just that he won’t get to see her with her tits on display for him, her nipples throbbing as he plays with the weighted chain, won’t get to see her shudder when the blood flows back into the hard little tips - christ - he’s got to stop picturing it, he’s half hard under her and he’s got six days before he sees it. He rubs his hands over her hips and down to squeeze her arse, rocking his pelvis up to her as she presses down.

“How about Saturday night?” he asks, sliding his hands up the back of her shirt.

“Hmm, not today,” she smirks.

He unclasps her bra - she raises and eyebrow and purses her lips but doesn’t protest - and he can’t help but slide his fingers around to push up the lace, his fingers immediately playing with her silky soft, not yet erect nipples.

He rubs his thumbs around and around the little tips, loving the way they harden for him, wanting to see them, wanting her naked on top of him. He reaches for the hem of her shirt and pulls it off quickly, sliding the straps of her bra off immediately after. He loves her mind, her personality, he’d love her even if she didn’t look like a pin-up girl, but christ, the fact that she does is completely unreal - she’s the fucking definition of cheesecake.

He palms her breasts, rubbing them and tugging at her nipples, then skimming his hands over the soft, smooth skin of her stomach, running the tips of his fingers along the waistband of her slacks. He slips the little hooks loose at her fly, then lowers the zipper, excitement blooming when she shifts so he can get her out of her pants. She’s left in only her knickers, a lace that matches the bra he divested her of, and god he wants to be in her, wants to get his mouth on her. It’s a bit early in the night for this, it’s just past nine and the boys are still up, should be going through their nighttime routine in the next few minutes, so they really should not start something they can’t finish. But then her fingers are shoving his shirt up as she sits up a little to run her mouth across his chest, and his hands are furiously undoing his belt before he can even think of stopping.

She nips and licks across his stomach, her hands splayed wide on his lower belly then moving fast, shoving his jeans quickly down before she shifts around on top of him and - jesus christ - pulls her knickers to the side and slides down on his cock. He’s not fully hard yet - nearly but not entirely - but the fact that she wants him so badly that she can’t wait drives his arousal sky high, his hands grabbing hard at her hips at the feel of her hot wetness surrounding him. She starts riding him almost immediately, swiveling her hips and bracing her hands on his chest as she works herself up and down his length - fuck - she’s so tight, feels so good. The way she works herself on him is so fucking hot, she’s taking what she wants, sliding up and down faster, faster, so that there’s little he can do but help her keep her balance as she rides him, her fingernails digging hard into his pectorals as she presses her hips down hard to grind on him.

He slides his thumb beneath her knickers to rub her clit, smoothing circles around and around as she pants and gives him those soft, breathy almost moans. It’s the noise she makes when she wants to be loud but can’t, when she wants him to know how good she feels. He thrusts up into her, bending his knees to brace against the bed, her head tipping back as they increase in speed, faster, faster - oh fuck. He reaches up to grab her breast, squeezing roughly and sliding his fingers to pinch hard on her
nipple as she rides him.

“Fuck, your tits are gorgeous,” he grits out, tugging her nipple then slapping the side of her breast. “Love when you ride me, love watching them bounce. Christ you’re so wet.”

She really is, her slickness coating him thoroughly, his thumb slipping against her clit as she starts to bounce on him. “You make me this way,” she breathes, speeding up, her breasts shaking, thighs flexing beautifully as she works and works on him.

God, he loves her, loves that she’ll talk back to him, loves that she’s so randy for him that she can skip foreplay and still be this turned on. He watches in satisfaction as her chest flushes, the pink starting just above her breasts and creeping up into her cheeks as she fucks him, and he’s suddenly close, has to shut his eyes because she’s too pretty to look at, he’ll come for sure if he watches her. She leans forward quickly, her hands coming to brace on each side of his head as her breasts brush his chest, and she gasps loudly as he slams his hips up in fast succession, feeling her tighten around him as she drops her face to his shoulder.

She comes fast, her climax quick and hard as she shudders and groans a soft, *Uhhhh* against his neck, her inner muscles spasming around him as he continues to thrust. He’s close too, opens his eyes as he grabs her ass, pulling her down hard as he pistons fast - bloodyfuckinghell - her wetness soaking him and making it so easy to fuck up into her - *goddamn she’s hot* - and - *fuckfuckfuck* - he’s coming, pulling out fast and making a mess in his hand, his neck arching as he strokes himself to completion.

She slides off of him and to the side, smiling softly, her eyes dancing, and once he cleans up and does up his pants he turns to her, tucks a dark lock of hair behind her ear and asks, “What’s got you smiling so brilliantly, love?”

“That was, _jesus_, I don’t know how you get me off so fast sometimes,” she grins at him as she meets his eyes.

“It’s a gift,” he teases.

Regina slaps his chest lightly, her eyes turning serious for a moment before she asks, “Speaking of gifts, when’s your birthday?”

He grimaces, because he’s been avoiding telling her that, knows that when she finds out he got beat up for her on his own birthday, she’s going to feel terribly guilty.

“Come on,” she prompts, poking him in the ribs. “I told you mine, fair’s fair.”

He grudgingly mumbles the date and her brow creases for a moment, then - yep, there it is - a look of pure guilt washes across her features. “Oh god,” she whispers, squeezing his bicep, “The day that Graham and I broke up? The day he came out here with his idiot friends and… _Shit_, I didn’t know, Robin, _god_, I’m - I’m so sorry.”

“Don’t be,” he soothes, turning fully onto his side to face her. “I’m not -” Regina gives him a dubious look, so he continues, “I didn’t _just_ get my arse kicked that day, you know,” he smirks, dropping his eyes to her mouth and brushing his thumb across her plump bottom lip. “I also got to kiss you for the first time, and _that_, darling, was one hell of a birthday gift.”

Regina just stares at him for a few seconds, her eyes shining and so sincere as she slowly strokes her hand down the side of his neck. She’s adorable - looks so concerned for a moment before she rubs her hand across her eyes as she clears her throat and says, “Ask me again.”

He furrows his brow - he has no idea what she means.
She laughs softly and strokes his cheek as she sits up and repeats softly, “Ask me that thing you asked me on New Year’s.”

Robin’s pulse jumps, his heart does a quick flip-flop in his chest and his tongue suddenly feels very thick. He wants to ask her, desperately wants her to be his girlfriend, but he still hasn’t told her the whole story about his tattoo, and he owes her that - she deserves to make an informed decision.

“I uh,” he says, grimacing when her face falls, “I need to tell you something.” She looks nervous and reaches for her shirt. He waits for her to pull it over her head and settle back down next to him, worried for a moment that she won’t - he knows she’s had her trust broken too many times for him to screw up now.

“I loved Marian,” he says quickly, “I truly believed in sickness and in health, in good times and bad… but,” he takes a deep breath, “She had an affair with my best mate, Will - that’s Merida’s older brother - and when I found out about it I… reacted poorly.”

She’s looking at him intently, her dark brown eyes fixed on his as she shifts a little, her hand falling to brush against his.

He shakes his head, his eyes feel hot as he corrects himself, “Poorly is an understatement. I kicked Will’s arse, took advantage of Merida, nearly drowned in whiskey and tattooed myself like an imbecile.” He rubs his hand across his jaw and says, “I was going to leave Marian, Roland was two at the time and I couldn’t get over it, but then she got sick.”

He continues, “Marian had a kidney transplant when she was fifteen. She’d been healthy for as long as I had known her, and aside from taking a few pills every day and some special care when she was pregnant with Roland, she always seemed fine.” He clears his throat, trying to fight the shame down, the humiliation of not knowing how sick his wife was or that she was cheating on him. “I knew she was acting distant, she had mentioned she wasn’t feeling well and she had missed work a few times, but that was all part of her affair - I didn’t think for a second that she’d forego her medical care for the opportunity to sneak around with Will. By the time we knew she was in rejection, she was too sick for another transplant.”

“Robin,” Regina says softly, taking his hand, but he charges on.

“So you see, I’m a bit of a failure as a husband, as a… as a partner. I believed her when she said everything was fine, I didn’t realize what was going on, and because of it, she’s dead.” He drops his eyes, no longer able to look at her pretty face as he confesses. “After she passed, I didn’t know what to do. Marian’s family didn’t know about the affair, and I couldn’t bring myself to tell them. Most of my mates took Will’s side, and after the way I treated Merida, I couldn’t blame them. Once Granny and Ruby caught word of everything, they convinced me to move to the States, offered to help me with Roland, so I took their offer and started a new life here.”

“Hey,” she says, rubbing her thumb over his hand.

“I just thought you should know what kind of man I am before you agree to start a relationship with me. I wish I could say I acted better, wish I had been a good person, I understand if this changes your mind, if -”

“Stop,” she cuts him off, her tone sharp. He clamps his mouth shut immediately and takes a deep breath, certain this is where she throws him out of her room.

“When Daniel died, the only thing that kept me from falling apart was Henry. And if you hadn’t been there when Graham cheated on me, I’m not sure what I would have done.” She pauses and
releases his hand to stroke her fingers softly down his neck. “After all you’ve done for Henry and me, after all the time we’ve spent together over the last few months, I have my own opinion of what kind of man you are.” He finally brings his eyes back to hers and she says, “So ask me again.”

He hesitates, gobsmacked by her understanding. He thought she was brilliant before, but bloody hell, he never would have imagined that this would be her reaction.

“Ask me,” she urges.

“Would uh,” he clears his throat, “Would you be my girlfriend?”

Regina grins, kisses his lips and says, “I’d love to.”

“Yes?” he asks, bewildered, kissing her and sitting up, turning them fast so she’s on her back and he’s leaning over her. “You’re sure?”

She mmhmm’s as he kisses her again, and when their lips part he says boldly, “If this particularly good mood of yours is a result of your girlfriends showing up today, they’re more than welcome to come back.”

She laughs against his lips and says, “I’m not sure you can handle that.”

He laughs too, agrees, and spends the rest of the evening wondering just what the hell she sees in him, because when he looks at her, he sees something that looks awfully like a second chance.

On the night of her birthday, Robin recruits the boys to help him make dinner for Regina, and they spend the evening playing board games together, laughing and teasing as the boys’ sugar rush on cake and ice cream. She loves the gifts they give her, he can tell she’s not faking - Robin helped the boys make cards for her, and on Henry’s advice he bought her a large bouquet of her favorite flowers, sure to put all of their names on the little card that came with it. For her gift he was at a loss, completely unsure if he should give her something intimate like he wanted to, or something a bit more proper, but in the end he went with the latter and bought her a laptop. She looks stunned when she opens it and for a second she thinks there’s something else inside the box; he spent too much but he doesn’t care, he knows how much she hates asking to borrow his and he refuses to make her use her mobile for all the things she needs a proper PC for. She sneaks him a kiss when the boys can’t see and scolds him for spoiling her, but he’d pay that and double for the relieved look she gets when she turns it on for the first time.

He has to admit that he was disappointed when Regina asked that they not tell anyone about their relationship yet - just for a little while so they can figure things out without everyone asking questions. Robin reluctantly agreed to it, he didn’t see what other choice he had, if she isn’t ready he doesn’t want to push her, so he’s been going along with their charade that they’re “close friends” and that’s all. He’s pretty sure Granny knows something is up though, it would have been hard to slip it by her anyway but asking her to watch the boys tomorrow night earned him one of those looks she
gives him when she knows he’s keeping something from her.

They cap off the night cuddled up on the couch with a giant bowl of popcorn while they watch Regina’s favorite movie, Roland and Henry piled on her in the chaise as Robin stretches out across the remaining seats. He doesn’t watch much of it - he can’t stop glancing over at her, she looks so content wrapped up with the boys - and when Roland shimmies up against her, Robin catches the moment that she kisses his son’s forehead and cuddles him in a little tighter. Roland looks so happy next to her, looks like he’s as in love with her as Robin is, and it makes him ache for her, makes him so bloody glad that she agreed to take the risk of getting involved with him. He has the urge to be that for Henry - to give her son what she seems to so easily give to his, and he spends the rest of the movie thinking up things he and Henry can do together, things that Daniel might have done with him. When the movie ends it’s well past the boy’s bedtime, and they get them to bed quite easily - mostly because Robin made them a deal that if they were extra good lads tonight that he’d sneak them some cake for breakfast tomorrow.

Somehow she convinces him that they shouldn’t have sex tonight, which he finds completely preposterous until she argues that if they get a lot of rest tonight, they’ll be able to stay up longer tomorrow night - when they’re alone, when they can be as loud and as filthy as they want, when he can fuck her in every single room of the house with those clamps on her tits. She falls asleep in bed with him, her legs tangled with his as they lay on their sides facing each other, and he strokes his fingers through her thick, dark hair, tracing the lines of her face softly with the pad of his index finger. When he can’t keep his eyes open any longer, he gives in and falls asleep with his hand resting lightly on the side of her neck.

She’s not sure what she thought would happen, but dangling over Robin’s shoulder, laughing and losing her breath as he slaps one hand down hard on her ass and carries her into his bedroom like a caveman isn’t it.

Robin throws her, quite literally, on his bed and starts yanking her clothes off so fast that he’s got her naked before Granny has pulled out of the driveway with the boys. She can’t stop grinning, she’s so amped up for tonight, hasn’t had a night like this in forever, since the early days of her and Graham, and even then it wasn’t like this. Robin is a little bit wild for her, flipping her over on her back then dragging her across the bed by her ankles so he can kiss her, his lips hot and fierce against hers as she grabs for his shirt, yanking it over his head and skating her nails across his lower back as he nips her bottom lip. She’s so excited she’s almost shaking, her pulse hammering hard as she works on his belt, which she currently has wrapped around his waist.

They’re moving fast and she knows that’s not really the plan tonight, but it’s been one whole day since she’s had him in her, and she’s missing him, is craving him like a drug. He drops his head and
slides down her body quickly, pressing hot, open mouth kisses across her chest, running the length of her sternum with his tongue and smoothing his hands over her breasts as he goes, then suddenly he’s up and off the bed, grabbing something out of his nightstand and quickly returning to her, sliding back in between her legs and kissing his way up her belly as he comes back to eye level with her.

“Can we try something?” he asks, kissing the underside of her jawline and working his way up to her ear.

“What is it?” she asks, breathless, running her hands through his hair.

“Would you let me tie your hands?” he murmurs, “I’ll use my tie so there won’t be any marks, and you’ll be free to move your arms, just not separate them.” He kisses her lips and pulls back to catch her eyes, bringing the black silk tie over to show her.

She hesitates. She’s done it before – not with a tie but with Graham’s handcuffs, and she wasn’t a big fan of it. She likes a man to be in control but her experience with Graham was less than satisfying – he got off in the first five minutes of her wearing the metal bracelets, and by the time he remembered to let her out she’d lost whatever excitement she started with and just felt frustrated and annoyed. But this isn’t Graham, this is Robin, and something in her tells her to let him at least try to make it work, so she nods.

“We don’t have to,” he says quietly, kissing her again, “You’re more than enough for me – it’s just, I think it’ll make you feel good, darling, really good.”

“Alright,” she says, skeptical but willing to go along with it. He’s so cute when he’s being considerate, and he really does sound like he’s doing it for her, not for him, which is such an odd feeling – to have her man think more of her needs than his own – he truly is one in a million.

He starts tying her wrists together, her right wrist resting on top of her left so her arms make a circle, and he cinches it tight enough that she definitely can’t escape it, but it’s not cutting into her either. When he’s got her secured he slips under the circle of her arms so she has her arms around his neck, and he says, “If you get uncomfortable, or it’s not working, or anything – just tell me and I’ll let you out, yeah?”

Regina nods and he slides down her body, pausing at her breasts to stroke and massage them, using his lips and fingers to pebble her nipples, sucking softly at first then harder, flicking at the little sensitive tips as she brings her arms above her head, stretching out and arching up under him. It feels good so far, she’s not nervous – she knows if she so much as suggests she wants out that he’ll let her loose, and it’s funny that she could be with Graham for so long and Robin for so short of a time, and she trusts Robin more than she ever did Graham. It’s a big part of why she listened to Mal and Cruella during their impromptu visit, where, after reading her the riot act for being “elusive”, they did nothing but tease her about how wonderful he is and question why the hell she wasn’t diving in with both feet.

“Can I mark you tonight?” he asks quietly, sucking softly on the underside of her breast.

She considers. It’s winter so it’s not like she’s wearing tank tops or low-cut blouses, but still, if Henry were to see she would be completely appalled. Robin looks so damn hopeful though, so she caves for him and says, “Yes – but only where it can’t be seen.”

He gives her a huge grin and goes back to her breasts, licking and flicking his tongue across her, then sucking hard just below her left nipple, marking her, and she smirks with his impatience, with his apparent need to put his claim on her. Men are so ridiculous.
Robin works his way down her body, pausing at her hips to kiss from one hipbone all the way across to the other, using his teeth to nip lightly as he trails his lips down the crease of her thigh and hip. She brings her hands down, only able to use her left hand but stroking it through his hair anyway, urging him to continue, to put his mouth where he must know she wants it. He takes his time, working his way across her mound, smooth and soft thanks to a solid waxing session – no one likes hair in their mouth – until he reaches her sex. He lays flat on his belly and spreads her thighs wide, stroking his hands up and down the soft muscles there, then darts his tongue out to skate lightly over her outer lips.

He’s teasing her, purposefully avoiding any kind of real pressure that can push her arousal up over the edge, and it’s making her crazy, making her needy and a little frustrated as she tries to arch up and get his mouth closer. He wraps his arms under her legs and smooths his hands across her stomach as he drops his head, finally giving her the flat of his tongue, running it slowly through her slick folds as she lets out a deep breath and feels her lower abdominal muscles shake. He runs his tongue through her sex over and over, lapping at her, keeping it flat and wide, pausing once in a while to suck lightly at her inner lips or to rub a few quick strokes over her clit, but always returning to those long, wide strokes.

She’s breathing deep, trying to keep herself from desperation, her arousal building insanely slowly with each firm stroke of his tongue. She hasn’t noticed that he’s been working his mouth further and further back, not until she feels his tongue slip lightly along the edge of her rear entrance, then slide all the way up to her clit, sucking lightly for a few seconds then returning to repeat the action. He’s venturing into interesting territory there – she knows he’s into that, or rather, she knows he at least did it with Merida, and she’s gotten close to doing it a few times to which she was not a huge fan, but she’s starting to think that maybe it’s because it wasn’t done right. What he’s doing right now feels… remarkably good, feels… exciting – she knows she’s clean everywhere, she made sure to prepare herself for anything tonight - so if he wants to put his mouth there, who is she to stop him? Especially when it - oooh – feels like that.

Robin slides one hand down to rub his thumb along the soft, smooth skin just below her entrance, skating up to dip into her wetness then rubbing down again, pulling the slickness further and further back, until he’s smoothing along the soft ridges at her rear. He – mmm - licks at her clit, pressing his tongue firmly against it and rubbing quickly side to side as his thumb teases at her rear entrance. Robin brings his other hand down to spread her open more, allowing the pad of his thumb to skate around and around as he works her clit with his mouth, her breath hitching as her arousal builds up, up, and he matches the movement of his thumb to the motions of his tongue.

Regina squirms under him, can feel her slickness pooling and slipping down toward her ass, and just as she’s starting to tighten, feeling the heat tingling in her clit start to pulse outward, he pulls back from her clit and slides two fingers swiftly into her sex. She jerks under him, a little Mmmm slipping from her lips at the sudden intrusion where she’s wanted him for what feels like forever. His fingers glide in and out of her easily, and – goddd – it feels good. He works his fingers fast and she swivels her hips up, tugging at her restraints, letting out a little frustrated huff when she can’t get out of them, can’t direct his movements.

“Need something, darling?” he teases, lifting his head to smirk at her.

“Close,” she pants, her hips moving on their own, trying to get his attention back on her clit.

“You’re close?” he asks, dropping his thumb to her clit and rubbing fast. “Do you want me to make you come?”

“Yeah,” she pants – Ohh that’s good.
“Not until I say so,” he says quietly, and she has to force her eyes open, has to make herself take deep breaths so she can understand what he means.

“Not until you say?” she repeats, dumbly.

“That’s right,” he rasps, his fingers working deep into her, curling and tapping quick-quick-quick against her – Mmm – inner wall. “You will not come until I tell you to. Repeat it.”

She’s breathless, his thumb flurries across her clit, his fingers pressing in deep and fast, and he has to tell her again to repeat it before she can finally gasp, “Won’t-come-til-you-say.”

“Good girl,” he murmurs, his attention drifting back to her sex.

She’s burning up – goddd – this feels so good, and it’s not, it’s not going to be long – ahhh – not if he keeps rubbing like that, just like that.

“I’m there,” she gasps, struggling hard to fight the surge of pleasure that rushes through her, gritting her teeth and tamping it down, forcing herself back from the edge as he suddenly pulls his hands from her, the cool air of his bedroom hitting her slick sex and making her moan with the sudden loss.

Robin places one warm hand on her lower belly, the heel of his palm just barely above her clit as he soothes, “Easy, not yet, not yet.”

When she’s calm again, he smiles and strokes his hand down over her sex, sliding his fingers through her slick folds and slipping them back up inside of her, starting a smooth, quick rhythm, his thumb ghosting over her clit as she jerks with sensitivity, her hips rolling up to him as he quickly reignites her arousal. He works his fingers in her faster, faster, his calloused thumb swirling over her clit - relentless against her - quickly bringing her up again, and her back arches as she feels herself spiral up. God, he feels good, she’s already getting close, can feel that tightness starting, her thighs starting to shake, her breaths getting shorter and shorter, neck arching back – ohh god – she’s so close, she whines, “A-almost,” and he immediately pulls away. She shakes with the effort of fighting down the pleasure, of forcing herself not to come, groaning loudly, her legs kicking a little with frustration and her hands fighting hard where she’s tied, needing to come, needing to release the tension that’s racing through her.

“Not yet,” he says firmly, both of his hands pressing down on her hips. She whines a little, not proud of it but not able to stop it either, and he repeats, “No, Regina.”

She takes deep shaking breaths – fuuueck – all she needs is a graze of a touch, a breath against her and she’ll come – goddd – it’s sweet torture. It takes her a lot longer this time to calm – he has to stroke the insides of her thighs and redirect sensations away from her center before she can stop her legs from shaking, but finally, finally she does.

“Do not move,” he says after another minute, sitting up quickly, and getting up from the bed. She starts to close her legs, desperate for some friction, for something other than the cool air, but he catches her, shoves her thighs back apart and repeats, “Do-not-move.”

She’s not used to taking orders - she’s always in charge, always the responsible one with a hundred things to take care of - and she’s well aware of what he’s doing - he’s offering to make the decisions for her tonight, and for the first time ever, she kind of wants to let him. So she does as he says and keeps her thighs wide, doesn’t give herself the relief that she so craves, and earns what looks like an approving smile from him as he reaches for the drawer of the nightstand once again.

Regina focuses on breathing, in through her nose, out through her mouth, tries her best not to think
about the way her clit throbs even without anything touching it, and when he comes back she’s outrageously relieved when he tugs his boxer briefs off and crawls back into bed.

Until she sees what he has in his hands.

Robin smirks as he dangles the nipple clamps in front of her asking, “Ready?”

She licks her lips, her pulse hammering in her ears and chest heaving with excitement as she nods quickly.

“I’m going to untie your hands,” he says quietly, reaching for her, “But you’re not to touch yourself, understand?”

Regina lets out a shaky breath and nods. She’ll try – jesus – she’ll try.

He gets her hands free quickly but instructs her to stay on her back as he drops his lips to her chest, sucking on her left nipple, then her right, pulling them into tight peaks quickly, her back arching under his hot, wet mouth. She runs her fingers through his hair, eternally grateful for the ability to do it, to feel him under her fingertips, but then he’s sitting back and he has the clamps, asking, “Shall I, or would you prefer to do it?”

She decides to do it, she hasn’t used these in years and has no idea what her tolerance is anymore, and it’s way too early in the night to risk a mishap. She sits up, careful to keep her legs apart, and gets the clamps on quickly, fumbling a little because her hands are shaking with her arousal. Robin kisses her temple, her cheek, the corner of her jaw and whispers, “So beautiful,” to her as she finishes tightening the second clamp. He pulls back and the look that comes over his face is worth every single penny she spent on them - he looks so aroused, so into this, so… thirsty.

She strokes her fingers along his jaw and drops her voice as she asks, “How do you want me?”

He makes a little sound in the back of his throat but catches himself, shifting back into his role as the person in charge of this scenario, leans forward to kiss her and says roughly, “On your hands and knees.”

She moans with excitement – that position is going to put the most pull on the weighted chain of her clamps, is going to cause the chain to swing on every thrust - jesuschrist – if he doesn’t let her come this time, she’s not sure she’ll be able to stop it.

She turns over onto her hands and knees, taking a deep steadying breath as she feels him shift behind her, feels his hands slide over her ass soothingly, running down the backs of her thighs and up again, spreading her cheeks and stroking his thumbs down the cleft, trailing them all the way to her sex where he flattens his fingers against her and slowly strokes her clit. “So wet for me,” he whispers, and his breath hits her lower back, causing a shiver to rush up her spine. “Always so needy for me,” his hand rubbing a little faster between her legs, “Do you fantasize about me during the day? Do you think about the way I suck on your hot little clit, the way I work my fingers inside of you?” He slips two fingers into her, and she shoves her hips back in enthusiasm, the weighted chain tugging lightly on her nipples – Mmm.

“Are you ready for my cock?” he rasps.

She feels his fingers slide out and she shakes her head yes, quickly adds, “So ready.”

He moans and she feels the head of his cock at her entrance for barely a second before he slides in, and she arches hard – fuck – oh god he feels good.
He immediately starts thrusting, long, slow strokes that drive him in to the hilt, quickly gaining speed, his hands hard on her ass as he drives into her. She’s starting to feel the pinch in her nipples, the clamps tugging hard at her the faster her fucks her, and she breaks out in a sweat, mouth dropping open as she sucks in quick shallow breaths. She’s so swollen, has been riding that edge for too long, everything is over-sensitive as he slides his thick length in and out, over and over, her nipples getting more and more stimulated with each stroke – jeeesus.

He increases his pace, slapping his hips hard against her ass with each stroke, pushing the hot pleasure up, up, up – oh god – and she hears him telling her “Not yet,” as she clutches her teeth and balls her hands into fists.

She’s making these ridiculous noises now, desperate, Hah, hah, hah’s, with every stroke, and she’s helpless to stop it, can’t control the press and swivel of her hips or the arch of her back, can only feel the heat radiating in her core, the pleasure streaking from the tips of her breasts, the tingling pressure inside of her building, building – shit – so good. She feels the slide of something silky on her shoulder, has just enough sense to glance over and see him slip his tie in front of her so he’s holding the two loose ends with the flat of it against her neck, and when he tightens up and puts pressure on her airway as he slams deep into her – fuck – her pulse jumps and her desire ripples through her so hard she’s afraid she’ll faint.

“Can’t,” she rasps between thrusts, “Close – “

He immediately releases the tie and increases his speed, one hand tight over the top of her shoulder as he tugs her back – ohhh, ohhh – her body shaking with the force. Her nipples are pinched hard by the clamps as he wraps one hand around her waist and pulls her upright so her back is pressed to his chest as he kneels behind her, her breasts bouncing, bouncing, the chain tugging hard at her sensitive peaks on every thrust. Robin’s hand slides up and he uses the quick release to free her left nipple, then the right, then drops his hand immediately to rub fast at her clit – ohgodohgodohgod – the blood flow returns to the ultrasensitive tips of her breasts, her pulse bounding fast and hard in them - shit-oh-god - everything is on fire, she’s so close, arching back against him - fuck – she’s so sensitive. He puts his lips to her ear and rasps “Now,” and she shudders hard, her entire body going tight, the muscles in her thighs rigid with tension - fuck fuck fuck – her clit is so sensitive, the molten pleasure is radiating out, she’s starting to shake, and then – ahhhh-god-oh-god – she finally comes, letting out a cry of relief as she jerks against him. He wraps his arms across her hips and chest, holding her tight to him as he thrusts quickly, stabilizing her as she loses control, trembling and clenching and soaking his cock with her release, her own fingers pressing down hard on her clit for another jolt of stimulation – goddddd – then another, her head dropping back to rest on his shoulder as she rides it out. Regina feels him drive deep and pull out fast as he comes, his release hitting the lips of her sex as he strokes himself to completion with one hand and holds her tight to him with the other, and they shudder against each other until they’re both completely spent.

Their heavy breathing is loud in his bedroom, and there’s a moment of blissful nothingness while he holds her against him, his mouth pressing kisses to her shoulder as they catch their breath. He pitches to the side suddenly, his arms still tight on her as he lets his bodyweight tip them over, and she goes over with him onto the soft comforter, laughing as he sighs dramatically and lightly slaps her ass, telling her, “Christ that was - that was… Happy birthday, darling.”
They’re having a little cooldown, which involves them finally soaking together in his big bathtub, and he’s in complete sensory overload.

She’s in front of him, her back pressed to his chest as she relaxes in the hot, sudsy water, his nose buried in her hair as he tries to memorize the feel of her slick, smooth skin pressed against his. She’s so beautiful - a work of art - all round curves and long lines, the black of her hair a stark contrast against her creamy skin, her hands fine boned and elegant where his are thick and calloused. She smells so amazing, always has this hint of apples and incense and something else, something that’s just her that makes him drop his lips to the top of her shoulder for the hundredth time tonight so he can have a taste of her.

“I love this tub,” she says softly, and he smirks - of course she does.

“Well, anytime you feel the need, even a whisper of an inkling to use it, please do,” he murmurs, moving the damp hair at her neck to one side so he can kiss her there. “I can think of nothing better to come home to at night,” he adds, unable to stop his hands from sliding to her waist and around to cup her breasts.

She makes a little hmm sound before she teases, “I’m not sure Henry and Roland would be very happy with that plan.”

He chuckles against her shoulder and plays with her breasts, carefully swiping his thumbs across her nipples and drawing another soft hum from her before he says, “They can learn to make due.”

She turns her head to kiss him, her hand raising out of the hot water to stroke along the back of his head as she slips her tongue in his mouth, and fuck, he’s just, he’s so into her. He kisses her back, tightens his arms around her and pulls her closer, stroking his tongue along hers as he tilts his head to deepen the kiss. He could kiss her forever, could feel the soft slide of her full lips against his every second of every day and never have enough. God.

They leave the tub when the bubbles are almost gone - he throws on a pair of sweatpants but she just slips into her robe (fuck that’s hot) - and they decide that it’s time for food since neither of them has had dinner yet. They have cold pizza and red wine, and after some urging and a few strategically placed kisses, he talks her into “dessert”. By some stroke of luck he’s able to convince her to let him blindfold her as she sits rather impatiently on one of the big oak chairs in the dining room, and when he apparently takes too long to start things up, she gripes about how much she dislikes surprises. He’s not trying to tease her, not trying to drag it out, it’s just that every time he looks over at her as he prepares his impromptu scenario, he loses his train of thought. It’s not his fault she looks so fucking good.

When he finally has all of his supplies he pulls another chair around so he’s seated right up close,
facing her, then he cuts up a strawberry and drizzles some Hershey’s syrup on it, telling her to open her mouth. She obediently parts her lips, frowning, and when he sees her uncertainty – bugger, she really doesn’t like surprises – he swoops in and kisses her once, twice, hoping that will reassure her, then presses the strawberry piece to her lips. She eats it, chocolate syrup smearing across her bottom lip as she pulls it into her mouth, and he can’t help but kiss her again, to suck the sweet sugar off her before she finally gives him a little smile and admits, “Oh, I think I like this game.”

He feeds her another two bites, loving the way she sucks on his fingers as he places the fruit between her lips, then switches things up, scoops up a spoonful of vanilla ice cream and slips the spoon between her lips, barely able to contain his laugh as she startles a little with the cold of it. She smirks when she realizes what it is and tells him, “And here I thought vanilla was boring.”

He laughs softly, giving her another bite, then presses kisses across her jawline as she swallows it, sucking softly as he goes. “Vanilla can be very interesting,” he says, trailing kisses down her neck as his hands quickly untie the knot in the belt of her robe, letting the sides fall open. She has her gorgeous long legs crossed in front of her, so he’s really only getting the full-frontal view of her tits – but he’ll remedy that in a moment, once he can find the will to drag his eyes away from what’s already on display.

He drops down onto his knees in front of her, urging her to uncross her legs for him as he reaches for her waist and tugs her toward the edge of the chair. Her breasts are so gorgeous – christ, he’s a lucky bloke – he skates his fingers lightly along the full swells, tracing the outlines then circling his fingers in until he brushes the sensitive tips. She licks her lips and looks like she’s fighting a smile as he palms her, lifting the weight and giving her a good squeeze, then dropping his mouth to first one nipple, then the other, swirling his tongue around the sensitive skin then sucking them into tight peaks. He licks his thumbs and strums across them quickly, watching himself play with her as he starts to get hard, hoping she likes it when he talks dirty to her because he can’t possibly be expected to touch her like this and not tell her what she’s doing to him.

“Your tits are so perfect,” he says quietly, leaning forward to flick his tongue across her right nipple, then sucking hard next to it, bruising her skin with the suction. “Love getting my mouth on you, love marking you up, love seeing the evidence of what you let me do to you.”

She blindly reaches for him, starts running her fingers through his hair as he licks and sucks across her ribs then trails back up to her breasts. “Got me so hard already,” he rasps, kissing her neck as he pinches both nipples, twisting and tugging before he releases them. “S’all I can think about - how much I want to kiss you,” he kisses the top of her breast, “Touch you,” he smooths his hands across her full mounds, “Suck on your pink little nipples,” he drops his head and suckles one, then the other. “Love the way your skin is so soft everywhere,” he flicks her nipples with his tongue then presses kisses to her stomach, his hands pushing gently against her so she leans back in the chair. “Love the way you smell,” his hands stroke down her hips and over the tops of her thighs as he sucks hard at her hip bone, marking her there. “Love the way you taste, the way you get so fucking wet, the way you drip and soak me when you come.” He tugs her forward and drops his mouth to her sex, pushing her thighs wide so he can press his tongue to her clit. He rubs back and forth across the swollen bud a few times then pulls back, asks, “Wet already, aren’t you?” then runs his tongue through her inner lips and grins broadly when he confirms his statement.

She scratches his scalp lightly with her nails as her breathing picks up - she’s obviously aroused - and he’s still got so much in store for her. He takes a bite of ice cream but only lets it melt a little, then brings his mouth to her breast and sucks softly on the pebbled tip, pressing the cold to her, and she sucks in a deep breath, asking quietly, “What is that?”

He pulls back and swallows the ice cream, now melted, and licks at her a few more times to spread it
around before he answers, “Vanilla.” Christ – the visual effect is making him so fucking hard – the white of the ice cream smearing across her hard pink tip is so fucking sexy, bloody hell, that’s an image he’s holding onto forever.

Goosebumps break across her chest and he smiles, asks, “Do you like that?” then he treats her other nipple the same way, smoothing the ice cream over it as he sucks on her, then licks her clean.

“I… think so,” she says, laughing softly and letting out a shaky breath as he nips at the underside of her breast.

“You look so fucking hot right now,” he says, stroking his fingers along the insides of her thighs.

“Ice cream is ruined for me - I’m quite certain it will never taste as good as it does when I suck it off your tits.”

She smiles and bites softly on her bottom lip – fuck she’s cute. He mixes it up, lets the next spoonful of ice cream melt for a moment before he tips it, drizzles the cold liquid in a line down her stomach. Her smooth, flat muscles twitch under the cold, and he drops his mouth to her, licking and sucking the vanilla from her, laving his tongue down to her belly button and back up. Setting the ice cream up on the table, he repositions himself, gets a bit lower between her knees and tugs her forward again, tipping her hips up toward his mouth. Just as he descends on her he hears her murmur, “Oh, I guess we’re done with vanilla,” and he laughs as he presses hot kisses to her mound.

“I only have so much restraint,” he says quickly, then strokes his tongue over her outer lips, loving the way she moves her hips toward him as he starts licking her from her entrance to her clit. Robin slides two fingers into his mouth, then sinks them up into her, watching in satisfaction as her lips form an O as she inhales upon his entry. He curls them - fuck he loves how warm she is – stroking easily inside of her, circling his fingers around and around, burying them as far as he can while he rubs her clit with his other hand. She squirms a bit and he picks up the pace, asking her, “You like my fingers deep? You’re so wet, so tight, you like it when I fuck you with my hands?”

She Mmm’s above him, spreading her thighs wider, and he encourages her, says, “That’s right, open those legs for me, let me see that hot little cunt.” Robin works his fingers faster, trying to find that spot, the one that makes her breath catch…there – she makes a soft little moan and opens her legs further – “Is that it, darling? Is that the spot that makes you squirt for me when I fuck you fast?”

She’s breathing faster and faster as he works her up, swirling and pressing firmly against her clit as he teases her g-spot, sliding his fingers in and out just a bit, enough so that he’s rubbing up and down against her inner wall and tapping at it. She’s getting so wet, with each stroke he can feel the moisture building, can see it on his fingers, watching her intently as she tips her head back against the chair and makes little rolls of her hips.

He keeps at her, watching her reactions and working her up, paying rapt attention and concentrating his movements on places that make her hips jerk or her breath catch. He’s in no rush except for his own desire, which is hard and aching for her, but he wants to make her feel good - better than good, wants her to think of this night and use words like incredible, and intense, and exhausting.

“Ready for more?” He asks as he speeds his fingers. He’s aching for her and he doesn’t want to wait until he’s completely desperate before he fucks her, wants to last as long as possible.

“Yeah,” she breathes, her hands balled into fists on her thighs.

Robin reaches in the pocket of his sweatpants and pulls out the clamps she bought, loosening the tension a tiny bit – he wants her turned on, not in pain – and he trails the weighted chain across her
thighs lightly as he asks, “May I put the clamps back on you, darling?” He strokes the cool metal around her areola lightly, pebbling her nipple back into a stiff peak as he awaits her answer.

She brings one hand up and touches herself, squeezes the nipple he’s not playing with before she agrees, but warns, “It’s probably the last time we can use them tonight though, I’m out of practice.”

She can’t see him grin but he can’t help it, he loves this about her - loves how she likes to try new things, how honest she is, loves how she trusts him with her body.

“I’d better make it count then, yeah?” he teases, then strokes and plays with her nipples until they’re both good and hard for him. He clamps one, then the other, his cock twitching with excitement as she makes this low hum in her throat and licks her lips. He lets her get used to them for a bit, drops his hand back down and finds her clit, rubbing circles on her, trying to spark her back up, and he keeps at it until she’s squirming again as she takes quick, short breaths. Then he tugs lightly on the chain, and she moans loudly, her hands splaying on her thighs and digging into the soft flesh.

He shifts, pulls his pants off and moves his chair out of the way, then reaches for her. “Put your hands on my shoulders,” he says quietly, and once she’s got a firm grip he leans back, tugging her along slowly, until he’s laying on the floor and she’s straddling him, her hands planted on his chest for balance.

“You want me to ride you blindfolded?” she asks dubiously, smoothing her hands up and down his pectorals.

“Of course not.” He sits up and tugs the blindfold off of her. She looks relieved to have her sight back, and he pauses to kiss her, tugs on the chain of her clamps, making her suck in a quick breath as he adds, “I want you to ride me, blindfolded.” He pulls the chain once more, stretching her nipples taught as he pulls them toward him, his eyes flicking between her face and her tits as she watches him with those dark eyes and bites her lip. He releases it when she makes this throaty little moan, watching in awe as her flesh springs back, then remembers he’s trying not to come in two seconds, so he slips the blindfold over his eyes and lays back down, smirking.

There’s a moment of quiet as she shifts a bit, and he wonders what she’s thinking, wonders if she doesn’t want to do this, and he almost sits back up, almost tugs the blindfold off. Then suddenly something cold drips onto his pec, followed by the hot, wet slide of what must be her tongue, and fucking christ – he didn’t expect her to play with him too.

There’s another cold drizzle across his collarbone, and he can smell her hair as she sucks hotly along the length, her tongue swiping wide and teeth nipping lightly as she goes. She moves up to kiss his lips, the cool chain of her clamps dragging against his chest, and he opens his mouth wide for her as she sweeps her tongue inside, tasting of – chocolate?!

Fuck.

She’s not drizzling ice cream over him, she’s drizzling chocolate syrup. He moans with the realization - there’s something so fucking hot about her making up her own game, about her bringing her own creativity into the mix.

There’s another cold drip along the line of his oblique – ohhhh naughty girl – she’s running her tongue over it now, lapping up the chocolate that pools in the edge of the muscles that create a vee between his hips and groin then – ahhhh yeah – drizzling back up the other side and licking up, purposefully avoiding the hard length of his cock as she licks and sucks him from hip bone to hip bone. He’s aching for her, didn’t consider that she’d want to do this too, thought he’d worked her up enough that she’d want to ride him hard and fast and – oh fuck, he just remembered again that she’s
got those nipple clamps on - *jesusfuckingchrist* – she’s the sexiest woman on Earth.

He feels her fingers slide around his cock, the pad of her thumb pressing softly to the sensitive head and swiping over it several times. He can feel the wetness there as she spreads his precum around, then the glorious friction as she strokes up and down his length, and when her hot, plump lips close around the tip of him in a wet, open-mouthed kiss, he moans.

She sucks him softly, shifting back as she lowers her mouth over him, her tongue swirling against him as she works her lips up and down his length, and – *ohfuckinggod* - he wishes he could watch her. Robin loves when she gives him head, knows that most blokes love it but *Regina* has the most talented, gorgeous, *sinful* mouth on earth – watching her lips slide over him, the way her cheeks hollow when she sucks hard, the way she plays her tongue against him and massages his balls with her hand – just like that – fuck, there is nothing better, nothing hotter in the world.

She runs her lips and tongue over him, licking up his smooth length from balls to tip, then concentrating on the head, her tongue swirling around and around, teasing the sensitive skin – *bloody hell* – then pulls back and works him fast with her hand, pumping quick-quick-quick-quick-quick then pulling away entirely. He mourns the loss of her for a moment, but then she suddenly shifts forward and slides down onto him, and *Fuckfuckfuck* – she’s so hot and so wet and so warm and - *fuck* - he was not expecting that.

She’s worked up now, apparently, because she immediately starts moving, riding him fast, her hands braced on his chest as she slaps her hips down on him. The feeling is incredible, she’s incredible, he wishes he could see her, is suddenly over this game of blindness. His self-control falls to pieces when she presses down hard, circling her hips around and around on him - *fuck* – taking him deep, and he rips the blindfold off just in time to watch her tug on the chain of her nipple clamps.

The action makes her buck, makes her start up again on him, riding him hard, her wetness seeping from where they are connected and making her thighs and his pelvis wet with her arousal. Christ, she’s hot, he can’t get over it, can’t help but stare at her tits as they swing and shake as she bounces fast, her nipples clamped so tight in their little metal prisons – *godd* He rubs her clit for her – takes him a second to sync his hand up with her rapid movements but then he’s got it, and she moans for him as she throws her head back and thrusts her breasts forward. He teases at the chain connecting her breasts, holding his fingers out so when she lifts up from his cock his fingers catch against it, giving it a little pull before she sinks back down. She looks like she’s in fucking ecstasy, her head thrown back, lips parted as she moans, whimpering when he tugs a little harder on the clamps.

“Close,” she gasps, taking him deep again, again – “So close.”

“Don’t stop,” he says, leaning up slightly as he reaches for the clamps, freeing her quickly then bending his knees and thrusting up hard as she continues to fuck him. Her jaw drops and he can see the pale tips of her nipples turning back to pink as her blood flow returns, and he jackhammers up into her, trying to hit her deep, trying to give her what she needs so she can come on him. He can feel her thighs starting to shake – *thankfuckinggod* because he’s so close – and he works her clit fast, his fingers firm and persistent against her. She raises her hands, stroking herself, smoothing across the red tips of her breasts – christ that’s hot – then her stomach quivers and she loses her rhythm, slams down fast-fast-fast on him and cries out, her forearms bracing against his chest as she tips forward and comes apart, her orgasm rocketing through her and making her clench on his cock. She’s so tight - always so tight - and when she comes, christ, it’s pure bliss. She kisses him hard as she flutters and spasms around him, her hips moving in sensual rocking motions as he holds her to him with one arm and works his hips up fast, chasing his own desire as she shakes above him. He’s close, just another couple of thrusts and he’ll be there, and when she gasps, “Ohhhmygod,” against his ear, he finally spills, trying to pull out, but she stays on him, pressing her hips down hard against
his as he slides deep up into her, groaning, his cock throbbing as he pumps her full of come - fucking hell - his balls tightening and releasing, over and over, his hands and abs shaking as he fills her up.

She collapses on top of him, bringing them chest to chest and keeping him inside of her, and he’s breathing so hard, christ, he’s just come so fucking hard in her. Her lips are moving at his neck and he turns his face, kissing the top of her head as a shiver runs down him, the aftershocks of his orgasm a ripple of pure energy racing through his veins. “You’re bloody brilliant,” he says quietly, stroking one hand across her back, the other threading in her dark hair.

Regina laughs against him and raises up to look into his eyes. She looks like she wants to say something but she just drops her lips to his and kisses him hard, kisses him deeply, and the feeling of his cock and his tongue all buried inside of her is so incredible he never wants it to end.

She shifts and sits up, sliding off of him and sitting back on her heels as he sits up too. “My apologies, I uh, came inside of you, darling, I hope that’s alright?”

She smirks, “I know – it was my fault I just… wanted to feel you.”

He groans with desire – she wanted to feel him come inside of her? No one has ever said anything sexier to him.

“Well, I’m happy to oblige any time you want to feel it,” he grins, cupping her face and kissing her fast, peppering her lips, her chin, her cheeks with quick pecks before bumping her nose with his. “We’re a bit sticky – how about another bath?” he asks, wiggling his eyebrows at her.

To his amusement, she agrees, and they head back to the soaker tub to clean up the mess they’ve made.

Regina wakes slowly, aware only of the heat she feels between her legs, of the rock of her hips and the press his fingers against her stomach.

She’s on her side, was the “little spoon” when she fell asleep last night, and she breaks into a smile as she feels his hard length slide slowly… slowly… out, then just as leisurely back into her. She moans when he gets all the way in, bending her knees and moving them forward so he can get deeper, arching her back against him as she whispers, “Ohhh,” into the early morning light.

He leans up on one arm behind her, his mouth at her neck as he sucks slow, lingering kisses down and across the top of her shoulder. “Good morning, my darling,” he whispers back, sliding his cock out, then swiftly back in as he palms her ass with one hand, the other sliding beneath her head and reaching for her left hand. He holds her wrist, effectively pinning that arm as he speeds up inside of her, the hand on her ass smoothing along the back of her thigh to pull up on her top leg, pulling it back so her thighs are parted, and he holds her under her knee as he tips her body back to him and starts to thrust in earnest.
Regina turns her face toward him, wrapping her right arm up to pull his head closer to her, and he kisses her softly, presses his face against hers, foreheads touching as he slides in and out, in and out, a steady, easy rhythm that makes her arousal build slow and hot in her core.

“Feels so good,” he rasps, kissing her, thrusting a little faster, “Can’t get enough of you, love, can’t think of anything but getting inside you.”

“Yeah,” she breathes, “More… mmm… more.” He feels incredible, she’s swollen from the night before, her sex and nipples extra sensitive this morning, her body marked from the pull of his lips and teeth, but she can’t get enough either. She’s on fire for him, she needs to feel that slick slide of his cock as he drives into her, needs to feel his hips moving against her.

Robin releases her leg and skates his hand up to grasp her breast firmly, squeezing and pressing kisses to her shoulder as he strums her nipple, tugging lightly and swirling his fingertips over her. “I’ll never get over how hot you are in those clamps, babe, christ, I get hard just thinking about it,” he breathes, pinches her nipple and twists, then runs his hand down her stomach to find her clit. He rubs two fingers against her, his hips speeding up, cock stretching her wide as he swirls around her swollen, sensitive bud, her hips moving with his as she gasps in pleasure and pulls his head closer so she can kiss him.

She loves having sex like this - loves to get rough and play around too - but this? This is so sensual, so much more meaningful; she feels incredibly connected to him, her body alive and responding to every move, every touch, every sound he makes. It’s how she used to feel with Daniel, and she shouldn’t be thinking of him right now, but it’s not like she’s comparing the two men, she’s just comparing her experience, and how loving it this feels, and how nice, and -

“I can feel you thinking,” he says against her ear, slowing his thrusts as he follows it with a soft laugh. “Apparently I’m not doing a very good job of distracting you, love.”

Regina huffs out a breath and corrects him, “No, you’re doing a fantastic job of that, I was… just thinking about how I haven’t felt like,” she clears her throat, “Haven’t felt this good in a long time.”

He pauses his movements behind her, then slips out entirely and rolls her onto her back so he can lean over her. Robin brushes her hair out of her eyes then settles his hand on her stomach, his eyes following his fingers as they slide comfortingly over her smooth skin and says, “I haven’t felt this way in a long time, either.”

And that’s… not quite what she meant, but… maybe it is? She’s not sure, and she doesn’t have the heart or the will to correct him when she doesn’t even know the answer, so she pulls him down to her and kisses him, deepening the kiss almost immediately and pulling him over so he’s on top of her, his belly pressed against hers as he settles between her legs. He kisses her hard, his lips smashed against hers before he pulls back and sucks her bottom lip, dragging his teeth across it then diving back in and nipping her top lip for good measure. The sudden change is welcome, distracting Regina from her previous confusing thoughts, and she runs her hands over his broad shoulders, along the long, defined lines of his back - god he’s built beautifully. She grabs his ass, tugging him to her, trying to rub against him, to align him and get him back inside of her, but he’s suddenly decided to play hard to get, sliding down her body yet again, and she decides that if what he really wants is to get his mouth on her, she’s going to do it her way this time.

She pushes him hard off to the side, and he’s obviously surprised by it, he tips over easily with this dumb look of shock on his face that she can’t not laugh at - he’s not the only one who can muscle their partner around - and then she’s telling him, “Move down the bed,” and his eyebrows shoot up as he breaks into a wide grin and shimmies down.
She throws the pillows off to get them out of the way then moves above his head, bending forward quickly to press an upside-down kiss to his lips, then places a knee on each side of his head and smirks when he mumbles, “Oh, fuck yeah, babe.”

She’s glad he’s happy about it, because it’s definitely something she intends to keep doing - Graham was garbage at it and she has this suspicion that Robin is quite the opposite, if she can judge from all the other times he’s had his mouth on her, and - ahhh, oh shit - with the first touch of his mouth against her, her suspicions are quickly confirmed.

His tongue runs through her slick folds, hot and wet and firm, and - mmmmm - just right. He licks at her eagerly, flattening his tongue as he slides it from her clitoral area to her entrance and then back up, almost a figure eight pattern as he brings his hands up around her to grab her ass. She tips forward slightly, settling her hands on his hips as she works herself against his mouth, so aroused by the way he’s sucking at her now - first her clitoral area, which he teases with quick flicks of his tongue, then her inner lips, pulling soft and steady at her, swirling his tongue over and around the swollen, pink flesh then sliding back to dip inside of her. Goddd he feels good.

She reaches for him with one hand and strokes his length - god - he’s so hard and so thick, he’s ridiculously built, like he’s made to make women come on him, jesus, with his size alone he doesn’t even have to be good to get a girl off, but the fact that he is - mmm - makes her stroke him faster, makes her bend forward to reward the sensitive tip of his cock with swirls andlicks of her tongue as she pumps him.

His hands are tight on the cheeks of her ass, spreading her apart as he hums beneath her, the deep, masculine vibration so, so good against the tender flesh of her core. She’s not used to this, isn’t used to have sex multiple times a night - but she could definitely get used to it. Robin is insatiable, is constantly stealing touches and glances and kisses from her, goddd, she loves it - she says she doesn’t, she pretends to resist, but she knows, she knows, that she loves it. And he must know it too, because - ohhh, ohhh - he keeps doing it. The way his tongue is swirling around and now - ahh-hah-hah - swiping back and forth across her clitoral area - oh god - she’s desperate for him to make her come, desperate for his next touch, is craving him just like she knows he craves her. She needs it, jesus, she needs him right now.

Regina grinds down on his mouth, losing some of her control, but he stays with her, increases the speed and pressure of his tongue against her - oooooooh - and the heat from her core is spreading outward, is making her thighs shake and her toes curl, is making her so, so wet for him. She’s panting, is trying to catch her breath but can’t quite, is focused solely on the tingling pleasure between her thighs, the way her body is tensing - goddd - it’s so good, it’s just - mmm - he’s so good to her, and she clenches on that thought, that he’s hers, and she doesn’t have to share him, oh no, he’s all hers. A hot spike of possessiveness races through her - possessiveness she’s never felt for any man before - and it lights her up, makes her clench again, makes her quiver, then suddenly - makes her come.

She sucks in a hard breath, making this embarrassingly high pitched gasp as her arousal drives up, up, up, up - ohh god - then explodes, her legs shaking, her hips taking on a mind of their own as she squirms on him. He chases her with his mouth and continues to suck and tease at her clitoral area as her inner muscles clench on absolutely nothing - godddddd - she wishes he was in her but - ohhhhhhh shit - it’s
so good anyway, *jesus* he’s good at this.

Just as she starts to come down from her high he suddenly slides out from under her, pushing her down so she’s flat on her stomach, his thighs bracketing hers as he positions himself and slides into her from behind, his hands on her ass and her legs pressed tight together. He feels huge inside of her, her sensitive, overstimulated flesh still shuddering from her orgasm, swollen from being used all night - *oooh oooh* - but she likes the way he fills her up and shoves her ass toward him as he starts thrusting fast and hard into her.

She’s not sure what comes over her, but she’s so riled up - *god* - she can’t help it, she starts talking, starts telling him, *harder, and faster,* and how she wants him to *give it to her.* She’s going to look back and think she sounds like an idiot, but in this moment she doesn’t care - she’s pretty sure if he roughs her up, if he fucks her really hard right now, that she’s going to come again, going to come like that *one time,* and *jesuschrist* she has never wanted it more.

He brings his hand down hard and smacks her ass, the sting making her buck and clench on him, and he increases his pace, thrusting into her so fast - *shit* - she can barely keep up, and he slaps her ass again - the other cheek this time - which elicits another jump of her hips against him. His hand is in her hair then, twisting around and pulling her head back sharply as he leans forward, his voice rough and breathless as he says, “*Oh fuck - take it babe, take it - you love when I pound that pussy don’t you?*”

She loses her breath, gasping beneath him as he slams into her again-again-again, his blunt fingernails raking down her back, then he grabs her wrists and twists her arms behind her, holding them captive so all she can do now is take what he gives her - *fuckfuckfuck ohgod* - and when he shifts slightly she jerks under him - he’s hitting her g-spot now - *oh oh oh jiuuuck* - and that hot pressure builds - *ohh jesus* - she knows what’s coming now, wants it this time - *christ* - she’s certain that’s not proper but cannot care. Instead she begs him, gets louder by the second as she moans and *Ah-ah-ah’s* with every thrust, her brow furrowing, body tensing, everything tightening as the pressure builds - *fuckfuckfuck* - the pleasure so sharp it almost hurts. She’s right on the edge, begging him please, *please!* and suddenly - *oh, ohhh* - she bursts - the pressure finally letting loose as she cries out, her hands balling into fists as he continues to restrain her as he fucks her, her insides clenching and contracting around him - *jesus!* - as she shakes hard and drenches him, her pleasure soaking the sheets.

He’s still moving inside of her, is still working her fast and deep when she finally can’t take any more, she’s too sensitive, she’s trembling and coming and clenching - *fuck* - she starts to tell him that - but then he groans and goes stiff behind her, shoving himself in deep, shifting quickly so her legs are outside of his as he shoves her thighs wide apart and drives into her, completely buried as his cock pulses and he fills her again, the hot rush of his come creating a warmth in her that she can’t wait to feel seep out, *jesus* - that’s filthy but she doesn’t care, dear god, she’s just come so hard she might faint, and she can feel his forehead against the back of her head as he leans over her, thrusting shallowly, panting, and shaking as hard as she is.

He lays next to her, his body half covering hers, his hand stroking softly along her back as they try to regain their senses. There are no words for what she’s just experienced, she cannot describe the rush, the high, and the utter sensation of bliss she feels right now, and it seems he feels the same. He grabs for a couple of pillows and they drag themselves up the bed, slipping under the sheets as their sweaty, spent bodies start to cool, and they kiss - soft and slow, deep and lingering, until she cannot keep her eyes open anymore, and just before she falls asleep she whispers, “*Best, birthday, ever,”* and feels him smile against her lips as she drifts off.
Spring comes quickly at Camp Sherwood, a mild but rainy March turning things back to green and encouraging the buds of new leaves to appear earlier than usual. It smells like wet earth and foliage, and the camp is in full swing preparing for the havoc that summer will soon bring. Regina has
recently learned that this is Robin’s least favorite time of year - the snowmelt, rain, and mud create a plethora of work to be done, various camp staff coming and going as they get ready for the first campers, and a list of chores that only seems to grow. According to Granny, the first task on the list is spring cleaning, which Regina knows most people hate, but she’s actually looking forward to it. She’s type A and she knows it, and she isn’t afraid to admit that when she’s stressed out sometimes cleaning makes her feel better, makes her feel like she’s back in control.

Regina and Robin have been working side by side all afternoon, going through the staff office and getting things in order. They’ve already cleaned and organized the main floor, which includes both of their offices, and are sorting through the clutter in the upstairs loft when Regina comes upon a large box filled to the brim with what looks like old trophies.

“What’re these?” she asks, peering inside and shuffling the contents around, eyeing the stacks of plaques, medals, and ribbons that are piled haphazardly inside.

Robin glances over to see what she’s talking about and a strange look crosses his face. He walks quickly over to her and takes the box as he says, “Nothing - it’s rubbish.”

“It’s not rubbish,” she argues, grabbing for the edge of the box and pulling it back to her. They get into a childish tugging match as Robin adamantly repeats that it’s trash, and she knows she won’t win, he’s too strong, so she quickly looks inside again and sees a large medallion, and she grabs it as she lets him pull the box away.

She steps back from him quickly and smooths her fingers over the silver, surprised by the weight and size of the medal, her eyes going wide as she recognizes the five interlinked rings. “Is this…?” she asks, stunned, flipping the medal over and reading the engraving:

Robin Locksley

Great Britain

Archery - Individual 70M

“It’s rubbish,” he snaps, snatching it out of her hand and tossing it back in the box.

“Hey,” she softens her voice as she reaches for his arm. “What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” he says, irritation plain in his voice as he pulls away and heads for the stairs. “Look, I’m knackered, I’m going to head up to the house, alright?”

“Talk to me,” she says - she knows she’s pushing but she can’t understand why he’s hiding this from her. Shouldn’t he be proud of such a huge accomplishment? She steps toward him and asks, “Why are you upset? Why won’t you tell me about it?”

“Christ, Regina, there’s nothing to bloody tell,” he bites off, and she sees the regret in his eyes as he throws the words at her, but he doesn’t apologize, and her temper starts to flare.

She nods, her irritation matching his. “If there’s nothing to tell, then let me see what’s in the box.”

“No.”
“Why not?”

“Can’t we just drop it?”

“No,” she repeats, “Not until you at least give me an explanation for why you’re hiding it from me.”

“I’m not hiding it,” he says, obstinate.

“Then let me see,” she argues back. Regina fought constantly with her mother, the Queen of Manipulation, for twenty-two years. He’s really no match for her - she can go around and around all evening if that’s what he wants.

“No.”

“Why won’t you just explain it to me?”

“Because it’s none of your fucking business!” he snaps, his face red and a scowl firmly in place.

Regina raises her eyebrows in response, and silence falls over them.

A minute goes by where they stare at each other, her temper hot and his irritation equally spiked, and she’s suddenly done with his bullshit.

“I see,” she says incredulously, her tone laced with sarcasm as she nods. “Then by all means, take your business out to the dumpster.”

“I didn’t mean it like that,” he says quickly.

“There really isn’t any other way to mean, it’s none of your fucking business, Robin,” she says waspishly and adds, “Message received.”

He shifts the box and she can see the clench in his jaw as he stares at her for a second, then he turns on his heel and leaves the loft with the box, leaving her with her anger and hurt warring for dominance.

Henry and Roland show up to help her after they get home from school, and by the time they’re through with the loft there isn’t a speck of dust, no box unsorted, no clutter left at all. They’re all tired and cranky - the boys because they wanted to play video games this evening, Regina because she’s still angry with Robin - and when she checks the time it’s almost eight. She sends the boys on ahead, it’s only a ten-minute walk and they know the trail well, and she stays to lock up.

She runs into Granny on her way out, and since the way to their houses is a partially shared path, they leave together.

She’s lost in her thoughts as they walk slowly, it’s dark and Regina knows by now that Granny never uses a flashlight, her argument of, “I can walk these trails with my eyes closed, why would I need a light?” all too true. Still, Granny is over seventy, and Regina’s certainly in no rush to see Robin, so they stroll along leisurely, breathing in the brisk March air.

After a few minutes of silence, Granny looks over at her and asks, “What’s on your mind, girl?”

Regina frowns. She’s not a sharer, isn’t comfortable talking about her feelings, so she goes with the standard response of, “Nothing, just tired.”

Granny snorts and says dryly, “Try again.”
Regina huffs out a frustrated breath in response but doesn’t continue, not until Granny prompts her with, “Don’t make an old woman dig for your troubles, I’m too tired for twenty questions.”

She fights a smirk at Granny’s temper, gives up and asks, “When Robin was younger, did he compete in archery?”

“Ahh,” Granny says, “So that’s what has you both in such a mood.”

“That’s not the cause for mine,” Regina says hotly, then catches herself and forces her voice to sound calm as she asks, “Any idea why he wouldn’t want to talk about it?”

Granny hmm’s next to her and answers her question with a question. “What has Robby told you?”

“Obviously nothing,” Regina bites off. Is every member of the Locksley family determined to push her buttons today? First Robin’s attitude, then Roland’s pouting, and now Granny’s mind games. Jesus.

“Watch that tone, girl,” Granny scolds, “You’re not too old for me to take you over my knee.”

Regina utters a quick apology and hopes to god that Robin hasn’t been telling people about her affinity for certain bedroom activities. “I found a box of archery trophies in the office loft today and he insisted it was garbage, refused to talk to me about it.”

“It’s not an old lady’s place to meddle in the affairs of others,” Granny says, and Regina purses her lips - of course Granny’s going to take his side. But Granny surprises her when she stops walking, her hand on Regina’s arm as she smirks at her in the darkness and adds, “But lucky for you it is a grandmother’s place.”

The corners of Regina’s lips perk up as Granny squeezes her arm. “Now listen,” the older woman starts, “He’s going to be good and cross with me when he finds out I’ve told you this, but I don’t give a hoot about that.” Regina has a rush of affection for her. “He’s been upset about it for far too long, and you might be just the person to finally get him over it. Lord knows that Marian certainly wasn’t.”

It’s the first time Regina has heard Granny speak of Robin’s wife, and she’s honestly a little surprised by the tone. Apparently Granny was not a big fan, and from what little Regina knows of Robin’s former partner, they share that opinion.

“The first thing you should know is that my son Robert was a drunk. Struggled with it his whole life, and the older he got, the worse he got.” Granny’s breath is a white cloud in front of her as she speaks, the night cooling off quickly now that the sun has set. “Then he ran off to England with Robby’s mother, and for a time, we thought he was over it.”

Granny pauses, and Regina sees the pain, the regret etched into the many lines of her face. “Every year Robby came back to me worse off. Bruises, mostly, but the uh, the mental toll was the worst of it.” Granny gives her a sharp look. “That’s something you know a thing or two about now, isn’t it?”

Regina nods. Beneath the adorable old lady exterior of the woman across from her is a very intuitive
mind - Regina is always impressed with her perceptiveness, and after being around her for so many months she’s come to expect those kind of questions, has come to know it’s pointless to lie to her.

“Well, my Harold - that’s Robby’s grandfather - was an archer, he competed at the national level before he knew me, and one summer he taught Robby how to shoot. He took to it quick, had a real, natural talent for the bow, and the next thing we all knew you couldn’t find him without that recurve.” Granny smiles, obviously thinking of some sweet memory before she continues her story. “When he graduated from high school he was unbeatable, placed first in the nation over there, and easily took the world championship - so of course he was a shoe-in for the Olympics.” Regina smirks at the pride in Granny’s voice and the shine in her eyes as she brags up her favorite grandson.

“But Robert was… he was in a bad way by then. Robby hadn’t lived with him for years, was taken in by those Scotts for some of the time - I think their girl was into the sport too - and the rest he… well he made due.”

Regina tries to remember Merida’s comment at New Year’s - something about if Robin had brought his bow out of retirement?

Granny continues, “I sent him money, paid for all of his competitions, sent him everything we could spare -”

Regina cuts in, her emotions right at the surface as she listens to Granny describe Robin’s awful childhood, and she has this sudden urge to reassure her, “I’m sure you did everything you could.”

“Darn right I did,” Granny says stiffly. “Anyway, they do that ceremony the night before the games, you know, and Robert showed up, drunk as a skunk - the first time he’d ever gone to any of Robby’s competitions. Robby tried to get him to leave but, well you’ve seen the Locksley temper, and of course they got into it.”

Regina has a sick feeling in the pit of her stomach.

“Robert got violent as usual, but you know, Robby was nineteen by then and I guess he’d had enough. So when Robert came after him, Robby hit him so hard he broke his hand. Robert took off, but… well there’s no use sugarcoating it, you’re a grown woman - he blacked out behind the wheel and they found his car wrapped around a tree not two miles from the stadium the next morning.”

Regina brings her hand to her mouth, horrified by the events that took place on the night that should have been the most exciting of Robin’s young life.

“There was a silver medal in the box,” Regina says suddenly, “If he broke his hand how could he compete?”

Granny straightens up in front of her and Regina has never seen a more proud grandparent in her life. “He made it through every round. The only reason he didn’t take gold is because by the end his fingers were too bruised, too swollen to feel the string - you could see it plain as day on the television.”

Regina feels terrible. If she had known about his father, if she had known what he’d gone through she never would have pushed him to talk about it. Jesus. Regina’s eyes suddenly feel hot, tears welling as she thinks of how traumatic this all must have been for him.

“Now that’s enough of that,” Granny snaps at her, and Regina meets her eyes. “I didn’t tell you all that so you’d feel sorry for him - he’s had enough of that in his life. I told you so you could knock some sense into his thick skull.”
Regina laughs nervously, confused as she admits, “I’m not sure I understand where you’re going with this.”

“He’s let the guilt, the shame eat away at him for years. We all know he’s not responsible for it, but he won’t admit it. I’ve never seen that boy so happy in his life until you started showing up around here, and I figure if anyone’s got a chance at getting his head on straight, it’s you.”

Regina starts to deny it, but Granny won’t be swayed.

“You can fool everyone else, girl, but you’re not fooling me,” she says, and Regina recognizes that knowing look Granny gave her at Christmas when Robin kissed her in front of everyone.

She’s suddenly very uncomfortable.

“You want my advice?” Granny asks, but doesn’t leave her time to respond, “Well I’m going to give it to you anyway. Don’t you feel sorry for him, you give it right back to him like someone should have done long ago. He’d have been better off if he’d had a strong woman with him from the start, would have been able to find his confidence and risen above all this. Instead he’s stuck here with us, his talent and his education wasted, and there’s no going back on that now, but maybe you can at least help him find a little of his dignity.”

Regina balks at Granny’s bold statements. Those are tall orders for a man she’s been dating for barely more than a month. A rush of fear runs through her at the responsibility Granny is entrusting in her, at the hope that’s shining in her eyes. She’s not ready for this - they’re just getting started together, she didn’t even know anything about his childhood and now she’s supposed to be some sort of cure for him? It’s not like she can wave her hands and magically fix everything.

“Oh don’t look so frightened,” Granny says, patting Regina’s cheek a little roughly. “You’ll figure it out.”

With that, the old woman walks off, her steps light and quick in the moonlight, and by the time Regina shakes herself out of the little anxiety attack she’s having, the old lady is long gone.

Robin doesn’t say much to her when she gets back, and she purposefully lingers downstairs with the boys, reading with them and tucking them both in extra tight. They’re both tired but they’re not cranky anymore, Roland’s birthday is this weekend and it seems both he and Henry are excited for the little party they’re throwing him. Regina takes the opportunity to get all of his special requests - what kind of cake, what theme he wants (Batman, duh), and which party games he’s most excited for.

She loves Roland, he’s so funny and outgoing, is Henry’s opposite in so many ways that it’s almost uncanny. She loves the contrast between them and how different they are but still manage be “best mates”. There’s no doubt that they have been a good influence on each other, Henry has never been more out of his shell, Roland has become obsessed with reading and chess, and they have even started to take on some of each other’s mannerisms.

She loves that they have each other, and it’s the main reason she was hesitant about getting involved with Robin. If this doesn’t work out, she can’t bear to separate their sons, she can’t bear to be the reason for them to lose this. Henry is doing so much better here, he seems so happy, except that he asks her every other day if he can transfer to Roland’s school. She’s considering it, it would be nice to send him on the bus with Roland instead of having to drive him downstate, but she doesn’t think it’s wise to transfer him again so soon, so she’s trying to have him finish out the year where he is before they make that decision. It’s another one of those things that she will be crushed to change, should things not work out.
Regina finally heads upstairs and finds Robin leaning on the kitchen island, nursing a cup of tea. It’s quiet in the house, and she’s not up to fighting with him tonight, is too tired from their big day and is too overwhelmed by the things Granny told her.

So she goes to him, slides in between him and the counter and pulls his head down to hers, touching her lips to his softly then pressing their foreheads together for a moment.

His hands find her hips and he murmurs, “I’m sorry.”

“Me too,” she says, just as quietly.

“Are we alright?” he asks, his hands tightening on her.

She thinks for a second and she wants to do things right this time, it’s so important that she’s honest with herself about her relationship with Robin - she cannot make the same mistakes she did with Graham, so she tells him, “No.”

She hears him swallow, and when he sniffs she wonders if he’s trying not to cry. Closing her eyes, she takes a deep breath and adds, “So tomorrow we need to figure it out, okay?”

Robin slides his hands around to her back and pulls her close to him, his face tipping into the side of her neck as he says, “Yeah.”

They go to bed, he climbs in with her tonight and she lays on her back, with him on his side facing her as he slides in close, his hand on her stomach and his legs pressed against hers. She feels sad, conflicted, and so anxious, but just being near him soothes her, so she lets him pull her a little closer, and she finally falls asleep, relieved to be done with such an awful day.
Despite Regina’s comment of figuring things out the next day, they’re both busy with work and getting things ready for Roland’s birthday party, so the day comes and goes without any further discussion on the box. Things get slightly awkward after that, neither Robin nor Regina seems very keen on getting into what happened, but there’s a tension between them that didn’t exist before, and Robin knows he should do something about it, but he can’t figure out how to sort it without telling her a load of things that he knows she’s not ready for, a load of things he’d prefer to never to talk about.

He figures he got lucky with her reaction to the Marian-Will-Merida scandal. She didn’t have to be so understanding, he wasn’t expecting it and he didn’t deserve it. He knows she only allowed him an easy out because of her recent heartbreak, and possibly the beating he took from Graham and his buddies, or perhaps out of some sort of debt that she felt she owed him. So if she finds out about his upbringing, about his father and the night that Robin caused his death, he’s all out of good deeds to make up for his poor choices.

And then he’ll lose her.

So he says nothing, lets the tension simmer between them and ignores it, hoping it will go away with a little distraction and time.

The day of Roland’s party finds the Mills-Locksley house full of rowdy ten and eleven-year-olds, mostly confined to the basement while several of the parents hang out on the main floor. Regina is distant today and he knows why, but that doesn’t mean he likes it. In fact, it’s driving him more crazy than usual, more so than when she pulls away in front of Granny, or how she presses her hand to her mouth when the boys almost catch them kissing, or the way she insists on waking up at least thirty minutes earlier than necessary in the mornings to avoid any chance of them being caught in bed together. He gets that, he understands her fear, but today in a house full of people she doesn’t even know, people who won’t care one way or the other whether the two of them are involved, she won’t go anywhere near him.

They haven’t had sex since the box, and he already caved once, took an “extra long shower” yesterday evening after work, and if she keeps this up it’s looking like he’s going to need another one tonight. He doesn’t understand how women do that, how they can turn their bodies off and on with their emotions. It’s not like that for men, or at least for any man he knows. Robin can be irritated, angry, depressed - name any emotion - and it doesn’t touch his sex drive, he’s always ready and willing, especially when it comes to his desire for Regina.

He corners her in the garage when she goes out to get another jug of Hawaiian Punch, the garage acting as a sort of spill-over refrigerator for the day. She hands him the big jug, misunderstanding why he’s followed her, until he sets it on the floor and backs her up against her car, his hands on her
hips as he leans in for a kiss. Much to his chagrin, she leans back, which he tries to compensate for, but he hears her rejection loud and clear when she turns her face at the last second, and he winds up kissing her cheek like a right idiot.

He pulls back quickly, “Are you serious?” he asks, hurt.

“I’m sorry,” she says quietly, “I um, I don’t want to mess up my lipstick.” She licks her lips as if punctuating her sentence with the action.

“You can reapply your bloody lipstick in one second,” he argues, “And besides, you’re wearing that eight-hour stuff that doesn’t smear.”

She drops her eyes and brings her hands up to his chest, pushing back lightly as she says, “This isn’t a good idea.”

Dread runs through him. “What do you mean?” he asks quickly, “Do you mean that kissing isn’t a good idea, or that kissing me isn’t a good idea?”

“I don’t want to have this discussion right now,” she mutters, tucking her hair behind her ear.

“Well, we’re having it,” he says, “Tell me what you mean.”

She bristles, “Robin -”

“I don’t understand, love - tell me what you mean by that,” he urges, more and more nervous by the second.

“So when you want to talk about something we have to, but when I want to talk about something we don’t?” she snaps.

“That’s not fair - this is different,” he says softly. He can feel her hurt radiating off of her. He’s starting to think he may have misjudged how upset she was about the box.

“Oh?” she asks, her tone growing more annoyed by the second. “What if I say that it’s none of your fucking business? Then do we have to talk about it?”

Robin steps back from her. Christ, this is not good.

“Alright then,” he says defeatedly, moving out of the way.

She sighs and picks up the Hawaiian punch, slamming the garage door behind her and leaving him in the cold to lick his wounds in solitude.

For the rest of the party they essentially ignore one another - Robin wanders off with the other dads to sneak a beer or two while the moms chat around the kitchen island, and they make it through cake and ice cream with minimal conversation, focusing instead on their children and all the fun the kids are having. The night is capped off by a half a dozen boys staying over for a slumber party, and Robin camps out on the couch for the evening, taking turns checking on the kids with Regina, who has apparently decided she has things to do in her room all night.

It’s the first night in weeks that they don’t share the same bed, not even for a minute, and by the time they send all the kids home the next day, he knows something has got to change. He feels like he’s between a rock and a hard place - if he does nothing he’s going to be right back where he was before she moved in, but if he tells her about his father, well, he’s probably in for the same fate or worse. Avoiding it at least gives him some time, essentially freezes the state of their relationship, and he
knows he’s being a chicken shit but he’s not ready to face the music.

He goes to her room on Sunday night to try to talk it out, but she doesn’t answer when he knocks, and when he peeks in, he finds that she isn’t there. He creeps quietly down to the basement, the only other place he can imagine she might be, and sure enough, she’s curled up in bed with Henry, the two of them fast asleep. Her dark hair is splayed out across her son’s pillows, her face tipped down to the top of his head with her arms wrapped tight around him. They’re beautiful, and he can’t interrupt it, can’t wake her from seeking comfort with her boy, so he checks on Roland, who is sprawled haphazardly on a diagonal across his bed, arms thrown out to the sides as he sleeps, one leg dangling off, and Robin goes to bed alone for the second time in as many days.

Monday’s suck.

Especially when you’re forced to work on marketing brochures all day. Regina can think of nothing more boring than staring at pictures of kids doing various activities at camp, trying to find ones where no one is photobombing or making an obscene gesture, as she tries to select the right mix to lure new campers in.

Robin is in an equally bad mood, their tempers clashing more than once today over trivial things that normally wouldn’t even warrant a second thought. He still hasn’t told her about the box, and she was hoping that he would, that he’d realize what an idiot he’s being and initiate the conversation so she doesn’t have to push for it. She feels bad enough about pushing in the first place, and now that she knows the story behind it all, she doesn’t want to be the one to bring it back up, but they need to talk about it.

The day of Roland’s party was the breaking point for her. They’d gone all week without talking about it, and when he cornered her in the garage and tried to kiss her like everything was fine, well, she panicked. He’s the one who wanted to make their relationship official, the one who’s always pushing her to tell everyone about it, the one who gives her those long looks and soft touches like he’s already in love with her. So what she can’t figure out is why, if he’s so serious about her, does he insist on hiding things from her? Regina doesn’t trust anyone very easily, and he’s done an above average job of earning her trust up to this point, but now she’s starting to have second thoughts. First he lied about his tattoo, and while she understands that, the fact that he’s continuing to hide things from her is cause for concern - makes her pause and wonder what else he hasn’t found the need to tell her.

It’s well after five when she finally gets the last of the brochures stuffed into their envelopes, ready to go out in the mail tomorrow - five hundred, picture perfect advertisements for Camp Sherwood. It’s been a long day and she’s ready to see Henry and Roland, to hear about how their day was and what kinds of activities they have in store this week. Granny has taken on the role of picking Henry up from school, which Regina was reluctant to allow but eventually gave in to. The convenience of not having to come back to the office after running to pick him up was too tempting to pass on, because it gives her more time with him each night.
She’s just reaching for her coat when David comes in, all smiles and pink-cheeked from the cool evening air, giving her a warm, “Hey Regina!” as he crosses the room and pulls her into a hug. She kisses his cheek automatically, he’s a nice guy and they’re sort of friends even though for a while he was nothing more than her plaything. “I know it’s late, but I was wondering if I could get last week’s paycheck from you, since I was out of town.”

She smiles and unlocks her desk, fishing out his check quickly and handing it over. He lingers, making small talk and asking about Henry, and he’s so uncomplicated that Regina feels relieved to spend a little time with him. He takes her mind off of her bad day, off of her trouble with Robin, and she falls into a good conversation with him about all the preparations he’s been making in the campers quarters as she boosts herself up to take a seat on her desk. She crosses her legs, her gray pencil skirt riding up a little, and she catches David’s approving look as he runs his eyes over her sheer thigh highs and black, knee-high boots. She has a silky, long sleeve plum colored blouse on, the first few buttons undone because it’s warm in the office, and when she brushes her hair back from her shoulders David takes the liberty of fixing her collar for her. He’s adorable in his crush on her, and with how upset she’s been feeling lately, she doesn’t even try to correct him, instead thanks him for his help with a smile that she knows is coy.

He drops heavily into her office chair and they catch up for a while. Apparently, Mary Margaret still hasn’t made a move on him, nor has he made one on her, and Regina teases him about having broken his heart, which is far from true but he plays along. He’s just asking her if she’s going to join them for Belle’s birthday on Friday when Robin comes stomping in from outside and heads straight for his office, the rush of cold air raising goosebumps on her arms as he shoots them a glare before disappearing from sight.

“What’s going on with him?” David asks innocently. “He nearly took my head off earlier when I asked him when we were going to start hiring the interns for the summer.”

“I have no idea,” Regina says, her poker face firmly in place as she raises her voice just a little and adds, “Anyway, his bad mood is none of my business.”

David laughs, completely oblivious, and says, “Yeah I suppose not. So, are you going to come out on Friday? It’s going to be a lot of fun - I could pick you up, if you want.”

There’s a crashing noise from Robin’s office and Regina smirks. Jealous idiot.

“You know, I haven’t quite made up mind yet,” she says, letting her tone take on that sultry rasp she knows men love, “But I’ll definitely let you know if I need a ride.”

“Well, I’d love to give you one,” he responds immediately, and his cheeks turn pink as Regina raises her brows at his inadvertent flirtation.

“My dear, if I haven’t found a ride by Friday, you’ll be the first person I call,” she says, dropping her voice and leaning forward on her desk, grinning when David’s eyes drop to her chest. She knows he can see the lace of her black bra - she wore it on purpose to entice Robin, thinking maybe he’d take the hint that she wants him back in her bed as much as he does, and he’d just tell her about the damn box. But he didn’t take the bait, and why shouldn’t she tease David? At least he appreciates it.

“I’ll make sure I wait by the phone,” David says boldly, standing and crowding her space so much that she has to uncross her legs as she leans back from him. In spite of her history with David, she’s finally starting to feel a little more than friendship for him - it took him long enough but finally Prince Charming has game to go with his good looks.

She’s playing with the zipper on his jacket when Robin reappears and snaps, “Are you ready to go?”
She doesn’t jump, doesn’t even look at him as she says, “No, David and I are talking.”

David is looking at her with such heat in his eyes that she knows she’s going to have to tone it down. She’s toying with him, again, and she needs to stop doing that - he’s too nice of a guy and she’s pretty sure he’ll let her play him forever. There’s something enticing about that - but she doesn’t want him, she wants Robin, if he’d ever pull his head out of his ass.

“How much longer?” Robin asks.

She smiles at David and shrugs, “As long as I want.”

David starts to smirk at her, but makes the mistake of looking over at Robin, and his face immediately falls as he steps back from Regina and says quickly, “I’d… better get going.”

Regina fights the urge to roll her eyes, and as David heads for the door she says, “I’ll let you know about that ride,” and he grins brightly at her before he goes, letting the door close softly behind him.

“That’s just cruel,” Robin says from across the room.

Regina shifts so she can see him and says, “What?”

“You know what,” he bites, “You know he has a crush on you, and you keep stringing him along when he doesn’t stand a chance. That’s evil.”

“Evil?” she laughs, “What makes you think he doesn’t have a chance? I went out with him before, didn’t I?”

“Yeah, to punish your sister.”

“Maybe,” Regina snaps, “Or maybe it’s because I was tired of waiting around for something that was nothing more than a fantasy. David doesn’t have a dishonest bone in his body - you had it right before, he really is Prince Charming, he’s the real deal.”

Annnnnnd apparently that’s the straw that breaks the camel’s back.

Robin crosses the room quickly, getting right up in her space as he snaps, “So that’s it huh? You and me - this has all just been another one of your games, then?”

Regina bristles - how dare he turn this around like it’s her fault. The nerve of him. “Games?” she asks incredulously, “What kind of games, exactly? Olympic games, perhaps?”

Robin clenches his jaw and she’s fighting her temper, but she’s only going to last so long before she gets good and pissed at his attitude.

He shakes his head and steps back from her, dropping his head back and looking to the ceiling as he asks angrily, “What is it you want me to tell you, Regina? You want me to tell you how I pissed it all away? How I was bloody good at something for once and I lost it because I fucked up? How I ruined everything? What is it you’re looking for here, because I have no clue what I’m supposed to tell you.”

She rolls her eyes and says hotly, “The truth would be nice.”

“Yeah well, the truth isn’t something you’re ready to hear.”

“Oh? Now you get to decide what I’m ready for?”
“Yeah that’s right - ‘cause I know when I tell you that you’re going to run. You’re going to be scared out of your bloody mind of being with me. And rightfully so.” She’s never heard him quite so upset.

“You’re an idiot,” she snaps.

“Yeah, yeah, I’m an idiot,” he says sarcastically, pacing back and forth across the office, rubbing his hand across his mouth.

She has to be the adult here, she has to rein her temper in or this is going to get even more out of control. Going head to head with him isn’t working, it’s just making him shut down. *Shit.*

“Come here,” she says, dropping her voice.

“What?” he snaps in disbelief, his head jerking up to look at her.

“What?” he snaps in disbelief, his head jerking up to look at her.

“Come here.”

He goes but looks reluctant, stopping a few paces from her.

“Are you serious about me? About us?” She asks, trying to take the venom out of her tone but not quite able to soften it all the way.

“Of course I am,” he says immediately, rubbing his hands over his face.

“And you want me to be serious too? Want me to consider this as something we might do for the long haul?”

“Yeah,” he agrees, his temper starting to fizzle.

“Then you can’t keep secrets from me, Robin.” He opens his mouth to object but she holds up her hand and says, “I’m not playing around with this - if you want me to be with you, you can’t shut down on me, you can’t hide things. I need you to be honest because if that’s not the type of relationship you want, I’m out. Henry and I have been through too much for me to keep making the same mistakes.”

“That’s not…” he struggles for words and his face turns pink with his frustration, “This isn’t about you or Henry, why can’t we just forget about it? Why can’t we just go back to before you saw the damn box?”

“Don’t be childish,” she snaps, her patience finally giving out. Jesus.

“Oh I’m being childish?” he throws back, “I’m not the one who was just flashing my tits at David-fucking-Nolan.”

Alright. Her patience is gone. She’s done. She’s not playing Ring Around the Roses all night.

“I’m also the one sitting here, missing an evening with my son while you waste my time running in circles trying to cover your ass for something no one in their right mind would ever blame you for.”

She hears her mistake the second it’s out of her mouth, and it’s not like her to slip, not like her to give away her hand, but she’s tired, hurt, and angry now, and she can’t keep this up all night. Robin’s jaw drops as he realizes she knows his secret.

“And I’ll flash my tits at whoever I want, thank you very much,” she bites, hopping down off the desk and grabbing her coat.
She starts to walk out - fuck him, *fuck him* and his stupid jealous temper, his stupid secret. *Fuck him.*

“You know?” he gasps, grabbing her arm and immediately letting go when she jerks away. “You know what happened?”

“Yeah, I know,” she admits, tugging her coat on.

He hesitates, looks around the office as if he’ll find the answer there, then visibly deflates and sighs, “Granny.”

Regina doesn’t bother to confirm it, because there’s no one else it could have been. She doubts even Ruby knows the whole story.

“Why didn’t you say so?” he asks, confusion evident. “Why didn’t you just tell me and save us this whole argument?”

“Now you’re being intentionally obtuse,” she growls, wrenching on the zipper of her coat. “Shame on me for thinking you’d tell me yourself.”

“If you know then why are you even...? Why are you still... here?” he asks, and the sudden desperation in his voice has her snapping her eyes to his, has her going absolutely still.

“You’re not the only one who grew up with shit parents,” she says quietly, “Maybe I understand what you went through better than you think.”

Robin rubs his hand across his forehead, then his eyes, then suddenly he sobs out this awful noise and Regina watches, horrified, as he breaks down in front of her. *Oh god oh god oh god.*

She pushes her anger down and goes to him, *shit-shit-shit,* and when she reaches for him he immediately wraps her up in his arms, holding her tightly as he takes a few deep breaths against her.

She pulls back and their faces are temptingly close. She stares in his eyes, sees his pain, his fear, and she wants to make him feel better, wants to reassure him. Regina bumps his nose with hers, then brings her lips to his, giving him a soft, quick kiss, pulling back to catch his eyes again, relief flooding through her when his eyes drop to her lips again. She kisses him again and again, soft, open-mouth kisses that tug at his lips as her hands slide up and down his chest, and he stops shaking, stops crying. They part, breathing hard, then suddenly he grabs her face in both hands, slamming his mouth against hers in a hot, hard kiss that makes her lose her footing, makes her knees give as she holds tight to his waist.

She kisses him back with the same kind of passion, the same frustration boiling over and driving her against him, making her tongue dance against his and her teeth sink into his bottom lip. This didn’t have to be so difficult, it didn’t have to go this way, and though she won’t admit it to him, she knows that it’s both of their faults that it did.

Robin strokes his tongue into her mouth, dueling with hers as he tilts her head, opening her further to him as he claims her lips. It takes her breath away, his intensity and the desperation with which he kisses her too much to handle, too much for her to think about right now.

He pulls back from her, kissing her cheeks, her chin, her forehead, covering her face and neck with fast, hard kisses as, “I’m sorry, fuck I’m so, so, sorry darling, I’m sorry,” spills from his lips like a mantra.

She hears herself murmuring, “I know, I know, okay,” against him, her fingers carding through his hair as he kisses her again, tugging her closer. Her own desperation grows as their mouths press
together again and again, teeth clacking a little as they ramp up, and the next thing she knows she’s yanking down the zipper of her coat and he’s pushing it off of her, she’s grabbing the hem of his hoodie and yanking up, pulling it swiftly over his head, quickly followed by his t-shirt. He gets her blouse open and they let it hang on her as she goes for his belt, tugging hard at the buckle and releasing it fast, her fingers quick and dexterous as she works his fly open, but then his mouth is back on hers, and he’s walking her backward, pushing her toward his office and kicking the door shut behind him. He keeps moving until her ass connects with his desk, then he drops his mouth to her chest and starts to suck the soft, smooth skin, nipping at the tops of her breasts as he tugs the cups of her bra down and immediately sucks a nipple into his mouth, flicking and teasing it into a stiff peak as he palms her other breast.

Regina arches under his touch, leaning back over his desk as she scratches her nails against his scalp, gasping when his lips tug hard at her nipple before he switches sides and gives its twin the same treatment. His hands run over her stomach and around, grabbing her ass and pulling her to him. She can feel his hardness, reaches for him and shoves his jeans and boxer briefs down before she gets her hands on him, and he moans against her chest as she starts to stroke him.

He’s hot and hard, goddd, she’s missed him, and she works her hands over him quickly, pumping steady and smooth, letting her fingers rub over the head of his cock in fast, firm twists of her hand as he pulls up the hem of her skirt. He grabs her wrists and pulls her hands from him, and they catch each other’s eyes in a heated moment as something between them clicks, then he spins her around fast and pushes her up against his desk, pulling her arms back behind her as he bends her over it. He holds both her wrists at her lower back with one hand and palms her ass with the other, giving it a hard squeeze, then running his fingers under the thin strip of her thong as he slides his fingers down through the cleft of her ass and further, until he reaches her sex. He groans when he finds her wet - it’s the excitement, the thrill, not necessarily that she’s that ready, but he takes it as such, strokes her fast with the flats of his fingers then rubs the head of his cock against her slick folds before sliding into her with a hard drive of his hips.

Regina huffs out a sharp, Hahh, and he immediately pulls back and starts fucking her fast and deep, the long strokes of his cock a wide stretch against her not-quite-ready inner muscles. She can’t brace herself, he has her wrists locked down tight against her back as he thrusts, her hips connecting with the rounded edge of his heavy desk, her breasts pressed down against the polished oak as he moves. Robin speeds up behind her - she’s still not quite ready but it’s starting to feel better, and while she knows she’s not going to get off like this, she also knows he isn’t quite in his right mind. She wants to give him what he needs, so she arches her back and presses her knees against his desk to move against him, letting her mouth run as he tells him between breaths, “Don’t hold back,” and, “I can take it,” and “Harder, harder.” He fucks into her faster and faster, her body giving him less resistance with each thrust as he rocks his hips up and in, working her up and up and up.

He shifts a little and suddenly when he thrusts deep he hits her g-spot, and she lets out a quick, “Ooo!” bucking under him with the sudden spark of pleasure. He hits it again on the very next stroke, and when she moans he bears down on her, his hips moving rapidly as he keeps the angle, and she gets hot for him fast, goes from being completely in control to completely wanton in a matter of seconds, her chest flushing hard with the tingling rush of pleasure that rockets through her. She feels his fingers at her clit then, fumbling a little until he gets them under the soft satin of her panties, then pressing firmly as he thrusts inside of her, and she drops her head down, encouraging him, “Ohhh god, just like that.”

Like everything else tonight he works his fingers fast over her sensitive clit, rapidly stroking back and forth across her. He switches from fast thrusts to - ooooh - hard, deep, punctuated strokes, bottoming out in her over and over as she squeezes her eyes shut and tries to remember to breathe -
fuck - rough sounding moans escaping from the back of her throat as her pleasure builds.

“Do you even know how perfect you are?” he gasps, hips rapping against her backside. She doesn’t respond, instead she concentrates on the heat building in her clit, the hot pulse of pleasure as he hits her g-spot. “You’re so, so good,” he murmurs, fucking her harder still, grunting behind her with the exertion, his desk shaking under the force as he gives it to her. He slams in deep and stays deep, rotating his hips and grinding against her ass as his fingers flurry over her clit. “Christ, I… jesus babe, I love -”

“He groans loudly and finally releases her hands, which she immediately slams down in front of her, finally getting some leverage to brace against. Robin slaps her ass hard and she jerks under him - fuck that stings - but it’s what she needs, it’s definitely what he needs right now, and breathless, she orders him, “Again.”

He gives her what she asks for, hitting her deep like that over and over, and she’s close now, he’s been working her clit almost frantically as his cock stimulates her g-spot, her hips are moving on their own, and she’s getting off on how he’s getting his control back as she loses hers.

He smacks her ass again - ohhh - again - jesusfuck - and again - chrrrist - she grits her teeth and groans as goosebumps break across the reddened skin, feeling the pain radiate through her and turn suddenly into pleasure, her body confused and registering it as just another hot, intense sensation he’s giving her. She starts to shake, a wave of arousal surging through her, her clit throbbing intensely under his fingers, the stroke of his cock making her hot, hot, and on the next stroke - oh, oh fuck - she starts flying up, that shiver of hot desire starting in her clit and rushing up through her, making her clench, making her tighten, and then - oh, oh, ohhh - she comes, gasping and scratching her nails into the polished surface beneath her, begging him - don’t-stop-don’t-stop-ohhh!

He switches the movement of his fingers on her clit to - mmmm-god - swirls and - jesus - she can’t believe how hard her inner muscles contract on him as she goes to pieces, losing every shred of control as she’s reduced to a shaking, wet mess, his cock soaked now as he continues to thrust, the sloppy sounds of her arousal obscene as he picks up the pace, slam-slam-slam-slams into her then pulls out, one hand bracing on her lower back as he strokes himself. She’s vaguely aware of him grabbing for the roll of paper towels on his desk as he comes, his breaths loud behind her as she tries to will her legs from jello back to solid while the aftershocks of her orgasm shudder through her.

Regina recovers first, righting her bra and tugging her skirt down, then smoothing the wrinkles out of the soft, knit fabric. She licks her lips and takes a steadying breath as she turns around, her eyes sliding over Robin’s naked back as he pulls his pants up and fastens the buckle on his belt. He turns and catches her looking, and they stare at each other for a few seconds, his gaze intense but soft, and she brushes her hair back, unsure of what to do now.

He steps up to her, his movements are slow and careful as he reaches for the hem of her blouse and starts buttoning it for her. This intense feeling of affection for him races through her, so she strokes
his fingers down his neck, watches quietly as he slips button after button back into place. When he finishes he takes her hands in his and pulls them up to his mouth, kissing her knuckles sweetly as he looks in her eyes, and she can’t help but to open her hands and touch his face, her chin tipping up to him as he kisses her softly.

Robin threads one hand through her hair, wrapping around the back of her head as he tugs her close, his other hand at her waist as he gives her sweet, slow kisses, over and over, his lips warm and soft against hers. It’s so loving, so intense, it’s so much, she feels like she might cry and has to pull away, has to gasp for air and drop her head to press against his collarbone. She wraps her arms around him and they hold each other close, and she swears she can feel the pieces of their relationship slide back into place, can feel her heart healing under his touch.

“I shouldn’t have hidden this from you,” he says softly, rubbing circles on her back. “You’re right, I should have talked with you about it. I handled it wrong and I’m sorry, darling. I won’t make that mistake again. I swear.”

Usually Regina is suspicious of promises, her pessimistic mind always punctuating them with I’ll believe it when I see it, but she doesn’t feel that way this time. She believes him, knows it must be hard for him to talk about it, and she thinks that if the circumstances had been different, he probably would have told her about it. So she nods against him and says, “I’m sorry I pushed you so hard.”

“You’ve no need to apologize, it was the right thing to do and I just, I didn’t want to disappoint you. I don’t talk about it, don’t like to even think about it really, and I, I didn’t want to lose you, didn’t want you to see yet another relationship I’ve failed at.” His voice is soft, hoarse with truth and emotion, and she pulls back to look in his eyes.

“The failure isn’t yours, Robin, it’s your father’s,” she clears her throat and admits, “It took me a long time to realize that about my mother, but once I did it… it really helped.”

He stares at her for a moment then nods and asks her, “Are we alright?”

She nods, “Yeah, we’re alright.”

They kiss again, finish getting dressed and go, making their way home along the wooded trail, zipped up in their warm spring jackets, gloved hand in gloved hand, their hearts mended and more full than they have been in days.
The weather continues to be unseasonably wet and warm, and it’s a rare sunny Wednesday in April when Regina comes back from lunch to find a recurve bow laying across her desk. She picks it up, it’s surprisingly light and well balanced, and she turns it in her hands, running her fingers over the aluminum riser and up the carbon fiber composite arms. She gives the nylon string a little pull, her curiosity absolutely burning, and turns quickly when there is a knock at her office door. She knows before she looks that it’s Robin.

“Ready?” he asks, grinning as she turns, bow in hand.

She raises her eyebrows in question, “For what?”

“Your first lesson,” he says, his smile softening as he moves into the room.

She laughs, holding the bow out to him, but he holds his hands up in front of him and doesn’t take it. “You’re serious?” she asks, glancing back down at the bow. “Robin I, uh, I don’t know.”

“What if I ask nicely?” he says, stepping up and tucking her hair back behind her ear, kissing her softly once, then again. She smiles against his lips, opening her mouth and giving him a little tongue on the next kiss, humming in the back of her throat when his hands find her waist and pull her closer.

“Maybe,” she teases, “Keep asking.”

Robin smiles and kisses her again, licking against her lips and sliding his tongue along hers, running across the roof of her mouth then tugging her bottom lip between his teeth.

“Mmm, I’m starting to be swayed,” she smirks.

He laughs and slides one hand into her hair, his tongue stroking deep into her mouth this time as he presses her against her desk. After several more lengthy kisses she finally acquiesces, agreeing to at least try it before she shuns the activity, which is how two weeks later, she finds herself in a large clearing, bow in her hands, as Robin corrects the placement of her arms.

He’s a good teacher, had her actually hitting the target on the first day, and she enjoys the activity because it seems to make him happy, seems to be healing his broken spirit when it comes to archery. She’s noticed that he hasn’t actually fired the bow, which makes her a little concerned, but she’s not going to push him on it, and instead she tries to pay attention and learn from him. She’s doing pretty well for a beginner, and she knows she’s not shooting nearly whatever the regulation distance is but she doesn’t care, she’s just happy to spend time with him, to replace some of his bad memories of the sport with fun, happy ones.

He takes the bow from her and shows her the difference in what she’s doing wrong with what she
should be doing, tipping his broad shoulders forward and back, exemplifying how the width of her feet should be slightly further apart, and even discussing the tilt of her head. He’s so handsome, it’s warm today and only partly cloudy, so he’s down to his t-shirt and jeans, and she can’t help but admire his arms when he pulls the string, the way his broad shoulders bunch and stretch. His forearms are thick and corded, his hands strong with nimble fingers, and she finds herself not listening to what he’s saying, instead studying the way his hips narrow at his belt and thinking of the way he moved under her last night, of the strength in his thick thighs when he held her up against the wall of the shower this morning.

“Alright, your turn, darling,” he says, handing back the bow, completely unaware of her daydreaming. She grins a little, taking the bow and drawing again, not fixing anything in her stance because she wasn’t listening, and she feels him step up behind her. His hands fall on her shoulders as he tips them forward slightly, saying something about drawing a straight line from point A to point B as he uses his finger to trace the imaginary line from one shoulder to the other, his foot between her legs and lightly kicking them a couple of inches further apart. Robin’s hand slides down to her lower back and he presses lightly, straightening her up then instructing her to aim and release. She does, holding the position he’s put her in, and when the arrow strikes the target, she hits the red center dot for the first time ever.

She breaks into a grin and behind her, Robin lets out a loud whoop, grabbing her around the waist and swinging her off her feet. She shrieks in surprise as he spins her around and around, laughing at his ridiculousness as he continues to spin her, faster, faster, then sets her on her feet. He kisses her cheek before running down to the target and snapping a photo with his cell phone, exclaiming how he can’t wait to show the boys. She’s still smiling when he comes back to her, and he kisses her hard and fast before picking her up again and telling her how proud of her he is.

She doesn’t even remember the last time someone told her they were proud of her, and his sentiment pulls her heartstrings, that familiar rush of affection for him welling up and making her heart slam-slam-slam in her chest as he stares up at her, his blue eyes bright and absolutely shining. Jesus, she likes him, she likes him so much.

He returns her to her feet and she takes a chance, hoping to play on his good mood as she asks, “Will you shoot one for me?”

He hesitates, and she tries to encourage him, adds, “I’d love to see how a pro does it, what better example could I have to learn from than you?”

She watches quietly as he mulls it over, and when he actually agrees she’s equally relieved and impressed - he’s being so brave, she knows that it can’t be easy for him when the last shot he took cost him a gold medal. She pulls him in and kisses him as she whispers a thank you against his lips, then steps back quickly so he can shoot the bow. He takes a few paces back from where she’s been shooting, lines up and then calls her name. She was looking at the target and when she turns to him, he holds direct eye contact with her as he releases the arrow, and when she turns quickly to check the target, he’s hit it dead center.

Wow.

That’s… that’s pretty damn impressive. And really, really hot.

She suddenly wants to see what else he can do, and tells him, “I bet you can’t do that again.”

He laughs, looking completely full of himself as he reaches for another practice arrow and flips it around in his fingers, suddenly looking seventeen years younger, the cocky boy from England who took the World Championship so easily shining through the wiser, thirty-six year old she’s so used to
seeing. “What’ll you give me if I can?” he asks, raking his eyes down her suggestively.

She chews her bottom lip and considers what she can reward him with.

“If you make a second shot without looking, I’ll give you a kiss,” she says quickly.

“And what if I make a third?” he counters, “What then?”

“If you make a third shot, I’ll give you a kiss, and you can feel me up,” she smirks.

“And I get to do that right now?” he asks, his excitement palpable.

Regina grins and agrees, thinking they’re done with this crazy bet - she’s not sure he can even make the shots, but if he does it’s not really that risky anyway.

“How about,” he says suddenly, “If I make both those shots, and a fourth shot of your choice, you’ll let me use the warming lube on you one time, whenever I want, and you can’t say no.”

Regina’s cheeks flush. She’s pretty sure he won’t win the bet, but still, that’s a pretty risky bet for her to take.

“C’mon, love, what’re the odds I’ll make all three? Besides, you get to choose how I make the last shot, and I’m sure you can come up with an appropriate distraction to ensure I can’t hit the bullseye.”

She finally agrees, her competitiveness getting the better of her, nervousness and excitement racing through her veins as Robin pulls back the bow. He lines up, turns his head to her and holds her eyes as he releases the string, and sure enough, when she looks to the target he’s hit dead center once again. The second shot is so close to the first that they’re barely indistinguishable, and Regina is suddenly suspicious that he’s made her a bet he can’t lose. She gets even more suspicious when the next arrow also slams into the center of the bullseye, and he’s grinning at her in triumph before he even knows her terms for his last shot.

She thought she could get him to close his eyes, or perhaps shoot left handed in order to make him miss the last shot, but now she’s not sure that even that will be enough. Regina thinks hard for a minute as he waits patiently, and she suddenly has a devious thought, has an idea for something that she is positive will distract him.

“Left-handed,” she starts, and he smirks - she was correct that wasn’t enough - “With your eyes closed,” she continues, and his smirk turns into a grin, “While you come in my mouth.”

His smile drops, as does his jaw.

“You said I get to make up the terms,” she says smugly, before he can argue. “Of course, you have the choice to forfeit if you don’t think you can do it.”

She watches his astonishment of her terms war with his own competitiveness, and he takes a deep breath, running his eyes across her as he asks, “You’re serious? Those are your terms?”

“Yes,” she says, adds, “Take it or leave it.”

“Fine,” he says, switching the bow from his right to his left, then mirroring his stance appropriately.

She glances around to make sure no one else has come into the clearing. God, it would be so embarrassing if they get caught, she should have thought of that first, but it’s much too late to change her mind now. She grabs his jacket from the nearby bench, throwing it on the ground in front of him
and getting to her knees as she reaches for his belt. In the short amount of time it takes to get his belt undone and his fly open, he’s already half hard, and she fights a smile - she loves how easily he gets turned on, how he can be ready for her in a matter of seconds.

She takes him in hand and strokes him until he’s fully hard, his breaths quick above her as he watches her work him up, one hand sliding quickly up and down his length while her other hand cups his balls. When he starts to thrust a little, she brings her mouth to him, sucking him in quickly and taking him in deep, getting his length nice and wet as she strokes her tongue along him. She loves riling him up, loves how his breath catches hard when she swirls her tongue around the head of his cock, how he makes these soft noises in the back of his throat when she starts to bob quickly up and down his length. He’s so rigid in her mouth - jesus - it turns her on, makes her wish they could fuck, makes her wish she could at least touch herself to relieve a little of the arousal that’s building in her core. Robin has one hand in her hair, stroking softly as his hips move against her, thrusting lightly as she sucks and swirls over his sensitive, hot flesh.

“Oh my god,” he says quietly, “You’re bloody brilliant, babe.”

She fights a smile and works his length faster, wrapping one hand around the base of him and pumping in tandem with the strokes of her mouth, pulling back for a second to catch her breath and working his length fast and firm in her hand. He moans, and she brings her mouth back to him, sucking hard on just the head of him, swirling and flicking her tongue over him, and his hand tightens in her hair. She pulls back suddenly and reminds him, “You better get ready to shoot,” smirking at the inadvertent double entendre, then goes back to sucking him, hollowing her cheeks with intense suction for several strokes before deepthroating him, letting him slide way back down her throat as she fights the gag reflex, then lets her throat clench on him, and he murmurs, “Ohhh fuck, I’m- I’m close,” above her, pulling the bow up and drawing it.

Regina swirls and swirls her tongue around him, sucking hard and tightening her lips, massaging his balls lightly as he starts panting, and like a gentleman he warns her just before he spills. She feels the first hot gush and swallows quickly, glancing up to make sure his eyes are closed - they are - hearing the thwack of his arrow hitting the target as she finishes him off, sucking hard and working her mouth up and down his length fast, swallowing the thick, salty fluid and wondering if he hit the bullseye or not.

By the time she’s done he’s dropped the bow, both of his hands stroking softly through her hair as he tells her quickly, “Christ, you’re incredible, feels so good.” She helps him get tucked back into his pants then he pulls her to her feet. She glances over at the target, certain there is no way he hit the center.

But he did.

Regina stares in disbelief.

Robin grabs her chin, presses a quick kiss against her lips, and says with a wink, “Lucky shot.”

She rolls her eyes and they pack up for the day, lesson over for now, and even though she lost the bet she doesn’t find that she’s all that upset about it. It was a big day - she hit the bullseye and from the swagger in his step, it appears he’s found his confidence again. There is something incredibly sexy about that, about the fact that he’s faced his past and that she played a part in healing some of those old wounds, and when he slings his arm around her shoulders and kisses her temple, her heart flip-flops in her chest. She can’t quit smiling for the rest of the day, reveling in the way his success makes her heart feel happy and light.
When the weekend finally comes it’s a flurry of activity on Saturday. In the morning Robin takes the boys to town for haircuts and ice cream, which he makes them swear they won’t tell Regina about. She’s been giving them all the evil eye every time she catches them with Oreos, or crisps, or that one time, popsicles, and she never misses an opportunity to remind them how those foods have zero nutritional value, and they should be eating their vegetables. He supposes one of them has to be a responsible parent about food, and he’s selfishly relieved she seems more than willing to play the part. Technically, he and Roland have been eating a lot healthier since the Mills family moved in, so he figures spoiling the boys a bit here and there isn’t a big deal, especially because Regina seems omniscient - he swears she knows every single occurrence they have indulged.

He’s not at all worried about his diet, because he’s been getting a thorough workout lately, and he doesn’t mean on his home gym. That woman is insatiable. He’s never had such a ridiculously active sex life; she’s always game, and at least half of the time - he’d wager it’s over half - she’s the one initiating it, though he’s certain she’d deny that. She does these little things that drive him absolutely insane with want for her, all the while pretending to be completely innocent - but he knows that she knows what she’s doing to him. And he bloody loves it.

He knows it’s not right to think of someone as perfect, that it’s likely after a time the rose-colored glasses will come off. But he honestly doesn’t think she’s perfect - she’s stubborn and hot-tempered and absolute rubbish when it comes to having patience for anything but their kids. So no, she’s not perfect, but Christ, she’s pretty close to it. The more he gets to know her the more he loves her, the more he wants her with him forever. She’s like no woman he’s been with before - sure, he’s dated some strong, smart, beautiful girls, his late wife was no exception, but Regina? She’s all of that and then some. She makes the things he enjoys more enjoyable, makes him excited to get up in the morning to see what’s in store for them, gets him to try things he never would have considered before, and god, the way she loves their kids? It’s bloody beautiful. She also calls him on his shit, pushes him to be better, to address his anxieties and regrets so that he can move past them instead of just pushing them down all the time. He doesn’t know how she gets him to do it, and it’s not always a pretty process, that debacle over his father and archery was a real mess, but they keep coming out the other end of their little spats even closer, and he knows that she feels something for him, maybe she’s not quite as deep as he is yet, but he thinks she’s getting there, and he’s going to make damn sure he does everything in his power to make that happen. Because she’s a keeper.

And he has the ring to make sure of it.

He couldn’t help it, he saw it the last time he was in the city, this gorgeous antique that just screamed Regina at him, and he had to buy it. It’s a 1920’s Asscher cut two-carat diamond, with tiny round European-cut and single-cut diamonds surrounding it on the elaborate platinum band. He knows it’s way too soon, they haven’t even said “I love you,” yet - he came close that one time but she freaked out so he’s toned it back a bit. But he wants to be ready when she’s ready, he doesn’t want to fanny about looking for a ring that he could already have, because she’s a once in a lifetime girl, she’s it, she’s the fucking one, and he’s known it pretty much from the start.

He’s just gotten back from dropping the boys off at one of Roland’s classmates for a sleepover - he loves how outgoing his kid is, and he loves even more how much Roland has helped Henry come
out of his shell, has helped him get a little more confident. Henry’s always been a nice kid, but one afternoon when it was just the two of them mucking out stalls, Henry told him he hasn’t had many friends, that he always preferred to read or play video games over hanging out with other lads, but that has certainly changed in the last six months. Henry doesn’t even go to the same school as Roland, but Robin would wager he has nearly as many mates there now as his boy does. It makes Robin happy to see the change in Henry, makes him feel like maybe the Locksley men are as good of an influence on the Mills’s as he knows they are on them.

Regina’s out today, shopping in the city with her girlfriends, so he takes some time to do some house cleaning, then gets the laundry sorted and put away. It’s probably odd that he enjoys laundry, but it’s like his own personal preview into her wardrobe and he can’t help it, she has some of the sexiest knickers he’s ever seen. Plus he’s good at it - knows how to separate items and read tags before he haphazardly chuck them into the washer, so it’s one of those things he doesn’t mind, especially knowing how much it helps them all out to have fresh socks at the start of the week.

He’s scarfing down a grilled chicken salad (see? he eats healthy sometimes), when he hears the front door open and, shit, the voices of all three women. He hadn’t known they were coming back to the house, is surprised they’d make the trek out here, and he’s not mentally prepared for the enormous amount of teasing they immediately start when they see him.

“Doesn’t he own a shirt?” Mal asks, her sharp blue eyes running over him.

“I sincerely hope not,” Cruella drawls, then adds, “Be a darling, Robin, and take our coats, won’t you?”

Regina scolds them both but he’s already coming around the island, hands extended to take their spring jackets - Mal’s a long gray duster and Cruella’s some sort of puffy black feathered thing. He hangs them up quickly and greets the ladies as warmly as he can with a mouthful of salad that he’s trying desperately to choke down. As the other two make their way to the kitchen - apparently remembering where they keep the wine, from the way Cruella grabs four glasses and Mal comes back into view with two bottles of pinot noir - Robin dives in and gives Regina a quick kiss. She returns it, then gives him an exasperated look and says, “Sorry, I didn’t know they wanted to come back here, I tried to text you but my phone died.”

“No worries,” he says, stealing another kiss.

“For heaven’s sake, she’s only been gone a few hours,” Mal says dryly.

Cruella shushes Mal and says, “Oh please, carry on - I do so enjoy watching the way he drools over you, Regina. He reminds me of a puppy - I could just, mmm, squeeze him,” she says, grinning devilishly at Robin.

He blushes bright red under Cruella’s scrutiny and Regina laughs as she watches him redden, swiping her thumb along his bottom lip to remove the bit of lipstick she’s left. She says quietly, just for him to hear, “If you suddenly have something you need to attend to, I’ll understand.”

He grins but reassures her that he’ll survive, then heads for his bedroom to don a shirt and some jeans, his basketball shorts not quite ‘company worthy’, especially for those two. When he returns, the three of them are circled around the kitchen island, drinking their wine and laughing about something, and it warms Robin’s heart to see Regina relax like this - having ‘grown up’ time, drinking wine, and chatting with her friends. As a single parent he completely understands how rare it is to have such an opportunity, and he wonders if he ought to find something else to do - he doesn’t want to intrude, and he once learned from Marian that women talk differently when it’s just them versus when there are men about.
They’ve poured him a glass of wine though, so he joins them and sips on it, offering to make them dinner, which they all decline due to some gigantic lunch they had. They continue to tease him, Cruella making lewd comment after comment and Mal making backhanded flirtations like, “My god Regina, how can stand to look at those biceps every day?” and “Regina, dear, how do you manage not to cut yourself on that jawline?” all of which make him blush like a schoolboy.

While Mal and Cruella are thoroughly distracted deciding on which bottle of wine to open next - Mal wants Merlot, Cruella wants Cab - Robin drops his lips to Regina’s ear and says, “I think I’ll collect on our wager now.”

Regina’s brows shoot heavenward and she whispers, “You’re kidding, right?”

Robin grins, shaking his head no, then reminds her that as per the rules, she can’t say no.

She pauses for a second, staring at him in disbelief, then he adds quietly, “And before you get any ideas, I’ll be the one applying it.”

Her jaw drops and her cheeks blush prettily, and he grabs her hand, tugging a little as he says, “Hey I mended the sink, let me show you what happened.”

She trails behind him, and he doesn’t look back, just struts into his bedroom, grabs the little bottle of lube, then pushes her into the master bathroom in front of him.

“Are you out of your mind?” she asks, but she’s already unbuckling her belt, and his smile widens.

“Possibly,” he shrugs, shaking the bottle of lube and rolling it in his hands. “But I cannot wait to watch you squirm for me, gonna be so fucking hot.”

She’s fighting a smile as she unzips her slacks, and she asks, “How um, how do you want to do this?”

Robin reaches for her and kisses her, backing her up against the bathroom counter and stroking his tongue against her lips, slipping it into her mouth when she opens for him. Her lips are so soft, smooth and glorious against his, and he takes his time exploring her mouth, tugging at her top and bottom lip in turn before pulling back. He licks his lips, tasting her lipstick, and she smooths her fingers across his mouth, wiping the red marks from him, but he’s not done with her, he just didn’t want to spread the bright red color everywhere. He starts dropping kisses down the line of her neck, sucking softly but not enough to cause the soft skin to turn red, and she murmurs breathily, “We should hurry, I’m sure they were suspicious from the start.”

“Let them be,” he rasps, sliding his hands up her shirt, smoothing across the smooth planes of her back and around, across and up her stomach to her lace clad breasts. “Been thinking about you all day,” he says, tugging the cups down to thumb her nipples into hard peaks.

Her breath catches and she runs her hands through his hair, arching her back as he drops his head and pulls her shirt up, sucking hard on one nipple and quickly moving to the other, sucking and teasing it with the swirl and flick of his tongue. “My mouth’s been watering all day thinking about these tits,” he says, pinching both nipples and holding them. “The second they’re gone I’m gonna fuck you however you want, babe, christ, can’t wait to have you.” He twists his fingers a bit roughly and releases her, then drops his mouth and sucks each of her nipples again, pulling on them with intense suction then flicking his tongue against her. Her hips bump into his as she moans quietly, and he pulls back, flicking open the lid of the lube and putting few drops on his fingers. He tugs her bra down further, making sure it’ll stay for a few minutes, then instructs her to hold up her shirt, and he rubs the warming lube over each stiff, pink peak as she hisses, “Oh, fuck.”
Once her nipples are thoroughly coated and shining with the slippery substance, he slides her slacks and knickers down and off, coating his fingers thickly with the lube, then running them through her already slick folds. He moans quietly as he touches her, wishing he could get inside of her right now, wishing he could set her on the bathroom counter and drive his thick cock up into her again and again, *christ*, he’s half hard now with the thought. He reins himself in, focusing on the slide of his fingers as he coats her, then pulls away and adds a little more lube. Robin spins her around and urges her to bend forward, and when she does he licks his lips as he spreads her arse cheeks wide and slides the lube around her rear entrance. She sucks in a quick breath as his fingers tease at her, and he can’t help it, he can’t rub lube on her arse and not touch her just a little, so he circles his middle finger around and around, urging her forward more, loving the way she complies and how her breasts are coming fast and hard.

He coats his fingers again, then slides them around the soft ridges, circling in a tiny bit each time, then pressing softly with his middle finger, hearing her quick intake of breath as he barely penetrates her, and he whispers, “Easy, love, relax for me,” and feels a rush of pride when she takes a few deep, calming breaths, trying to do as he says.

He presses his finger in a little further, then pulls back to drag more lube in with him, centimeter by centimeter, in a tiny bit further, then out for more lube, over and over until he’s got his finger inside of her to the second knuckle. She’s so fucking tight around him, he can feel her quivering underneath him with nerves and what he hopes is excitement, and he works his finger slowly as he tells her, “So tight, *christ*, your arse is so fucking perfect, wish you could see how hot you are right now, got me so hard, *jesus*, babe I could come just from this.”

He slips his finger out, because if he keeps going he’s not going to be able to not fuck her right now, coats his fingers and re-lubricates her tits and sex one more time before stepping back and reaching for her pants. He pockets her knickers and her jaw drops, she rasps, “Really? No panties?”

“Nope,” he smirks.

“Robin, I’m, I’m going to make a mess, I might soak through,” she says nervously.

“That’s quite alright with me,” he smirks then pulls her to him and kisses her, his fingers sliding fast across her clit, rubbing little circles until her hips are moving against him, her breaths quick against his lips before he steps back, grabs a tissue and cleans off his fingers. He adjusts himself, grinning as he says, “Christ woman, got me so hard for you I could cut glass.”

She laughs and puts her pants back on, shakes her head and adjusts her bra and shirt before they head back out into the kitchen. He can’t quite keep the grin off his face, can’t stop glancing over at her as she shifts, again and again as she tries to make conversation, tries to pretend that her sex, arse, and tits aren’t all on fire, pulsing with the heat of the lube, driving her arousal up by the second.

And poor Regina, despite a few well-placed hints about the time of day and the hour getting late, her friends linger for over an hour, drinking wine, none-the-wiser to her “situation”. Robin’s feeling quite guilty by the time he’s helping the ladies with their coats, not to mention dying to know how hot she is for him. Regina stands with her legs crossed tightly, trying to lean against the sofa as if she’s relaxed, but he can see the clench of her jaw, the tightness of her hands as she folds her arms, and when at last they’re left alone, there is a fire in her eyes he has never seen before.

“Robin Locksley,” she says quietly as he flips the deadbolt on the front door.

He turns, excited and a bit fearful all at once.

“If you aren’t hard, naked, and inside of me in the next five seconds, I swear to god -”
He doesn’t let her finish her sentence. Instead, he charges her, crushes his mouth to hers, and it’s a flurry of motion as they strip each other down. He’s hard for her, never lost his erection from earlier, actually, and the second they’re undressed he grabs her by the back of the thighs, lifts her up and slides her down on his cock on the first try.

Regina wraps her arms tightly around his neck, her head dropping back as he shifts her up and down his thick length - fuck she’s tight - she’s hot and so wet, swollen inside as if he’s already fucked her, her need insanely high from the hour of slow, warm torture he’s just put her through. Her body is hot against his, perspiration beading between her gorgeous tits and at the small of her back as he holds her up, thrusting into her hard as he shifts his hands to her arse and grabs a firm a handful of each cheek. Her legs are locked around him, and he loves how strong she is - she’s using those toned thighs to work herself on him, riding him, her hips rolling sensually against him as he increases his pace.

“So fucking hot,” he rasps, his thighs burning, arms straining as he tries to decide if he wants to keep fucking her like this or if there’s a better way to get her off.

“Don’t stop,” she gasps, her arms tight as she writhes, “So close, oh god,” she says, breathless.

He’s a little staggered by how fast she’s spiraling up, he knew she would be aroused from the lube, but chrst, it’s been less than ten minutes and she’s already starting to shake, her hips working madly against him, losing rhythm as she breathes hard. Bloody hell, she sounds close to hyperventilating, and he bounces her fast on his cock, driving vigorously into her without mercy, her legs tight like a vice around him.

Suddenly she sobs and he slams her down on him, staying deep inside of her as she shatters around him, her head thrown back and pretty lips parted as she gasps for air, her body shuddering against him as her pleasure crests quickly, then she tips forward, leaning heavily against him. He shifts her up in his arms, then carries her to his room, laying her down on his soft sheets and kissing her deeply, their tongues tangling for a moment before she pulls away, still trying to catch her breath.

“Oh god,” she pants, as he works his mouth down her chest, his hands squeezing her breasts then gliding down her ribs. He purposely avoids her nipples - knows that they’re going to be outrageously sensitive, and he’s got to be careful - that fine line between pleasurable stimulation and too much causing him to pause and take a little extra time with her. He kisses across her stomach, dipping his tongue into her belly button and moving further down, licking along the crease of her hip and sucking softly across her mound, heading down slowly, slowly.

He runs his tongue lightly over her outer lips, nudging her legs apart as he situates himself between them, stroking his hands softly along her inner thighs and opening her glistening sex for him. He smirks - she wasn’t kidding about soaking through - she’s literally dripping, the lube having gotten her slick and wet, her orgasm only adding to it. He licks his lips and rasps, “Jesus christ, you’re drenched, fuck.”

Her voice is shaking when she tells him, “Put your mouth on me,” both of her hands buried in her own thick black hair as she rolls her hips up at him.

Robin drops his mouth to her and runs his tongue across her plump outer lips. On the next stroke he slips his tongue deep through her slit, tasting the remnants of the lube with her own wetness - fuck that’s hot - she’s so swollen and hot under his mouth, she whines when he tongues her engorged clit and he groans in response. He works the sensitive little bud with the flat of his tongue, swirling around and around, pressing firmly for several strokes as her legs shake. He fights it but he can’t stop smiling, his eyes flicking up to watch as her gorgeous chest heaves faster and faster with each stroke.
of his tongue, and suddenly it feels like the right time to ask her about something he’s been dying to
know.

He sucks on her clit, holding the suction while he rubs it quickly with his tongue, her hands coming
down fast, one pressing to the back of his head and the other twisting hard in the sheets as she tilts
her pelvis up to him - fuck - she’s close and he knows, but he wants to ask her - needs to know. He
pulls his mouth from her, replacing his tongue with his thumb, swirling soft and slow over her clit as
he says, “Darling, I have to ask,” he pauses, gathering his courage - he doesn’t want to offend her
but it’s just, he’s got to ask, “Did you, at one time, did you have your clit pierced?”

He startles when she laughs, this sexy, raspy sound emanating from her chest, the smooth muscles of
her stomach shaking as she claps one hand over her eyes.

Robin moves his thumb slightly so he can get another look at the hood of her clit, and he swears
that’s a scar in the center of it, supposes it could be something else but christ, he doesn’t know what
that could be. He goes back to rubbing her, smooth and steady, drawing her laughter down to fade
into a breathy moan.

“Yes,” she says quietly, smoothing her hair out of her face and leaning up on her elbows to look at
him. “For a few years, I had it done when I turned eighteen.”

He speeds up his thumb on her clit and moans, picturing the curved piece of jewelry, how the metal
might feel between his lips if he sucked her clit - bloodyfuckinghell - she’s so sexy, such a bad girl -
jesus christ. Her dark brown eyes are fixed on his, and he grins broadly, sliding two fingers up into
her as he says, “Always knew you were a naughty little minx.” He thrusts his fingers deep and starts
working them fast, rubbing quickly against her inner wall, staying deep and pulsing them rapidly.

She drops back down on her back, grinning, and tells him, “It’s the only piercing I could get that my
mother wouldn’t find out about.”

“Brilliant,” he gasps, sliding a third finger into her, her hips rocking hard against his wrist as he
thrusts them hard and fast in her and says, “You’re bloody fucking brilliant, love.”

He works and works his fingers in her, dropping his mouth back down to her clit and flicking fast
with his tongue, until his curiosity gets the better of him and he asks, “Why’d you take it out?”
laughing a little as she sucks in a loud, shuddering breath.

“D - Daniel didn’t like it,” she stutters.

Robin’s shock causes him to stop, and he asks in disbelief, “What?!?”

She whines a bit at the halt in stimulation, then looks down at him again and gives him this slow,
sexy smirk as she says, “It made things more intense for me, always made me come more than once,
and he couldn’t keep up, couldn’t last - it made him feel bad.”

Robin’s jaw drops and he groans loudly. “Fuck, I wish I knew you when you were eighteen. I’d
have begged you to keep it babe, that is so fucking hot.”

She bites her bottom lip and gives him one of those adorable smiles he loves so much, her dark eyes
shining with mischief, cheeks flushed, her body hot and sweaty under him - christ - she’s incredible.
He can’t take it anymore, his cock is throbbing and so, so hard, and he’s got the picture of her
pierced clit in his head now - fuck - and he’s got to get some relief.

He crawls up her body, pausing to suck softly at her nipples, they look less red now, the effects of
the lube must have finally worn off. He teases them erect, unable to help himself from flicking and
running his tongue around them - he just can’t seem to get enough of the little gasps and moans and shuddery breaths she makes when he touches her here. It doesn’t help that she tempts him with them constantly - knit sweaters with a deep vee neckline, silk blouses that he can see the pebbled tips right through when they’re hard, button-up shirts with one button straining to spring free and bare those glorious tits for all to see. Christ. She rolls her hips under him and it reminds him that he was working his way up, so he can work his way in, and he grudgingly leaves her chest and continues his journey upward. Robin settles over her, pressing his body down on hers and capturing her lips, bumping her nose with his as he asks, “How are you this sexy? I swear to god, you’ve got me hard for more hours of the day than not.”

Regina blesses him with that megawatt smile he’s been seeing more and more of lately, that familiar audaciousness shining in her eyes as she says, “It’s a gift,” and he immediately kisses her again, grinning against her lips as he whispers, gorgeous, stunning, and beautiful between kisses.

She shifts under him, spreading her thighs wider and snaking one hand between them, taking him in hand and stroking him before lining him up, her breath slipping out fast and hitting his lips when he slides into her.

The fervor of their earlier activities has faded now into something softer, unhurried, and he revels in her, slowly rocking his hips against hers, sliding in and out carefully, rolling his hips in a way that will stimulate her most, his mouth against hers as they kiss deep and slow. He works her clt with one hand, giving her smooth, side to side strokes, speeding his hips as her breathing escalates. It’s a slow and steady build, a patient and completely unhurried activity, a crescendo that he simultaneously can’t wait for and can’t wait to draw out.

He’s never had sex like this, where he’s honestly paying more attention to her than himself, doing everything in his power to make her feel as good as he possibly can. He feels like he’s a tool for her pleasure, and he wants her to use him, wants her to take whatever she wants to get herself off, wants nothing more than to spend his life making her smile like she just did.

The heat between them builds, the evermore slick slide of him in and out of her body making him light up with pleasure, her desperate, sweet sounds encouraging him to work faster, harder for her. He complies immediately - knows he will always comply, will give her anything she asks of him - and a hot, rushing sense of pure desire for her sweeps over him, makes him keenly aware of her reactions to the way he pleasures her. Robin works her harder, faster, knowing she likes it a bit rougher, grabbing her knee and hooking it over his arm, thrusting deeper, sweat building as he tries hard not to let the perfection of her body sweep him over the edge to get lost in his very own real-life fantasy. She’s beautiful - fuck - she’s so beautiful, her onyx hair spread out like ink across his pillows, her lips swollen and parted as she arches her neck, long full lashes framing her dark eyes and pulling him in deeper. He kisses her, can’t stop kissing her, he can barely breathe with the intensity that is rushing through him but he’s unable to stop the desperate press and pull of his lips against hers.

This time when she comes it’s just as intense, but it goes on for what feels like forever, her body shaking beneath him, her back and neck arching sharply, inner muscles clenching fiercely around him. He’s too sensitive, can’t take the force of her climax without coming too, but he forces himself to stay controlled, to continue to thrust steadily and rub her clt as her hips buck and her legs tremble, then wrap around his waist. She holds him inside of her - begs him to stay in her - as he spills with his lips pressed against her throat, kissing, sucking, then biting into the top of her shoulder as his cock throbs hard, pulsing as he fills her - gushing over and over, the stroke of her soft hands along his back the most soothing and sensual thing he has ever felt in his life.

When their legs are steady, they get in the shower, and the slow, sweet afterglow continues as they
scrub each other clean. She even lets him wash her hair - god he loves her hair - it’s so thick, so soft and heavy in his hands, and she smells so good - god - he loves touching her, loves taking care of her. They spend the rest of the night curled up on the couch eating popcorn, watching shark week, and debating whether it’s worth it to swim in the ocean or not, what the odds are of getting bitten, which shark is the best (he thinks it’s the great white, she thinks mako) and why (power versus speed). They talk and smile and cuddle - their personalities as in sync as their bodies - her dry sarcasm cracking him up, his silly teasing making her pull him down for kisses that have no purpose other than to shut him up, rewarding him with the feel of her smile against his lips. Robin has never been more in love, has never ever felt about a woman the way he feels for Regina, and every time he thinks of the ring he’s got hidden in the bottom drawer of his desk, the more certain he is that he was correct to buy it.
Robin has asked her again to tell the boys about their relationship, and she’s running out of excuses for why they should keep it a secret. She managed to convince him to wait until they’re out of school for the summer, so they have time to adjust without the worries and all the activities that come with the school year. She tells him she’s worried about how Henry will react, concerned that he won’t take it well, that he’ll think of her breakup with Graham and all the changes that came with it, and he’ll shut down. It’s a pretty weak excuse, Henry adores Robin and they all know it, but he lets her off the hook anyway. He’s the greatest guy in the world, and she’s falling in love with him.

Which she absolutely should not do.

They’ve only been dating for three months and she shouldn’t be in love with him already, she should not have these deep feelings that radiate through her when she thinks of him, she should not have silly fantasies about how good it might feel to be called Mrs. Locksley. Well, Mrs. Mills-Locksley. Jesus, she’s acting like a lovestruck idiot.

Regina doesn’t know what he sees in her, how he could possibly look at her with so much unabashed love in his eyes. She literally has nothing to offer him, has been sponging off of his goodwill for six months and she still has another year until she gets her inheritance, which she... hasn’t told him about. She has this idea that when she gets it she’s going to quietly put some of it aside for Roland, for his education and then a little extra. Just a couple million so he can have a good start and not need to worry about anything until he’s older, and so Robin doesn’t have to go into debt putting his son through college. Then she’s going to slip another few million into the camp’s coffers, Robin never looks at the books now that she’s running the finances, and she’d like to give the camp a little cushion in case anything bad should happen. It’s the least she can do after everything he’s done for her, and it’s not like she’s ever going to spend fifty million dollars of her daddy’s hard earned money on just her and Henry. She’s not even going to tell Henry, actually, she’s going to keep raising him like a normal, middle-class kid, going to let him decide what he wants to do with his life, let him pursue his dreams and passions, and when he’s old enough, she’ll sit him down and they can discuss where the money came from and what it all means.

Regina hasn’t had a family, not since her father, and then Daniel, died, and the Locksley’s are as close to one as she assumes she’ll ever have. She loves Roland as if he were hers, looks to Granny for advice or to give her perspective, and Robin, god, he’s her best friend. She knows that it would be so much easier if they had just stayed friends - then for sure she could have lived here at least until Henry goes to college, they could have raised their boys together and had holidays, birthdays, and graduations together, all without any strings attached. It could have been so much simpler if she had just kept her damn pants on, if she had resisted kissing him at every opportunity, but now she’s in deep, she’s falling in love and she can’t stop.
Robin has had a crush on her from day one, and sometimes he says these things, things like You are so perfect, that scare the hell out of her. The closer they get the more he says things like that, and she’s getting paranoid about it, is worried that he’s created this fantasy of her, of this perfect girl that she absolutely is not. She’s a control freak with a hot temper and a rebellious streak a mile wide, the girl who makes all the wrong decisions, whose own mother couldn’t love her because she constantly fell short of expectations. Robin isn’t stupid, and she knows deep down that one of these days he’s going to figure it out, he’s going to see her for the mess she really is, and then everything is going to fall apart.

So for now, she doesn’t know what else to do but to try to protect Henry and Roland from getting their hopes up - to try to shield them all from her stupid, lovestruck heart. She fights against telling anyone else about their relationship, because as long as no one knows about it, they can’t get hurt when they inevitably break up. If no one knows, they can’t be disappointed in her, they can’t give her that look she has seen so many times - the one of disgust, of pity for the girl who had it all just to come up short, once again. Maybe she can even work out some sort of deal with Robin to at least keep Henry’s life stable, to make sure he’s not hurt too much by the fallout.

It’s payday, and she’s signing checks all day as employees come and go, Mary Margaret lingering awkwardly and trying to chat her up just before lunch. She hasn’t spoken with her since New Year’s, has been avoiding any communication with her because, first of all, she’s not really sure she does forgive her, and secondly, she’s not sure if her step-sister realizes just what was going on in the hot tub when Regina accepted her apology, but she’s not really keen on finding out. She finally gets rid of her but her pen runs out of ink, and she can’t find another in her desk - Robin steals hers constantly, the damn thief - and she heads into his office in search of another. She knows they just got a few boxes of them in the last time she ordered office supplies, but they’re nowhere in sight, so she opens his desk drawers in search of them.

She’s rooting around in his bottom drawer when her fingers brush against a small, leather coated box, and she pulls it out, stroking her fingers across the soft, white fabric as her pulse pounds in her ears.

It looks like a ring box.

It’s definitely a ring box.

She smooths her fingers over the top of it, trying to come up with a reason he’d have a ring box hidden in the back of his desk drawer. Perhaps it’s Marian’s ring, maybe the memories are too painful for him so he’s hidden it away. It’s a stretch - they were still married when Marian passed, so she was very likely buried with her wedding band - Daniel was. Regina racks her brain - maybe it’s Granny’s, a family heirloom? Maybe it’s empty and she’s melting down over nothing.

She cracks the box open but can’t see anything, a slip of paper obscuring the contents. She gives up and opens it, her curiosity killing her as she pulls out the piece of paper - it’s a receipt - all the air whooshing from her lungs when she finally sets eyes on the ring.

It’s gorgeous.

Beautiful.

Absolutely stunning.

It’s an antique for sure, with a huge center stone - two carats, she guesses - with an ornate band that makes her heart stutter. God, it’s the most perfect ring she has ever seen in her life. She glances toward the door - Robin went home for lunch but is due back any minute, so she quickly unfolds the
receipt, choking when she sees what it cost, and when her eyes land on the date of purchase - two weeks ago - panic slams through her.

Oh-god-oh-god-oh-god-oh-god-oh-god.

Regina crams the receipt into the box and shoves it back into his drawer, slamming it shut quickly and bolting from Robin’s office. She goes into her own office and shuts the door firmly, trying to calm down. Jesus, they haven’t even said I love you - he has a ring and she knows it’s for her, and they haven’t even said I love you.

Oh god.

Why does he have a ring already?!

She wills herself calm, wills herself to get it together. He hasn’t asked her anything - just to tell their boys they’re together - he hasn’t asked her to spend the rest of her life with him.

Yet.

She takes deep breaths and tries to tell her brain to shut up, that there’s nothing wrong with him having a ring in his desk, for some purpose she assumes but doesn’t actually know. There are a hundred reasons he could have that ring, and the sooner she forgets about it, the better.

So Regina tries her best, tries hard to forget she ever saw it. She forces down the fear, uncertainty, and yes, the stupid, starry-eyed hope, that’s swirling around in her head, and she goes back to work, throwing herself into it and vowing that she will not spend one more thought on the beautiful, perfect ring that’s sitting in Robin’s desk drawer.

It’s been raining all week and the ground is completely saturated by the time Sunday rolls around. The rain has quit but it’s still overcast and dreary, and Robin has talked Regina into helping him lay yet another layer of mulch on the trail that leads from camp to their and Granny’s houses. She wouldn’t typically do this sort of manual labor, but he asked nicely, as in back-to-back orgasms nicely, so here she is. Roland and Henry are at the barn with Kristoff, who has taken over both boy’s horseback riding lessons, so they’re in good hands for a few hours. It takes a long time to lay all the mulch, they’re both sweating, muddy, and tired by the time they get the last wagon load spread, and since they worked their way to camp, they decide to pop in and see how the kids are doing with their lessons.

The outdoor paddock is empty, too muddy for use, so they head to the large indoor arena, both coming to a short stop when they find it empty. Robin checks his watch and it’s later than they thought, so there’s a good chance they just missed them, but on the way back out Regina notices one of the stall doors is open, and when she checks it she finds it empty.

“Which horse’s stall is this?” she asks Robin quickly.
Robin’s brow furrows, “That’s… Merry’s,” he says, and Regina knows that this is Roland’s favored horse.

She strides quickly down the wide aisle to the far end where Henry’s usual mount is housed. The stall door is closed but when she looks inside, the stall is empty.

“Is Gus-Gus in there?” Robin calls, checking the other stalls quickly, looking for the two missing horses.

“No,” she calls back, and a wave of fear rushes through her.

Robin pulls out his cell phone and calls Kristoff, the tone of his voice turning more and more fearful as the conversation continues. Regina strides from the barn quickly, her eyes scanning the ground, looking for hoofprints in the thick, sloppy mud. She finds nothing in the driveway, so she circles around to the side door of the arena, and shit, sure enough, there are two sets of perfect horseshoes leading out of the barn toward the northeast trail.

She calls for Robin and he comes running from inside the barn.

“Kristoff said the boys finished their lessons over an hour ago,” he says quickly, concern in his tone, “He had to take off but the boys promised him they’d put up their mounts.”

“Look,” she says, gesturing to the hoofprints.

Robin rubs his hand across his mouth, cursing under his breath as he brings his bright blue eyes to hers.

It’s clear that the boys took off on a little joy ride, but the trails are a complete mess - there have been washouts all spring and it hasn’t been dry enough to groom the trails properly, so it’s sure to be slippery as hell and extremely dangerous.

They’re just deciding on whether they should take horses or the ORV to go after them, when a flicker of movement catches her eye and she turns, completely relieved as Henry comes barrelling out of the mouth of the trail. Her relief quickly turns quickly back into fear, however, when Roland does not follow behind him, and when she brings her eyes back to Henry, who is closing the distance quickly, she can immediately tell that he’s in hysterics.

The little Arabian Gus-Gus comes to a hard stop in front of them, mud spraying out from under his hooves as Robin grabs for the reins, Henry jumping from the saddle at Regina as he sobs uncontrollably. She holds him tightly to her, he’s a bit too big for her to hold like this but she can’t set him down, he’s in a full panic and she can’t understand what he’s saying through his sobs. Robin wrangles the horse and quickly takes it through the big gate to the outdoor arena, saddle and all, then comes sprinting back to them, taking Henry out of her arms so she can run her hands over his face, wiping away his tears as she gets him to focus on her, gets him to breathe and calm down enough to tell them what happened.

“We-we-we took the horses out,” he gasps, shaking hard in Robin’s arms, “We weren’t s’posed to - we told Kristoff we’d put ‘em up - but we wa-wanted to ride some more and-and-and Kristoff had to leave so we just went anyway.”

Henry sobs out how sorry he is and Regina’s heart breaks for him, but she has to be strong now, has to know what happened, so she does her best to calm him again and asks quickly, “Henry, where is Roland?”

Henry takes a shaky breath and says, “His h-horse slipped and he tried to correct but he-he couldn’t
and the horse bucked him off and ran away.” Terror rushes through her, and Regina smooths her fingers over her son’s face, speaking softly to him, urging him to continue. “I tried to help him but his arm is bad, it’s all weird and he kept screaming and I-I-I freaked out and -” he breaks off mid-sentence, wailing in Robin’s arms as Robin turns to her, his fear shining in his eyes.

They have to get out there, they have to go get Roland - they have no idea how badly he’s hurt but from what Henry is saying it’s a very serious situation.

“What’s going on?” someone calls to them, and Regina thanks the heavens - it’s Granny.

They get Henry to go to Granny, who agrees to take him up to the house with her while they go after Roland. They jump in the ORV and take off, mud flying as they tear down the trail. There’s only one loop on this trail, thank god, but they’re deep in the dark forest by the time they see Roland’s little body, curled up as he sits shivering, crying, and covered in mud on the side of the trail.

Regina is up and out of the ORV before it comes to a stop, sprinting toward Roland and sliding, going down on her knees as she gets to him. He’s crying hard, obviously terrified and in pain, and the first thing she does is put her hands on his face, bringing his dark brown eyes up to hers as she soothes him, telling him he’s okay and they’ve got him now, that everything is alright.

He has a little jacket on so she can’t see much, and he has his arm tucked in against his body, cradling it. When she asks if she can see it he vigorously shakes his head no, his sad little voice telling her it’s broken, and from the way he’s acting she absolutely believes him. Robin gets down next to her, asking his son to show them, to please let them see, and Roland pleads with Regina, begs her not to make him move it because it hurts too much.

She looks to Robin and now he’s crying, his hands shaking hard as he reaches for Roland, rubbing his back, and shit, he’s nearly hysterical too.

“Okay,” she says, taking a deep breath and doing her best to put authority, strength in her voice, “This is what we’re going to do.”

Robin and Roland both bring their eyes to her, equally scared and looking at her like she’s going to save them.

“Daddy’s going to pick you up,” she tells Roland, “And he’s going to put you on my lap in the ORV, okay?” Roland nods, his tears running and running down his sweet little face, but his fear looks like it’s abating a little. “Then I’m going to hold you nice and tight, and daddy’s going to drive us home. Then we’re going to go to the hospital, and they’re going to make you all better. Isn’t that right, dad?”

Robin shakes his head yes, his eyes wide as he sniffs loudly, then finds his voice and rasps, “Yeah, that’s right, that’s what we’re going to do.”

Regina nods, feels like she’s getting some control of the situation. “So I need you to be a tough, brave little boy right now, Roland, can you be tough and brave for just one more minute and let daddy pick you up?”

Roland hesitates, his dark, teary eyes locked on hers, and she strokes her fingers across his cheeks, wiping his tears away as he shivers in the cold mud. He nods, whispers, “I c-can be brave, but just for a minute.”

Regina smiles proudly at him, jesus she loves this little boy, and she stands, pulling Robin up next to her and grabbing him firmly by his upper arms as she asks quietly, “Are you capable of driving us?”
He nods quickly, and Robin looks calmer now, trust for her shining in his eyes before he reaches for his son, and she jogs to the ORV and slides in, grabbing a blanket out from under the dash. Robin places Roland in her lap, and he’s crying harder now, the jostling of being moved causing him more pain, and after a little strategic shuffling around, they get him so he’s kneeling, straddling Regina’s lap with his good arm wrapped tight around her shoulders and his little face tucked into her neck, the blanket wrapped around him so he’s tucked in with her. Robin jumps into the driver’s seat, starts the engine up and swings the vehicle around, taking off down the trail at a slower pace, every bump and movement causing Roland to cringe and cry into her neck, begging Regina to make it better as she whispers reassurances.

It’s one of the most heart-wrenching nights of her entire life.

They take Roland to the emergency room, and he clings to Regina, holds tight to her so that she carries him in and holds him in her lap as Robin fills out the paperwork at the desk. It’s a mercifully short wait, and when they take Roland for x-rays he asks Regina to come with him. She’s allowed without question - the nurses assume that she is his mother and no one bothers to correct them. When the doctor finally comes in with the films, she shows them that Roland’s arm is broken in two places, simple fractures in both his radius and his ulna, and she informs them that he’s going to need a cast when the swelling comes down.

They’ve given him something for the pain, but he holds tight to Regina’s hand with his good one, his eyes on her whenever the doctor says something that sounds scary, and she reassures him with soft words as Robin kisses his forehead. Robin looks like he’s in shock, his face pale and ragged looking under the bright hospital lights as he stands next to her, stroking his fingers through Roland’s curls. The doctor and nurses learn quickly that they should speak with Regina, to tell her Roland’s care instructions instead of Robin, after they notice the glassy look in his eyes as he stares at his son. She listens carefully, asking all the right questions and ensuring that she understands what she can do to make him more comfortable. They wrap and splint Roland’s little arm, and she finally gets a smile out of him when she compares it to a robot arm.

They leave the hospital shortly after that, treating Roland to his favorite fast food restaurant because, now that the trauma is over, he’s suddenly starving. Robin drives them home without a word, his hands perfectly placed at ten and two on the wheel, and she can see from the white of his knuckles that he’s just barely holding it together. They get home and it’s well after dark, Roland is exhausted and leans against her hip as she wraps her arm around his shoulders and walks him inside. Henry and Granny are waiting, and the two boys have the most heartbreaking little heart to heart she’s ever seen - Roland apologizing for making Henry take the horses out when he didn’t want to, and Henry apologizing for “leaving Roland to die.”

She takes both boys into the kitchen and gets them up on the bar stools, dishing out a small amount of ice cream for them both, then starts a serious discussion about what happened. They talk about how they are never to take the horses without permission, how Roland’s injury is no one’s fault, and how Henry did the right thing in going for help. It’s exhausting - she has to go in circles a few times with them until the boys have a clear understanding of the situation, but eventually she gets them all settled. Robin helps Roland wash up, and Regina cleans up quickly, throwing on her pajamas and robe before she heads down to tuck the boys in.

The stress of the day has taken its toll on all of them, and the boys don’t fight at all about going to bed a little early. Regina tucks Henry in first, kissing him and squeezing him extra tight, which he also doesn’t fight. Henry is the kind of kid to punish himself worse than she ever could, so instead of harping on what went wrong today, she reassures him that all is okay, that she loves him more than anything else in the world, and that nothing will ever change that.
She switches with Robin, him going to Henry’s room to say goodnight and her going to Roland’s. She hugs and kisses Roland a few extra times too, and she’s just about to pull away when he grabs her hand, pulls her in close and asks quietly, “Is it okay if…” he trails off, looking nervous.

Regina sits on the edge of his bed, brushes the curls out of his eyes and encourages, “Is what okay, baby?”

He sighs heavily, looking up through his long eyelashes and asks, “Is it okay to say I love you?”

Her heart swells and her eyes feel hot as she swallows and says, “Of course, it’s always okay to say I love you.”

He smiles up at her, his sweet dimples finally making an appearance tonight as he says, “Oh, alright. I love you.”

He says it simply, because he’s a child and life is simple, but for Regina it’s - it’s like her whole world officially grows by one more little life, one more person that she cannot live without. She tells him, “I love you too, Roland.”

She starts to pull away but he stops her again, his dark brown eyes round with sincerity and curiosity as he asks softly, “Do you think, since I haven’t got one, maybe you could be my mum?”

Regina’s mouth opens, then closes. She isn’t sure what to say, isn’t sure what the right, or the appropriate, response is. He’s looking at her with such openness, such honesty in his young features, and she just, she can’t tell him no. So she redirects and says, “You do have one, honey, she’s just, she’s not with us anymore.”

Roland’s brow furrows and he rubs his hand over his mouth - she fights a smile, the gesture is so Robin. “I know,” he pauses and considers, then states bluntly, “Henry said he wouldn’t mind sharing, though.”

She’s not sure what to say to that, the fact that the boys have had their own independent conversation about sharing her as their mom shocks her into silence, then makes her heart positively leap - maybe… maybe she’s not such a terrible mother after all.

Roland flashes that Locksley grin at her again, his little face so expectant that she can’t say yes or no, because it’s really something he needs to discuss with Robin. God knows she’s willing, she already thinks of him as hers, but there are rules about things like this, especially when the person in question is merely your father’s live-in sort-of girlfriend that may or may not have a ring waiting for her in a desk drawer.

Robin knocks softly, saving her from having to say anything, and Roland tells her I love you, one more time before she heads upstairs.

She’s sure that the boys fall asleep almost immediately, but Robin lingers in Roland’s room for a long time. She’s worried about him, and he’s down there for so long that she finally goes back down, takes his hand and tugs him upstairs and into his bedroom. She goes back to the kitchen and tosses a few ice cubes in a tumbler, then fills it with the good scotch - the Johnnie Walker Black Label that he keeps hidden above the fridge for “special occasions”. She heads into the master bathroom and runs a hot bath, complete with epsom salts and bubble bath, then comes back into the bedroom to see Robin sitting exactly where she left him. Her heart breaks for him, for the terror he experienced today, the terror that she felt as well, but somehow she’s still keeping it together, so she takes care of him too. She pulls his shirt up and off, gets him to stand and removes his mud-soaked jeans, strips him down then takes off her own clothes and pulls him into the bath.
She gets in first, and he looks confused, but she just pulls him down in front of her, and he leans back against her as she runs a sudsy loofa over him, scrubbing him up and getting all the mud off. Then she wraps her long, smooth legs around him, her arms too, her hands drifting soothingly across his chest as she rests her chin on his shoulder, her cheek pressed against his. He takes a long sip of the scotch, downing half of it, then sets it on the side, his body tight with tension against her. He hasn’t said a word to her since they found Roland, and he’s starting to scare her - she has to figure out how to pull him out of this weird state of shock he’s slipped into.

Regina kisses his cheek, the corner of his scruffy jaw, presses soft, slow kisses down the side of his neck and across the top of his shoulder, wishing she knew how to help him. They stay in the tub until the scotch is gone and he has finally relaxed against her a little, his head tipped back against her shoulder as he stares at the ceiling. They’re completely silent, she doesn’t know what to say, there aren’t really any words for what happened today, and they crawl into his bed, laying on their sides as they stare at each other in the dark.

It was a terrifying day, an awful, terrible event that scared the living hell out of them both. As the minutes tick by it suddenly catches up to her, the emotions she’s been shoving down for the last several hours finally surging past her defenses, and she’s helpless to stop it when the tears start to fall. It’s stupid to be crying now, to be upset when everything is alright, but it snaps Robin out of his daze, murmuring, “Come here, darling,” as he scoots in closer, wrapping her up in his arms and kissing the top of her head as she presses her face against his chest. It helps, his touch helps bring her back under control, and they spend the rest of the night trading off - slipping downstairs to check on their boys - unable to quell the anxiety and fear that torments them throughout the night.
Robin takes the week off so he can stay home with Roland. His boy got his cast on Wednesday, and he’s technically cleared to go back to school, but Robin keeps him home just the same. It’s selfish, he keeps him home more for him than he does because Roland needs it, but he can’t help it. He’s feeling a bit odd about the entire thing, feeling a bit put out, feeling a bit… jealous.

Which is completely ridiculous, because there is nothing to be jealous about.

So what if his son cuddles up with Regina instead of him at night? So what if Roland tells all of his mates on the phone that Regina saved his life? So what if he’s overheard him telling Regina how he loves her more than anything in the whole world every single night this week?

He’s completely green with envy and it’s stupid.

It’s not until Friday afternoon that things get real for him, that it all finally sinks in and the envy dissipates as fast as it came. Roland asks him as if it’s the most normal thing in the world, “Dad, can Regina be my mum?”

The bowl he’s rinsing in the sink slips out of his hand with a loud clang! splashing water all over his t-shirt as he scrambles to shut the faucet off as he asks, completely flustered, “What?!”

Roland grins from across the kitchen island, where he’s tapping the elbow of his cast haphazardly against it.

“Regina,” he says again, “Can she be my mum?”

“I, er, what do you mean?” Robin asks stupidly. How does Roland know that he and Regina are together? How on earth did he find out? They’ve been so careful, christ, Regina is going to kill him.

“Well, it’s just,” Roland furrows his brow and looks hard at his father, “I mean, she’s Henry’s mum, and I haven’t got one anymore, she takes care of me and we love each other, so wouldn’t that be alright?”

Robin dries his hands and rounds the island, sliding onto the stool next to his son.

“You do have one, it’s just -” he starts, but Roland talks over him.

“That’s what Regina said,” he gripes, “But that’s not fair. What’s so different about me and Henry? Doesn’t she love me as much?”

Robin’s heart breaks, he tries to explain but Roland isn’t done.

“How come Henry can have her but I can’t?” he asks, tears in his eyes, “I know I got in trouble
about the horses but I’m usually a pretty good lad, and I can be better, I can be smart like Henry, I’ve been practicing chess, I can almost beat him now, and I -”

Robin grabs his son and pulls him into his chest, shushing him and kissing the top of his head. “Hey,” he says softly, “That’s not at all what this is about. Regina loves you just the way you are -”

“But -”

Robin holds up his hand and Roland stops talking. “And she loves you as much as Henry, but she’s not your mum - you know that mum died when you were little, yeah?”

Roland nods.

“And you know that no matter what, she’s always going to be your mum, right?”

Roland looks annoyed, but nods again.

“I know it’s not fair,” Robin says softly, “It’s not fair and it’s never going to be fair. Sometimes that’s just the way life works.”

“That sucks,” Roland snaps.

“Language, my boy,” Robin corrects, and Roland looks sullen. “But you’re right,” he agrees, “Sometimes it sucks.” Roland cracks a grin and Robin smiles back. “Regina loves you very much, and I’m sure she would have loved to be your mum too, but it just didn’t work out that way.”

Roland thinks for a moment, then perks up suddenly and asks, “What if you married her?”

Robin feels a hot flush heat his cheeks and neck. “Come again?” he asks stupidly.

“Isn’t she your friend?” Roland asks, and when Robin agrees, he continues, “Is she your best friend?”

Robin suddenly feels very uncomfortable. How the bloody hell is his eleven-year-old son so insightful? “Yeah, I suppose she is,” he says carefully.

“Well, aren’t you supposed to marry your best friend?”

Robin laughs, because his son is a bloody genius, and he is completely, absolutely correct.

“And then she’d be my step-mum,” Roland pauses, another idea sweeping over his features as he says, “Oh! And you could be Henry’s step-dad!” Roland finishes, pleased as punch, looking so proud of himself that Robin can’t help but laugh softly as he ruffles his son’s hair.

“Well, that’s er, that’s solid reasoning, my boy,” he says, getting up from the barstool. “So I suppose I better get to work on convincing her she should marry me.”

Roland grins, “Yeah!”

“We’re going to have to be patient though, alright?” he asks, dropping his voice conspiratorially even though they’re the only ones home. “When you get a bit older, if you wind up liking girls, you’ll learn awfully fast that they are much more… complex than we men are.”

“They are?” Roland asks, confused.

“Yes.”
“Oh,” he says, crinkling his nose as he asks, “Even Regina?”

“Especially Regina,” Robin smirks.

Roland looks across the island at his father with this look of pride on his face as he says, “Well then, it’s a good thing you’re the best, isn’t it dad?”

Robin returns the grin, winks at his son and says, “You better believe it.”

Later that evening, Granny stops by to collect the boys for a few hours, taking them to see the latest and greatest Lego movie that’s just come out. The boys are ecstatic, are so geared up they’re practically jumping up and down before they run out the door, piling into Granny’s Buick and waving at Robin as they pull out of the drive.

Robin turns quickly, throwing the bolt on the front door - he’ll have no interruptions for what he’s planning, he’s going to get this right - he’s got to.

Regina is curled up on the couch with a book, a well-worn copy of Don Quixote in its original Spanish (christ, she’s so smart) - and he takes a moment to look at her, to really soak her in, to revel in this moment before he shakes it all up. She’s adorable, dressed in those tight black pants, knit socks, and swimming in one of his forest green camp hoodies - she’s rolled up the cuffs at the sleeves and has it zipped only halfway up, with a v-neck t-shirt underneath, and he loves when she dresses like this. It’s uncharacteristic of the Regina she shows the world - makes him feel like this is his Regina, casual and so, so soft.

She’s so beautiful - her thick, ebony hair brushing her shoulders, one side tucked behind her ear, her long dark lashes, dark chocolate eyes - always so focused, so sharp - the straight line of her nose and the high curve of her cheek, the cut of her pretty jawline and the fullness of her lips. He’s never going to tire of looking at her. She’s not “perfect,” no, she is so much more.

She reaches for her glass of wine, a merlot tonight, and he watches as she drinks, licking her lips and looking back at her book with her brow furrowed, before taking another sip and setting it back down. He loves her hands, the smooth, fine lines, the way they fit just right in his, how she runs them over him in soothing, in desire, in laughter. She’s stunning.

“Stop it,” she says in that low, quiet tone he loves, her eyes never leaving her book.

Robin smirks. “What’s that, Darling?” he asks innocently from where he’s leaning against the kitchen cabinets.

Her tone is dry, but he thinks she’s fighting a smile as she says, “You know what.”

“I’m sorry but you’ll have to be a bit more specific.”

“Staring at me - I know you’re doing it, stop it,” she’s definitely fighting a smile now, her eyes
crinkling even though her lips aren’t yet upturned and her gaze is still on her book.

“Well I’ve quite a view,” he flirts, “My apologies, but I just can’t bear to look away.”

Regina breaks into a grin, and she still hasn’t raised her eyes, but now her voice is a bit husky, that low, sexy bedroom voice he fucking loves as she says, “It’s too bad you’re busy looking, when you could be busy touching.” She raises her eyes to his as she finishes her sentence, her brows raised and a cocky smile on her lips. She holds his eye contact for a moment, licks her lips, then slides her eyes back to her book, still smiling.

And fuck.

He wants to. Christ, does he ever want to touch her. So much. Everywhere. All the bloody time. Over and over. While she pants and moans and shakes beneath him, while she -

Fuck.

He’s got to get it together, got to start thinking with his head instead of, well, his head.

He’s a bit buggered on how he wants to start this conversation with her. If he gets anywhere near her he’s going to touch her, and then he’s going to fuck her, and then he won’t be able to have their discussion. If he tries to be coy, tries to beat around the bush at all, she’ll catch on - she’s way too smart for him to even try it - and then she’ll freak out before he has a chance to make his case. He figures the only way he’s going to be able to accomplish his goal tonight then, is if he just dives right-the-fuck in.

“Let’s tell the boys,” he says, his voice firm.

The smile fades from her lips and she says, without looking up, “No.”

“Let’s tell them,” he urges, “I want them to be a part of this.”

“No.” she repeats, a frown on her lips as she stares at her book. He knows she’s not reading, and by not looking at him, she’s essentially hiding from him.

“Give me a reason,” he says, determined.

“I’ve given you several,” she sighs, running her fingers across her brow. “I don’t intend to repeat myself.”

“Those aren’t reasons,” he challenges, “They’re excuses.”

That gets her attention - she snaps her book shut and sets it on the coffee table next to her wine as she stands, turns, and faces off with him.

“They were good enough reasons last week,” she snaps.

“Last week is last week. I’m asking you right now.”

She purses her lips in irritation as she walks over to the island to take up her battle position, leaning one hip against it as she levels him with her dark eyes, which are currently full of fire.

“And I just told you, right now, that my answer is no.”

God, she’s frustrating. He knew she wouldn’t be easy to persuade - she’s so bloody stubborn. He takes a deep breath and asks, “Why?”
“Because they’re not ready,” she says, exasperated. “We’re not ready. No one is ready for that.”

He gives her a sharp look and says, “Quite the contrary, love, everyone is ready. Even you.”

“Oh,” she drawls, “I’m sorry, I didn’t realize that when I gave you consent to fuck me that I also gave you consent to speak for me.”

It’s a nasty, sarcastic comment meant to hurt, meant to shut him down for fear of a worse bite from her.

Robin is ready for it though, expected it even, knows that it’s her way of protecting herself. Verbal armor, he calls it.

“What’s holding you back?” he asks quickly, “I don’t get it - everything is perfect, why are you fighting so hard to keep us from moving to the next level?”

“Stop - don’t say that,” she says, the venom gone from her voice and replaced with an edge that sounds almost like fear.

“Why?!”

“Because I asked you to, because I’ve already told you no.”

“And it doesn’t make any bloody sense!” he snaps. “Is this a joke to you? Because it’s not funny, it’s cruel, what you’re doing is depriving us of something that could be brilliant, something that is real, and I don’t understand why.”

“A joke,” she repeats, her voice quiet as she nods. “Yeah, that’s obviously what this is,” she swallows and narrows her eyes at him. She’s carefully controlled, her movements and her face completely steady, calm as she says, “It seems you have all the answers, Robin. I don’t know why you keep asking me.”

She acts like this is it, like that’s the end of the argument as she turns and heads back toward the couch.

“You know,” he says to her back, “You could actually be happy if you’d just bloody allow it, if you’d let someone give you it.”

“I’ll keep that in mind,” she says quietly, not turning around as she collects her book and her glass of wine, refilling it then heading for her room.

“We’re not done talking,” he says loudly, straightening up, because if she gets behind her bedroom door, this is all a bust, a potentially fatal mistake in their relationship.

“Yes we are,” she says, two steps from her door.

Robin panics, loses his mind and blurts, “You know what I think? I think you’re scared. I think you’re terrified of being happy, that this could work. And the only reason you keep running from it, is because as long as no one knows, you don’t have to deal with it - you get to have the fantasy without the commitment.”

She stops mid-stride, turning around swiftly and stalking back to him, slamming her book and wine glass down on the island so hard he’s afraid it’ll shatter, wine sloshing over the sides and onto the granite.
“No commitment?” Regina snaps, leveling him with the fiercest look he’s ever earned from her. “I’m risking everything - my job, my home, my son’s happiness, your son’s happiness - I’m risking everything for you, and you have the nerve to stand here and accuse me of no commitment?!”

He thinks he may have pushed her too far, but he can’t take it back, and at least he got her away from her bedroom.

She takes a deep breath, her eyes red-rimmed as she stares daggers at him, the volume of her voice rising as she asks, “Tell me, what does it feel like to have zero risk in this? How does it feel to be so spoiled you don’t even know what you have, so you constantly demand more?”

“Bloody hell, babe,” he exclaims, “All I want is to include our sons in our relationship, you act like I’m asking you to marry me!”

“I’ve seen the ring!” she yells, panicked.

Bugger.

Jesus-fucking-bloody-christ.

Fuck, fuck, fuck.

He scrambles for an explanation but can come up with nothing, knowing that deep down, he doesn’t want to come up with anything, because he damn well bloody does intend on asking her to marry him, someday. So what comes out of his mouth is the most idiotic thing he’s said tonight.

“You went through my desk?!”

She looks completely dumbfounded by his question and automatically replies, “I needed a pen!”

“Well use your own bloody pens - you don’t go snooping through every drawer in someone else’s desk for a pen!” he’s frantic now, holding onto this stupid argument for all he’s worth, because he’s got nothing else right now.

“I’d use my own pens if you’d stop stealing them, you fucking thief!” she snarls.

“Well excuse me, Your Majesty, I was unaware that you owned every pen in the bloody office, next time I’ll be sure to place them where you don’t have to go looking through every drawer.”

A beat of tense silence passes, and they stare at each other, both riled up, both frustrated and angry.

“Jesus,” she hisses, cheeks flushed, “This isn’t what we’re arguing about -”

“That’s right,” he cuts her off, “We’re arguing about you being a chicken shit.”

“No, we’re arguing about you being a thick-headed idiot who won’t stop pretending that I’m something I’m not.”

“What?” he asks, utterly confused. “What d’you mean by that?”

“Perfect!” she snaps, her temper waaaaay up, eyes red and wet but not quite crying as she breaks into a rant. “You think I’m this perfect girl - don’t deny it, Robin, I’ve heard you say it - stunning, brilliant, perfect - I’m not! I’m not any of those things! And if we tell the boys about us, they’re going to get their hopes up, and then not only is my heart going to be broken, but theirs will too. I’m not doing that, I’m not doing it to Henry, I’m not doing it to Roland, I’m not, I’m not,” she sucks in a few quick, deep breaths, then continues, “I’m not dragging our sons into this only to break their
hearts when you finally see me for who I am.”

Robin goes completely still. He feels like time has stopped around him, like everything is frozen. She’s staring at him with this determined look in her eyes, like she actually believes what she just said.

“I don’t think you’re perfect,” he says quietly, looking her straight in the eyes, “I think you’re perfect for me.”

“That’s the same thing,” she snaps, desperation starting to creep into her voice, “You’ve put me up on a pedestal, you’ve put me so far up I can’t see the ground anymore, and I’m trying - I’m trying so hard to give you what you want, but, god, you just keep pushing me for more, it’s too fast, and I’m -”

“Bollocks,” he snaps, his own temper catching fire. “I haven’t put you on a pedestal - you’re so in your own head, so stubborn that you won’t let yourself see what everyone else sees.” He forges on quickly, giving his speech everything he’s got. “You want to know what I see? I see a woman with so many scars on her heart that she shouldn’t even be able to love, let alone give what you’ve given us - Henry, Roland, me. You talk like you’re a peripheral person in this family but you’re the center of it. You can’t do the things you did when Roland got hurt - you can’t provide the strength, the courage, the comfort that you did, you can’t give every ounce of yourself to all of us when we’ve gone to pieces and never once think about yourself, not until you’ve sorted everything and got us all tucked in, safe and sound - Regina, you cannot do that then pretend that you aren’t everything to us.” Robin takes a deep breath, glaring hard at her and putting as much conviction into his voice as possible as he states, “You’re not perfect, not at all, not even for a second. You’re everything.”

“Stop!” she pleads, “Don’t say that, you can’t say that!” Her voice cracks in the middle of it and Robin’s heart hemorrhages for her.

“I can say it!” he says emphatically, “I can, and I will, and I’m going to keep saying it until you get it through your head, until you feel it deep down in your soul, until you finally get it!”

“What? Get what?!”

He stares at her, dumbfounded. How can she not know?

“Christ, Regina, I’m in love with you!” he exclaims, waving his hands at her as he takes two hard steps in her direction.

“Well I’m in love with you too!” she yells, closing the last step, her eyes wild as she runs her hands through her hair. “Are you happy now?! Jesus.”

He can’t help it, she’s so angry, furious with him, but he can’t stop it. He grins.

“Stop smiling!” she cries, a sob coming up out of her chest as she covers her face. “Stop it!”

“No,” Robin says firmly, grabbing her wrists and pulling her hands away so he can see her. She tugs, tries to wrench away but he holds her tight, pinning her arms in between them as he jerks her close. “No, I will not stop smiling - I will not stop smiling, because you just told me that you love me. You love me and that is definitely something to smile about.”

“But we can’t,” she says brokenly, no longer fighting him. “We can’t, I’m, I’ll mess this up, we’ll lose everything, Robin and I can’t, I -”

“Tell me,” Robin asks softly, sliding his hands up to cup her face, “Tell me again.”
Tears slide down her cheeks, and it’s the most broken he’s seen her. Funny that - she’s more broken by confessing her love for him than when she was cheated on.

“I love you,” she whispers, dropping her eyes.

His heart hammers in his chest, and he wishes he could kiss her, but not now, not yet. Robin smooths his thumbs across her cheeks, wiping away the rogue tears that have betrayed her. “Again,” he says.

She tilts her head, leaning into his hand as she grumbles, “I love you.”

“Once more,” he encourages, his smile growing, heart so full with love for her.

She takes a deep, shuddering breath, her hands sliding down to settle at his waist. He can barely hear her, but she says, “I love you.”

He kisses her forehead, unable to resist. “Please, love, again?”

“I love you,” she breathes.

He kisses the bridge of her nose, keeps his voice soft and deep as he asks, “Please?”

“I love you,” it’s barely a whisper.

He kisses her cheek, “Again.”

“I… love you,” a bit louder.

He kisses her other cheek.

“I love you.”

He’s not prompting her now, she’s just saying it, slightly louder this time, and he kisses her chin.

“I love you.”

He presses his lips to hers and she leans into him, the “I love you,” she whispers against his mouth breathless, almost surprised.

Robin kisses her again. When they part, her brow is furrowed as she stares hard at him and says, “I love you?”

Another kiss.

“I love you,” she gasps, as if she’s just now realized what she’s been saying, and what it means, and Robin breaks into a beaming, huge smile.

“Yeah, you do,” he says, stealing another kiss then adding, “And I love you.”

Regina surprises him, that resilient spirit of hers finally breaking through her stubborn anguish as she gives him a shy smile, looking up through her lashes as she asks excitedly, “You love me?”

Robin gives her a slow, sweet kiss, pressing his lips firmly to hers, then pulling back sharply so he can say, “So much,” before kissing her yet again.

They part and he pulls her into a tight hug, squeezing her then stepping back so he can look in her eyes. He tucks a lock of her dark hair behind her ear and asks, “It’s completely up to you, darling,
we can do whatever you want, truly, but I have to ask once more, can we please tell the boys? I just, I want this to be real for all of us.”

She leans in and presses a sweet kiss to his lips, gives him a watery smile, clearly overwhelmed as she says, “Okay.”

“Yeah?” he asks excitedly. Yes. *Fuck* yes.

She nods, stroking her fingers down his neck and admitting, “It’s real,” she sniffs, “And it’s time, it’s definitely time.”

“There she is,” he smirks, stepping into her, “There’s my stunning, brilliant, *imperfect* girl.”

Regina rolls her eyes and takes his hand, pulling him from the kitchen as she mumbles, “Shut up,” and then, looking over her shoulder, “I love you.”

Robin grabs her around the waist and she lets out a yelp of surprise as he sweeps his arm under her legs, picking her up threshold style and carrying her to his room as he says softly, “And I you, my darling.”
Robin has her shirt off, her bra unclasped, his lips around her nipple and one hand down her pants when she hears the front door slam and Roland yell, “Dibs on the chaise!”

“Awe man!” Henry whines, “You got it last night!”

The two boys argue about the rules of “dibs,” while Regina has a tiny heart attack.

Robin scrambles from the bed, closing his bedroom door as fast as possible while trying not to make any noise. He flips the lock quietly as Regina fumbles with her bra, trying to get her clothes on straight and tamp down the arousal that was just starting to spark in her core, as Robin pulls his pants back up and grabs for his shirt, grinning.

“This is not funny,” she hisses.

“Like hell,” he whispers, his eyes dancing, “Leave it to Granny to make tonight the first time she’s ever brought the boys home on time.”

She tugs her shirt on and heads for the door, but as she passes him, Robin grabs her, picks her up and presses her into it. He sucks hot kisses down her neck, his teeth nipping softly as he pushes his body into hers, and against her better judgement, she tilts her head back to give him access to her throat. She’s really worked up - he’d been rubbing her just right, his lips stimulating the tips of her breasts, her emotions running high from their argument and subsequent revelations. Robin lets her body slide down his, sucking that soft spot behind her ear as he unbuttons her pants again - shit - then slips his hand back down beneath her panties to stroke through her slick sex and press firmly against her clit.

“We can’t,” she pants, biting her bottom lip and sliding her hands up his chest, under his shirt.

“We can,” he whispers, circling her clit, “You’re already soaked, it’ll only take a moment, let me get you off.”

Robin works his fingers faster, rubbing those perfect swirls right where she needs him as he kisses her lips, sucking softly and dipping his tongue into her mouth. She nips his lips, smiling against him as his fingers move steadily, her hips rolling against his hand - oh jesus - while heat pools in her center.

He moves his lips to her ear, pulling her earlobe between his teeth, licking softly up the shell of it as he whispers, “Christ, babe, I can feel your heartbeat pounding in your clit.” Robin kisses behind her ear again, rasps, “I can feel how much you need this, fuck, you need me to give it to you, don’t you, love?” He slips his hand out and pulls her pants and underwear down, guiding one foot out then standing quickly, sliding his middle and ring fingers swiftly up inside of her. Regina’s head tips back and thumps softly against the bedroom door, her lips parted as he finds her g-spot and swipes
purposefully across it, back and forth, pressing firmly as his fingers move over the soft, warm flesh. The immediate heat it elicits is breathtaking, making her gasp and lick her lips as he strokes her, his palm rubbing against her clit.

Robin presses his lips to hers again and rumbles, “Pull your shirt up, let me see those tits.”

Regina’s heart rate jumps, her hands obediently going to the hem of her shirt and tugging it up as Robin changes the movement of his fingers from side-to-side to long, slow circles. Her hips jerk, clit throbbing as wetness seeps from her, and Robin kisses her again and says, “Fuck, you’re gorgeous.” He looks down unabashedly at her breasts, then whispers, “Play with your nipples while I finger you.”

She’s panting now, is too turned on to think straight (obviously), and she brings her hands up to squeeze her nipples through her bra. “Let’s see them,” Robin says, speeding the smooth circles inside of her, his palm grinding against her clit. She tugs her bra down, freeing her breasts, then takes both nipples between her fingers and rolls them, pinching and tugging, over and over as her arousal climbs.

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“Flick them,” he commands quietly, and she does, strumming her thumbs over the hard tips, the wet heat in her core increasing - *oh god* - her arousal building up, “Now rub your clit,” he says, sucking on the nipple she abandons as she moves her fingers down to slide between his palm and her mound, expertly finding her clit and rubbing fast. She wants to come - *goddd* - she wants to come. Robin’s fingers switch to firm pulses and quick little thrusts against her g-spot, sucking hard on her breast as she rubs fast, fast, fast on her clit.

Her toes curl and the muscles in her lower abdomen tighten as she tilts her pelvis up - *shit-shit-shit* - she’s close - *mmmm-goddd* - Robin’s tongue flicking at her as her fingers tug her other sensitive peak, clit so swollen, her sex dripping as he works his fingers deep - *Ohhhh* - almost, almost, almost -

>Knock-knock-knock!<

“Hey, Dad?” Roland calls through the door.

They freeze. *Fuck-fuck-fuck.*

Robin’s voice is hoarse as he replies, “Just a moment.”

They get her re-dressed in record time, and she darts into the bathroom, shutting the door quick and quiet as Robin opens the bedroom for his son. She hears their muffled discussion, something about where the popcorn is, and Robin is pulled out of the room with his son, who is hopefully none-the-wiser to what almost transpired.

When she gets her heartbeat, and her arousal, firmly under control, she exits the bathroom quickly and nonchalantly heads to the kitchen for a glass of water. Robin shoots her a smirk from where he’s planted on the couch, somehow having won the chaise, and when she joins them he widens his legs for her, insinuating she should slide in between them. She hesitates, glancing nervously at the boys, and he gives her a soft smile, mouthing, *I love you.* So Regina pulls up her courage and settles down in front of him, shifting until her back is pressed to his chest, and when she finally sneaks a look at the boys, they don’t appear to have noticed, and as the evening wears on, she’s relieved to see that they don’t appear to care about the change in seating whatsoever.

They watch one of the Transformer movies, then they make the boys pick a “classic” which translates to a choice from Robin’s collection of late eighties and early nineties movies, and they
settle on The Karate Kid. It’s just after nine-thirty when they start the movie, but it must be too slow for them, because within twenty minutes they’re both asleep on the far side of the room, right in front of the TV, sprawled out on a plethora of pillows and blankets that they used to create their own “life raft” on the floor.

Robin drops his lips to her ear and whispers, “I owe you an orgasm.”

She smiles and says quietly, “Yes, you do.”

His hands move from her waist to rub up and down the tops of her thighs, then slide up the insides of them. “Grab that blanket,” he whispers, motioning to the throw next to her.

She pauses, because oh god, they shouldn’t, they really, really, shouldn’t, but then Roland snores loudly and she uses it as evidence to the contrary (weak though it may be), and she grabs the blanket and spreads it out over her lap, bending her knees to block the view of any movement.

“Dirty girl,” he whispers, “Knew you couldn’t wait.”

She’s in her pajamas - flannel pants and a soft v-neck t-shirt, so there’s very little stopping him as he slides his hands to her center and rubs her through the fabric. She grabs the remote and turns up the TV, forcing herself not to think about the fact that their kids are in the same room. The truth is, she’s still buzzing from earlier, still aching in her core for that release she was so close to, twice, and as long as they take it easy, there’s very little chance they’ll get caught. The boys both sleep like the dead, but she doesn’t want to get up, doesn’t want to make any sudden movements that might awaken them. At this point, she is bordering on desperate for her release - her skin is oversensitive, her pulse elevated - her body is essentially begging for it, and she can’t fight it anymore, deciding it’s worth the risk to do it here. She’s already soaked through two pairs of panties and she refuses to rub one out when she knows Robin would love to do it for her.

He slides his hands up under her shirt and palms her breasts, massaging them gently through her bra then sliding around to unhook it. “Take this off,” he murmurs, and she slips the straps down her arms, pulling it out the bottom so he can hide it between the cushions of the couch. His large, warm hands return to her, stroking across her smooth skin, the light touch pebbling her nipples under his palms as he strokes across her. “Your tits are so soft,” he says in her ear, “So heavy.” He bounces them gently, “I think about them constantly - think about sliding my cock through them, covering them with my come, think about the way they shake and bounce when I fuck you.”

Regina pulls in a deep breath, his words making her even hotter for him, the smooth, soft caress of his hands causing goosebumps to rise on her chest. He pinches her nipples, rubbing and massaging them rhythmically, tugging and twisting as she bites her lip. She turns her face to his, kissing him quietly then whispers, “I need your fingers in me - please, please make me come.”

Robin immediately runs both hands down her stomach and under her waistband, using his left hand to spread her outer lips wide as he slides the fingers of his right through her slick folds, then up to stroke her clit. She’s still swollen - jesus - she’s been aching, a simmer of arousal burning for hours, and as he strokes her, her hips immediately jerk, to which he stifles a chuckle against the side of her neck.

“Still soaked, love,” he whispers, slipping his middle finger up into her while he rubs her clit with his other hand. “If I fucked you right now you’d be so tight, bet I could barely fit inside of you, I’d have to stretch your pussy so wide.” He nips the side of her neck then sucks the soft skin, hard enough that it’s at least going to turn red.

“Robin,” she turns her face to his and pants softly, “I - I need to come - tease me later - I can’t - I
“Are you begging, Ms. Mills?” he asks, quickening the movements of his talented fingers. She rotates her hips and stifles a moan.

“Yes,” she breathes, too full of need to fight him, “Please, please,” she begs quietly, bringing her hands up to tease her breasts under the blanket.

“Love it when you play with yourself,” he encourages, kissing the corner of her jaw. “I love taking care of you, love touching you, babe, love you so much.”

She turns her face to his, panting against his lips as the heat blossoms and burns, spreading from her center, streaking down from where she’s pinching hard on her nipples. She kisses him softly, quietly, desperately, as she tightens, the sensations sharp within her, a fiery tingle, relief denied for far too long. Robin licks at her lips, tangles his tongue with hers as he speeds up on her clit, his fingers rubbing furiously, as he says, “Tell me you love me, tell me as you come.”

Regina furrows her brows - jesus - she’s on fire - fuck - the pleasure shimmers up through her and she flies up fast, spreading her legs wider so he can get deeper, so he can splay her lips open further, and - oh god - add a second finger inside of her. Her hips thrust up rhythmically, uncontrollably, and he whispers, “What a needy girl you are, look at you spread those thighs for me, I don’t even have to ask, do I love?”

He strokes and works his hands fast, thrusting carefully and curling hard against her inner wall, her clit so sensitive - jesus - she’s pulsing under his touch, the shocks of pleasure pushing her closer, closer, - mmm oh god - and then - ooooh - she finally comes, lets the relief and pleasure wash over her as she clamps her legs closed on his hands, her back arching as she pants, “Love you,” against his lips, before he presses his mouth hard to hers and steals the rest of her breath.

He slips his fingers from within her and cups her until she settles, then removes his hands from her pants entirely, pressing softly against her lower abdomen as he kisses her temple. “Fuck you’re beautiful,” he whispers as she drops her head back against him. “Wish you could experience how good you feel when you come.”

“Bed,” she whispers when she catches her breath. “Take me to bed.”

Robin moans softly as he presses the bridge of his nose to her cheek. “I’ll take the boys down,” he rasps, “And when I get back upstairs, you had better be starkers and ready.” He kisses her cheek, then turns her face to him by her chin and presses his lips fiercely to hers, both of them breathless and flushed when they part.

She makes a break for his bedroom before he picks up each of the boys and carries them, still sleeping, down to bed. He’s back upstairs and locking the bedroom door in less than five minutes, and just as he requested, she’s naked, stretched across his bed on her stomach, heart hammering and dying with anticipation of him.

He freezes by the door, his bedroom eyes hot on her as he looks her over and says, “Christ, I wish I had an eidetic memory.”

Regina smiles, teases, “Oh? Can’t remember what you came in here for?”

Robin grins and walks toward her, pulling off his heather gray t-shirt and dropping it to the floor as he says, “I’d hardly forget an opportunity to be with you,” he shucks his flannel pants and underwear as he steps toward her, “But god, I cannot think of a prettier picture than you stretched across my bed
She rises up on her elbows and pulls herself to the edge of the bed, eyeing his half-hard length as she says in a low voice, “What about me, stretched across your bed, with my mouth open and waiting?”

Robin bites his bottom lip as she reaches for him, running the tips of her fingers along his smooth skin, giving him a little satisfied smile when he steps closer. She wraps her fingers around him loosely, teasing him to rigidity, stroking softly, and she hears the saliva click in his throat when she tightens her grip. Robin brings his hand up and lightly wraps it around hers, not directing, just along for the ride it seems, and it’s hot, it’s like she’s watching him jerk off for her but she gets to feel the warm, silky, hardness in her hand as his arousal grows. Her heart pounds as she stares at his hand over hers, at the beautiful contrast - his palm and the pads of his fingers are coarse and calloused, his fingers thick and long, the back of his hand showcasing the scars of the surgery that corrected his once tragically broken bones.

She’s still nervous about openly being together, about telling the boys, but Robin wasn’t totally wrong in what he said to her today. She was playing pretend, at least to some extent - she has been holding out on making this real because of all the repercussions that might accompany the inclusion of family and friends. They’ve been dating inside of a safety bubble, but Robin made it clear he’s done with safety, he wants to take on the risk with her, because he loves her. So while she still has fears and reservations about it, she’s going to try hard to let him have this. Going to try to have faith in him, to convince herself that he really does love her the way she is, when so many others have tried and failed at it.

She tugs lightly on him, pulling him a half-step closer to the bed as she guides him to her mouth, licking her lips in preparation and removing her hand from beneath his, indicating that he should be the one to do it, to slide his thick length between her lips.

In true Robin fashion, he takes his time, teasing both of them, giving himself a few, firm strokes then smoothing the head of his cock against her lips, which she opens. When she catches on that he’s not going to slide it in, not yet, she plays back - presses wet, open-mouth kisses against his hot flesh as he rubs it around her lips, then sneaks her tongue out to lick and flick over him as he pumps himself softly and circles her lips again. He leans in a little closer, letting her pull just the sensitive tip of him into her mouth, and she sucks lightly, smoothing the flat of her tongue against the silky, warm skin then licking around the perimeter. She can hear his heavy breaths as they both touch him, his own hand pumping shallowly on his length as she teases and strokes his sensitive head with her mouth, lips sucking and tightening as her tongue slides through his slit and gathers his precum, which she promptly swallows as she shifts herself closer to encourage him to give her more.

He does, he steps closer and lets her start bobbing on him, taking half of his length into her mouth as he continues to stroke himself, resting his other hand lightly on the back of her head and threading his fingers into her dark locks. He gets a little closer, his will power failing as she slides her tongue up the underside of his shaft, then sucks hard at the tip, pulling up with a loud smack of her lips then diving back in to repeat the movement. He moans softly, using both hands to gather her hair up so he can watch her, then twisting it around so he has a decent grip on her. She’s wet between her thighs, usually gets turned on from giving head - knowing she’s making him happy, that he’s feeling so good because of her attention. It makes her hot, makes her want to go down on him just so she can hear that quick exhale when she hollows her cheeks and sucks him hard, and that low, throaty hum he lets out when she cups and kneads his balls.

Robin starts to say something but his voice cracks and he has to clear his throat. She doesn’t stop what she’s doing for a second, her lips gliding slick and hot over him, again… again… again… a slow, steady pace that has him tightening his fingers in her hair as she slides him down the back of
her throat for a second. “Fuck,” he rasps, “Would you,” he takes a shaky breath, “Would you let me
fuck your mouth?” his tone is strained as if he’s wound tight, but she is not a fan of his request -
every experience she’s had with it has ended up with the guy turning stupid in the middle of it,
getting too rough and giving her a sore throat, and in one particularly horrifying case, actually
causing her to vomit. So, as she flicks her tongue against his hard length, she hesitates.

Regina pulls up from him with a slick *pop*, unable to stop herself from licking him from base to head
one more time before she asks him, “Have you done it before?”

He nods, running his fingers through her hair as he looks down at her.

“How do you want to do it?” she asks, watching him stroke himself and wondering how long he’ll
even last. He is *hard*.

Robin thinks for a second then says, “If you’re a bit nervous, how about on your knees? That way if
you feel uncomfortable, you’re able to pull away.” His eyes are patient and understanding as he
looks at her, so she does as he says, shifts around and gets on the floor, hoping he knows what he’s
doing, because tonight started so frustrating, and if this doesn’t go well, it might just kill the
adrenaline high she’s been running on since he told her he loved her.

He starts slow, easy, and it’s a lot like how she normally gives head, except that he has his hands
tight in her hair and he’s moving his hips a lot more as he pushes and pulls against her, thrusting
shallowly into her mouth. She slides her tongue against him as he strokes in and out, keeping her lips
firm around him, breathing through her nose when she can, eyes closed in concentration. It’s not bad
at all, actually, even when he speeds up and bumps the back of her throat a few times - he’s practiced
enough not to push it, immediately adjusts the depth of his strokes but doesn’t stop. He slides his
hands down to cup her face, his thumbs stroking across her cheekbones as he thrusts smoothly into
her mouth and says, “Open your eyes for me babe.”

She does, opens and blinks up at him as he increases the speed of his hips, his cock slipping fast
between her lips now, in-out-in-out-in-out, and his hands are firm, but not tight, on her face as he
stares down and watches her take him, over and over. He’s panting, his breaths stuttering as he
moans and slides his fingers across her brow, murmuring, “So bloody beautiful,” breaking off to
groan as she tightens her lips a little more, adding as much suction as she’s able as he thrust-thrust-
thrusts into her mouth. “Wish you could see what I’m seeing,” he gasps, threading his fingers into
her thick dark hair, holding her a little more still as he pumps into her, “Your eyes are so gorgeous,
your lips around me like this? Fucking hell.”

Robin thrusts a few more times, quick-quick-quick, then asks, his voice shaking, “Can you
deeppthroat? Can you take me down for a few strokes?”

He keeps his cock in her mouth, keeps thrusting as he asks, sliding slowly in and out, so she nods
around him, but pulls her face back to catch her breath, her saliva threading for a second from her
mouth to his length, and Robin moans again as he wipes her chin for her. “So hot, *christ*, do you
have any idea how fucking sexy you are?”
He’s asked her that before and it made her grin, but this time it makes her smirk, makes her lick the tip of him like an ice cream cone after she swallows and takes a few steadying breaths, then sucks him back into her mouth again, opening her throat as he slowly slides in deeper, bums the back of her throat and presses just a little further. She forces herself to relax, fights the gag reflex hard and her eyes water, but it’s not all that unpleasant - she has more experience here and the slower pace makes her much more confident. He pulls out completely, lets her take a deep breath then strokes back in, down, down a little further, this deep, rumbling, *Uhh*, spilling from his lips as her throat spasms around him. He pulls out, letting her calm the reflex and catch her breath, then strokes back down one last time, his hands smoothing over her cheeks, holding her to him as he settles his cock deep in her mouth. He holds and holds her there - she can’t breathe but she’s not too worried, knows he’s not trying to hurt her - and when she glances up he’s staring at her, his jaw slack, breathing hard and looking so impressed she feels a little rush of pride in herself.

Finally, he pulls out, and Regina gasps for air as he pulls her up fast, laying her back on the bed and covering her neck, throat, jaw, and lips with hot, desperate kisses. His big body covers hers, and she breathes deeply under him, steadying herself and swallowing thickly as he strokes his hands all over her.

“Where do you keep your vibrator?” he asks, sucking on her collarbone.

She grins and laughs softly, “What makes you think I have one?”

“Oh, you’ve got one,” he murmurs, kissing up her throat, “A woman like you? You probably have more than one, am I right?”

She hums as he nips along her jaw.

“What’ve you got?” he continues, “Rabbit? Bullet? Tell me you’ve got one with a remote,” he moans against her hairline, just behind her ear, apparently working himself up with his own questions. She shivers as his hot breath hits her and he pulls up, eyes full of excitement as he asks, “Well?”

“There’s a box of Tampax under my bed,” she tells him, and he furrows his brow.

“But you’ve got an IUD, you don’t have… lady days.”

“Exactly,” she smirks and he breaks into a huge grin, jumps up, pulls his sweatpants on and is across the hall to her room before she can hide her nakedness under the sheets.

He comes back quickly, pausing to lock the door, and he looks absolutely ridiculous - his hard on is tenting his sweatpants, his chest and cheeks flushed with arousal and excitement, grinning like a kid at Christmas as he dives into bed with her and opens the box.

He’s right, she does have a few choices, nothing too embarrassing, but enough to mix things up when she needs a little extra. Fortunately for her, she hasn’t had to touch the box in months - Robin’s been keeping her more than entertained without any of it. He pulls out the purple one, just a standard, silicone vibe with several different pattern options, and she can practically see the ideas running through his head as he sets it aside. He pulls out a small bottle of lube next, reading the label, it’s just regular KY, but that seems to be fine because he sets it on the bed too, then looks through the rest of her stuff, flips the lid on the box and sets it on the floor.

Robin looks at his watch. “It’s quarter past ten,” he makes eye contact, “How many?”

“How many what?”
“How many times do you think I can get you off in the next forty-five minutes?”

Regina laughs - he’s ridiculous. She literally just came ten minutes ago, just came hard - it’s going to take him a lot more work to get her off again, so it’s not exactly an ideal situation.

“Twice?” she asks, dubious.

Robin’s jaw drops and he says, “Now that’s just insulting.” He puffs his chest up a little and says, “I can at least get you three, but I’m going to shoot for five, just to prove you wrong. Now c’mere.”
He gets her first two orgasms relatively easily. They’re not exactly show-stoppers, but he’s being a bit egotistical and trying to get both quantity and quality tonight, and he’s got a couple of big ones planned for her. She came hard and fast with the vibrator pressed against her clit for just a few minutes, a strained Mmmmm! escaping her as she arched up and pulled her hips away, shuddering with pleasure. From there he slipped two fingers into her, rubbing on her g-spot the way she seems to like, making smooth circles and increasing in pressure, thrusting a bit as she made those sexy little gasps, her fingers twisting in the sheets as he worked her up quick, then carefully, carefully stroked the vibrator around and across each of her nipples, down her stomach, over her mound, creeping closer and closer to her clit. He held it just above the sensitive area, changing the pattern of the vibrations from smooth and steady to a repetitive, building pattern, starting soft and ending with quick and intense sensations. He slid it down on the start of the next build, careful not to over-stimulate her as he worked his other hand inside of her, and on the fifth or sixth pulse from the vibrator, she gave him her second climax.

Number three he’s pretty excited about - he’s hoping to get her to give him multiples on this one, hoping to get her so aroused he can get number three, four, and possibly five, if he works her up just right.

She looks like a goddess laying across his sheets, her chest flushed, nipples peaked, hair mussed and lips swollen from his kisses. Christ, she’s gorgeous, and on top of that, she loves him.

He grabs her hip and rolls her onto her stomach, straddling her arse and sweeping her dark hair off her neck, a few of the damp, ebony strands clinging to the soft skin and giving him an excuse to sweep his fingers across her a few extra times.

He drops kisses across her shoulders, rubbing his hands up and down the warm, soft planes of her back, massaging each side of her spine and smiling as she moans under him when he finds and starts working out a knot next to her shoulder blade. She shifts, curling her shoulder forward so he can knead the tight muscle, her breaths deepening and slowing as he works one shoulder, then the other, then slides down to rub her lumbar.

Robin parts her legs and kneels between them, bending forward to lick the dimples in her lower back, his hands smoothing over her arse and massaging the firm muscles. This woman has the absolute best bum he’s ever seen; round, full, perfectly proportionate, and so soft under his fingertips. He slides down a bit further, nipping the curve of one cheek, then skirting his fingers through the crease at her thighs, biting back a moan as he runs his thumbs up each side of her cleft and spreads her for him.

Fuck her arse is perfect. He wants to fuck her there so, so badly but knows he can’t, knows she’s not very experienced, if at all, with that, and it’s not something you just do. It takes a bit of preparation, a
bit of practice, and while he would love to lube up and slide in -fuuuck- that’s not going to bring her much pleasure, and it’s certainly not going to give them her third orgasm.

But it doesn’t mean he can’t… play.

He grabs a pillow, folds it in half and slides it under her hips, then reaches for the lube, coating his fingers quickly before slipping them down the cleft or her arse. She tenses under him, and he knows she’s nervous, so he ups his game a bit, slips one hand down to tease through her swollen sex as he slips and slides his finger across her rear entrance.

“Have you ever been fucked here?” he asks quietly, swirling his fingers around the opening, the lube coating her thoroughly and dripping down a bit.

She takes a deep breath and he knows she’s trying to relax for him, but he’s already got her to give him some seriously brilliant oral tonight, and he doesn’t want to push her limits too much, but god, he really thinks she’ll like this if she gives him a chance. She already let him penetrate her with the warming lube, and he didn’t get any complaints about that, so he’s hoping she’ll risk it.

“No,” she says quietly, then adds, “Graham tried a few times, but um, it hurt.”

“Well that’s a bloody shame,” he soothes, “Cause if it’s done properly, it’s quite pleasurable.” He strokes his fingers softly up and down her cleft, his other hand slipping lightly through her folds. “Would you let me try a bit of light stimulation?” he asks, keep his voice even, trying not to let his excitement, his anticipation bleed through. He wants her to try it because she wants to, not just because he wants to. “If anything feels less than good, we can stop immediately - you have complete control,” he reassures her, and he means it.

Regina takes another deep breath, her back rising and falling as she considers. After another minute she says softly, “Alright, but,” she takes another deep breath, “If it hurts we’re stopping - I don’t want to be pushed on that.”

“Absolutely,” he says, his fingers slipping over her again. “You can trust me, darling, I want nothing but to make you feel incredible.”

“I trust you,” she says softly, and Robin’s heart swells with the honesty in her quiet voice.

It’s a new step in their relationship, kicked off with their confessions of love earlier tonight and extending into sex, her trusting him not to hurt her as he trusts her to tell him how she feels. It’s surreal to Robin that they’re here together, that this is Regina Mills underneath him, with her perfect arse dripping with lube while his fingers softly rub her clit, and he has to take a moment to calm himself. He feels starstruck, completely in awe that she returns his sentiments and wants to do this with him.

He takes some lube and coats his length, which is ultra-sensitive at this point, hard and throbbing for relief, but he ignores it, he’ll get his at some point tonight, of that he’s sure, and he wants to make this positively blinding for her. He adjusts her hips, spreading her legs wider as he says softly, “I’m going to slide my cock up into your pussy, alright, love?”

She laughs softly, looking over her shoulder at him with those dark eyes and says, “You don’t have to warn me about that, but I appreciate it.”

He smiles, because he has full intentions of talking her through every single thing he does to her body right now so she doesn’t get stressed or nervous, so she can relax and just enjoy his touch. He lines up and slides the head of his cock in, just the tip -fuck- she’s so warm and tight. He pulls out
then quickly slips back in again, working in deeper and deeper until he’s completely buried in her. Her breathing has picked up, she’s rolling her hips back to him as he thrusts lazily inside of her, and she’s making little noises of encouragement as he fills her.

“How does that feel?” he asks, kneading the muscles of her arse with both hands.

She *Mmm’s* and rocks her hips back to him as she arches a bit and says, “*Very* good.”

Robin continues the slow, easy pace of his hips and grabs the vibrator, toggles it to it’s slowest speed and coats the tip with lube. “I’m going to run the vibrator over your arse now,” he tells her, “And I’m going to touch it to your opening, but I won’t slide it in, not at all, unless you ask me to.”

She nods in front of him and he drags the toy across her lower back, then traces the swells of her cheeks, just getting her used to it, trying to grow her trust. He thrusts inside of her slowly, buries himself deep and rotates his hips as he taps the vibrator against her cheeks like he might his cock, if it wasn’t otherwise occupied. She seems alright with it so far, so he takes the next step, slides the slick toy down the cleft of her arse slowly, closing the distance to her rear entrance centimeter by centimeter. When he gets to just above the pink edge, he has to tamp down his excitement, has to switch from those deep slow rotations to long, easy thrusts again, to give himself a bit of relief.

“I’m going to touch it to you there, now,” he says quietly, “Are you alright with that?”

“Yeah,” she breathes, and when he thrusts this time he pulls all the way out, dragging some of her wetness with him - *christ* she’s wet - and he’s relieved, because she’s obviously turned on. As he strokes back in, he simultaneously drags the vibrator down to rest lightly against her, and she doesn’t really react, so he lays the broad edge against her fully and presses, letting it stimulate across her entire rear opening as he starts to thrust a bit faster.

“How’s that, love?” he asks, thrusting into her steadily.

“It’s good,” she says, stretching her arms up over her head, the toned muscles in her back flexing and releasing as she relaxes.

Good isn’t exactly what he’s going for though. He wants excellent, incredible, wants her so turned on she can’t form words. He gives her several more steady thrusts and starts rubbing the toy against her, up and down in rhythm with his cock, adding a bit more lube and pressing the wide edge of the toy a little more firmly against her. There’s no risk of accidentally penetrating her this way, it’s just stimulation to the outside, and he’s suddenly rewarded for his patience, when on the next stroke she raises her arse up to him, asking, “Rub it harder?”

He immediately complies, and he hears her low moan, watches with amusement as she wriggles a little under the vibrations as he thrusts slow and steady, watching the warm lube drip down from her arse to his cock. *Fuck* that’s hot, she’s so bloody brilliant.

“Alright love?” he asks, and she hisses through her teeth, rasps, *God yes - more.*

His excitement skyrockets and he moans in response - how the fuck did he get so lucky with her? - then he moves the vibrator around to press against her clit.

She jumps under him when he makes contact, and after he confirms she’s not too sensitive, he holds the toy against her, letting the slow setting rile her back up as he moves inside her and circles her rear with two slick fingers. Regina works her hips sensually, little swivels and presses back against him that turn him on so much he has to bite his lip to redirect his attention, his cock so rigid and sensitive, he’s positive that he could come in about three seconds if he increases his speed.
“Can I slide one finger in?” he asks, clicking the vibrator up to the medium setting against her clít, sliding his cock in deep and grinding against her before going back to steady thrusts. “I’ll stop the second you tell me to,” he reassures. “There’s no expectations, no pressure.”

She moans under him, and she’s so wet that as he fucks her he can hear the slick sounds of it, can feel her warm, slippery arousal soaking him with each thrust, can see the way she coats him on the outstroke of his thrusts. He teases at her rear opening, pressing lightly but not penetrating, waiting for her to give him the go ahead. She moans again, “Feels so good,” slipping quietly from her lips before she says, “Let’s try it.”

He keeps fucking her, clicks the vibrator up to the high speed and she shoves her hips at him, thighs shaking with her arousal. Christ, she’s gorgeous, she’s a hot, dripping mess for him and it’s outrageously arousing, so, so sexy. The fingers on his left hand are slick from the lube, and he circles the edges of her, pressing his middle finger in softly, lightly, then a bit more, a bit more, slipping in to the first knuckle. He does no more, just holds it steady in her as he thrusters, keeping that pace, working the vibrator back and forth across her clít.

“Oh, love?” he asks, needing reassurance.

She gives him an Mmhmm, nodding her head and bracing on her forearms.

“How about a bit more?”

She nods again and he’s getting excited, starting to think that she’s into this, hasn’t heard her complain at all, and fucking hell, she is so wet. He slips his finger forward slowly, pressing down and in, pulling it back and gathering more lube, then sliding in again, this time to the second knuckle. Regina makes this little whimper and he stops his fingers, but keeps his hips moving as he asks, “How’s it feeling, darling?”

She’s panting underneath him, and if he had to guess, he’d say she fancies it, but he’s not dumb enough to assume anything. “I’m good,” she rasps, “Keep going.”

“How?” he confirms, and she nods.

Fuck she’s hot. It’s like every time he thinks she couldn’t possibly be more sexy, she comes up with something new, just to prove him wrong. His cock is aching, there’s this simmering tightness in his lower belly - arousal that’s been ignored for far too long - but he can’t think about that now, he wants only to think of her pleasure. He pulls his finger out a bit, thrusting carefully in and out a few strokes before he finally slips his finger into her all of the way, she’s so tight - christ alive she’s tight - and as he presses down toward her belly and strokes his cock into her, she moans. Loudly.

“Good, babe?” he asks, fucking her cunt a bit faster and holding the vibrator steady against her clít.

Her voice is needy, breathless as she huffs, “Oh goddd.”

“You like this? You like when I finger your arse and fuck you at the same time?” he asks as he carefully starts to thrust his finger in time with his hips and she groans, dropping her head to rest on her forearms. “You look so good like this, with both holes filled, fuck. Someday I’m gonna slide my cock into your arse, slip this vibrator into your hot little cunt and rub your clit until you come.”

She’s trying to work her hips faster against him, trying to speed him up, but he’s forcing them to keep the steady, even pace - he wants this slow, burning build up of arousal to wash over her so he can keep her going once she starts.

“God, babe, you don’t know how many times I’ve stared at your perfect arse and dreamt about
fucking it, dreamt about coming in every hole, and *fuck*, you feel so good, so tight everywhere, squeezing my cock and my finger, and christ, you’re so wet, you’re making such a mess all over me, I can feel it dripping off me as I fuck you.” Regina moans loudly again, a small sob working up from her as she begs loudly, “Oh god, don’t stop.”

“Quiet, love,” he reminds gently, loving how hot she is for him, but not wanting the boys to overhear them, should they wander up from the basement.

He speeds up a tiny bit for no other reason than that he can’t help it, lengthening the strokes of his finger in and out of her, letting her have more of a full thrust from it instead of shallow ones, angling down toward her belly, and - *jesus fucking christ* - he can feel the rub of his cock through her inner wall as he thrusts in tandem, and she moans again, her breaths coming so fast he worries she might get lightheaded.

“Ohh,” she breathes, struggling to stay quiet, “Oh god, I’m close.”

“I know, babe, can feel you, sooo tight, *God*.” He moves the vibrator in quick little rubs against her clit and she moans again, pressing her face to the mattress to muffle herself. He thrusts his finger gently, pressing down again as he strokes into her. “Had no idea that under those little skirts and silk blouses there was a filthy girl who fancies double penetration,” he starts, and she gasps under him, as if she hadn’t thought of it this way yet, “But your pussy is so wet with my finger in your arse, you’re fucking shaking - you’re loving this, aren’t you?”

Her inner muscles start to flutter against him, and this it, he’s certain she’s going to come, but he has to maintain control, can’t lose himself yet because after this one, he’s got more, needs to give her just a bit more before he finally lets go.

“Mmhmm,” she whines, “Please go faster, *fuck*, I’m so close.”

He smiles, feeling a bit guilty but it’ll be worth it, “This is as fast as we’re going love, let go for me nice and slow.”

She groans softly in protest against the mattress, her fingers scrunching up the duvet as her entire body trembles. Robin works his hips up and in, up and in, pressing down in her arse to rub that spot, trying to stimulate her from both sides, and suddenly she makes this desperate, *Uhmmmm*, her voice strained as she arches, her inner muscles flutter around his cock, and then suddenly she contracts around him. He encourages her, “Aw, that’s it babe, fuck,” and keeps thrusting steadily, looking to the ceiling because he can’t look at her or he’ll come, he’s painfully close and she’s so beautiful, *fuck*.

She shudders under him, clenching and moaning through several more of his thrusts, then her hand comes down suddenly and pulls the vibrator away, gasping “T-too much, *ohhh*.”

Robin clicks off the toy and drops it on the bed - she’s still shaking - and he slides his finger carefully from her arse. She moans with the loss - *fucking moans, christ* - and he grabs her hips firmly, then finally, *finally*, lets himself lose control. He thrusts hard, fast and cannot stop himself from doing it, she’s too tight, too much, too bloody wonderful, and she makes this loud, sexy-as-fuck high pitched gasp as he slams his cock into her. Regina buries her face in the comforter, her lips moving almost constantly, fast and in time with the thrust of his hips as she groans out little *Ah-ah’s* and *Oh god’s* and *Mmm’s*, and one long, drawn-out *fu-uh-uck*.

He’s quite literally throbbing inside of her, oversensitive and feeling strung out from his arousal - he’s never held out this long - but suddenly she moans again and, *christ*, starts to clench on him. “Fuck babe, are you gonna come again?” he asks, his voice gravely as he slap-slap-slap-slap his hips
against her, stroking in deep, his fingers white with the firm grip he has on her hips.

She responds only with these breathy *Hah-ah-ah’s* on each stroke as he slams into her, again, again - fuck she’s so tight, her wetness is everywhere, coating his cock, balls, thighs, *jesusfuckingchrist*, and her body shakes beneath him. He’s panting, breathing so hard - *fuck* she’s close though - and he works harder, *harder* against her, so deep - *fuck* - she’s taking him *so deep* with every stroke, and then - *ohhh fuck* - she comes - *christ* - she comes, her inner muscles clamping so hard on him that she shoves his cock right out. He pushes himself back in fast, slams into her rapidly, fighting the clench and hot wetness that he’s pressing into, then he can’t stop, he can’t hold on, he comes too - *bloodyfuckinghell* - he comes hard, spilling inside of her as she continues to spasm on him, her body encouraging him to release the hot jets of come deep inside of her. He gasps and moans behind her, giving her slow, hard thrusts, burying himself again… again… again… bottoming out, his balls swinging as they tingle and his cock pumps into her.

He pulls out fast, still coming a bit but he wants to give her one more, he’s shaking and shuddering, nearly brainless with how incredible she feels, but fuck, he wants her to have another. He flips her over on her back, spreads her legs wide and shoves his still-hard cock back into her, pressing down on her lower belly as he thrusts fast-fast-fast-fast-fast into her.

“Wha-?” she gasps, but he pulls out again, replaces his softening cock with three fingers and works them fast, rubbing hard on her g-spot, relentless against it as he presses a bit harder on her stomach. She suddenly starts to squirm underneath him, her eyes squeezed shut, her gorgeous breasts flushed, nipples hard, her hips frantic against his hands, but he doesn’t let up, he knows he’s got her now, he’s working her just right, and he keeps at her until she clutches hard and sobs out a loud, “*Oh god!*”

He pulls his fingers from her quickly as her liquid release gushes out, rubs her clit rapidly, *vigorously*, and gets more, *more*, fluid from her, until she jerks up hard and the last hot rush escapes her, her back arched as she slams her thighs closed on his hand and rolls to her side, her lips parted and eyes shut tight as tremors run through her entire body.

Robin slides up the bed and curls himself around her back, spooning her, wrapping her up snug in his arms as she shakes. It’s surreal that he’s the one to make her come undone like this, and all at once he feels insanely proud, and insanely lucky as he tightens his arms around her.

After several minutes she calms, turns in his arms and presses into him, threading one leg through his, her hands running softly down his chest as she tries to catch her breath. He’s a bit worried about her, she’s sweaty, flushed, and filled with his come, and while he thinks that’s bloody brilliant, he’d like a bit of reassurance that she enjoyed what he just put her through.

He brushes her dark hair out of her eyes and looks her over - her cheeks pink, lips swollen, a little vein standing up in her forehead and positively no makeup - and her natural radiance takes his breath away. After a moment he asks softly, “Alright, darling?”

Regina blesses him with a bright smile, her dark brown eyes dancing and finely arched brows shooting up as she says, “Alright? If I wasn’t already in love with you, I would be now.”

Robin laughs and kisses her forehead. “Well, fuck, had I known that multiple orgasms were the way to your heart, I’d have found a way to get my hands down your knickers last year.”

She laughs too and scooches up to kiss his lips, her voice low and sexy as she says, “You know, you probably could have, I’ve had a crush on you for forever.”

Robin’s stomach drops out. “Are you putting me on?” he asks quickly, pulling back to see her face.
“Since when?”

She smiles, looking a bit shy as she says, “Since I picked up Henry from summer camp.”

Robin’s jaw drops. That’s nearly as long as he’s had a crush on her. His was instant, he knew the second he laid eyes on her that he wanted her, but bloody hell, that’s still quite a long time. “What was so special about me then?” he asks, flabbergasted.

Regina licks her lips and her fingertips play against his chest as she says quietly, “I had just parked when I saw you - you were covered in paint from something, and when you went to the hose and rinsed yourself off, I um, well, that’s when.”

He grins broadly, remembering the event. For the first time ever the camp counselors had finally talked him into kid-friendly paintball, and of course, they’d all targeted him. It was fun, but he was completely covered in multi-color paint by the time he escaped to the barn, and he’d wanted to wash the paint from his face so it would stop getting in his eyes. It was a scorcher of a day and the cold water felt so lovely that he’d pulled his shirt off and rinsed his whole chest too, but he doesn’t remember seeing Regina at all that day.

“I’m sorry, darling, but I don’t remember seeing you then. Did we speak?”

Her face goes a bit pink and she says sheepishly, “No, I uh, I thought it might be a bad idea. Graham and I had just had an argument, and you were looking so, ridiculously good, and I decided it was safer if I didn’t talk to you.”

“Oh,” he teases, “Because I’m so dangerous? A right fiend, aren’t I?”

Regina slaps his chest lightly and says, “Maybe not a fiend,” she cocks one eyebrow and her eyes drop to his lips, “But definitely a deviant.”

He kisses her, nips at her lips and asks, “If I’m a deviant, what does that make you?”

She thinks for a moment, her eyes skirting around as she does it, then says simply, “A woman in love with a deviant?”

He grins again. He’ll never tire of her saying things like that.

Robin runs his fingers lightly over her brow, tucking her hair behind her ear and allows himself to just take in her beauty for a moment. She’s stunning in the lamplight, all smooth curves and fine features, her face relaxed and eyes soft as she looks back at him. He’s just fucked her for, he checks his watch, a solid fifty minutes, and he still hasn’t had enough. Probably will never have enough.

“What time is it?” she asks when he looks at his watch.

“Five after eleven.”

She hmm’s, then runs the pads of her fingers across his lips and says, “Too bad, I guess you didn’t quite hit your target.”

Robin sits halfway up, exaggerating his offense. “Woman, you wound me,” he says dramatically, clutching his chest and flopping over on his back as she giggles - fucking giggles - god she’s adorable, oh, how he loves her. “Besides, we’ve been cuddling for at least six minutes, so technically, I’m within bounds.”

She shifts over and pulls herself up to lay directly on him, her thighs straddling his hips and her
elbows pressing into his chest as she props her head in her hands and looks down at him.

“I’m sorry about what I said earlier,” she says softly, eyes going serious.

He looks at her confused, has no clue what she’s talking about.

“About, giving you consent to speak for me - I don’t actually think that.”

“I know,” he says, running his hands up the backs of her arms. “I’m sorry too, for saying you weren’t committed -”

“You were right,” she says, dropping her eyes. “I’ve been hiding this, keeping it a secret because I was afraid that if it was real, I’d lose it.” Robin rubs her back but doesn’t interrupt. “You should know, should understand that my family, my experiences with love are… they’re not normal.”

Regina takes a deep breath and his heart aches for her. “My mother was a cold, spiteful woman who purposefully made my life a living hell. Her idea of love was trying to marry me off to the highest bidder, which came with… several bad experiences. After my father died, and then Daniel - apart from Henry, I didn’t think I was capable of love like that anymore. Then you came along and right from the start you made everything so easy, made me feel so… my life was falling apart but you stood right next to me, supported me the whole time, and… every man I’ve ever loved, I’ve lost, so I,” she takes another deep breath, “I thought if we kept it quiet, if it wasn’t real, maybe I wouldn’t lose you…” she laughs softly, “I obviously don’t know how to love very well.”

She drops her eyes and he can’t stand it, can’t stand that she thinks herself so terrible at something that she is so good at. This woman, she feels things deeply, she feels things with her whole soul, the idea that she doesn’t know how to love is completely outrageous to him - she loves harder, deeper, more completely than anyone he’s ever met.

Robin moves them so he’s sitting up, leaning against the headboard with her still straddling his lap. He strokes his hands up and down her back, holding her close as they trade slow, lingering kisses. “Regina, in my entire life,” he pauses to kiss her, then cards both hands through her thick hair, “I have never been loved as much, as deeply, as the way I feel loved by you.”

Regina tips her head to the side and gives him a sweet smile, asks, “You haven’t?”

“Never,” he whispers, “Not even close.”
They’re making love.

And it sounds silly, it sounds childish and naive to call it that, but those other words - sex, fucking, whatever - they don’t come close to what she’s feeling.

Their movements are slow… slow… slow… he’s sitting on the edge of the bed, and she’s in his lap, her legs wrapped around his waist with his arms locked around her back. They’re cocooned in a big quilt, their movements too slow to work up a sweat but feeling too good, too connected to stop. She leans back and he kisses the tops of her breasts, sucking softly, his cock buried deep as he rocks up into her. Regina swivels her hips around and around in slow circles, the press and stretch of him inside of her erotic and blissful, this deep stimulation so different from their earlier activities.

Her hair falls away from her face as she arches away from him, the dark strands hanging heavy behind her, and he drops his head down further to tease her nipples, giving them light little flicks with his tongue and long, slow, sucks until they’re pebbled into stiff, sensitive peaks. She weaves her fingers through his hair, tugging softly and stroking down the back of his thick neck; he feels beautiful under her hands - she can feel the tension in his arms as he holds her, his bulky shoulders flexed, his skin so warm under her fingertips.

Robin slides his hands down to her ass and works her up and down his cock with just a little more urgency, and she locks her hands behind his neck, changing the movement of her hips from circles to rolling motions, tugging on his shoulders to give her more leverage. It feels incredible, he feels incredible, filling her up with his thick length, almost bumping her cervix when they shift together. A deep warmth grows inside of her, this slow increase in pleasure that spreads through her body, climbing then plateauing, climbing again and again with each thrust, until it’s almost unbearable, almost too much.

Robin sucks hard on her nipple, flicking at it while he holds the suction - jesus - she feels so good everywhere - god - then he kisses across her chest, up her throat, sucking lightly and whispering, Love you, and So lucky, and Mine.

Her breath comes faster and faster as Robin nips her chin, encouraging her to tip her face to his so they can kiss, and when their lips touch, the pleasurable tingling that’s been building in her escalates, radiating up from her core - up, up. A hot shiver races up her spine and Robin moves faster under her, thrusting up quickly now, thick and deep in her, his fingers pressing hard into her ass as she rocks against him. He slides his tongue into her mouth, strokes it along hers then bites her bottom lip, tugging gently, and that deep, molten sensation in her finally spills over.

Hot vibrating waves of pleasure wash through her, her inner muscles contracting hard around him like always, but more, more. Robin groans against her lips, thrusting deep again, again, and the pleasure suddenly explodes, rushes through her legs, her chest, down her arms and out her fingertips.
Her whole body tingles, shakes against him as she comes, and she gasps against his lips, trying to
breathe, expecting the pleasure to crest, writhing in his lap, waiting for it to peak.

But it doesn’t.

The waves of pure ecstasy rush on and on - she’s vibrating with it, is completely consumed by
rapture she’s experiencing. Regina feels like she’s high, like she’s experiencing some kind of acid
trip - she opens her eyes and looks to Robin, and he’s biting his bottom lip, still fucking up into her, a
look of wonder in his eyes as he rasps, “Bloody hell, how are you -” he moans, “- still coming?”

She can’t speak, everything is so much that she just can’t, so she doesn’t even try, just presses her
mouth to his and lets the tingling pleasure consume her. Robin pulls back and groans, thrusting hard,
working fervently into her and using his strong hands to bounce her on his length as she trembles and
clenches around him. “I can’t - christ - can’t, babe, gonna -” and it’s all the warning he can give her,
because she’s still contracting around him, even as he comes. She can feel it - depending on how
sensitive she is, she sometimes can, but not like this - she’s all lightning and sparks inside, and when
he comes, when his release floods her it shocks through her system and pushes her up again. She
cries out against his mouth, her eyes suddenly burning with a rush of adrenaline and emotion, and -
goddd - finally the sensation breaks - she gasps loudly, sucking in air like she hasn’t had a breath in
years, slamming her eyes shut and dropping her head to his shoulder as she shudders hard, so hard -
jesus - and finally starts to settle.

When Regina opens her eyes, she’s laying down. She has no idea when that happened, doesn’t recall
moving at all. They’re on their sides facing each other, and she’s wrapped around Robin, who is still
buried inside of her, breathing heavily.

“Fuck,” he huffs out, his warm breath hitting her lips. “Welcome back.”

“Welcome back?” she asks, confused.

“You uh,” he hesitates, “You went a bit… limp for a moment…” he cringes as he says it.

She stares at him, eyes wide.

“I went… limp?” she repeats.

Robin nods, looking nervous as his bright blue eyes sweep over her face.

A beat of silence passes, and suddenly, she laughs.

He watches her for a moment then grins, laughing softly and shifting so he slips out of her. He
strokes his hand up and down her side in long, soothing strokes as they stare at each other in wonder,
and she bites her lip before she says, “Well, that’s a first.”

“For me too,” he sits up and grabs the big quilt from the foot of the bed, pulls it over them and
snuggles in tight so he can see her face as they settle in. “Are you quite alright?”

She’s sleepy now, feeling euphoric and relaxed, completely sated and so comfortable in his arms.
“Mmhmm,” she says softly, then, “You?”

“Yeah, definitely,” he smirks, “I have no idea what just happened, but as long as it was good for you
too, I’m happy.”

They’re quiet for a few minutes, just enjoying each other’s company as their heart rates finally return
to normal.
“When should we tell the boys?” she asks, her eyes serious.

“Never,” he grins, “They’d never recover if they knew I made you come until you blacked out.”

She laughs again and swats his chest, “That’s not what I mean, although I definitely agree with you.”

He smirks, but then his eyes turn serious and he asks, “Tomorrow?”

She agrees, it’s better just to do it and see what happens, and at least tomorrow is only Saturday, so they’ll have the weekend to sort things out.

“We should go clean up,” she suggests, and he groans, wraps his arms around her and tugs her close.

“Just a few more minutes,” he whines, kissing the bridge of her nose.

“If we wait a few more minutes, I’m going to fall asleep,” she laughs, lightly pushing against him.

Robin tightens his arms around her, squeezing for another minute then releasing her. She heads into the master bathroom and cleans up, then thinks better of it and turns the shower on. She has the traces of several different ‘fluids’ all over her, and she doesn’t relish the thought of sleeping in it. Robin knocks and gets in the shower with her, and it’s all slow, lazy caresses and sudsy warm water for a few minutes as they wash up. It’s so domestic, so nice - it’s not even sexual, and when she’s clean she wraps her arms around his neck and presses her warm, wet body to his. They stay that way, their hands running over each other and trading soft kisses until the water turns cool, then they head back to bed, stripping off the duvet and cuddling under the big quilt they’d used earlier. She’s so content, so warm and wrapped up in Robin that she almost immediately drifts off, still a little nervous about tomorrow but trusting him, loving him, and so grateful to have this.

“Mom?” she hears, but it’s through a thick fog - she’s too sleepy - she snuggles deeper into Robin’s warm, naked body and doesn’t fully wake. “Can we um, can we have pancakes for breakfast?”

Robin tenses against her, but she’s still mostly asleep. She furrows her brow and groans, nuzzling her face against his chest and sliding closer to him, so that most of their bodies are in contact, skin on skin.

There’s a pause, and her subconscious tries to pull her under and throw her back into REM sleep.

“Woah, Dad!” she hears, louder, and she startles awake, opening her eyes to Robin’s bare chest, confusion weaving through her first, followed quickly by absolute mortification.

It’s the boys.

It’s the boys and they’re standing right next to Robin’s bed - right next to where her naked body is wrapped around his - right next to where she had six orgasms last night - oh god oh god oh god.

“Are they doing it?!” Henry gasps loudly and she cringes, too horrified to do anything but try to hide against Robin.
“I dunno,” Roland says, then, “Oiy Dad, are you guys doing it?”

She wants to die. Right now. Oh god, please take her now.

“No,” Robin says calmly, his fingers tightening on her back, “We’re not. And yeah, we can have pancakes if you two go and set the table for breakfast, alright?”

“Yes but you were doing it, weren’t you?!” Roland blazes on, and Henry’s corresponding Ewww! is so humiliating she could cry. Roland cracks up, his laughter loud as Regina tries to discreetly scooch closer to Robin, trying to burrow into him. God this is so embarrassing - how did she let this happen?

Robin laughs and the vibration in his chest almost startles her. “We might have been, had we not so rudely been interrupted by two boys who apparently haven’t any manners,” he scolds, but his tone is playful, not harsh. “In fact,” Robin pulls her tighter, rolling her under him a little to shield her from the boys, “We might do it right now, just to teach you boys a lesson about knocking before you come bursting into people’s bedrooms.”

Both boys shout out Yuck! and Gross! and Regina hears the corresponding sound of their rapid footsteps and the slam of the bedroom door as they flee.

Robin is cracking up, his arms tight around her as his body shakes with it, then he looks down at her and asks, grinning, “How much trouble am I in for that one?”

She’s really, truly upset that they’ve just been caught red-handed. Robin’s eyes are dancing and his grin is so bright it takes the sting out of it for a minute, but it can’t quite keep the awful thought from slipping from her lips, “Oh god, I’m the worst mother ever.”

Robin laughs at her and kisses her forehead, the bridge of her nose, her lips, then says, “I hardly doubt that getting caught in bed with your significant other qualifies you for that.”

She cringes and stares up at him, worried about Henry.

“Hey,” he says softly, growing serious as he kisses her again, “We love each other, we’re in love. There’s nothing wrong with what the boys saw this morning, other than that it would have been nice to have given them a bit of warning. It’s not like they walked in while I was going down on you.”

Regina squeezes her eyes shut and groans - god, that would have been so much worse.

They get dressed quickly and join the boys in the kitchen, and Regina is right to be concerned. Roland is setting the table by himself, Henry is nowhere in sight, and when she asks him, Roland tells her Henry said he wasn’t hungry and went to his room.

She shoots Robin a look of despair and starts for the basement, but he grabs her hand and pulls her back. “I know you need to speak with him,” he says softly, “But, would you let me try first?”

“I don’t think that’s a good idea,” she says, looking down, “I’m the reason he’s upset, I should go and explain things to him.”

“Right,” he states, “But, I’ve got a few things to speak with him about, and I’d like a go at it before you have your heart to heart.”

She starts to interject but Robin pleads, “Trust me on this, darling, please. I think I can turn this around.”
Regina runs her hands through her hair, unsure about Robin’s mystery plan, but she doesn’t really
know what to say to Henry to make him less upset about this. She’s not even sure which part he’s
upset about, and with the way he shuts down on her, it could be weeks before she figures it out.
“Okay,” she agrees, “But please, try not to make him more upset, I feel so terrible, jesus, I feel
awful.”

Robin hugs her to him and kisses her temple, gives her a much too cheery, “Leave it to me, love,”
then bounds down the basement stairs to speak with her son.

This leaves Regina with a very curious Roland, who wastes no time giving her the third degree.

“So, are you my dad’s girlfriend now?” he asks as Regina mixes the pancake batter.

“Yes,” she says hesitantly, “How do you feel about that?”

“I think it’s brilliant,” Roland grins, dimples on full display as he pulls himself, one-armed, up onto
one of the barstools at the island.

“Oh?” she asks, risking a glance at him as she stirs the batter, “Why is that?”

“Well, my dad’s always happy when you’re around,” he says, his tone excited, “And I love you.”
She looks up and Roland is still grinning, giving her all of that Locksley charm his father is so good
at. “And you smell nice, you’re quite pretty, you make good cookies and help me with my maths.”

Regina laughs at his bluntness - Roland is such a bull in a china shop, both with his words and his
movements. “Thank you, sweetie,” she says, and he gives her a perky, “Yep!”

“Can I have chocolate chips in my pancakes?” he asks, and that’s the end of Roland’s concerns,
apparently, because she spends the next five minutes negotiating with him until they compromise (he
can have one chocolate chip pancake but the rest have to be blueberry), and he goes on to tell her all
about how he got an A on his last math test.

After a while, Regina’s curiosity gets the better of her and she pads quietly down to the basement,
admittedly eavesdropping but unable to stop herself. She’s so intrigued by Robin’s request, can’t
figure out what he might say to make Henry feel better that she couldn’t, and she finds herself
lurking outside of her son’s bedroom door, trying desperately to hear the conversation.

“You do?” she hears Henry ask. “Really? Because, she said that about Graham - she was going to
marry him, but then she broke up with him and it didn’t matter.”

“Did your mum tell you why she broke up with him?” Robin asks softly, and Regina cringes. She
hated telling Henry about it the first time.

“Yeah, she said that he wanted to date Emma too, but mom didn’t want him to, she only wanted him
to date her.”

“And what did you think about that?” Robin asks.

“It made me sad,” Henry says quietly, and Regina has to strain to hear him. “But then I was mad
because she could have just let him. Graham was okay and if mom had just let him date Emma too,
we wouldn’t have had to move.”

Robin asks, “How do you feel about it now?”

“I guess it’s okay now, I like living here a lot better.”
“Do you miss Graham?”

“Not really.”

“Do you understand why it’s not alright for Graham to date both Emma and your mum?” he asks, and there’s so much loyalty in his tone that Regina’s heart swells.

“I guess,” Henry says, then adds, “But I thought that’s what guys do, at least, that’s what all the cool guys in the movies do.”

“Do you think I’m cool?” Robin asks.

“Yeah,” Henry says enthusiastically, “You’re really cool.”

“Well,” Robin says softly, “Then let me explain something to you, from one cool guy to another,” he pauses, and the conspiratorial tone he takes has Regina almost in tears - God, she’s always wanted Henry to have this kind of relationship, has fantasized about how it would have been had Daniel not died. And here’s Robin, doing it without even knowing how desperately Regina has longed for it. Jesus, she loves that man.

“There are all kinds of relationships,” Robin continues, “Sometimes a bloke might date one person, sometimes he might date more than one person. The important thing is that whoever is in the relationship knows, understands, and agrees to it.”

“But...” Henry starts to argue, but Robin continues.

“When you get older, you’ll find out that there are lots of ways to date, and they’re all completely fine, as long as there’s trust. Your mum and Graham were in a very serious relationship, so it needed loads of trust, but Graham broke your mum’s trust because he was lying to her about Emma, he was keeping secrets.”


“Right,” Robin agrees, “So you see, that’s not something a cool guy would do. It’s all about trust, mate, it’s about being open and honest with your partner - cause that’s what relationships are, they’re a partnership.”

“Like, when I play co-op with Roland?” Henry asks.

“Exactly like that!” Robin encourages, “If you’re Mario and Roland is Luigi, you wouldn’t want Roland to go and fight koopa-troopas with Princess Peach without telling you, would you?”

“No!” Henry exclaims, “I would be so mad!”

“See, you’ve got it now, mate, yeah?”

“Why didn’t mom just tell me that to begin with?” Henry gripes, and Regina shakes her head - if only it were that easy.

“Your mum loves you so much,” Robin explains, “And she didn’t want you to see how sad she was when Graham broke her trust.”

“Oh,” Henry says, then, “So... are you guys going to get married?”

“Well, mate,” Robin says slowly, “I’m hoping your mum will date me for a bit, see if we’re compatible that way. As far as relationships go, this is quite new for all of us, so we’re still figuring
things out. And of course we’d want to make sure that that would be best for all four of us, before we make a big decision like that.”

“For all of us? Even me?” Henry asks, sounding just a little bit awed.

“That’s right,” Robin confirms, and Regina bolts from the basement - she’s lingered for far too long. If she stays any longer she’s going to cry, and honestly, she’s a little concerned about what kind of trouble Roland may have gotten into with the chocolate chips.

She’s just dropping the first set of pancakes on the griddle when both Henry and Robin come back upstairs, with to her relief, smiles on their faces. They all pitch in for breakfast, Roland and Henry take turns dropping the blueberries and chocolate chips into the pancakes, Robin fries up turkey bacon and pours everyone juice, and Regina flips pancakes while trying to keep the slowly growing stack from being stolen by three other sets of hands.

Regina takes Henry aside after dinner and asks him if he has any questions, if he’s really okay with her dating Robin, but he seems mostly content with the situation they find themselves in and the explanation Robin has already given him.

“Mom?” he calls, just as she’s about to head back upstairs, hauling a load of his dirty clothes with her.

She turns immediately and says, “Yeah, baby?”

Henry doesn’t cringe like he normally does when she calls him that, doesn’t correct her that he’s not a baby anymore, and his eyes are so serious as he says quietly, “I really like it here, I like hanging out with Roland, and Robin too, so if you break up with Robin, will we have to leave? I don’t want to move again.”

It pulls every single heartstring in her chest to hear her son voice the concerns that she has spent so much time worrying about since she and Robin became “official”.

“I don’t know,” she says honestly, and her heart breaks as his face falls. “I would hope that Robin and I would be able to work something out, so that even if you and I didn’t live here anymore, you could still see Roland all the time, whether it’s here or at school.” Henry perks up a little at that, so she continues, “I know this is confusing, sweetheart, and I’m going to try really hard to make sure that no matter what happens, you don’t have to worry about things like that, okay?”

To her surprise, Henry gets up from his bed and launches himself at her, giving her a huge hug that she suddenly realizes she really needed. She holds him tightly and kisses the top of his head, and when he finally pulls back, he’s smiling a little, not shutting down thank god.

“So does this mean I get to switch schools next year? That Roland and I get to go to school together?” he smirks at her, and she realizes belatedly that she walked right into his carefully set trap.

She grins down at him, because she can’t think of any reasons why not - Roland’s school is a very good school, there’s no reason Henry can’t go there next year, so she agrees. That earns her an excited Woop! from Henry before he runs past her upstairs to tell Roland, and that, thank god, is the end of the complicated conversations for now.
It takes her a couple of weeks to get truly comfortable showing her affection for Robin when the boys are in the room. When she started dating Graham, Henry was only seven and it was simpler to ease him into it, but he’s ten now - almost eleven - and she feels awkward and strangely guilty in front of him. She knows she has no reason to feel that way, but despite Robin’s reassurances and her trust in him, her pessimistic inner voice is still torturing her, still telling her she’s going to screw this up, she’s going to fail Henry yet again, she’s going to mess up her son’s life for good this time.

Lucky for her though, Robin seems to have absolutely no qualms about any of it - he holds her hand when they walk anywhere together, he cuddles up with her on the couch, and she swears when he kisses her that he times it just right so the boys catch them at it. It’s earned them several Eww’s, and Come On’s, and Ack’s, but she’s noticed that the reactions are starting to taper off as the boys get used to it.

At the end of May, Robin asks her to move into his bedroom with him, and she can’t deny that it would be nice to stop running back and forth between the two rooms every night.

“Please, darling?” he asks softly, pressing her up against the washing machine, “Think of how nice it’ll be to stop sneaking around at night, how wonderful it would be to lay in bed together, lights on, door open - perhaps you reading while I rub your shoulders. Doesn’t that sound lovely?”

He pauses to kiss her neck, sucking softly at her pulse point and running his hands over her ass.

“It does sound nice,” she admits, threading her fingers through his soft hair, then sliding them along his scruffy jaw to pull his mouth to hers. She kisses him passionately, her lips pressed hard to his, her tongue flicking at his lips for entrance, only to duel with his as he tilts his head to deepen the kiss.

“Hey, Mom?” Henry asks, and she almost pulls away, but at the last second she doesn’t - instead, she gives Robin another, softer kiss then turns to her son, who is waiting patiently just outside the laundry room.

“Yes, baby?” she asks as she licks her lips, breathless.

“Where’s my backpack?” he asks, looking completely unphased by their affections.

“It’s still in the car,” she reminds him, and he bounds away without even flinching as Robin pulls her back for another kiss.

“See?” Robin murmurs against her throat, flicking at her smooth skin with his tongue as he presses open-mouth kisses down to her collarbone, “The boys are fine, they probably won’t even notice.”

She hums against him, mulling over the idea as he presses another kiss to her lips and gives her ass a firm squeeze, until finally she says, “Alright, but only on one condition.”

“Anything,” Robin says, carding his fingers through her dark hair and kissing her deeply.

When their lips part she bumps the tip of his nose with hers, gives him the most serious look she can muster and says, “I’m going to need at least half of that closet, probably more.”

Robin grins and squeezes her ribs. “Consider it done.”
Summer at Camp Sherwood is an absolute flurry of activity. There’s a constant slew of campers of all ages coming and going to day camps, week-long camps, ropes courses, horseback riding lessons, and everything between. The counselors have their work cut out for them, crisscrossing the property multiple times a day as they try to keep track of their charges, the summer heat just starting to hit the low eighties and allow for more of the lake activities to start up.

Regina loves it - she’s busier than ever at work, the boys are out of school for the summer and hang out around camp every day, helping out the counselors and having a ball as they meet all kinds of
new friends and wear themselves out with every activity under the sun. Robin is working hard too - has his hands full coordinating activities, interviewing interns and new staff, scheduling meet and greets with parents, and performing the majority of the maintenance required from the camper’s wear and tear.

Mary Margaret has cornered her yet again today, slipping into her office right after she returned from lunch and closing the door quietly behind her as she helps herself to a seat across the desk from Regina.

“Hey, sis!” Mary Margaret says cheerily, her big hazel eyes looking more green today due to the forest colored Camp Sherwood t-shirt she’s wearing.

“Mary Margaret,” Regina acknowledges, looking over the expenses from last week.

“So, a little bird told me that you and Robin are dating,” her step-sister says coyly.

“Then you should make an appointment with a psychiatrist,” Regina replies, without looking up.

Mary Margaret laughs in that high pitched, girlish giggle she has and asks excitedly, “How did he ask you out? How long have you been together?”

“Why? Worried he’ll die trying to get away before you get your next paycheck?” Regina asks, dropping her pen and holding eye contact with the younger woman.

Mary Margaret looks ashamed for a moment then says, “No, I um, just wanted to know how you’re doing, we haven’t talked, really talked, in a long time and I… I miss you.”

“There’s a reason we haven’t talked, Mary Margaret,” Regina fires back, not buying into those sad eyes her step-sister is giving her, “And you know exactly what it is.”

“It’s just, I thought you forgave me?” she blurts, “I didn’t mean any of it, I had too much to drink and I was upset because I like David so much, and he was staring at you how everyone stares at you, and I freaked out because I knew he was going to ask you out, and if you liked him then I would never have a chance.”

“You made it quite clear that you were interested in him,” Regina drawls, “I suppose if I wasn’t such a bitch, you wouldn’t have had to worry.”

To her horror, Mary Margaret bursts into tears.

Regina can’t quite stop herself before she snaps, “Oh god, are you serious?”

Mary Margaret blubbers across from her for several minutes, helping herself to the box of tissues Regina pushes toward her. After a few minutes Regina finally shuts her up with a glare, and an uncomfortable silence falls over them.

“I don’t think you’re a, I don’t think you’re that,” Mary Margaret says, reaching across the desk and grabbing Regina’s hand before she can pull away. “I don’t, not at all,” she pleads, “I look up to you so much, I, I always have, and I can’t bear to have you think that I do, I -”

Regina holds up her hand and Mary Margaret thankfully stops talking. “What on earth do you mean, You look up to me?” she says in disbelief, “Why?”

“Oh come on, Regina,” her step-sister says, her voice gaining a little strength, “You’re so smart and put together, you’re so, so pretty, everyone says so, and you’re so brave - you say exactly what you
think, you go after the things you want without hesitating. I have always looked up to you, ever since I was nine years old and I watched you stare down your mother across the dining room table - that woman was absolutely terrifying, and you looked right back at her like she didn’t scare you for a second.”

Regina’s eyes feel hot and she doesn’t know how to process Mary Margaret’s comments, so after a few beats of silence she says, “She was terrifying, wasn’t she?”

Mary Margaret laughs and it catches on - Regina finds herself smirking back at her, and for the first time in a very long time, her annoyance of the girl dissipates.

“Look,” Regina says softly, “David likes you, you should just ask him out.”

“Oh, I couldn’t,” Mary Margaret says, “I get so nervous when I talk to him.”

“Mary Margaret Blanchard,” Regina says with authority, and the other woman automatically straightens up in her seat, “Since when do you back down from a challenge? That’s certainly not the girl I grew up with.”

Mary Margaret starts to object, but Regina cuts her off and says sharply, “What happened to the girl who used to steal my makeup every time I wasn’t looking? The girl who used to borrow my clothes without asking and then try to sneak them back before I found out? What happened to the pain in my ass that refused to leave me alone, even when I threatened your life?”

Her step-sister takes a minute to stare at Regina, then a look of determination takes over her face and she says, “You’re right. I don’t know what I’ve been thinking. You’re absolutely right.”

Regina fights a smile and the little rush of pride that runs through her.

“Can I ask you something?” Mary Margaret says carefully, “You don’t have to answer if you don’t want to, but I’ve just been so confused by it that I’m hoping you’ll help me understand.”

Regina cocks an eyebrow and says cautiously, “Alright.”

“When you left Graham, why didn’t you use some of your father’s money to get your own place?” she asks, tilting her head to the side. Regina suddenly regrets bolstering her step-sister’s courage.

She debates lying to her, doesn’t really want to get into it, but then she decides that she doesn’t really care what Mary Margaret thinks, so she tells her, “When I married Daniel my mother changed the terms of my trust, I can’t access it now until I’m thirty-five.”

“Are you serious?!” Regina can’t decide if Mary Margaret is more flabbergasted or horrified. It’s actually pretty amusing, she’s positive that her step-sister has never even considered the concept of being cut-off.

“Have you tried to change the terms?” Mary Margaret asks, “I think if you file for hardship you can get them to release it early.”

They’re venturing into territory that is a little too personal for Regina’s taste, but against her better judgment, she admits, “I tried, just before my birthday - my request was denied.”

“But you’re thirty-four!” Mary Margaret exclaims, “What difference does one year make? That’s so unfair!”

Regina just smiles at her and says, “Henry and I are just fine without it.”
“Oh, of course you are,” Mary Margaret seems to find her manners and clarifies, “Henry seems so happy, he’s really coming out of his shell lately.”

Regina doesn’t bother to hide her proud smile as she agrees. After a few more minutes of polite conversation, she finally gets rid of her step-sister - even lets her pull her in for a quick hug - then goes back to her expense reports.

When David comes in later that afternoon to speak with Robin and pops in for a quick hello, Regina does something she never thought she’d do.

“Hey, David,” she calls, just as he’s leaving her office.

“Yeah?” he turns, smiling at her.

“Are you seeing anyone?” she asks, and he gives her a confused look. She’s pretty sure he knows she and Robin are together.

“No, why?” he asks, sounding just a little bit hopeful.

“You should ask out Mary Margaret,” she says seriously, “You two have a lot in common, and I’m confident she’ll say yes.”

David’s eyebrows shoot up and he gives her a little smile as he says, “Oh, alright. Thanks, Regina,” then heads out of her office without another word.

Later that week, she gets a huge, raving text from Mary Margaret telling her she has a date with David, and Regina finally feels like she’s put the fight with her step-sister behind her, once and for all.

Robin feels like he’s living on cloud nine.

He’s got the love of his life, his boys, and his camp, and he cannot stop the skip in his step as they prepare for the Fourth of July, which he always goes all out for. It’s a bit of an odd holiday for him, considering his dual nationality, but he really does like the fun, party atmosphere and the raucousness that accompanies the celebration. This is the first year that he’ll have a girlfriend for it, and the thought has him excited, has him delegating a lot more duties and fantasizing about making out with Regina under the fireworks, and maybe creating a few fireworks of their own.

They set everything up to take place out by the lake, due to the need to shoot the huge fireworks (Killian smuggles them in from out of state every year) off the end of the long dock so they don’t cause a fire hazard. The party started out as just camp staff, but over the years it’s grown to include most of Robin’s friends too, and friends of friends, so that they usually have a pretty good turn out of fifty or so people. There’s plenty of food, alcohol, and adults making borderline inappropriate decisions, and Robin is really looking forward to being one of those adults this year.

They set up all kinds of yard games to play, grill hot dogs and burgers while they day drink, and
because it’s such a hot afternoon, people are having a bang-up time swimming and laying out, catching some afternoon sunshine.

Robin and Regina allow the boys to hang out for a while, letting them play yard games and swim, but then Robin takes them to a sleepover at one of Roland’s mate’s. When he gets back he has his first beer of the day, and he’s just taken a huge sip when his eyes land on Regina - who is laying out on the dock with a few other women - and he very nearly chokes.

Jefferson slaps him heartily on the back and grins, muttering, “How you ever managed to pin that woman down is beyond me,” he gives Robin a very suggestive look, “But if you ever get tired of her, you’ll let me know first, right?”

Robin laughs and agrees, there’s no way he’s ever willingly letting her go, but he doesn’t really mind the way Jefferson compliments Regina. He might be strange but the man has some strict rules he lives by, and stealing another man’s woman is definitely against them. Robin has an unconventional relationship with Jefferson, enjoys his company, although he is exceedingly odd, but Jefferson has helped him… explore certain sexual experiences with a few choice women, and they’ve bonded over being anything but orthodox when it comes to their preferences in bed. Robin suddenly wonders if Regina would ever consider doing a threesome with Jeff - he imagines the two of them working her over, perhaps as she sucks on one of them and the other fucks her, or even, someday, while they both fuck her - christ - the thought has him counting to one hundred to prevent himself from becoming too interested in the idea.

Regina’s bikini today is a bit less revealing than the one she wore at New Year’s, this one is pure white with gold rings connecting the sides of the bottoms and the valley between her breasts, and the halter shoves up her generous cleavage quite nicely. He licks his lips as he stares at her - fuck she’s pretty - and before he can stop himself, he’s headed in her direction. She gets up as he nears her, shifting her sunglasses down from the top of her head to her eyes as she grabs her towel and struts - that’s right, she bloody struts - toward him, her hips swaying and tan, golden skin glowing in the sunlight. He shoves his own sunglasses up and lets her see him run his eyes over her body, then sets them back in place as she gets up close.

“Bloody hell,” he murmurs, pulling her close so her breasts brush his chest, “How is it possible for you to be so gorgeous all the time?”

Regina wraps her arms around his neck and smirks, giving him a quick kiss. He’s not having that though, he’s waited all day to get his mouth on her, and everyone else be damned, he’s going get himself a real kiss now. He smooths his hands up the bare skin of her waist to her ribs and pulls her flush against him, then teases her lips, brushing his lightly against hers then pulling back when she tries to kiss him, making her chase him a bit before he finally crushes his mouth to hers. They tilt their heads in tandem, deepening the kiss, tongues playing against each other as he tightens his grip on her, christ, she’s practically in her underwear in front of everyone and it’s such a tease he can hardly stop himself from moaning into her mouth.

He hears a loud catcall and laughs against her, pulling back as Ruby whistles loudly and says, “Woo! I didn’t know we were getting a show today!”

Robin turns a bit pink but isn’t at all ashamed, though he is a little worried that Regina will be irritated by the PDA. He can’t see her eyes through those dark Alexander McQueen’s, but she surprises him, murmurs, “If it’s a show she wants, I suppose we should give her one,” and pulls Robin’s head down to hers in another fierce kiss. She skates her hands down his neck and over his shoulders, and Robin can’t help himself, he smooths his hand down, wraps his fingers under her thigh and pulls her leg up, tipping her back in a steep dip as he slides his tongue in her mouth.
There’s a chorus of silly cheers, whistles, and even an exclamation of Get it, Robin! so he presses his mouth harder against hers, his lips pulling and teasing hers as he pulls her leg up over his hip, grinding against her just a bit. He finally rights her and pulls back with a slick smack of their lips, and the devious grin she gives him makes him so happy his knees go weak. It’s ironic that this exact kind of kiss made her so upset with him in December, but in July she’s the one initiating it. It makes him insanely happy.

They spend the day like college kids, drinking, laughing with friends, swimming in the lake and soaking up the hot sun. He can’t take his eyes off of her, she’s so confident, so gorgeous, so much fun that he can’t bear to part from her all afternoon. He wishes people got to see this side of her more, this almost care-free version of Regina, the woman he knows so well and has been given the privilege of loving. The woman who is currently sitting on his shoulders as he stands chest deep in the lake, fighting off Killian and Elsa for the chicken championship.

They win, but it isn’t easy - Elsa’s arms are ridiculously long, as are Killian’s, but Regina and Robin are both more fit, so in the end it’s their sheer strength and stubbornness that topples the other pair. They celebrate like they’ve just won the world cup, Robin stays in the water and runs the length of the dock with her on his shoulders, laughing and clinging to him for dear life, and just as they hit waist deep water again, he pushes backward and dunks them both.

Regina comes up sputtering and laughing, threatening his life every other breath, and he can’t resist her anymore, he tugs her body to his for a kiss. She wraps her legs around his waist and her arms around his neck, and he wades out further into the warm water until they’re chest deep, his lips never leaving hers. Regina’s body is pressed against his, her legs so smooth around his hips as she shifts against him, her hands stroking down his chest then up to cup his scruffy jaw as he kisses her. Her thick eyelashes are wet with lake water, her jet black hair slicked straight back, and her sun-kissed skin is warm and salty under his tongue as he traces it up the side of her neck to pull her earlobe between his lips.

“You’re so hot,” he rasps in her ear, “You look incredible in this swimsuit, christ, darling, I can’t stop thinking about getting inside of you.” He plays with the hem of her top, skirting his fingers underneath and teasing the bottom edge of her breasts.

The sun is setting quickly and everyone else has gotten out of the water, busy drying off and changing, picking out their spot to watch the fireworks and getting a snack or another drink as Killian and Jefferson start hauling large boxes to the dock. The water has gone as still as glass around them, the humid summer air hangs hot and heavy, and Robin can’t tear his eyes from Regina. Her face is completely devoid of makeup now, and he loves how she looks without it, the lines and edges of her eyes so clean, so innocent looking without the black frame of eyeliner, the dark chocolate of her irises looking that much more vibrant without the distraction of her eyeshadow. She’s always beautiful, makeup or no, and while he loves the drama she can play up with a smokey eye and that dark red lipstick, the way she looks now makes him think of how she must have been as a naive twenty-something, excited to strike out into the world with Daniel and create a life of their own.

He wishes she had had that. Wishes she hadn’t gone through the pain, loss, and struggles that plagued her as a young adult. Robin kisses her soft lips, swiping his thumbs back and forth under her top, sucking softly at her lips as he skates his thumbs up a bit further. He pauses when he feels the pebbled edge of her areola, wondering if she’ll let him touch her like this right now - no one can see anything from their shoulders down, but he’s not all that confident he can stop if he starts, and while he loves a bit of exhibitionism, she seemed slightly regretful after the hot tub.

She shifts against him, her groin coming into contact with his as she slides her feet down the backs of his thighs before wrapping her legs around him again. He kisses the edge of her chin and down the
side of her neck, scraping his teeth lightly across the top of her shoulder as he slips his thumbs up to
swipe across her nipples. Her nails scratch softly down his neck in encouragement, and he shoves up
the white fabric of her top, her tits pressing out the bottom so he can get full access to her, and she
drags her fingers down his arms as she moans quietly. He pinches her nipples, they’re hard and tight
under the pads of his fingers, and he tugs on them, rolls them then swipes quickly over them as she
presses her lower half against his.

“God that feels good,” she whispers, her eyes half closed, lips parted as he strums the across the little
peaks, over and over.

“Got me so hard,” he whispers back, kissing her and nipping her bottom lip, “You gonna let me fuck
you here?”

She arches her back, thrusting her breasts in his hands as she says, “There are fifty people on shore,
it’s not a good idea.”

Robin twists her nipples roughly, pulling a gasp from her lips, his voice gravelly as he says, “I didn’t
ask if it was a good idea, love, I asked if you’re gonna let me fill that pussy.”

Her hips rock against his and he sucks at the soft, sensitive spot just behind her ear, massaging her
breasts before sliding one hand down over her stomach to play at the waistband of her bikini
bottoms.

“I bet you’re already wet,” he says into her ear, “I bet if I slip my fingers down your bottoms that
you’ll already be slick for me.”

“Yeah,” she agrees, “Can’t help it, you make me want it all the time.”

Robin moans quietly and presses his forehead to hers, breathing heavily as his cock hardens. “Do
you want it now?” he asks, letting his hand slide under her bikini bottoms to cup her. He adjusts his
hand so he can press his thumb to her clit, and starts rubbing little circles over it as her breath catches
against his lips.

She makes this throaty Mmm as he pinches her nipple in rhythm with the circles on her clit, then
says, “We shouldn’t.”

Robin slides his fingers through her folds, finding her slick with need, and he nips her bottom lip as
he says, “No, we shouldn’t - but we can.”

She works her hips against his hand for a moment but doesn’t respond, so he takes the opportunity to
glance toward shore. Literally no one is even looking at the water, they’re all gathered around a
game of yard Yahtzee, cheering and drinking as whoever is rolling takes their turn.

Robin slides his middle finger up inside of her, she’s hot and tight around him, and he imagines his
thick cock sliding in, how good she would feel encasing him in that slick wetness.

“I’ll fuck you fast,” he whispers, “I’ll get you off quick then fill you up, and we can go back to shore
like nothing happened.” She’s breathing fast against him as he thrusts his finger into her, swirling
against her inner walls. “Just think,” he encourages, “Think how good it would feel when my hot
come runs out of you as we watch the fireworks, how turned on you could be knowing we just
fucked in front of everyone, and we’re going to fuck again, we’re going to fuck the next second I
can get in you.”

“We are?” she asks, breathless, her hands running down his chest to flick her thumbs over his
nipples.
“Absolutely,” he pauses to kiss her, switches his fingers from her left nipple to her right and pinches sharply.

“I’m going to fuck you as many times as you can take it, going to fill you up with so much of my come you’ll feel it soaking your knickers, running down your thighs, 

she says, thrusting his fingers in rapid succession, then pulling out to sweep vigorously across her clit. “And Jefferson already wants to fuck you, so it’ll only serve his purpose to keep his mouth shut.”

Regina kisses him, her tongue flicking fast into his mouth then retreating as she nips his top lip. “They’re going to know,” she argues, but rotates her pelvis on his fingers, her breaths quick, matching his.

“They’re distracted,” he reasons.

“Not everyone,” she bites her lip, brow furrowed as he speeds his fingers inside of her and flicks repeatedly over her nipple.

Robin glances over and she’s right - Killian and Jefferson are still fooling about with the fireworks, in clear view of them. “No one will listen to Killian,” he says, pulling out to sweep vigorously across her clit. “And Jefferson already wants to fuck you, so it’ll only serve his purpose to keep his mouth shut.”

Regina moans softly, pressing her face into his neck as he continues to rub her clit. She puts her lips to his ear and asks, “Jefferson wants to sleep with me?”

He can’t hold out anymore, there’s been too much teasing and no relief, so he pulls his hands from her and opens the fly of his swim trunks, pulls himself out and gives his cock a few strokes, then pulls her bikini bottoms to the side and slides up into her.

She groans against him, her breath hitting his ear and making him shiver, and he gives her a few steady thrusts before he says, “Yeah, he’s hot for you, love.”

Regina lets a soft Oooh, escape on her next breath, and Robin takes advantage of her arousal to ask, “What do you think of that? Would you consider fucking Jefferson and me at the same time?”

She rolls her hips against him, taking him deep and choking down another little moan as he grabs her arse with both hands, spreading her cheeks wide and pulling her up and down his hard length.

“Have you ever had two men at once?” Robin prompts, squeezing her arse and circling his hips as he thrusts. “Have you ever sucked a cock and been fucked at the same time?”

“No,” she gasps, her hard nipples brushing his chest as she works herself on him. “But I want to.”

Robin bites the crux of her neck to stop the moan from escaping, the visual of watching her take it at both ends, 

chastened, it turns him on so much he feels a hot spark in his lower belly, his arousal surging as he slides in and out of her. “Sexy as the devil, you are,” he encourages, one hand leaving her arse to tangle in her wet hair and pull her head back. He sucks a hot kiss against her throat and whispers, “Rub your clit, I want to feel your tight little cunt squeeze my cock.”

They’re quiet for a few minutes as he fucks her, trying to move faster without making the water ripple too much, his hips pumping quickly under the water, feeling the frantic movements of her fingertips as she rubs her swollen clit. He moves his hands to her hips, tugging down hard with each stroke, watching completely entranced as she licks her lips and bites her bottom lip. 

Fuck she’s pretty - so, so sexy - he’s close, hopes she is too. He kisses her hard, stroking his tongue along hers, relief flooding him as he feels her clench around him, gasping against his lips, “Close - don’t
It only takes a half a dozen more thrusts for her to come, and she locks down on him with it, her free arm and both legs wrapped tightly around him as her hips stutter and jerk, her inner muscles clamping on him rhythmically as she works her clit a little more, her forehead pressed hard into his shoulder. Her orgasm triggers his, he’s completely helpless to stop it - she’s got him buried deep inside and he can barely move against the grip of her legs - so he spills hard and fast, his back curling forward as his cock pulses, his balls clenching and releasing. His legs shake with the immediate adrenaline rush that floods through him, the pleasure of being buried so deep in her as she flutters in sharp, quick aftershocks draining him until they both finally finish.

They stay in the water for a while after, kissing softly, running their hands over each other, even laughing a bit at their own indecency, until their fingers turn pruney and they decide to go dry off. Robin’s gaze happens to fall on Jefferson, who is currently setting up some mad chain reaction of explosives, and Jefferson catches his eye, smirking deviously then nodding his head toward the end of the dock where there are two towels and two mixed drinks waiting for them. Robin grins in return and pulls Regina with him, and they dry off on the dock, sip their drinks for a while, then rejoin the larger group after changing into dry clothes.

They cuddle up on a big blanket at the edge of the beach, just inside the ring of citronella tiki torches that are doing a decent job of warding off the ravenous mosquitos, and it’s so surreal for Robin. He finds he doesn’t watch much of the fireworks, he’s too caught up in watching her smile, watching the colored lights reflect in her dark eyes, and when Killian lights off the finale, he doesn’t see any of it, because Regina turns in his arms and kisses him until there’s nothing but smoke left in the night sky.

“I love this,” she says quietly as the noise dies down. “I love having this with you.”

Robin knows he’s a bit soft-hearted, but for him this moment feels as significant as the moment she told him she loved him. Up to this point he’s been operating under the knowledge that he had fallen for her well before she did him, and he’s been hoping for this change, for the moment that she’d look at him like this, with love and happiness in her eyes, and tell him she’d fallen just as much as he had.

“I love you,” he tells her, kissing her softly, then kissing her again, and again while he fights back the hot wetness in his eyes.

The rest of their evening is spent with friends circled around a big campfire, listening to music, laughing, drinking, and telling stories. Regina lounges against Robin, tucked in between his knees, her back to his chest, and it’s truly pure heaven for him. Her onyx colored hair is wavy and shiny in the light of the flames, so gorgeous that he can’t stop from running his fingers through the thick strands over and over. He keeps kissing her cheek and hugging her close in the circle of his arms - he can’t seem to stop - and fuck, he just cannot believe how lucky he is to have her. There’s something so amazing to him that she’s chosen to be here with him, that she’s laughing and chatting and - oty! - stealing his beer as they while away the night tucked deep into the forest under a blanket of stars.

They walk back to the house well after midnight, laughing and talking loudly, a bit drunk, and Robin ends up giving her a piggyback ride for most of the way, running and spinning her around, acting like an absolute fool to pull as many laughs from her as he can. It’s the most fun he’s had in years, it’s certainly the best Independence Day he’s ever celebrated, and he can’t help but think that for as beautiful as the fireworks were tonight, they are nothing in comparison to her.
Roland is looking at Regina like she’s completely out of her mind, and she fights a smile, trying to convey the importance of facing his fears.

“But ‘Gina,” he says nervously, “I can’t ride with just the one arm.”

“Oh course you can,” she reasons, “You just have to change how you control the reins. Besides, you still have two arms, you just can’t bend one of them.”

Roland gives her a dubious look, his big brown eyes unsure as he thinks about her request.

It’s a hot Sunday morning in mid-July, and they’re standing in the center of the indoor arena next to Roland’s horse Merry, a pretty little bay mare, who is saddled and waiting patiently for her rider.

Roland has hardly gone near the horse since the accident, and it’s taken every ounce of Regina’s patience and understanding to coax him back to the barn. They spent the first week just getting reacquainted with the horse, Roland suspicious and his trust of the beast utterly broken, regardless of the fact that it really wasn’t the horse’s fault. This is the second week, and Roland is heavily resisting getting up in the saddle, his fear written plainly across his cute face as Regina tries reasoning with him.

She ends up compromising, hoisting herself up in the saddle first, then pulling him up in front of her to ride tandem as he regains his confidence. He’s a skinny kid, and Regina isn’t a very big person to begin with, so the horse handles it fine, but Roland is stiff and uncomfortable in front of her, making it more awkward than it should be. Merry is a well-trained horse and takes leg cues remarkably well, which helps Regina discretely guide the animal when Roland hesitates with the reins. She’s grateful for it, because it allows her to build Roland’s faith in the horse without him realizing that she’s helping him.

After a few days of this, she finally gets him to ride solo as she walks Merry around the arena, holding lightly to the bridle and coaxing Roland into talking almost constantly (which isn’t difficult to do, he’s such a little chatterbox), in order to distract him from his nerves. The following day she gets a workout, jogging next to the horse when Roland finally summons the courage to trot, and at the end of their session, she even gets him to walk the horse slowly around the perimeter of the
arena, all by himself.

Thank god.

She’s been getting a little lax on her cardio, has been substituting sex for running, and she’s worked up quite a sweat in this humidity. The weather has been unseasonably warm, topping off in the low one-hundreds with almost no relief at night, but a cold front is supposed to come through in the next day or so and bring them back into temperatures that feel less like living in a sauna.

In the afternoon they take the boys out to dinner and a movie, and Regina gets yet another beautiful glimpse of the path her life is traveling. Robin holds her hand in the truck as they drive into town while the boys chatter away in the backseat and argue over which Pokemon is the best. It’s fun and lighthearted, a relaxing afternoon in the air conditioning that is a much-needed break from the hectic, hot activities going on at camp seven days a week.

Regina can hardly believe that she and Robin have been dating for over six months. The time has flown by, and she knows that they’re probably still in the honeymoon phase of their relationship, but she honestly wonders if it will ever change. Robin makes her incredibly happy, he’s actually taken the time to learn her, to really learn her for who she is. It’s a strange feeling - with Graham she felt like she was always putting on a show, always had to be on, but with Robin, it feels the opposite. When she is with him she feels relaxed, feels her emotional walls fall down, and she feels like he loves her, really, truly loves for who she is.

She hopes he feels the same way, because she honestly does love him as he is, even with that streak of Locksley stubbornness, and the bit of temper that flares up on a rare occasion. Neither of them is perfect and they still argue, still don’t always see eye to eye on some things, but they’re getting better at compromising, at listening to one another, and she’s starting to feel like he’s a part of her, like he makes her a better person, and jesus, it’s amazing. Things are going well, so wonderfully, insanely well, that Regina is finally starting to let go of her fear of failure, is starting to think that maybe she won’t mess this all up. That maybe there really is a happy ending for her after all.

Regina startles awake, grumbling loudly at Robin, who is shaking her shoulder roughly and speaking hurriedly in the pitch black of their bedroom.

“Up, love, no time to fanny about,” he’s saying, tugging on her arm.

“What?” she’s so confused, can’t figure out why the hell he’s pulling her out of bed in the middle of the night for something other than sex.

“Power’s out, and the storm’s getting worse by the second, we need to head downstairs, there’s too many trees near the house to risk it,” he says quickly, shoving pajamas at her, which she hurriedly pulls on.

“How bad is it?” she asks dumbly, “My phone hasn’t -” The emergency alert blares from her cell phone, cutting her off mid-sentence as she grabs for it in the dark, the Tornado Warning! Severe Weather! alert blinding her in the dark of the bedroom. “Shit,” she mumbles, pulling on a pair of
shoes and one of Robin’s hoodies, then takes his hand and follows him out of their room. He calls Granny quickly and confirms she’s already holed up in her basement, and she can see the relief rush through him as he ends the call.

Lightning flashes as they cross the living room, stopping at the fridge to grab several water bottles, the wind rattling the windows and debris clattering against the glass as the sky lights up again. Deafening thunder is quick to follow, the dishes in the kitchen cabinets rattle from the jarring vibration, and they dash down the basement steps, trying not to break their necks in the dark. This is one hell of a storm.

It’s unusual for this area - they get their fair share of thunderstorms, but tornados and straight-line winds are rare. The cold front must have come through tonight, must be slamming into all that hot humidity they’ve been having, and now Mother Earth is showcasing her displeasure. Fucking global warming.

The boys are both still asleep in their bedrooms, and there’s no point in waking them up just to scare them, so Robin and Regina check on them but let them slumber. There’s an old couch in the small living area of the basement, a natural gas fireplace on one wall, and Robin gets it going in order to give them some light so they can preserve the batteries on their phones. They both click them over to battery saver just in case - they can hear the howl of the wind and feel the shudder of the thunder even down here, and Regina has a little rush of fear. They have an emergency box of supplies like you’re supposed to for a storm like this - packed full of flashlights, batteries, canned goods, bottled water, and a few other things to keep them going should the worst happen - but it’s the fear of a parent that races through, the fear for her loved ones that causes her shoulders to tense as they hunker down.

Robin grabs the thick quilt off the back of the couch, and she almost laughs at his protectiveness when he pushes her against the backrest and lays half on top of her, shielding her from damage should the ceiling fall in. It’s sweet and chivalrous, and it makes her love him even more, makes her press her palm to his chest to feel the quick tha-thump of his heart, the steady beat so calming to her. They lay together in silence, staring at each other in the flicker of the firelight while they listen to the storm rage and hope there won’t be too much damage. Worry creases Robin’s face, his hands fidget against her and she knows he’s thinking of Granny, of the camp, of their little family here in the basement and all the things that might happen.

She runs her fingers over his face, trying to comfort him, smiling softly in spite of her worry, summoning her courage to be strong and calm in the face of the unknown. There are loud sounds outside, she’s positive she’s heard the toppling of a few nearby trees, the sharp crack of lightning striking something and the accompanying flash of brilliant white light glares through the tiny windows of the basement, making Robin cringe and close his eyes.

Regina moves to stroke her fingers along his neck, running her hands where she can reach him, trying to keep his worry at a manageable level, his brow furrowed so hard she can’t help but smooth her fingers over it to try to get him to relax. “It’s going to be alright,” she says softly, rubbing her leg along his, “There’s nothing we can do right now but wait, there’s no use worrying until we know what we’re worrying about.”

Robin smiles at her with a look of curiosity and asks, “Did someone teach you that phrase?”

She nods. “Why?”

“It just, doesn’t quite sound like you, but your face was so sweet when you said it, like you were thinking of a pleasant memory.”
It shocks her how well he can read her sometimes, how well he has always been able to read her, and she tells him, “My father used to say it when I got in trouble with my mother.”

“Tell me about him?” he asks, and his voice is curious but gentle. She hasn’t spoken much of her parents, other than to mention that her mother was awful and that she was a daddy’s girl.

She tucks a lock of hair behind her ear - it’s getting long now, just past her shoulders - and says softly, “What would you like to know?”

It’s a deflection, she recognizes it as soon as she says it, and she’s trying not to do that with him - knows it’s part of her emotional self-defense, a habit instituted by her mother - so she corrects herself before he can say anything and says, “His name was Henry.”

Robin smiles and his hand strokes along her hip encouragingly.

“He was kind,” she continues, letting the old memories surface for the first time in quite a while. It’s hard to think of him, it’s been eighteen years and her heart is still a little broken over his loss. “And he was wise, he had a saying like that for everything.” She pauses, a few of those phrases flitting through her head as the thunder booms and rattles the house again. “He raised me, mostly. My mother was… not very maternal, but he was a wonderful father. He took me to all of my lessons - piano, horseback riding, tennis, and he never missed a competition. He was my biggest fan, and he um… he shielded me from my mother on more occasions than I can remember.”

“So that’s where you get it,” he murmurs.

“Get what?”

“You love so hard, so deeply,” he says quietly, bumping the end of her nose with his, “It makes sense, just hearing you talk about your father, that you learned it from him.”

Regina beams, because he’s just given her about the biggest compliment he could have - that she takes after her father, when so many people have insisted that she’s just like Cora.

“Well, I certainly didn’t get it from my mother,” she laughs, but she’s not quite able to pull the anger from her tone.

“Is that why you kept Mills when you got married, why you didn’t take Daniel’s surname?”

She smiles softly at her decision and says, “I wanted to keep my father’s name alive for a little while longer. I couldn’t bear to change it, couldn’t even consider it - I felt like if I changed my name, it would be like I had forgotten him.”

“When did he pass?” Robin asks, his fingers making soft swirls over her hip.

A loud <CRACK!> sounds outside and they both pause, waiting to hear if there is any cascading effect, but it’s followed only by the sound of hail bouncing off the ground and striking the glass of the basement windows.

“He had a heart attack when I was sixteen,” she tells him quietly.

Robin kisses her softly, and murmurs, “I’m sorry, darling,” against her lips.

He’s so sweet, it’s been such a long time and he has nothing to be sorry for, but she feels like his heart bleeds when hers does, so she gives him a weak smile and says simply, “Thank you.”
“What about your mum?” he asks, and there’s hesitation in his voice - she’s made a handful of comments about her mother in the last few months, but she tries hard not to mention that woman at all. Regina’s anger, her pain is still too much, and where she tries hard to hold onto the memories of her father, she’d just as soon forget her mother ever existed.

“My mother was… a lot like your father, I think,” she says quietly, dropping her eyes. “Except where your father’s addiction was alcohol, my mother’s addiction was power.”

Robin’s fingers run down the bridge of her nose and across her lips, but he says nothing.

“She liked to play mind games and had a terrible temper, and she used to throw things when I made her really angry. When my father died she turned her attention to landing another rich meal-ticket, and within a year she’d won over the worst of them, Leopold Blanchard.” Regina feels upset, feels like she might cry, feels like she can’t stop talking now that she’s started. She’s never told anyone what she’s pretty sure she’s about to tell him.

“Mary Margaret will tell you he’s wonderful, and to her, he was, he is.” She takes a deep breath, “But he was… inappropriate with me. I was seventeen and he used to say things, used to imply things, and then one day, he started to touch me -”

“What!?” Robin growls, and she’s never heard him sound like that, has never heard rage in his voice like she hears it now. His protectiveness of her flashes in his eyes as he sits halfway up.

“It’s alright,” she soothes, wrapping her fingers around the back of his neck and pulling him back down to her. He’s vibrating against her, barely controlling himself, and she bites the inside of her cheek to keep herself from crying as she says, “It started out small - normal things - my hair, my shoulders, but, then, well,” she breathes deeply, feeling Robin shake harder under her hands as she admits, for the first time ever, “Then it was my thighs, my stomach, my ass, and… it got out of hand. I tried to tell my mother and she called me a whore, accused me of wanting him for myself, so I started staying with Daniel’s family as much as I could. I couldn’t tell Daniel but he knew something was wrong, and he installed a deadbolt on my bedroom door when they were gone one day. When I had to be home, I went to bed with a knife under my pillow, and between that and the lock it stopped him, but um, you can imagine I didn’t get much sleep on those nights anyway.”

Robin is clenching his jaw, his hands are balled tightly into fists and locked down against his sides, and she feels bad for riling him up, for causing him to be upset. The hail slams against the windows and she wonders for a moment if they’ll break, but the panes hold steady and she turns her attention back to Robin.

“I was almost a legal adult and he was careful, was smart about it, so I never had any evidence of what he was doing,” she says quickly, then adds, trying to alleviate Robin’s anger, “He never got under my clothes. He tried, on more than one occasion, but I was pretty athletic and I learned to keep my guard up, to never be alone with him, and to run like hell if I was. I graduated high school and moved in with Daniel immediately, and my mother was so busy with her social life she never even noticed I moved out before I went off to college.”

Regina smiles at the memory and how Daniel helped to heal her that summer, how wonderful it was to be safe and free, how much fun she had with her first love.

She brings her attention back to Robin and - oh god - he’s crying. Oh god.

She fights a rush of anger - she doesn’t need, nor want his pity - then she fights an equally strong wave of fear that he won’t want her now that he knows, now that he’s aware that she was… hurt. A third emotion shocks through her - humiliation - and she closes her eyes tightly, feeling herself
withdraw, shit, she shouldn’t have told him, it’s too much, it’s too soon, shit.

Robin’s hand cups her cheek and when he says her name softly she opens her eyes, unsure of which emotion is winning, only that what she’s feeling isn’t a particularly good feeling. Telling him didn’t bring the relief she thought it might, it only brought those old fears to the surface, and she feels like she made a giant mistake.

He says her name again and she meets his eyes, determined not to shy away from whatever he’s about to say - it’s not like he’s going to throw her out into the storm - this is Robin, and even if he’s through with her, he’d never do that.

“Regina, you are the most incredible person,” he says quietly, a few tears spilling out when he blinks, surprising her with the honesty that bleeds into his voice. “Every time I think I know how strong you are, how resilient, how brave, you turn around and show me another example of just how amazing you are. Christ, woman, I swear, every minute that passes I love you even more.”

She furrows her brow in confusion, because that’s not at all what she expected him to say, then berates herself because this is Robin and of course he’s going to accept her, of course he’s going to still love her. This is Robin, he is hers, and she is his, and she should know better than to expect so little of him.

He licks his lips, catching her eyes in the dim light as another flash of lightning and the roar of thunder hammers around them, making the house shudder under the violence of the storm. “But I swear to god,” he drops his voice and it’s a deep, menacing rumble in his chest as he locks eyes on her, fury distorting his usually calm features as he finishes, “If I ever come face to face with that man, there is nothing that will stop me from cutting his heart out of his fucking chest and giving it to you in a pinewood box.”

She smirks, because his loyalty is both endearing and surprisingly arousing, all at once. “You’d cut his heart out for me?” she asks quietly.

“I’d dig it out with a dull spoon, I’d claw it out of his chest with my bare hands if I had nothing else,” he says, blue eyes blazing. There is so much conviction in his voice that she really believes him, and she hopes for Mary Margaret’s sake that Robin never meets Leo.

“You do know that you don’t have to beat up everyone who has hurt me, don’t you?” she teases, trying to lighten the mood.

It works, it gets him to calm against her and he smooths his fingers across her cheek, but his eyes are still serious as he asks, “Did you…” he pauses, licks his lips then forges on, “When you were pregnant with Henry, did you worry about being a good parent, that you might turn out like… like your mum?” Regina chews her lip, but Robin continues, “I was terrified when Marian became pregnant. I thought for certain I’d ruin Roland, that I’d… that I’d turn into my father,” he sighs and trails off.

“Yes,” she says quietly, “At first I was, but Daniel helped with that a lot, helped me see that even though I hated my mother, I did inherit some of her better traits, which was something I hadn’t considered. And, any time I have to make a decision as a mother, I think about what she would do, and then I do the opposite of it.” She ends on a small laugh, wrinkling her nose as a wry smile graces her lips.

Robin laughs softly with her, then says, “Marian was just as afraid as I was that I’d turn out to be a rotten father.” Regina’s dislike for Robin’s late spouse grows yet again. “I suppose she had reason to be; I had quite an unusual upbringing, and this ruddy stubbornness, but it was quite strange - the
second I saw my son, it’s like this calm came over me. Even when I caught Marian with Will and I behaved so terribly, the only thing that kept me from doing something… even more stupid, was the thought of Roland growing up without a father, or with a deadbeat one. It’s him who turned me back around - I don’t know what I’d have done if I hadn’t had him.”

“Whatever happened with Will?” she asks carefully, “Granny said you basically lived with him off and on while you were growing up, finding out about the affair must have been… heartbreaking.”

“You know what’s strange?” he says quietly, his fingers tracing a pattern over her hip, “I think I felt more upset by Will’s betrayal than Marian’s. Isn’t that odd?” Robin’s brow is furrowed hard, like he’s thought about this a hundred times and could never figure it out.

“I don’t think it’s strange at all,” Regina presses her palm against his chest to feel his heartbeat once again. “From what I know, Will was someone you trusted, someone you depended on for a long time. You loved him, probably as much or more than you did Marian.”

Robin looks upset, and embarrassed, so Regina presses a kiss to his lips, running her fingers across his scruffy cheek as she asks, “After the fight, did you ever talk to him again?”

He shakes his head, but then says, “When Marian got sick, he used to show up at the hospital. At first I hated him, I couldn’t believe he had the audacity to come visit her. But he was as respectful as I suppose he could be - he never went in to see her in front of me, and after a while I talked myself into believing that he must have really loved her to do that. I never spoke to him, I figured since she was dying it didn’t make any bloody sense to fight over her then.”

Regina brushes her fingers through Robin’s soft hair and asks, “Are you sure he was there to visit Marian? Or was there a chance he came to see you, to support you, even though you were on the outs?”

Robin’s brow furrows hard, and she knows from the look on his face that he’s never considered that. It breaks her heart that he never thought that the boy who was more or less his brother might have come to give him his support, regardless of the major errors in judgment they’d both made.

“No,” he says, “Fuck, how do you do that?”

“What?”

“How do you look at something I’ve agonized over for years, and make it make sense? How do you make it seem like perhaps it isn’t as bad as I always thought?” he smirks, “Bloody brilliant, you are.”

Regina just smiles and they share a moment of silence while lightning strikes once again, the rumble of thunder still intense as it rattles the house, the strong wind whipping at the windows.

She thinks of another question she’s had for quite some time, so she takes advantage of this rare opportunity and goes for it. “You and Merida seem to get along alright these days,” she says, so curious about that relationship and the strange camaraderie she’s witnessed between the two of them.

Robin laughs, “Well, over the years she’s given me a few hard-hitting reminders of what a prat I was, and lucky for me, she’s never been good at holding a grudge.” Robin traces his fingers lightly over Regina’s lips, and she presses a kiss to them. “I’ve known her since she was little, she used to challenge me to archery competitions constantly once she picked up the sport. She’s bloody good at it too - almost as good as I am.”

There’s deep pride showing in Robin’s eyes, both of himself and of the Scottish girl, and it makes Regina’s heart happy for him. He has more people who love him, more family than he realizes, even
in the face of the terrible mistakes he’s made.

Outside, the storm rages on, loud and angry.

“Do you miss Daniel?” Robin asks quietly, holding her eyes steadily.

She nods, because she really, truly does. “I used to think I couldn’t live without him, he was a part of me, my other half - when he died I didn’t know how to function without him.”

Robin tilts his head, listening intently as she continues. “But the things I miss now are different from what I used to miss.”

“How so?”

“Now I miss his friendship, I miss his sweet personality and the memories we made when we were kids.” She trails off, the vision of Daniel’s face clear in her head as she thinks of him.

“And before?”

“I used to miss the way he was always so supportive of me, the way he loved me and Henry. I missed the deep connection of being in love with my best friend, and the physical and emotional intimacy that went with that.”

“Why the change?” Robin asks, his tone and expression curious and completely unassuming as they look at each other in the dark.

Regina gives him a soft smile, reaches for his hand and presses it against her heart. “Because I can’t miss something that I have.”

Robin kisses her, then presses his forehead against hers and takes a deep breath.

“I’m going to sound terrible for this, and I know I should feel sorry, but I’m not.”

She squeezes his hand and says, “Okay…”

“I don’t miss Marian. Not the way you missed Daniel, I…” he swallows thickly and bumps her nose with his. “I never felt about Marian the way I feel about you, Regina.”

The air leaves her lungs quickly, her eyes burning so much that she has to close them to collect herself. How on earth she was ever lucky enough to deserve this man is completely beyond her.

They hold each other for the rest of the night, the storm raging loud and angry outside, knowing that in the morning the devastation will be vast. It’s a stressful, restless night, but they try to relax against each other, try to stay calm and collected, comforted by the knowledge that together they can face whatever challenges tomorrow is certain to bring.
Devastation is an accurate description, he thinks.

As morning breaks, Robin stands on his front porch, the cool, crisp stillness a strange contrast to the violence of last night’s storm. There is a haze in the air, the warm ground mixing with the chilly atmosphere and creating a light, rolling fog, and the sun is just barely visible, a dull orange color behind the cloud covering. It would be a beautiful morning, if it weren’t for the chaos that surrounds him.

Robin has never experienced this kind of destruction. His first thought was that it must have been a tornado, but his phone informs him that it was straight-line winds that created this havoc, winds that reached nearly one hundred miles an hour as they ripped across his property.

The house is mostly untouched, thank god. There are trees down everywhere, branches, leaves, dirt and debris cover the yard, and he knows he should be thankful that this is the worst of it here, but he can’t muster the positivity required for it. He has no idea what state camp is in, or Granny’s, and while all three places are heavily insured - it’s his biggest expense after payroll - there’s an ominous feeling in his gut, a feeling that this is not the worst of it.

The boys wake early and are shocked by the damage, both having slept straight through it last night, regardless of the noise. Robin and Regina got very little sleep - spent a long time talking and an even longer time just listening to the storm rage, holding onto each other and wishing that it was over. She looks as tired as he does this morning as she joins him on the porch, her raven hair pulled up into a ponytail, his dark green hoodie zipped up to her neck, in worn jeans and boots. She’s so pretty like this - he loves her fancy dresses and her classy business clothes, but when she’s dressed down like this with him it makes him feel warm inside, makes him think of how she described Daniel as her other half, and makes him understand what is truly meant by that.

They give the boys strict orders to stay in the house, then head across the yard and take the trail to camp, and the typical ten-minute walk takes them over a half an hour - the brush and debris so thick that they can barely even see the path. When they finally come through the woods on the other side, Regina’s horrified gasp echoes the thoughts in his own head as he lays eyes on the destruction.

Devastation, indeed.

The staff office is destroyed, a huge maple tree having fallen directly on it, crushing the small building and making it almost unidentifiable. The arenas are no better, all of the fencing on the forest side is down, half of the wall of the indoor arena has blown away, trees and debris from the office are everywhere, shingles and siding strewn across the driveway. And then there’s the stable.

Robin swallows thickly and clutches hard to Regina’s hand as he stares at it.
Two large trees have fallen directly on the barn, crushing the back third of the building. Movement catches his eye and Kristoff comes out of it, his hands wiping at his face, which is red and tearstained as he approaches them.

“Who?” Robin asks, voice shaking.

“It’s mostly the tack room and storage,” Kristoff says quickly, sniffing and dropping his eyes.

“Who?” Robin repeats, because it is clear from the younger man’s face that there has been loss.

Kristoff can’t speak for a moment, his face buried in his hands as he tries to collect himself, then rasps quietly, “Falco.”

Next to him, Regina breaks, her love of the big dark Percheron causing her to drop his hand to cover her mouth as the sob escapes her.

Robin gathers his courage, “How?”

“Cave in, it looks… it looks like it was quick, maybe instant,” Kristoff says softly, then, “Jesus, Rob, I’m so sorry, he was, he was already gone when I found him.”

Robin can’t look at Kristoff, can’t look at any of them. His throat is constricted, his eyes burn and he feels about a second from falling apart. Buildings can be rebuilt. Fences mended. But a life? The life of his favorite horse, the one he vowed to spend more time with this spring but didn’t quite get around to it? There is nothing that can fix this loss.

Robin walks to the barn, leaving Regina and Kristoff together to grieve over the loss of the beloved animal. He feels like he needs to see it to believe it. He's had that horse since he was a teenager, had picked out the chunky, oversized colt at the auction with his grandfather when he was seventeen years old. He’s never had a smarter horse, has never connected with an animal the way he did with Falco. He wasn’t a pet. He wasn’t just a horse. He was… he was his friend.

The damage is vast, and Robin supposes that he should be thankful that they’ve only lost one horse. They house over a dozen in their stables, so the fact that only one animal was lost in this mess should be a relief. But the agony of the loss only grows and grows as Robin nears the stall, the entire area around it completely crushed in a tangle of debris. As he passes her stall, Rosie, their other Percheron, paws madly at the door, nickering at him so that he stops and returns to her. She was bonded with Falco, the two of them had been best friends since day one, and he knows that she will miss him as much as Robin will. He calms her as best he can, feeds her a peppermint he finds scattered across the barn floor and rubs her nose, her ears, but she’s too worked up for much else, her big head shaking back and forth quickly in her displeasure and grief.

He can see Falco beneath the mess, can see that the big horse never stood a chance, and it tears him apart, makes him so, so angry that he was locked in his stall, unable to escape from the terror of the storm. Rationally, Robin knows that this was the safest place for him to be, but the anger that accompanies his grief has him grabbing at the debris, suddenly overcome with the need to free his horse from it, to take it away so that he can lie in peace, instead of under a pile of rubble.

Kristoff joins him at some point, and Regina, and when they ask him what he’s doing all he can say is, “Get him out, I need to get him out,” in this weird strangled voice that doesn’t sound like him at all. The three of them work carefully and quickly to clear the stall, until all except for the top of the tree and the big horse is left. Robin and Kristoff use the tractor to pull away the tree, and then there is nothing left but the body of the beautiful animal Robin has loved so much.
He spends an hour with the horse, knowing he should be doing things, adult things - checking for damage in other areas of the camp, calling the insurance company, calling his employees and filling them in on the damage. There were thankfully no campers last night - they’ve been closed for two days for staff training, so at least he doesn’t have to worry about the terrible things that might have happened had there been children on-site.

Regina stays with him, silent and respectful, and when he finally gets the will to leave, she takes his hand in hers and they go on together to check the rest of camp. It’s only nine in the morning by the time they make it to the staff lodging and campers quarters, but it’s all a mess. The staff housing is mostly alright, a bit beat up on the outsides but no real damage, but the mess hall, the activities center, half the camper’s cabins and even the dock are all destroyed. Some of the buildings are in such bad shape that there’s visible foundation damage, and those will have to be entirely rebuilt. It’s easily several hundred thousand dollars worth of damage, and it takes his breath away, makes him freeze up while Regina rubs his back soothingly, reminding him of the insurance, that things may look bad now but they probably aren’t as bad as he thinks.

By some insane stroke of luck, he’s able to get the insurance appraiser to come out later that day. He’s pretty sure Granny knows the bloke’s parents and that’s why they’re so high up on the list, but the appraisal he gives Robin initially seems quite fair. There are a lot of hoops to jump through, paperwork that seems endless, and the clean-up work is daunting, to say the least. He’s going to have to close the camp for the rest of the summer, will have to refund an enormous amount of their income, and he’ll have to lay off all the staff except for Kristoff and Regina. It’s a bloody nightmare.

The camp is old, it’s been in his family for generations, and usually that thought warms Robin’s heart, usually it brings pride and contentedness that the Locksley’s have had an impact on so many children’s lives, but in the face of the rebuild, it’s brought nothing but headaches. The age of the property means that a lot of things were grandfathered in under old insurance policies and deals his family members had made in the past. So, to add insult to injury, rebuilding is definitely going to take more money than they are insured for, because now the insurance company is requiring that all buildings be brought up to today’s building standards, including those that weren’t damaged. This means updating water lines, electrical, foundations, insulation, and a plethora of other things that were previously acceptable, but are now being ruled unacceptable. It’s a kick in the teeth on top of the work they have to do just to clean up from the storm.

Robin, or rather, the camp, has a savings - it’s been quite profitable the last several years and they do their best to save for emergencies such as this. It’s not quite as large as it could be - Robin favors paying his employees a more than livable wage over hoarding the money - but it’s a nice little stash he will definitely need. So while it is a nightmare to have to deal with all of this, when Regina runs the numbers for him it doesn’t turn out to be quite so bad. He can cover about half of what the insurance won’t with the camp savings, so if he takes out a loan and they don’t run into any further complications, they should be able to re-open next spring. The insurance money is sure to take several weeks to come in, so money is going to be tough for a while, but between the two of them they should be able to get on without having much, if any, impact on the boys. When Regina informs him of all of this it takes every ounce of self-restraint he has to stop himself from proposing to her. She has been nothing short of a miracle through this - she’s bloody brilliant and he never could have figured out this financial mess without her - and Christ, it just makes him want to wife her so hard.

It’s non-stop work for a month - every moment of Robin’s time not spent on the phone with the insurance company, the bank, or trying to get a few hours of sleep, is completely consumed with clearing debris, demoing damaged buildings, and fixing what he can. Regina is a godsend - not only does she continue to do her job for the camp, but she takes on most of the duties at home as well, taking care of the boys and enlisting them in household chores or sending them to help him with what they are able. They’re both working in some way, shape, or form well before, and well after,
daylight every day, and while that doesn’t leave much time for other activities, he truly feels like they’re part of a team - she’s handling one half of the responsibilities and he’s got the other half. So while they’re both completely exhausted and stressed out of their minds, they somehow manage to keep everything running smoothly, including their relationship.

It’s an oddly welcome change - Robin thinks of the past few weeks as the official end of the infamous ‘honeymoon’ phase and the beginning of something more. He’s not sure why everyone idolizes the honeymoon phase - sure, it was absolutely incredible with Regina, but he still feels incredible, more so even, and their friendship has grown to a whole new level of trust and understanding, which in turn has made their sex life even more intense. This, he thinks, is what everyone should strive for - the end of the honeymoon and the beginning of the real.

They’ve learned to read each other in these amazing ways - can translate a glance, a sound, even a tilt of the head or arch of an eyebrow into a full sentence, and they catch themselves on more than one occasion saying the same thing at the same time. He’s picked up some of her sarcasm, she’s adopted a few of his choice phrases, and every time he hears her murmur bloody-fucking-hell under her breath, it makes him break into a grin.

Henry’s birthday is Friday, and they’ve both vowed to make a big deal of it. He’s turning eleven, and they’re hoping to use the opportunity to get the boy’s minds off of things, to give them a break and have some fun that has been seriously lacking lately due to the damage from the storm. Henry wants to have a video game party, which translates to Robin and Regina taking both boys and a few of their friends to the next town over, to a restaurant that doubles as a giant arcade.

The boys play in the arcade for hours, and it’s fun to sit back in the booth with Regina and the parents of the other boys, watching them all go wild in an environment that is specifically intended for it. They don’t have to scold the boys for yelling and getting outrageously excited, and Regina even allows them as much cake and ice cream as they want, which Robin is shocked about but not willing to question. He thinks she looks adorable sitting next to him - he often forgets that she’s quite a small woman - her presence always takes up his entire consciousness but in reality she’s almost a head shorter, her frame lean and strong. He’s been thinking about her legs a lot today - she’s in sandals and these little shorts that show off most of her thighs, so he gets to see almost her entire leg without having to feel bad about it. She’s got beautiful muscle tone in her calves - he wants to nip along the sharp edges of them, and her thighs have this gorgeous, muscular curve that makes his hands positively itch to stroke over her. She’s sexy as hell and the longer she sits in the crook of his arm, the further his thoughts sink into inappropriateness.

It’s been over a week since they’ve had sex - it’s not that they haven’t done other things - they’ve gotten handsy, had some oral once or twice, but they’ve been exhausted, stressed out and have barely seen each other outside of bed. He likes to take his time with her, always gets off more on pleasing her than himself, but when things started to heat up a couple of nights ago, she had actually asked him to stop and admitted sheepishly that she was literally too tired to come. He understands that, he’s exhausted too, not up to his usual standards in pleasuring her, and anyway it’s not forced orgasms he wants, or weary, half-hearted sex. Robin is hoping that spending the day together with their boys, resolutely not thinking about camp, will help them both recharge so that tonight or perhaps tomorrow night they can spend a bit of time on each other.

What Regina doesn’t know, is that he’s got plans for her tomorrow. He’s been thinking a lot about what he could do for her, to show his appreciation for how amazing she’s been, how supportive, and he figures it’s well past time to take her out on a proper date. He’s been scheming with Mal, who managed to set them up at an extremely nice restaurant in the city, followed by some fantastic tickets to see Hamilton, because apparently, that woman has connections everywhere. He’s agreed that if Regina is game they’ll join her for drinks after the show, but he’s going to leave that up to Regina -
he knows she doesn’t like surprises and he doesn’t want to push his luck any further than he has to.

She gives him quite the side-eye the next day when he tells her to stop what she’s doing so she can get dolled up.

“Why?” she asks, suspicion thick in her voice as she continues to chop vegetables.

“Because we’ve plans,” he says, stepping up behind her and wrapping his arms around her waist.

“Oh?” she continues to chop, “And those are?”

Robin sweeps her hair to one side, it’s really getting long now, and drops his lips to the side of her neck. “I’m taking you on a date,” he says quietly, pressing hot kisses up the side of her neck. He drops his lips to her ear and says, “I promise to make it worth your while.”

Regina hums and sets the knife down, wiping her hands on a dishtowel before she turns in his arms and asks, “What kind of date?”

He holds her hips as he presses a soft kiss to her lips and gives her a mischievous smirk. “A fancy one.”

She licks her lips and gives him a little amused smile, then bumps his nose with hers and says, “This wouldn’t have anything to do with Mal, now would it?”

Robin’s jaw drops. How did she know? He’s been so discrete - Mal must have ratted him out.

Regina grins and says, “You honestly didn’t think you could strategize with Mal and I wouldn’t figure it out, did you? Mal and I have been friends for almost half of our lives - I can tell when she’s hiding something, and I always know when you’re trying to be sneaky.” She pokes him in the chest as she says it, her eyes all too knowing.

Well, fuck. Here he thought he’d done a right job in surprising her, and she’d known all along.

Still smiling, she tips up her chin and gives him a small kiss, then deepens it, opening her mouth and sucking softly at his upper lip, then teasing her tongue against his. “Now I see where Roland gets that pout,” she teases, and Robin has the good humor to laugh.

“I suppose it’s my fault,” he squeezes her hips and gripes, “I should have known the two of you would turn this around on me.”

“Well, to be fair,” she rubs her thumbs across his scratchy jawline, “I don’t actually know what we’re doing, just that we’re going out and I had better be on my A-game for it.”

Robin tilts his head and slides his hands down over her arse. “Darling you could go just as you are and still be the most beautiful woman in the room.”

Regina just rolls her eyes and pulls away, already headed for their bedroom as she asks, “How long do I have to get ready?”

“As long as you need, but if you’d like to stay on schedule, try to keep it under two hours?”

She grins and tosses her hair back as she keeps walking and throws over her shoulder, “I suppose I can make something work.”
Robin is beginning to think that taking her on a date was a mistake.

It’s not that there’s anything wrong, per se, they’re having a lovely time, just as he knew they would. It’s that every other man in the room, and at least half of the women, have been making eyes at Regina since they sat down, and that hot little possessive streak he has for her has been simmering now for over an hour. It’s making him mad with lust, and there’s nothing he can do but continue to stare at her like everyone else, his mouth watering and his trousers way too tight to be appropriate.

She’s gone all out tonight, has shown him no mercy with the way she dressed up, and though it’s killing him, he fucking loves it. Her makeup is perfect - thick black eyeliner, dark, dramatic eyeshadow and full red-stained lips, her ebony hair pulled up in soft waves with her long bangs swept to one side, exemplifying her refined beauty and making her look positively regal. She’s in a tight, dark purple dress - the color is so hot on her, plays perfectly against her summer-tanned skin, turns her dark brown eyes nearly violet, and the way it hugs her curves makes his tongue feel thick, makes it hard to swallow. It’s short sleeved, with little points on the shoulders, and the neckline is a narrow, deep vee that clings tightly to her breasts. Since the cut of the neckline goes almost to her sternum, he knows without a doubt she’s not wearing a bra, or at least, not a conventional one, and the mystery of it draws his eye constantly, to the point that he has to make a heroic effort not to let his gaze drift down whenever she stops speaking. The hem of her dress is almost conservative, hitting her at her knees, and she’s in sheer tights (or thigh highs, he’s not sure which) and stiletto high heels that make her almost as tall as he is, which is so, so sexy.

In short, she’s the definition of stunning tonight, and by the hot little smirk that keeps playing across her lips, she bloody well knows it.

They have a lovely dinner and both thoroughly enjoy the theater; the show is as good as everyone raves and Robin is happy he got to experience it with her. Regina is in a great mood all night, is flirty and sweet, intelligent and funny, and by the time they’re leaving the theater he’s on cloud nine. Regina decides she’d like to meet up with Mal, just for a bit to catch up since she doesn’t get to see her as much now that she lives up north, and that turns into drinks with Mal and Cruella, which is how Robin finds himself in a chic, upper-class bar, tucked into a dimly lit booth with Regina on one side, Mal on the other, with Cruella across from him, and a hard on that has no relief in sight.

They’re evil. Evil, sinful, gorgeous women, who he’s pretty sure are trying to kill him with desire.

Regina’s hand is on his thigh, squeezing and rubbing up and down under the table, teasing over his rigid cock randomly as Mal tells another story about her most recent sexual conquest in explicit detail. She draws it out in that sexy, raspy voice that stands the hair on the back of his neck on end and makes his brain long to call her ma’am, or perhaps even Madam. It doesn’t hurt that she’s wearing something precariously close to what a dominatrix might - a tight black corset, short green leather skirt with a pattern that resembles some kind of scales, thigh high boots and those thick lips painted a deep, blood red that very much resembles blood. He’d feel bad about his attraction for her, but she’s no competition for his Regina - Mal is hot, definitely fuckable, but Regina? There’s just no competition for her level of beauty.
Cruella’s looking good tonight too, and he feels a bit bad that he almost didn’t recognize her when she first joined them. She’s changed that barmy two-tone hair to all platinum blonde now, almost white, and her makeup is a bit less dramatic, though she’s still covered in animal print (zebra today) from head to toe. She’s smoking some kind of fruity smelling tobacco, using a teal, opera length cigarette holder, and though he’s typically not a fan of the habit, he has to admit she makes it look undeniably sexy.

The longer the night wears on the more intense things get, and Robin’s starting to wonder just what these women are up to, especially when Mal and Cruella return from the loo and catch him with his tongue in Regina’s mouth, his hand under her dress on her upper thigh (it’s thigh highs and garters, jesus christ), and their reaction is merely disappointment at having missed the start of the kiss.

Regina looks positively mischievous as she pulls back from him, her hand holding his steady against her thigh as she tells the others, “You have no idea how hard this man is to resist.”

“I fear we may never know - you’ve never been very good at sharing,” Mal gripes, noticing her drink is empty, then reaching for Regina’s martini and taking a slow sip. “Such a shame.”

“My dear, you know very well that I’m quite good at sharing,” Regina defends, “You’re just not very good at taking turns.”

Mal smirks as Cruella seconds Regina’s statement, accentuating her agreement with a perfect smoke ring directed at Mal, and confusion consumes Robin. Confusion and arousal. Christ, what has he gotten himself into?

“And how about you, Robin darling?” Cruella asks him, “You strike me as a man who knows how to share, I bet you positively excel at it,” her smirk is devious and plainly sexual as she flashes her light blue eyes at him.

Regina’s hand slides over his cock and squeezes him lightly, her eyes and the tilt of her head granting him her permission to flirt back with her friends.

Robin makes eye contact with Cruella, taking Regina’s drink right out of Mal’s hand and letting his fingers stroke teasingly over hers as he takes a sip and says calmly, “That’s a solid bet, but I must admit that I enjoy being shared just as much as I enjoy sharing.”

Mal makes a low hum of approval next to him, and when he looks to Regina her dark eyes are smoldering, her lips perked up in a little satisfied smile, and she looks positively lustful. He can’t stop himself from pressing his lips to hers again - fuck she’s sexy - and he laughs against her as Mal says, intentionally loud enough for them to hear, “Fucking tease, the both of you.”

“Feeling neglected, Mal?” Regina laughs, leaning forward to speak across Robin, “And after that lascivious tale you just told? I’d think your appetites would be more than satisfied.”

Mal laughs throatily and reaches for Regina’s drink again, but instead of taking from Robin, she grabs his wrist and pulls it up so that he ends up holding it to her lips as she takes a long sip. “Now Regina, you know better than anyone that my appetites have never been sated. I used to think the same of you, but now I’m starting to wonder.”

“Feeling neglected, Mal?” Regina laughs, leaning forward to speak across Robin, “And after that lascivious tale you just told? I’d think your appetites would be more than satisfied.”

Mal laughs throatily and reaches for Regina’s drink again, but instead of taking from Robin, she grabs his wrist and pulls it up so that he ends up holding it to her lips as she takes a long sip. “Now Regina, you know better than anyone that my appetites have never been sated. I used to think the same of you, but now I’m starting to wonder.”

Mal gives Robin a hot look and runs her fingers up his forearm before she lets go, and across the table, Cruella looks Regina up and down and adds, “I quite agree with Mal, you look thoroughly sated. Tell us Robin, what exactly are you doing that puts that thoroughly fucked glint in our dear friend’s eyes? I think we deserve details, don’t you, Mal?”
Mal immediately agrees, and for the first time tonight, Robin catches a little blush creep into Regina’s cheeks.

Robin strokes the backs of his fingers along Regina’s neck, then turns back to the two sirens giving them such a hard time and says honestly, “Believe me, ladies, it’s all her - I’m merely a pawn to be played with at her Majesty’s discretion.”

Mal barks out a laugh and Cruella sits back in her chair, sucking hard on that cigarette and letting the smoke drift slowly from her parted lips. Regina graces him with a brilliant smile, her eyes softening at the nickname as she strokes her hand over his thigh and down to squeeze his knee, which he is ungodly thankful for - he’s so hard from her teasing attention that it’s starting to hurt.

They leave shortly after that, it’s getting late and they have a bit of a drive back. They’re both wide awake though, running on adrenaline and the thick anticipation between them, as Regina regales him with stories of the ridiculous antics she’s gotten into with Mal and Cruella over the years.

“So Cruella tells them that she’s the illegitimate child of Ralph Lauren, and within five minutes she actually manages to convince them of it, and we wound up with second-row seats for the entire runway walk.” Regina is animated next to him, “You should have seen the fashion, I almost died it was so gorgeous.”

Robin smirks and sneaks another glance at her - she’s a bit tipsy but not trollied, just buzzed enough to be (very) chatty, her excitement making her sound young and full of energy. He has a strange thought suddenly - he wishes that Daniel had never died. Robin loves her so much, but he wishes she could have had more of these crazy experiences and funny stories, wishes she could have skipped the grief, loss, and struggles that he knows she suffered when the love of her life died.

She’s just finishing another story about one of Mal’s conquests when he remembers something from the restaurant and asks, “So, what exactly did Mal mean when she said that you were never any good at sharing?”

Regina gives him a hot little smirk and says, “I’m pretty sure you know the answer to that.”

Robin’s heart rate fires up in his chest, because fuck, if she’s saying what he thinks she is, he may never get that picture out of his head. “I have an idea, but I thought you said you hadn’t had a threesome before?”

She laughs with this low, sultry edge to her tone and says, “Not true - I said I hadn’t had a threesome with two men before.”

Robin groans loudly, his fingers clenching hard on the steering wheel, lascivious thoughts of Regina and Mal, Regina and Cruella, Regina and Mal and Cruella all flashing before his eyes.

Her hand is on his thigh then, and she asks carefully, “How does that make you feel?”

He can’t stop the laugh that he coughs out, and he grabs her hand, pulls it closer to him and rubs it over the erection he’s had for what seems like ages. “I swear to god, Regina,” he drops his voice, guiding her hand to stroke over him, “You’re every man’s wet dream, christ.”

She grins and takes to rubbing him on her own, her fingers stroking firmly across him through his trousers, swirling and teasing him as he skates his fingers up and down her forearm. “Jesus,” she says softly, squeezing him, “You’re so hard, isn’t that painful?”

“It’s starting to be,” he admits, but turns his head and grins at her, “You do realize you’ve got me like this almost constantly, don’t you?”
“Is that right?” she smirks, rubbing the pad of her thumb across the tip of his cock. “Well if it’s my fault, perhaps I should do something to make up for it.”

Robin’s breath catches. She’s not implying what he thinks she is, is she?

“I suppose that’s only fair,” he says quietly, trying not to get his hopes up.

She rubs him a little more enthusiastically, then slides her fingers up the crease of his thigh, her fingers following the length of his belt to his buckle. She slips the leather through the metal and separates the two halves, then looks up at him through her long, dark lashes and says coyly, “Oh no, look what’s happened.”

The only thought that Robin can form is, Yes-yes-yes-yes-yes-yes-yes.

Her fingers work their way to the button on his trousers, and he shifts his hips forward a bit, trying to make it easier on her. He could undo it himself, but this is way too hot, and she certainly doesn’t seem to mind the work. She flicks the button through the little hole, then slides his zipper down, and - fucking hell - skirts her hand right under his boxer briefs and wraps her warm, smooth fingers around him.

He has to concentrate hard on his breathing, has to focus on driving and not how bloody good it feels as she strokes him, swirling her fingers around and around his tip, the wetness of his precum spreading as she slides the pad of her finger across the head of him. He loves this, loves her so much, and he wishes he could watch her, wishes he could see the way her eyes get even darker with her arousal, the way she furrows her brow and bites her luscious bottom lip as she concentrates.

She starts up a rhythm, strokes his length from base to tip as much as she can in the confines of his pants, then apparently loses her patience and shifts, tugging his clothing down enough to free him entirely. He’s well aware they’re being reckless, knows it’s dangerous as hell, but he cannot ask her to stop - he’s almost certain he can keep his shit together enough to keep them on the road, and they’re thankfully far enough upstate now that the highway is basically deserted anyway.

He glances down to watch her hand on him, her dark painted nails wrapped firmly around him as she strokes and strokes him, and he’s just thinking that it can’t get any better than this, when she slips out of the shoulder part of her seatbelt, flips up the center console, leans over and slides her gorgeous mouth down onto him.

“Oh fuck,” he moans, fingers tightening on the wheel as she immediately starts to bathe his length with her lips and tongue. He drops one hand to the back of her neck, not wanting to mess up her hair as she does this for him, but unable to resist touching the soft skin at her nape.

Regina moves her head and lips fast, stroking and sucking him eagerly, and he’s grateful - he’s so hard, aching for release, and her mouth is downright magic. She is magic. He’s not going to last long, not with her hot little tongue stroking up and swirling around his tip like that, and he moans again, kneading his fingers into the muscles in her neck, encouraging her to take him in deeper. She does - fuck she’s hot - she takes him deep into her mouth until he nudges the back of her throat, then deeper still, pulls back and does it again, again - pauses for a deep breath - then sucks him down deep again, her throat constricting around him as she holds him there.

It’s too much, he’s been hard for her all evening and the way her throat contracts around him feels so similar to how she does when she comes on him, that he can’t shake the image of her naked body writhing on him, her breasts bouncing as she rides him fast and hard. Another flash of fantasy crosses his thoughts, of her and Mal kissing, Regina nipping and sucking on those plump red lips of Mal’s, of Mal sucking on Regina’s nipples as he eats her out, and - fuck - the images spike his arousal, make
him dig his fingers into her as she licks and swipes at the edge of his head. Then she’s back to sucking quickly up and down his length, faster, faster, her tongue zig-zagging over his head on each upstroke - *oh christ* - and his hips are thrusting up as his hand holds her head down - *fuckfuckfuck* - and he can’t even warn her, he’s too far gone - he comes hard - gushes into her mouth as he grabs the steering wheel in an iron grip with both hands, forcing his eyes to stay open to watch the road as she swallows around him. The muscles in his lower belly shake as he comes, his balls tensing and releasing, his cock throbbing as he fills her mouth again - *fuuuuck* - and she continues to suck on him, pulling another two hot spurts from him before he’s finally spent.

She sits up quickly, licking her lips like a fucking vixen and grinning at him as she slips back into her seatbelt. Once he catches his breath, he tucks himself back in with shaking hands, and when he looks over at her she’s nonchalantly fixing her lipstick as if she hasn’t just sucked him into heaven and back.

*Christ alive* - Robin doesn’t give two fucks what she says - she’s absolutely bloody perfect.
One thing Regina loves about Robin is that he’s always open to new ideas.

Which is why they’re fucking in the truck, parked out on a dirt road with the engine running (it’s August and way too hot out to do this without air conditioning).

She hasn’t done this - hasn’t had sex in the car since she was sixteen - and that was so long ago now that the experience almost feels new again. It’s different this time too - Robin is bigger than the boy she used to do this with in several ways, so it’s harder for them to maneuver at first, but at the same time they don’t have to mess around with a condom, so she thinks it probably all equals out.

He’s reclined in the passenger’s seat, and she’s straddling him, riding him fast and almost frantically. She’s got his dress shirt unbuttoned and her hands shoved up under his undershirt, stroking across the hard planes of his chest and abs - god she loves his chest - as she works her hips quickly. He’s shoved her dress up to her waist - she didn’t bother with underwear tonight - he’s fucking her with her garters on, and - jesus - he just feels so, so good. He’s hard and long as she slides up and down him, and she’s so wet for him - god - she’s been wet since before she gave him head and with every stroke she drips a little more for him. His hands run over her thighs, then up to squeeze her breasts, his thumbs finding her peaked nipples through the rich fabric and flicking over them, then pinching and playing as she presses her hips down hard and grinds on him, his thickness stretching her wide and hitting that white-hot spot inside of her that makes her gasp for her next breath.

Robin wraps one hand around the back of her neck and pulls her mouth down to his, nipping at her lips, stealing her breath and playing his tongue against hers, and she’s caught up in him, in the sensation, in the excitement of doing this with him. She can be as loud as she wants, can moan and gasp and yes, even beg him just a little to get her off, to get her off now, to please-please-please-oh-god-please get her off now.

He has the audacity to laugh against her flushed, heated skin where he’s sucking hard on her pulse, goosebumps breaking out and cascading down her neck when his breath hits the moisture he’s left. “You’re so fucking hot,” he rasps, “Try not to come yet, darling, want you so worked up you scream for me when you come.”

She swivels her hips then raps them fast against him, driving herself down on his thick length again-again-again, but then he grabs her hips hard and holds her to him, holds her so she can do nothing but sit in his lap and take him deep.

“Lean back, love,” he says, his voice rough, and he pushes her upright and away until her back connects with the dashboard and she’s bent as far as she can go. He slips his thumb into his mouth, then starts to rub her clit, firm little swirls that make her hips buck, which - oh god - presses his cock right against her front wall, right - jesus - right against her g-spot. He pinches her clit and massages it between his fingers, then goes back to those soft swirls, and she rolls her hips, driving him against
her sensitive spot over and over. Her chest is flushed, her hands pressed against the roof of the truck for leverage to drive herself down on him, she’s panting and so turned on, and his filthy mouth does nothing but drive her up further with every shock of pleasure created by his length buried so deep and so tight inside of her.

“God, you feel so good,” he says, voice strained, “Such a tight little pussy, *fuck*, you can barely take me, I can feel how much I’ve got you stretched, love, you like it like that? You like that big cock stretching you wide?”

She nods, a strangled, “*Yeah,*” slipping from her lips on her next breath.

Robin’s thumb speeds up on her clit, and he starts to thrust up, little rocks of his hips in rhythm with hers that keep him deep but rub him - *ohhh* - right where she wants him.

“You take me so deep, *christ babe* there’s nothing better than when you take all of me, when I push so far up into you that you lose your breath and make that little whimper - so fucking sexy.” His thumb presses hard on her clit as he thrusts up hard-hard-hard, then slows again, one hand on her ass squeezing roughly then sliding to the front to snap her garter against her thigh.

“*Switch me,*” he says suddenly, his hands pressing down on her thighs.

“No, this is good,” she pleads, “I’m so close, let’s keep going.” Her voice sounds whiny to her own ears, and later she’ll cringe about it, but right now there’s molten heat pooling in her clit and she needs him to finish her.

Robin grins up at her and murmurs, “Trust me, love, this will be better for you - switch me.”

Regina huffs out a loud, dramatic breath, and they awkwardly shuffle around in the tight space. When she starts to settle on her back he urges her onto her stomach instead, so she’s laying on her stomach with her hands gripping tight to the headrest.

Robin pulls up her right knee and props it on the center console, spreading her legs nice and wide, then kneels between them on the seat, wraps his hands over the tops of her shoulders, and slides into her. She moans immediately, long and desperate, and has to admit he was right - this modified doggy style position arches her back sharply as he strokes into her, gives him leverage to pull her down on him as he thrusts, and allows him to slide almost all the way out before he shoves his thick length back in.

It’s - *godd* - it’s so good. Her chest rubs against the soft fabric of the seat, her nipples peaked in arousal, her fingers digging into the cushions as he mercilessly drives into her. He pulls firmly on her shoulders, jerking her body down onto him, and she moans loudly, begs *Yeah-yeah-yeah* between breaths. His hands drift across her shoulders between thrusts, inching closer and closer to her neck, until suddenly on the next thrust both of his large hands are wrapped around her throat, squeezing firmly and robbing her of her next full breath.

He lets up and she gasps for air, is allowed to breathe for two thrusts, but then the fingers of his left hand tighten again while his right slides up to cover her mouth, and her arousal surges with the rough way he’s handling her. He chokes her again, cuts off her air for three deep, punishing strokes, then loosens his grip, the fingers of the hand he has on her mouth sliding between her lips and teeth to tug her jaw down as he rasps, “Make some noise for me, darling, let me hear how much you need to come.”

He keeps those fingers in her mouth, pulsing and releasing the hand on her neck as he drives his thick cock into her. She’s breathless, lightheaded, and her core is completely on fire as she whines
for him, moans and makes embarrassingly high pitched Ohh-ohh’s when he loosens his grip on her throat. His fingers in her mouth play against her tongue then grip her hard and pull her mouth wide open, his hips rotating deep as he commands, “Rub your clit you filthy girl, want to feel you squeeze my cock.”

Regina drops one hand and does as he says, groaning desperately with the immediate spike in pleasure it gives her. She’s so wet - ohhh jesus - and her frantic fingers are pushing her to the edge as the hot rushing pleasure radiates out - shit - her clit throbbing with her pulse - god - she’s close. When he grabs her shoulders again and unleashes without warning, slamming fast-fast-fast- oh fuck! - fast-fast-fast, a shudder wracks her body, her heart pounding as her arousal surges through her, tightening in her core, making her clench all over, then suddenly the fire in her sex releases and she hits her peak, comes hard as she moans and moans for him, her hips bucking, back and neck arching as the pleasure rushes through her, her body trembling under his.

“Bloody hell,” Robin gasps, still pounding, still driving hard into her as she clutches on him, contracting so hard and with so much wetness that the sloppy sounds fill the silence of the truck. “Fuck - gonna come, babe - can you feel that? - can you feel my cock throb for you? Christ - beg me to come inside of you.”

It’s not fair, she cannot deny him, not when she’s panting and rushing on endorphins as hot, intense pleasure shakes through her core, the tips of her breasts, every erogenous zone of her body, and she starts rambling, “So much, oh, please, please come inside me, want it so bad, Robin, oh god, please.” Robin lets out a rough sounding groan, wrapping his arms tightly around her, pressing his entire length in deep, so deep, and she rocks her ass up to him, letting him fill every inch of her, feeling the hot gush as he comes, his thrusts stalling then finishing slow, slow, slow.

When he’s done he lets out a loud, shaking breath, both his hands sliding back and grabbing her ass, spreading her cheeks wide. “Fuck, babe,” his voice is low, rough, “Don’t think I’ll ever get over hearing you beg for my come, christ.”

She hums beneath him in agreement. She’s not embarrassed - it turns her on too, that he works her up to such a state where she really is desperate and begging. He starts to pull out, and she wants to make this just a little bit special for him, so when he slips out she rasps, “Rub your come on my ass.”

Robin moans, slipping his fingers through her sensitive folds, gathering the thick liquid that’s now seeping out of her and dragging his fingers up the cleft of her ass. He rubs it around, the slickness close to lubricant as he plays his fingers against her, penetrating her shallowly then sweeping down, again and again, to collect the mess and paint her rear entrance and the swells of her cheeks with it.

“Jesus-bloody-christ,” he murmurs, sliding two fingers into her core and swirling them around, “You’re such a naughty girl, aren’t you? You like wearing my come all over you?”

“Yeah,” she breathes, “Makes me feel like I’m yours.” She knows how bad she’s teasing him with this, but she’s not done tonight, she’s nowhere near it, and she wants him well aware of that.

Robin slaps her ass lightly and says, “Fuck, babe, you’re definitely, mine - the second we get home I’m going to show you.”

“Promise?” she asks, turning her head to look at his face and grinning.

“Promise.”
She should have known better than to make Robin promise. She should have known just how seriously he would take her asking him to own her - she knows how much he likes to be dominant, **and** how much she likes to submit to him - so the situation she finds herself in now is really her own fault.

It’s not like they haven’t done things like this before, and really, they tend to do more things like this than anything close to vanilla when it comes to sex. She likes it when he gets rough, when he holds her down, or ties up her hands, or blindfolds her, or plays with her ass, but what he’s doing right now is definitely a new level of intensity - in fact, it’s pure, exhilarating, sexual torture.

Regina is on her knees on their bedroom floor, nipple clamps in place, her legs spread wide, one hand holding her vibrator to her clit and the other wrapped around Robin’s cock as she sucks and jerks him off. His hands are in her hair, which has long since been let down, the thick black waves of it brushing the tops of her shoulder blades as he thrusts his length rapidly between her lips. He’s been in her mouth for so long at this point that her jaw is starting to ache, but he’s commanded her to take him until she’s soaked, until he can see her dripping for him, at which point he’s promised to “make her his.”

She doesn’t know exactly what that means, but she really, **really**, wants to.

He’s already had his way with her more than once tonight, but she hasn’t had enough - she’s dying to know what he’s going to do to her, is so amped up with anticipation that with every little rock of her hips she can feel the wetness between her legs, can feel it starting to coat the insides of her thighs. The vibrator is working her up and up, her legs are shaking from the pleasure, and she’s having to practice some serious self-control to stop from squeezing her legs together. She’s certain she’ll come in less than a second if she moves the vibrator at all, and it’s tempting, but she wants to come for **him**, and the more she denies herself, the closer she gets to “dripping”. In fact - *oh-dear-god* - she’s dripping, she’s literally dripping, right now.

She pulls her head back, her fingers tightening around him as she gasps for air, looking up through her lashes as his fingers card through her hair. “I’m -” she starts but it’s so breathy, so needy that she forces herself to take another deep breath before she starts again, “I’m dripping, *jesus*, I’m dripping for you.”

Robin groans and steps back, excitement and arousal clear in his features before he circles around her, pressing forward on her shoulders to position her on all fours. He moans again once he’s behind her, lets out a harsh whisper of, “Fucking hell, love, what a mess you’ve made,” then she feels his hand slide over her slick core, smearing her arousal all over before he slips two fingers up inside of her.

“Shut off the toy and set it aside,” he says gruffly, and she does as he says, relieved to have a break from the constant stimulation. His fingers stroke in and out of her slowly, and she can feel his breath on her back as he gets into position behind her. He drops kisses down her spine then slips his fingers out of her, trailing the slickness up the cleft of her ass, and finally she feels the hot, smooth head of his cock at her entrance. He slides in *sooo* slowly, centimeter by centimeter, his hands gripping hard
on her hips, a low groan rumbling out of him when he’s finally, fully sheathed in her.

His voice is soft as he says, “Listen carefully,” his hands stroking lovingly over her ass cheeks. “You will not come until I allow it, understand?”

She shudders out a quick breath and squeezes her eyes shut, “I’m not sure I can hold out,” she whispers, “I’m already so close, been close for forever.”

Robin pulls back and thrusts into her in one hard motion, and she makes this pathetic sounding Ohhh! with the pleasure he creates inside of her. “You can,” he thrusts hard again, “And you will,” another long, hard thrust, “Because you’re mine, aren’t you, love? Isn’t that what you want?”

She breathes Yesss, when he strokes inside her again, her breasts swaying with the force, clamps swinging and the chain tugging, creating sweet pressure on her nipples.

“And if you’re mine,” he thrusts again, “Then your orgasms are mine too, and you’ll not have one until I allow it, understand?” Her brain is so addled with arousal, and his accent is so thick now, that she has to concentrate hard to make out what he says.

“Okay,” she rasps.

“Repeat it,” he commands.

“Not until -” he thrusts hard and she cuts herself off with a loud moan, finishes with a strangled, “-you allow it.”

Robin runs his palms over her back soothingly, his large hands comforting her as he says, “That’s my girl.”

And then he’s fucking her, really fucking her, thrusting hard and fast with no resistance and absolutely no mercy. She’s so swollen, has created so much lubrication for him that it’s immediately sloppy, obscene squelching noises filling the room with each drive of his hips. She’d be embarrassed if she could think, if she could make any thoughts except don’t-come-don’t-come-don’t-come, but she can’t - if she stops focusing for a second she’s going to come for sure, and she doesn’t want to, she wants to give him this, wants him to decide for her.

It’s odd to release the power of decision making to him - she’s so strong, so capable and put together in every other aspect of her life that it’s almost a relief to give herself to him in this way. She doesn’t have to do anything - not a single thing except not come - and because that’s all she has to think of, her arousal builds and builds without the stress of self-consciousness or emotions. He has total control of the speed, the intensity, even the position they’re in, and she’s not sure she’s ever felt so liberated in her whole life.

She’s teetering on the edge, is fighting the pleasure from spilling over, is resisting those tell-tale internal tremors with everything she has. She can’t stop the fluttering of her internal walls, it’s impossible, completely involuntary at this point, but somehow - jesus - somehow she’s stopping the throbbing in her clit from spiraling up, is mostly ignoring the shock of hot pleasure that shoots from the pinched tips of her breasts to her hot, slick core.

“Christ, you can take it,” he rasps, “Never met a woman who could get fucked so hard, for so long, bloody hell, love.”

She tries to block out his praises, tries to think of fighting the pulsating tingle in her clit, the shake of her legs, the swing of breasts, and he must know it, he must know she still has some control, because suddenly he’s shifting around, getting to his feet without slipping out of her. On the next thrust he
drives hard against her front wall, and she automatically drops to her forearms, buries her face in the thick, plush rug as she cries out, delirious with her arousal. He speeds up, faster, faster, faster, driving down into her, pressing hard on her g-spot with every thrust and eliciting molten heat in her lower belly that grows and grows. His balls swing and hit her clit with the force, and - fuck - she can’t, she can’t take it, she’s starting to lose control, can’t tamp it down, can’t ignore the direct slap against her clit and the tug on her nipples when he shoves into her hard, again-again-again.

“Fuck, you’re going to come, aren’t you, darling?” he gasps, breathless.

She’s sweating, her back, chest, and forehead slick with it, her whole body flushed and over-sensitized, and she nods into the carpet, whines, “I can’t stop it, can’t stop, fuck.”

“Who do you belong to?” Robin asks, his voice shaking as he fucks into her.

“You,” she rasps, her voice hoarse.

“That’s right, love, you’re mine - all mine, and for being such a gorgeous, good girl, I’m going to let you come if you can last for ten more seconds, got it?”

Her excitement skyrockets, the anticipation of the end, of being allowed to finally, finally climax rushing through her, and she nods fast, tells him, “Yes, yes!”

“I’m going to count down for you,” he says, speeding up, “And you’re not to come until we hit zero, understand?”

“Yes!”

“Ten,” he speeds up.

“Nine,” and - goddd - she’s never been so needy, so hot all over, so completely overstimulated in her entire life.

“Eight,” the burning pleasure in her core is almost painful, there are tears in her eyes from her frustrated concentration.

“Seven,” she grits her teeth and clenches her fists as he pounds into her fast-fast-fast-fast-fast.

“Six,” she’s moaning, or sobbing, she can’t quite tell.

“Five,” he slaps her ass hard and she cries out, her hips bucking and she almost loses it when she accidentally clenches on him.

“Four,” his voice is strained.

“Three,” her nipples are on fire, everything is pulsing - fuck, fuuuck.

“Two - take those clamps off,” he orders, thrusting faster still, sweat dripping off him and landing on her back. She immediately grabs the clamps and frees her nipples.

“One,” the blood rushes fast and hard to the tips of her breasts and her voice is so hoarse she doesn’t even recognize it as she moans “Fuck, oh god, fuck!”

“Zero - come for me.”
It’s an immediate rush - like lightning rocketing through her veins, her inner muscles slamming and flexing harshly on him as he buries himself in her, dropping to his knees and reaching around her to rub her clit. It’s so intense - shiiit, oh jeeesus - she bucks and writhes on him, shoving her hips back as he stays deep and grinds into her, his fingers teasing her clit as she spasms around him again and again, her throaty moans long and loud as her body shakes and the arousal simply radiates through her.

“That’s it,” he says to her, wrapping up the length of her hair in one hand and pulling her head back, “That’ it darling, work that cock.”

It lasts forever, and she gives herself over to the burning flush in her chest, ass, and face, the involuntary clenching in her core, the shiver of pure pleasure that runs her spine, the length of her legs, and finally out the tips of her fingers and breasts. She gasps for air, trying and failing to stop the trembling, making desperate noises of protest that come up from somewhere deep in her lungs.

Robin’s calloused hands run all over her, his touch so soothing, and the next thing she knows he’s rolling her over and picking her up, one arm under her knees and the other around her back as he takes her to bed. He sets her down gently and she stretches like a cat, arms and legs extended, her spine arched, rolling her neck in satisfaction as the afterglow sets in. He slides in next to her, his hand smoothing back and forth across her hips and stomach as he presses soft kisses to her breasts, and she’s positive that she has never felt so content.

She strokes her fingers through Robin’s soft hair and finally takes a moment to look at him. He’s flushed too, sweat having made his hairline wet, his chest pink, and he’s shaking slightly as he moves over her, covering her chest and neck in kisses. She shifts and feels the evidence of his orgasm seep from her, and she laughs quietly - she hadn’t noticed that he came, or even, when he came.

“Alright, my darling?” he asks, his warm breath causing goosebumps to break across her chest.

She scratches her fingers lightly against his scalp and gives him a soft, Mmhmm, followed by, “Come up here.” Her voice is scratchy and low, rough from all the noise she’s made tonight, and he slides up her body until they’re eye to eye.

Regina’s smiling even though there’s wetness around the edges of her dark eyes - it’s just from the endorphins, not because she’s upset - and she loves this effect he creates when he works her over like this. It’s so hot that he can totally wear her out, can push her limits and make her feel so incredible when she’s never considered herself all that easy to get off.

His brow furrows, concern evident in his eyes as he scans her face, kisses her lips softly before he asks, “Too much?”

“God, no,” she says immediately, her smile growing. “Perfect. Jesus, that was, you are amazing.”

Robin kisses her again, bumps his nose against hers with his blue eyes shining as he smiles back. “I think I like making you drip for me, it seems to make you quite amenable.”

She laughs and play bites at his lips as she arches an eyebrow and drawls, “Well, you gave me a lot to be amenable to.”

Robin smirks, bites his bottom lip and drops his voice as he tells her, “I like calling you mine.”
Regina hums in agreement and says, “I like being yours.”

Robin breaks into the biggest, most genuine smile she’s seen from him since the storm. “Think you’d like to be mine for good?”

Their conversation is suddenly very serious, and she wants to make him happy, wants to give him the answer he’s hoping for, but god, she’s terrified. She licks her lips and strokes her hands up his back, over his muscled shoulders and gives him what she’s able as she says, “Maybe someday?”

Robin’s face falls and her heart breaks, because - shit - she didn’t mean to hurt him, she just, she’s not sure about getting married again, isn’t sure that she can give Robin what she so freely gave to Daniel. She wants to, she really does, but she doesn’t know if she’s able, doesn’t know if it’s even necessary. She loves Robin, loves being with him and being his, but marriage is different. Marriage is for better and worse, is joint bank accounts and shared debts, is the merging of her entire life with his. She’s fantasized about it, about being Robin’s wife, and she truly is committed to him, but in the face of formality, she doesn’t know if she really wants to get married again.

She had had no qualms about venturing into married life with Daniel - he’d been her other half, her best friend, her entire support system for years by the time they were ready to get married. She’d never even thought about life without him, never had to figure out who she was until he died, until she was no longer a part of “Daniel and Regina”. She’s done that now, over the last eight years she’s carved out her place in the world, knows her strengths and weaknesses, knows just what she’s capable of, knows how to take care of herself and her son. Marrying Robin means re-identifying herself, doubling her responsibilities, means forever together or until death, and Jesus, if something were to happen to him, she’s not sure she can live through that again.

Robin rolls off of her and to the side, and when she tips her head to look at him, he’s staring at the ceiling, one hand rubbing across his mouth in that way he does when he’s frustrated or thinking hard. Regina reaches for the sheets and covers them up, scooches over and cuddles into his chest, pressing a kiss right over his heart as she tries to soothe him. His arm wraps around her shoulders but she can feel the distance between them now, and she hates that she’s ruined this perfect night, this perfect date he orchestrated just for them. She slides up and kisses his lips, strokes her fingers across his scruffy jawline as she holds his eyes and says, “I love you, I love you so much, and I…” She takes a deep breath for courage as she finishes, “I don’t know if I want to get married again, I haven’t had much luck in that department, and I want to give you an honest answer when you’re ready to ask me for real.”

“You said yes to Graham,” he mumbles, holding her eyes for a second before looking away.

Her stomach drops, because he’s right, and she can absolutely understand why that would upset him.

“I did,” she agrees, wrapping her fingers around his chin and tugging his face back to hers, catching his eyes which are now red and wet looking. “But I shouldn’t have.”

Robin looks absolutely devastated as he looks at her, but he nods anyway, because he’s wonderful, because he’s this perfect guy who deserves the world, deserves that perfect girl who can’t wait to wear his ring, who can’t wait to change her last name and have five kids with him.

He drops his arm from her shoulders and rolls away, shutting off the bedside lamp before settling on his back again, but he’s significantly further away from her, clearly not in the mood to cuddle anymore. Regina grinds her teeth as she lays on her side, facing him in the dark, frustrated with herself as much as he is with her. A few moments of complete silence pass before she hears him clear his throat and take a deep, controlled breath.
“For the record, I was asking you for real,” he says brokenly, staring at the ceiling.

She hates herself. God, she hates herself.

“I’m sorry,” she whispers, pulling the blankets up and tucking her face into them, crying silently against the soft Egyptian cotton. He doesn’t reach for her, doesn’t comfort her, and she knows it’s because she’s fucked this all up, just like she always knew she would.
This can’t be happening.

This cannot, cannot, be happening.

Robin is sitting in his insurance agent’s office with Granny, staring at the young man across the desk who has just told him that their insurance doesn’t cover any of the damage caused by straight-line winds. Apparently, when that oddball hurricane hit downstate two years ago, many of the insurance companies quietly dropped wind damage coverage from the standard property insurance, and Robin would have needed special wind damage insurance to cover the vast majority of destruction at camp.

He stares at the kid across the desk. The kid who’s holding out a check for five thousand dollars as if it’s some sort of gift that Robin should be thankful for. His hearing has gone to static, a strange buzzing in his ears as he stares and stares, unable to respond, unable to fathom just what has happened.

Gone.

All of it.

Everything his family has built over the last century, his entire livelihood, his legacy and everything he could have one day offered to his son - gone.

He cannot make up the difference in money that he needs to rebuild. He’s already taken out the largest loan he could qualify for, has already spent all of the camp’s savings on repairs with the certainty that it would all be replenished once the insurance money came through.

Except he’s just been told that there is no insurance money, which means there is no camp.

Granny speaks at length with the kid who’s just told him that his life is over, goes around and around in circles trying to figure out how this could have happened, how it possibly could have been missed when the insurance rate hasn’t changed in five years. The kid at least has the decency to look sheepish as he explains that while they dropped wind damage, the rates stayed the same, and the look of pure disgust that Granny gives him is enough to shut him up for good.

They leave shortly after that, Robin in a daze as he drives Granny to his house, and they sit at the dining room table together for the next three hours, brainstorming and trying to figure out any way that they might possibly come up with the money, but with all the repairs he has to make to update all the buildings, there’s no way to get the kind of money they need. So, unless money starts falling from the sky, they’re going to have to sell.

They’ve polished off the Johnny Walker and half a bottle of Chivas when Regina gets home with the
boys. She takes two steps into the kitchen, spots their drunkenness and immediately sends the boys to the basement while she makes a call. Within ten minutes Mary Margaret is shuffling the boys out the door with her, their overnight bags in tow, as Regina stands in the kitchen with a furrow in her brow and worry etched across her face.

Robin can’t look at her, can’t bear to give her the news, so he finishes the scotch in his glass and stands, walks into the living room and puts both hands on the mantle over the old fireplace and hangs his head. He hears the soft chatter of Granny explaining things, and the plethora of questions that follow rapid-fire from Regina - questions and ideas that they have already discussed and for one reason or another, have ruled out.

Silence falls after that, and he hears the garage door open and close as Regina takes Granny home. She’s back within ten minutes, and the sound of her keys as they hit the granite of the kitchen island is startling.

“I’m sorry,” she says, her soft voice cutting through the silence.

Robin laughs and it’s terrible sounding, desperate and broken. “You’re sorry?” he asks, bitterness eating him up inside. “I can’t imagine that’s the truth, love,” he picks his head up and finally looks at her. She’s so pretty, always so fucking pretty. “It seems you’ve dodged quite a bullet - I bet you’re thanking your lucky stars you didn’t say yes the other night.”

It’s cruel, but he’s sloshed, and to be fair, he’s not really thinking about her feelings right now.

For a moment she says nothing, but he knows her well enough to see the hurt in her eyes - she’s never been very good at hiding from him.

“If you think that money or assets has had anything to do with our relationship, then you’re right, I did dodge a bullet.” The forced calm of her voice, the way her features settle into blank nothingness is something he hasn’t seen or heard from her in a long time - it’s her emotional walls flying back into place, the walls he’s worked so hard to topple. She surprises him when she continues though, her voice steady as she adds, “But I know you’re upset and didn't mean that, so try again, because I might be your girlfriend, but I'm certainly not your emotional punching bag.”

Robin takes a deep breath and looks away. She’s right, he’s being a daft git, but he feels like he’s having deja vu of when he left England, when he had lost his wife and his friends, had lost everything but his son. Except this time he has nowhere to go. This time, there is no easy out.

“My apologies,” he says quietly, because the last thing he needs is to drive Regina away even more than he already has. “I’m a bit sloshed,” he states the obvious, as if that will explain everything.

“I can see that,” she says with an irritated edge to her tone. “I’m not sure why you thought getting hammered was a way to solve this, but -”

“Solve it?” He interrupts, “There’s no solving it, love,” he drops his tone to be less challenging, can feel the hot burn of failure rushing through his chest, the panic rising. “I’m going to have to sell - you should get your resume together, start looking for a new place to work, a new place to live.”

“Kicking me out then?” she snaps, and he cringes, because of course he’s not, but he certainly can’t expect her, can’t ask her to stay when he’s about to make her start from scratch.

“You know I’m not,” he says, crossing the room to where she’s leaning against the kitchen island. “But I’m not going to ask you to stay, darling - you have worked too hard to put your life back together and I’m not going to ask anything more from you. Besides, we both know you’ve invested
just about as much as you’re willing to in this relationship,” she makes a face and he’s quick to correct, “I’m not saying that’s not alright, it is, I’m just saying it shouldn’t be a reason to hold you back. You’ve got to do what’s right for you and Henry and -”

Regina slaps her palm down on the counter, and he jumps with the loud <smack!>.

“Seriously?!” she barks, making a very annoyed face at him, then adds, “Stop being an idiot.”

There’s a beat of silence, then she takes a deep breath and adds, a little more calmly, “You’re drunk and acting stupid, and until you start making sense again this conversation is on hold.” Regina shifts around the island, heading in the direction of their bedroom as she throws over her shoulder, “I’m going to take a hot bath. I suggest you have some water and try to act like an adult when I get back.”

He grudgingly does as she says, drinks as much water as he can over the next hour and tries to flush his system. He’s half asleep in the chaise when she comes back, smelling like incense and that expensive apple shampoo she uses, and she takes him completely by surprise when she curls up between his knees as usual.

Another hour passes and they sit together silently, watching some show on the telly about hoarders. He’s feeling sober when she shifts around so she’s sideways in his lap, and she rests the side of her head against his chest, her warm breaths hitting the skin of his collarbone at the v-neckline of his shirt. He drops his nose to her hair and inhales, presses a kiss to the crown of her head and whispers, “I’m sorry.”

“You can’t continue to react like this when things go wrong,” she says quietly, pressing the flat of her hand against his chest. “And I don’t appreciate being treated that way.”

He kisses the top of her head again and agrees quietly, “I know.”

Regina’s hand wraps around the back of his neck and she pulls him down for a soft, slow kiss. “I love you,” she says against his lips, “And I’m sorry I hurt you when you asked me to, when you asked me that thing. But we need to focus on camp right now, we need to figure out our options, need to figure out how we’re going to make a living. Even if you have to sell, we’ll figure out something, we’ll come up with something that works for all of us, alright?”

Robin kisses her again and nods his agreement. “How did I ever live without you?” he asks quietly, brushing back her damp hair from her forehead, “What do I do, darling? How do I get this sorted? I haven’t a clue where to even start.”

They talk at length about their next steps, about what will happen if they do nothing, about how to stall what seems like the inevitable, about extreme options that could save the camp. She stays curled in his lap with her head against his chest, and he strokes his hand along her legs, up and down, up and down the length of them. It’s so soothing to touch her, to sit with her quietly and talk about options, no matter how far-fetched or unobtainable they might be.

Aside from losing camp, Robin doesn’t understand why she won’t marry him. Nothing has to change if she doesn’t want it to, but he would really, really like it to. He’d like to make this permanent, wants to give her that ring and look at it on her hand every day, knowing that she’s as in love with him as he is with her. He wants his touch to be as comforting to her as hers is to him. Wants to be able to call Henry his, wants their boys to be brothers. He wants to wake up every morning and go to bed every evening with her, wants to know if she’d think about pulling that IUD and seeing what happens.

But for now this is what they have, and he realizes that if he wants to keep her, it’s going to have to
be enough.

He tucks his face in close and presses his forehead lightly against hers. “I’m sorry I asked you that thing,” he says quietly. “I didn’t mean to push, I just thought since you said you liked being mine, that perhaps you’d want to wear that ring I bought you. I misunderstood, but I want you to know that it’s alright that you don’t. This can be enough for me - this can be whatever you want.”

Regina strokes her fingers along his neck and tips her chin up to press a kiss to his lips. “I’m not saying never,” she whispers, “I’m saying I don’t know. But I’ve been thinking about it, and when I figure it out, I’ll,” she swallows thickly, “I’ll tell you.”

It’s not the answer he wants - it’s been a terrible day, a terrible few days, and he hasn’t gotten any answers to anything, really, but when he’s holding her in his arms like this, he realizes that he doesn’t need answers right now. Right now he needs to hold her while he gets his head on straight, and once that happens he’s going to figure this all out, he’s going to pull himself together and find a way to convince her that he’s not a failure anymore, that he won’t fail at this relationship.

When Regina was with Graham he had hoped that the other man was giving her the kind of love she so deserves, that he was able to give her everything she deserves and then some. He never thought Graham was worthy of her, and it hurts to know that she was going to marry that git but is hesitating when it comes to Robin. It’s a wake-up call, proof that he’s never been better than Graham, that he too isn’t truly worthy of her. He knows now that the only way he’s going to get her to even consider wearing his ring is by getting his shit together and showing her that he isn’t a total idiot, that he can be successful, he can work hard for her, provide for her, take care of her, that he can be a good influence on Henry. Then he just has to hope to god she thinks that that is enough.

He knows that Daniel was her first love, her true love - he can see it when she talks about him, when she tells Robin about their life together. She was so happy back then and he knows he can’t give her what she shared with Daniel, he can’t make her feel the way she felt when she was with him - but perhaps he can give her a second best.

And if Robin’s best is Regina’s second best, he’ll consider himself the luckiest bloke on earth.
In mid-September, Regina finds herself standing in Margaret Margaret’s canary yellow entryway, trying desperately to stay calm as her pulse pounds in her ears. Her step-sister lured her over here by telling her that she had invited a well-known philanthropist who was interested in making a sizeable
donation to Camp Sherwood - a donation large enough that it would actually make a difference, perhaps even save Robin from having to sell.

What her step-sister failed to tell her, is that the “philanthropist” is Leopold.

She smells his cologne the second Mary Margaret ushers her inside of her huge, expensive apartment, and her stomach immediately churns, her hands fistling as she automatically backs up and bumps into the closed front door. Her step-sister is already in the living room, completely unaware of Regina’s hesitation, chattering away about how nice the weather has been, but Regina doesn’t hear much of what she says. She’s too busy calming the slam of her heart against her ribs, wiping her sweaty palms over her thighs, and scanning the length of the apartment for the man who once scared her so much.

She thinks to go, even fumbles for the handle of the front door for a moment, but then Mary Margaret is calling to her, telling her how much she just has to see the art projects that Roland and Henry made last time they were over, and it’s Regina’s kryptonite. She’s going to stay now, she really wants to see what the boys created, and her conniving step-sister absolutely knows it.

So it’s with dread in her chest that she walks slowly, carefully into the living room, trying to fight down the nausea that always wells within her when she has to share a room with this man. He’s lounging on Mary Margaret’s couch in a very expensive three-piece suit, his hair significantly more gray than the last time she saw him, his checkbook propped open on the coffee table in front of him and all she can think is, How typical. It’s been at least five years since the last time they met - Mary Margaret’s apartment warming party she’s pretty sure - and she remembers it well, remembers how he cornered her in the kitchen, remembers the way he once again tried to touch her, how she was shaken so badly that it took her more than fifteen minutes to regain her composure.

“Regina!” he exclaims when she comes into sight, “Looking lovely as ever, I see.” He stands from the couch and comes toward her, and she steels herself - she’s an adult, she’s a thirty-four-year-old woman, she will not step back, she will not be afraid of him. He reaches both hands out as if to hug her though, and she immediately reacts, dodges around him and winds up awkwardly shaking his hand. When she tries to pull away, however, he clasps her hand tightly between both of his, brings it to his lips and kisses it wetly as he holds eye contact and says quietly, “You always were more beautiful than your mother.”

Regina rips her hand out of his and sits next to Mary Margaret on the loveseat, resisting the urge to wipe her hand on her leggings. She’s been here for five minutes and she already feels like she needs a shower.

“So,” Mary Margaret says, cheerful and naive as ever, “I was telling Daddy about what happened with Robin’s insurance claim, and how he’ll have to sell the camp if he can’t get the money to repair all the damages.” Regina cringes, knowing what’s coming, “So Daddy said he might be able to help, but he wanted to speak with you about it first - wanted to discuss the finances with you since that is your area of expertise.”

Regina could roll her eyes - it’s obvious that Leopold was angling to see her. She doesn’t understand this obsession he has with her - perhaps it’s the fact that she’s never been impressed by his money, his prestige, or what she’s been told were once quite good looks, but he’s a monster, a predator, and she’s never seen him as anything but. He’s disgusting.

“So, I’ll leave you two to discuss it all, I’ll just be in my room if you need me,” Mary Margaret finishes, squeezing Regina’s knee excitedly as if she’s just solved all of her worries, not locked her in a room with her worst nightmare.
The second the bedroom door clicks shut Regina is on her feet, headed for the front door.

“My, my, I’ve never seen you run from anything Regina - what is it that’s got you in such a rush? We both know you’re in no position to ignore my offer.”

She pauses mid-stride, anger rolling through her in waves. “I want nothing to do with your offer,” she grits out, glaring down at him. “There is nothing you have that I would ever want.”

Leopold laughs arrogantly from his seat on the couch, stretching out his legs and propping them on the coffee table. “Now, Regina, don’t be rash. A quick comparison of our pocketbooks proves you wrong. And you wouldn’t want to hurt Mary Margaret’s feelings now, would you? She practically begged me to help you.”

It’s a lie, and they both know it. Leopold has always taken any opportunity he’s been given to see Regina. There is no way that this is an exception. He’s right, though - she doesn’t want to hurt her step-sister’s feelings. Mary Margaret meant well, didn’t know any better than to run to her daddy to fix a problem, and if Regina walks out in the first five minutes, she certain that Leopold will villainize her for it.

So she returns to the love seat and puts her guard up, straightens her spine and stares at the old man across the room as she tries to make herself go numb.

“What do you want?” she asks, her voice low, tipping her chin up and throwing him the biggest look of disdain she can muster.

“I want to help,” he says, smiling at her. She guesses that to anyone else the smile might be charming, but to her, it’s just creepy. “I have money to invest your boyfriend’s little camp - lots of money - enough to ensure that he never mismanages it into bankruptcy again.”

She wishes she could say no, that she could walk out without hearing the rest. But her history with Leo doesn’t erase the fact that without some sort of ludicrous donation or investment, Robin will definitely lose the camp, so she digs her fingernails into her palms and asks, “Why would you want to help with that?”

“Well, because it means so much to my little girl,” he sneers, “And of course, because I’ll get to spend some time catching up with you, too.”

“Well you’re wrong there,” she snaps, “You’ll see no more of me than you do now - five years without contact hasn’t been nearly long enough.”

“I see you haven’t outgrown that poor attitude,” he lowers his voice, narrowing his eyes at her as he finally drops the charade. “Really, Regina, you’re so much prettier when you smile for me, I seem to recall that you used to enjoy my company, especially when your mother wasn’t around.”

Regina straightens up, clenches her jaw. “I see you’re even more delusional than the last time we spoke,” her voice sounds rough, but she feels strong, hasn’t let the fear seep in yet. “And if you don’t cut the crap and tell me just what you expect to gain from contributing to Robin’s camp, then I’m going to consider this conversation over.”

A sneer crosses Leopold’s face and he stands, walking quickly toward her. She immediately gets to her feet, she’ll not let him hover over her, will not let him anywhere near her without being ready to fight if she needs too. He gets right up in her face, gets six inches from her before he stops and runs his eyes over her like the lecherous bastard she knows he is. She’s dressed nicely today - is wearing a sleeveless black dress with a wide neckline and sheer leggings under knee-high boots. She’s pulled
up her hair and swept it straight back in a sleek, long ponytail, a strand of pearls with matching earrings her only jewelry. The otherwise black on black color scheme makes her feel strong, powerful even, and she’s thankful that this is what she wore today. Thankful that her neckline is appropriate and her legs are covered up, thankful that he can’t catch an eyeful of anything that she’s not intentionally showing off.

Leopold reaches up and strokes his thumb against her shoulder, and when she jerks away he grabs her hard around her bicep. She freezes, the old fear finally spilling over, and he grins cruelly down at her as he says, “You know exactly what I want, Regina - you’ve been teasing me for years, and I want what’s mine - what you’ve always craved to give to me but were too shy to ask for.”

Regina feels pathetic. She’s frozen in his tight grip, is having flashbacks of all the times he crossed the line, all the times he touched her legs, her thighs, her neck. She’s stuck in a continuous loop of the nightmares he caused her, feeling like that scared seventeen-year-old girl whose own mother wouldn’t protect her.

There’s a loud knock at Mary Margaret’s front door and it startles her out of the panic attack that she was about three seconds from. Leopold immediately steps back and drops her arm, but his eyes hungrily sweep over her chest and she very nearly gags before she pushes past him and answers the door.

“Is it true? Is he here?”

It’s Robin, and he looks furious, looks terrified and positively livid all at once.

“Tell me right now,” he snaps, and Regina puts both hands on his chest and pushes him back out into the hallway with her, slamming Mary Margaret’s apartment door shut behind her.

“You can’t be here,” she hisses, pushing him further still, but he’s fighting her now, looking past her as if he can see right through the door.

“I know he’s here, Regina,” he snaps, his eyes wild as he tries to skirt around her, “I can see it in your face. I swear to god if he’s touched you -”

“You’re just making this worse,” she cuts him off, “It’s fine, everything is fine. You need to leave.”

“So you can go back in there alone?” his sarcasm is thick as he looks past her again, “Not bloody likely.”

Regina changes tactics, frames his face in her hands and tries to reason with him. “I’m not alone, Mary Margaret is here. There’s a chance he’s going to donate to the camp, a chance that he’s going to donate so much money that you won’t have to sell. So if you want a shot at getting his money, you need to let me handle this, you need to stop acting rash and trust me.”

“I don’t want his bloody money,” Robin snaps. “I’d rather live on the street than take money from that man, I -”

“Well it isn’t just about you,” she reminds him, “You have employees to think about, not to mention Granny and Roland, you can’t throw away a real chance like this because you’re angry. Please, trust me.”

He calms a little under her hands, but he’s shaking, his eyes are red-rimmed and wet as he looks at her and says, “I trust you, and I know you can handle this, but please don’t make me go.”

She says nothing, tamping down the wave of affection for him that surges through her, trying to push
herself back into numbness. She should make him leave, she knows he won’t be able to handle being in the same room as Leo. Robin is too protective of her, and his history of defending her honor can only cause more trouble if he loses his temper with her former step-father.

“Please, darling,” he pleads, taking both her hands in his and kissing her palms softly. “I can’t stand the thought of you being in there with him, I can’t think about what might happen if I’m not there, if something happens and I’m not there to protect you when I could have been, please, love.”

He’s rambling and she tugs him to her, presses her lips hard to his to shut him up, because she loves him for this, loves him so much for caring about her and taking things so seriously, for insisting that she not have to face her fears without him.

“Okay,” she says against his lips, gives him another desperate kiss and adds, “But you have to stay calm, you can’t get physical - if something happens, Leo will make what Graham did seem like child’s play. Promise me, Robin.”

Robin licks his lips and sucks in a deep breath, nods solemnly and vows, “I promise.”

She strokes her thumb along his bottom lip to remove the smear of lipstick she left, then squeezes his arm before she turns and leads him into Mary Margaret’s apartment. Leo is still in the living room, but he’s taken his suit jacket off and rolled up his sleeves, no doubt in an attempt to make himself look more dominant. She pulls Robin into the room behind her, holding tightly to his hand and tugging him down onto the loveseat next to her.

Leo narrows his eyes at her for a moment, catching on quickly that he can no longer travel his original path with this, then turns on the charm and approaches them in an attempt to shake Robin’s hand. Robin leans away from the man, staring pointedly at his extended hand then looking away - it seems he’ll keep his mouth shut and his hands to himself, but he’s left his manners outside.

Leopold laughs haughtily and takes his seat on the sofa again, looking Robin over before he says, “I expected more from a Cambridge man.”

Robin opens his mouth but Regina squeezes his hand hard, and he snaps it shut.

“So, Leo,” she says, forcing calm into her voice, “You were just about to tell me what it is you expect in exchange for your generous donation to Camp Sherwood.”

The corners of Leo’s mouth tilt down, and she watches the wheels turn in his head as he formulates his next move. “Yes, that’s right,” he says smoothly, “You were just agreeing to meet me at my office next week to go over the finer details.”

Well, she walked right into that one. Shit.

“Perfect,” Robin chimes in, “What day? I’ll be sure I’m free to attend.”

Leopold stares at Robin with disdain as he says, “I’m sorry, Mr. Locksley, but these financial matters are best left to those who understand them - it would be much too complicated for us to explain, and certainly you trust that Regina is up to the task?”

“Of course she is,” Robin snaps, “She’s the smartest, most capable woman I’ve ever met, I trust her explicitly. It’s you I don’t trust.”

Leopold bristles, and Regina knows he’s not used to being treated this way, probably hasn’t been spoken to as an equal in years. With his political career on the rise, she’s certain that everyone has been too busy kissing his ass to even attempt to speak to him this way.
“You’ll watch your tone,” the older man snaps, shooting a glare at Robin, “Or my generosity may suddenly run dry.”

“Next week?” Regina interrupts, trying to stop the situation from escalating. She agrees to Wednesday evening and suggests a popular restaurant in the city for them to meet at.

Leopold declines that however, and insists they meet at his office. The fear is rising in her again - there is absolutely no way she’ll meet with him alone, but he’s shot down every other possibility, and it’s looking like she won’t have a choice. Robin must feel her tense because suddenly he cuts in and says, “She’s not meeting you anywhere you can get your filthy hands on her, so I suggest you accept her dinner invitation, before I decide I’ve had enough of this little game you’re playing.”

Leopold has always had a temper - she’s known it since she was a girl, since the first time she pushed him away and he grabbed her by her hair in retaliation. Apparently over the years, that hasn’t changed.

“You forget your place, young man,” he snaps, standing up and rolling down his shirt sleeves. “Since I’m the one offering to save your stupid little camp, I’ll make the decisions as to where we’ll meet, when we’ll meet, and where I’ll be putting my hands.” He lets his eyes rake over Regina again, and her mouth waters with a wave of nausea. She’s going to throw up, she can’t breathe, she can’t do this, she’s going to -

“You’re not getting anywhere near her,” Robin drops her hand and stands too, she’s going to throw up, shit, her stomach churns - “I know what you did to her as a child, I know what sick, twisted, disgusting things you did to her, so if you think for one second I’m going to let you so much as look at her, you’re sorely mistaken.”

Leopold gets up in Robin’s face, and Regina fights the bile, tries so, so hard not to vomit, but her chest is tight, she can’t breathe, and she digs her fingernails into the couch cushions as she tries to fight the panic down. This is not happening, this is not happening, oh god, she knows Robin is going to hit him and it’s all going to fall apart, oh god.

“She likes to pretend she didn’t like it, acts like it wasn’t her idea all along, but we both know it was,” Leopold growls arrogantly. “You always were an ungrateful, dishonest girl, weren’t you, Regina? If you hadn’t been such a nice piece of ass I never would have wasted my time on you.”

She vomits.

The world is spinning and she’s on her hands and knees on the floor when she hears it, when she hears Mary Margaret’s terrified voice asking, “What?! What does that mean, Daddy?! What does that mean?!!!”

“You bloody well know what it means, Mary Margaret,” Robin snaps, and Regina feels his hand on her back, smoothing softly across her shoulders as she dry heaves.

“I’ll not be treated this way,” Leopold snarls, then adds, “They’re liars, Mary, you obviously know better than to listen to their ridiculous accusations.”

“Regina???” Mary Margaret asks, her voice small. Her step-sister appears on the floor in front of her, avoiding the mess but scooting up close to her, her hands cupping Regina’s face and smoothing over her cheeks as she asks in a whisper, “Is it, is this what I think it is?”

She can’t look at her, can’t look into those innocent hazel eyes and tell her that her beloved father is a monster, so she looks away, dry heaves again and when she catches her breath, she quietly asks
Robin to take her into the bathroom. He does so immediately, picks her up and carries her in there, grabs a lysol wipe and cleans the porcelain for her before throwing down a nearby towel for her to kneel on. He locks the bathroom door and sits with his back against it while she vomits again, thankful for the seclusion of the bathroom and Robin’s thoughtfulness.

It takes almost a half an hour but eventually she calms down, stops wretching and settles back against the opposite wall, her head in her hands as she drags deep breaths into her lungs. Robin appears in front of her, a wet washcloth in one hand and a small cup of water in the other, and he carefully wipes her face, cleans up her runny makeup and tells her, of all things, how proud he is of her.

She laughs weakly as she raises her eyes to his. She’s a complete mess, she vomited all over Mary Margaret’s floor, and she has just barely made it through the panic attack to end all panic attacks, and he’s telling her he’s proud of her?

There’s a knock at the door, and when Mary Margaret softly calls her name, Robin makes eye contact with her in question - should he let her in? Regina nods, and Robin swaps with Mary Margaret, who shuts the door and approaches Regina slowly, then gets down in front of her and sits cross-legged. They look at each other in silence for a few minutes, then Mary Margaret takes her hand and says, “No wonder you hated me.”

Regina barks out a sharp laugh, because that’s not at all what she thought she was going to say, and she squeezes her step-sister’s hand and says, “Among other things, but yeah, mostly that.”

Mary Margaret throws her arms around her, and they end up sharing one of those ridiculous heart to hearts that Regina typically despises, but is willing to admit is needed, just this once.

When she returns to the living room with her teeth freshly brushed, all evidence of her mess has been removed - Robin is washing up in the kitchen, and she has to admit again just how much she loves that man.

They leave Mary Margaret’s soon after, and although they didn’t get the money they needed to save the camp, she feels like maybe they’ve gotten more than that. Her step-sister finally knows the truth about Leopold, Regina has faced him for what she’s pretty sure is the last time, and Robin - well Robin didn’t punch anyone.

“I’m proud of you too,” she says as he directs the truck out onto the highway.

He takes her hand across the center console and the surprise is evident in his voice as he asks, “Oh? I thought for certain you were about to run me through for losing my temper, and for speaking for you, and for ruining your plan with my uncontrollable overprotectiveness.”

She smiles and rolls her eyes. “I probably should, but to be fair you were right for some of it, and I was vomiting for other parts, so I think just this once, I’m going to cut you a break.”

“Lucky me,” Robin grins, and she loves the way the lines around his eyes crinkle when he smiles like that.

“I’m proud of you for not hitting Leo,” she says, squeezing his hand. “That couldn’t have been easy for you, but I’m glad you didn’t, he’s not worth it.”

“Well, I can’t say I agree with you there, darling,” he smirks, “If there’s one bloke on earth who deserves his lights knocked out, it’s definitely Leopold Blanchard.”
It’s Robin’s birthday, and it’s been a perfect, cool October day. They spent all morning in the apple orchard with the boys, picking only the best apples, because Regina has promised to make him an apple crumb cake for his birthday, *from scratch*, and Henry has assured him that although Regina will say that her lasagna is the best dish she makes, (it’s truly delicious), apparently *this* is the real crowning jewel of her culinary expertise.

He still hasn’t figured out a way to save the camp, but he’s got a final date that they have to come up with the money or put it up for sale by - December 15th. It’s lovely that they’re going to lose everything just before Christmas. Just, bloody lovely. He’s spent nearly every hour of every day since their insurance claim was denied trying to figure out a way to worm his way out of the heartbreak that hurtles toward them, and he’s got some ideas for how to delay the loss, but no long-term solutions. Regina has been helping him, has been his partner in every sense of the word, putting in the same obsessive dedication as he is. If the whole thing wasn’t quite so disappointing, he’d step back and appreciate the beauty of it, of working together to save something they have both grown to love so much, but the closer they get to December, the more it’s starting to feel like a Shakespearean tragedy.

And to top things off, she’s acting strange today. She’s more quiet than usual, almost reserved. He’s pretty sure it’s because he and Roland are leaving for England tomorrow, and he wishes he didn’t have to go. They’re going two weeks early this year, because Robin needs to get back to camp as soon as possible to deal with his mess of a life. It doesn’t cost very much for them to make the trip - Robin’s former in-laws pay for the airfare even though he has assured them time and again that they needn’t, that they would still make the trip, but Marian got her infamous stubbornness from both her parents, and he’s never been able to talk them out of it. So it’s not that he can’t afford to see them, or even that he doesn’t want to see them - he does, he wants Roland to know that half of his family, truly, but Robin is having the same hesitation he had last year. He doesn’t want to leave when there’s something weird going on with Regina.

Last week she had asked him what he’d like for his birthday, and he’d admitted that he didn’t want her to buy him anything - instead, he wants to try something with her in the bedroom, well, sort of in the bedroom. They’ve been practicing with her bum, he’s been playing with her and teasing her rear quite often when they’re having sex lately, especially when he’s going down on her. They’re even to the point now where if he doesn’t do it, she asks him for it, and it turns him on to such an outrageous extent that two weeks ago he went online and bought them a little something - a small, silicone plug. He’s been dying to tell her about it, been dying to see if she’ll go for it, and last night he’d finally asked her if she’d wear it for him. Today. While she makes him that crumb cake. He’s hard just thinking about it.

He gets back from dropping off the boys at their friend’s house and finds her in the kitchen, mixing
up the cake batter in an apron.

In *just* an apron.

His jaw drops and his car keys fall right out of his hand, a soft, “Bloody-fucking-hell,” spilling from his lips as she grins, flashing him those perfect white teeth - *christ* her smile is perfect - and without pausing her mixing she asks, “Be a dear and set the oven for me?”

He almost trips as he pulls off his shoes without untying the laces, then quickly makes his way to the oven, which she has her back to as she starts to pour the batter into a pan on the kitchen island. He programs the oven to the temperature she tells him, and when he turns around his eyes fall to her completely naked backside and - *fucking hell* - he sees it.

He groans loudly, pathetically, his cock is rock hard in a second as she tips forward a bit, scraping the batter out with a spatula and giving him a perfect view of the pink silicone toy she’s slipped up inside of her rear. His breath hitches like a right idiot - he had no idea he’d be this affected by seeing her with that in, *fuck* - and he’s still frozen solid, staring at her, when she nudges him to the side to slide the cake into the oven.

“Jesus christ,” he says, stroking himself over his jeans, “Darling you’re, I can’t even, *fucking hell*, I just, you look so…” he stops talking, realizing belatedly that he’s not making any sense.

“Are you going to be alright?” she teases, returning to the island and cleaning up the mess she’s made, “Or am I going to have to take this out before we have some fun with it?”

His knees feel weak and his tongue is thick in his mouth, and he’s got to get himself together, he’s got to stop acting like a daft virgin and make the most out of this situation. Robin unzips his hoodie and tugs that and his t-shirt off before he steps up behind her, trails his fingers down the soft skin of her back until he hits the ties on her apron, where he dances his fingers across her waist. He drops kisses to her back, sweeping her hair over one shoulder so he can put his mouth all over her, reveling in how soft and warm her skin always is. He trails his lips down her spine, pulling at the ties of her apron until it’s loose, continuing downward as he drops to his knees behind her. He nips the top of her arse, gripping each cheek in his large hands and squeezing, massaging the toned muscles as he finally lets his gaze fall to the plug.

He spreads her cheeks and runs his tongue along each side of her cleft, tasting the lube she must have used when she slid it in - *fuck* he wishes he’d seen her do that - and he lets his fingers coast over the toy lightly, pressing softly then making a small circular motion. Regina moans and leans forward on the island, spreading her legs wider for him as he continues his exploration, sliding between her gorgeous thighs so he can run his tongue along her slit.

She’s soaked, her slick arousal coating her smooth inner and outer lips, and he licks greedily at her, loving the way she tastes - *god*, she tastes good. Robin pulls her legs back another step so she’s really bent forward, asks her to drop the apron, and then he’s got a naked Regina Mills bent over the kitchen island with a plug in her arse and his tongue on her clit. He’s absolutely certain that this is his own, personal heaven.

He licks and licks at her, laving the flat of his tongue through her folds, sucking softly on her inner lips and flicking at her clit, mixing up his teasing with figure eight patterns, long, slow circles, quick zig-zags, and whatever the fuck else he can think of. The longer he works his mouth against her, the wetter she gets, and he loves doing this, loves turning her on until she’s squirming against his face, panting with arousal, and making those hot little breathy moans.

He sucks hard on her clit, flicking and rubbing it fast with his tongue, and she gasps, thrusts her hips
back to him and spreads her legs wider, giving him more access to tease her. He lets the little bud slip from his lips with an obscene slurping sound, pulls back to nip the bottom of her left arse cheek and asks, “Ready for my fingers?”

“God yes,” she pants.

Her voice is a little desperate, and it makes Robin smile - *fuck* - he loves riling her up.

“You’ll tell me if you’re uncomfortable, yeah? It’s going to feel a bit different than usual, and we’ll go at whatever pace you want, love, you tell me what feels good and I’ll do it, alright?” He wants to be clear that he’s doing this for her - he loves it, he’s *really* getting off on it, but truly, honestly, he wanted to do this because she really seems to like having her arse played with, and this extra stimulation is almost certain to increase the intensity of her orgasm, granted he does it right.

He starts slow, uses two fingers to rub her clit, making those tight, firm swirls she fancies before sliding his fingers back to slip his long middle finger up into her. She makes this hot little *Mmm*, above him, and immediately says, “More,” so he pumps into her a few times with one finger then adds a second.

Her hips jerk and she swivels her hips, lets out a low moan and hisses, “**Yesss,**” as he starts to stroke slowly in and out of her. It definitely feels different - she’s always so bloody tight to begin with, and with the plug she’s even tighter - *godd*. She’s clenching her inner muscles on him on purpose he thinks, getting herself used to the new feeling, and he’s starting to wonder if he’ll be able to fit his cock inside of her, should she ask him for it.

He’s so hard that the confines of his jeans have gotten extremely uncomfortable, so he brings one hand down and unbuckles his belt, opens his button and fly and pulls himself out. He’s completely rigid, hot in his palm as he gives himself a few strokes, staring unashamedly at her arse as he works his fingers a bit deeper into her. He’s so aroused that his precum is leaking heavily from the tip of his cock, and he wipes it on his jeans, trying not to get too excited before he gets her off, because - *christ* - if she asks him to fuck her with that in her arse, he desperately wants to last.

“Another,” she breathes, and he bites his lip hard as he slides a third finger slowly up into her. She goes still for a moment, and he freezes with her, lets her take time to adjust to the new intrusion.

“God,” she says quietly, “You have no idea, *jesus*, it’s so, so, *uhhh*…” she trails off, circling her hips and riding his hand slowly.

“Is that good, or bad, love?” he asks, surprised by the gravel in his voice as he turns his fingers inside her so he can rub them lightly against where he thinks her g-spot is.

“Good,” she says quickly, “Different, but *ahh*,” she pauses, her hips jerking as he finds just the right spot and starts swiping against it, “But really good.”

Robin loves the way her voice drops low when she’s turned on, that raspy tone makes him so hard, makes his balls clench with anticipation. He’s never been with a woman who turned him on in so many ways, everything about the way she looks, smells, tastes, and sounds - *bloody hell* - gets him so randy for her. Even the thought of her can make his cock twitch with want, and from the first time she let him touch her, he knew without a doubt that Regina is his ultimate fantasy.

“Can you, *mmm*,” she trails off.

“Can I what babe? What do you need?” he asks, trying to keep the shaking out of his voice, stroking his cock again to try to give the sensitive, throbbing flesh a bit of relief.
“Can you fuck me like this?” she rasps, rolling her hips on his fingers and shuddering with the sensation.

“We can certainly try,” he says honestly, but warns, “I’m not sure I’ll fit, you’re so bloody tight like this, if it hurts I want you to promise you’ll tell me right away, alright?”

She mhmms and slides herself up and down his fingers again, her wetness dripping down the back of his hand - christ this woman gets wet - and he slowly slides his fingers out before getting to his feet behind her. He sucks his fingers clean then palms her arse cheeks again, enthralled with the way that little pink toy flashes at him as he squeezes and spreads them apart, over and over. He quickly shucks his jeans and underwear, his socks too, then takes himself in hand and lightly slaps his thick length against her cheeks.

Before he fucks her though, he takes a moment to smooth his hands all over her perfect body, reveling in the way goosebumps spread across her when he touches particularly sensitive areas. He kisses her neck as he smooths his hands up to cup her breasts - fuck he loves these tits - and he plays with them for a few minutes, bouncing and kneading them, pinching her nipples hard and strumming rapidly across them with the pads of his fingers.

“Fuck, babe,” he says in her ear, tugging her soft earlobe with his teeth, “Been fantasizing about this since we met, since I first saw your round arse filling out those tight little skirts.” He pauses to suck at her pulse point, then that soft spot right behind her ear. “I’ve been waiting for you to let me fill your arse, will you let me come in you tonight?” he’s shaking, he’s so excited, “When we pull that out, will you let me fill your tight little arse with my come?” He flicks her nipples quickly as he asks her this, pinches hard then flicks some more, roughly kneading her plump tits then tugging each peak, twisting and roughing them up just a bit.

“Yeah,” she moans, thrusting her chest into his hands and bumping her arse against his groin. She moans, must have bumped the toy when she moved, and adds, “Oh god, yeah, want you to.”

Robin takes a deep steadying breath, trying to calm down before he enters her - he needs to stay completely put together when they try this, he absolutely does not want to hurt her, but god, she’s so fucking hot he feels like he might die with his arousal for her. He rubs the pad of his thumb over the smooth head of his cock, then slides it back and forth through her slit, coating him in her wetness, using his fingers to rub it all over his length so he’ll slip into her as easily as possible. He braces one hand on her hip and lines up, asking her, “Ready, darling?” as he probes her entrance, and when she nods her consent, he slowly, slowly, slowly, slides the tip in.

Regina makes this stuttering groan and he freezes, but she covers his hand on her hip and squeezes hard, says, “Keep going,” as she arches her back a bit sharper. He continues to push into her at a snail’s pace, she’s so fucking tight - he can feel the pressure on the back wall of her cunt from the toy filling her other hole, and he has to slide out for a second and restart, the clench of her inner muscles leaving almost no room for his thick cock.

He’s about halfway in when she moans again, sucks in a sharp breath and says, “Ohhh goddd,” loudly, her voice going up an octave in that way he knows she does when she starts to get close.

“Already, darling?” he asks in disbelief, because he hasn’t even been able to give her a full stroke yet, and if she comes right now she’s certain to shove him right out.

She nods quickly, both hands gripping the kitchen island as she drops her head, her gorgeous, smooth back rising and falling quickly as she takes deep breaths.

“If you can, try to wait,” he rasps, “I’d like to get all the way in, if you can make it.”
“You’re not all the way in?” she whines, and he laughs softly - she’s obviously surprised, and it’s fucking adorable.

“Only half-way,” he confirms.

“Oh, fuck,” she whimpers, then bumps her hips back against him and demands, “God, hurry up.”

He likes it when she orders him around like this, when she commands him to do things to get her off. He typically prefers to play the dominant role, but he can definitely imagine that there will be a time or two in the future where he’s the one on his knees being told not to come.

He slides in a bit quicker, listening hard to her breathing and try to be cognizant of any signs of discomfort, but she’s a bloody champ, his girl has always been able to take whatever he can give her, and he re-confirms this as he slides almost all the way out then drives back in with the first full stroke.

“Fuck - oh - jesus!” she cries out loudly, and again he stops, unsure if that was good or bad. “Don’t you dare stop,” she gasps desperately, her voice almost a growl as she shoves her hips back at him and starts to pant.

He appreciates her enthusiasm, he does, but fuck, he definitely didn’t expect this, didn’t expect her to be quite so into it, quite so tight. He carefully thrusts into her again, starts up a slow, easy rhythm, trying to focus on her, not the hard fluttering of her inner muscles that he can already feel - those flutters that are way more intense right now thanks to the lack of space inside of her. He wraps one hand around and finds her clit, starts rubbing the engorged little bud with two fingers, slowly at first, in time with his strokes, then faster, faster, until he’s rubbing her at twice the speed that he’s fucking her.

Her hips work sensually against him - she swivels, and rolls, and circles them as he strokes in, increasing in speed little by little, watching in awe as she breaks out in a sheen of sweat under him. She’s practically soaking his cock with her arousal, he slips out accidentally and she literally drips on the kitchen floor, causing him to groan loudly before slamming back into her and pounding fast before he remembers he shouldn’t. He catches himself, is about to apologize when she moans, “Don’t-stop-don’t-stop!” so he gives up, lets himself fuck her hard like she asks, leaning away so he can stare at the plug in her arse. Her clit is hard and swollen under his fingers and he keeps going, keeps working her until suddenly - fuck, oh god - she starts to come, and it’s so intense when she contracts down around him that he can’t even thrust anymore, he just goes completely still inside her while he rubs her clit frantically, biting his cheek as his eyes water with the punishing way she spasms around his cock.

She finishes with this long, drawn out, Nnnnnnngh, her hips twitching when she finally comes down, and he tries to soothe her, rubs his palms all over her body, giving her long, slow strokes until she’s finally done clenching on his cock. He slips out slowly, finally able to catch his breath, looking down and moaning with the thick cream she’s coated him with, then presses his thumb lightly to the toy and asks, “May I remove it?”

Regina takes a deep, shuddering breath, then another before she nods, but says, “Go really slow.”

He does as she asks, works the little toy out with extreme care, one hand braced on her lower back while the other slips it out, and it comes out easier than he expected, leaving her rear entrance gaping for just a second when he drops the toy to the floor and spreads her cheeks wide.

“Put the tip in,” she says quietly, and his cock throbs with her words.
“I don’t think we’re there yet, love,” he tries to reason, swallowing thickly and stroking himself with one hand.

“I’m ready,” she insists, “Just the tip, I just want to know what you feel like.”

Robin groans and strokes himself faster, so turned on and -fuck- how is he supposed to tell her no?

“Please,” she asks thrusting her hips back, “Just a little bit, just for a second.”

“I appreciate the confidence you have in my self-control, darling,” he laughs softly, “But I’m bloody close and I’m afraid I’ll hurt you.”

“Jerk off and put it in me when you come,” she suggests, and he could fall to his knees and worship her forever when she demands things like this from him. “You asked for that already,” she continues, “So give us both what we want.”

Rational thought leaves him as he strokes himself in earnest. He really is close - she was so bloody tight and he took those hard contractions without mercy, which pushed his arousal up fast. He concentrates his strokes on the head of his cock - he’s so rigid, so flushed and sensitive as he palms her arse, which she - fucking hell - shakes for him by bouncing on the balls of her feet. He rubs his cock through her sex again, coating himself with her wetness, he’s close, fuck he’s so, so close, and when she reaches back with both hands and spreads her cheeks for him, he loses it, his balls contract and that hot wave of arousal rushes through his lower belly, cock throbbing as he presses the slick head to her puckered entrance, sliding in as slowly as he can as he spills, pressing a bit further, further into her - fuckfuckfuck - her tight muscle squeezing him so bloody hard as he buries his tip in her arse while she groans beneath him. He keeps his tip in her, strokes the base of his cock as he pumps his come in, watching himself pulse and throb in his hand, careful not to thrust but giving her what she wanted, holding the head of his cock still just inside the tight rim of her opening - bloody hell, feels so good, so fucking good - until he finally stops coming, stops shaking, and is able to take a deep breath.

He carefully pulls out of her, light-headed and dizzy, then can’t help himself, he spreads her cheeks and watches a bit of the white fluid seep out, whining like a bloody fool with the outrageously hot vision it burns into his brain.

Their hard breaths are loud in the kitchen, and she turns around to face him, her body flushed, nipples pebbled, and dark eyes hot as she runs them over him. He immediately reaches for her, has to get skin on skin, has to press himself against her because she’s just so, so… everything.

“Well that was… different,” she says against his lips, then graces him with a series of small, quick kisses.

“Yeah,” he says stupidly, just staring at her beautiful face in awe.

“Was it, um, was it what you were hoping for?” she tries again, smoothing her hands up his chest to wrap around his neck.

Robin laughs, breaking the bit of uncertainty surrounding them as he tugs her body even closer, wrapping both arms firmly around her back and kissing her deeply before he says, “Fuck yes - even better than I imagined,” then asks, “What about for you? Was it alright?”

Regina laughs and slides her foot up the back of his calf, kisses his cheek and says, “It was better than alright, I’m glad we did it, I wanted to see what it felt like. Although, to be honest, I’m not sure it’s something I want to do all the time.”
He tucks a dark lock of hair behind her ear, chuffed to bits that she’s being so honest with him, and
reassures her, “We’ll only do it when you want to, love. There’s no pressure from me, and if I’m
being honest, you got so tight when you came it almost hurt - I’m not sure I’ll survive that experience
more than once.”

She laughs, “That makes two of us - that was, well, it was just a lot. But I’m glad it’s what you
hoped for.”

He smiles back, bumps her nose with his and says, “You are what I always hoped for, darling, this
was just icing on the cake.”

Regina grins and her eyes drop to his lips. He’s headed back in for another kiss, already missing her
mouth against his, when suddenly she pulls back and gasps, “Oh my god, the cake!”

She pulls away and practically runs to the oven, flipping down the door quickly as she grabs for the
oven mitts. It’s bloody hilarious to watch her pull the cake out wearing nothing but the thick gloves,
and he’s still laughing when she drops it on the stove, relief spread across her face that it apparently
didn’t burn.

After a moment and one good glare, she actually cracks up with him, and they spend the next half
hour standing in the kitchen, laughing, naked, and eating his cake right out of the cake pan. He
decides then and there that this is the best birthday he’s ever had, and he reaffirms it twice over when
he fucks her again in the shower, and once more in bed before they finally succumb to pure
exhaustion.
Robin’s birthday had been a strange day for Regina.

It hadn’t started that way, it had started completely normal - they woke up together, got handsy during their morning shower, ate a light breakfast, and had a great time picking apples with the kids. It was a perfect October day, the leaves having already started to turn into bright reds, oranges, and yellows, and it was chilly enough for her to throw on a long sleeve shirt under her (his) hoodie, but not enough to warrant a coat. She was really looking forward to making Robin his apple crumb cake - she knows that was Henry’s idea, it’s his favorite and she’s pretty sure he talked Robin into it - so after they had collected an entire bag of perfect fuji apples, she had made a trip to the grocery store to get all the ingredients fresh. She wanted Robin’s cake to be perfect, absolutely perfect, because if she wound up not being able to fulfill his…special request… then she wanted to be able to make it up to him via food.

Being with Robin has completely changed her sex life. She and Daniel weren’t prudes, certainly she and Graham weren’t either, she’s always had a high sex drive and she likes to believe that she’s been open to trying new things, but with Robin, it’s different. Sex with Daniel was sweet, starry-eyed, lovemaking, a product of her awful childhood where she was starved for love mixed with Daniel’s naturally kind disposition. Sex with Graham, and for that matter, most of the other men she’s slept with, was more about a need for release, a need for a warm body against hers, and sometimes, just a way to relax.

Sex with Robin is… shockingly intense. It’s all of those things she’s had with other men all at once, plus more. She trusts him deeply, trusts him right down to her soul, and for Regina this means she’s willing to try a lot when it comes to making him happy, both in bed, and out of it. Because of that, a weird thing has happened - by trusting him so much, she’s started to trust herself, too, has started to push herself more and more outside of her comfort zone, because almost every time she has, it’s been a fantastic experience. She’s always been confident in her looks, but when Robin gives her his bedroom eyes, she feels like she is pure sex, like she could do literally anything and he would think it’s the hottest thing ever. It makes her want to try things - clean things, dirty things, messy things, sweet things, completely non-vanilla things, things she would never have considered doing with Graham, and quite possibly, even with Daniel.

Robin has a way of making her feel like everything they try in bed is completely normal, and it’s honestly, surprisingly, a relief. She’s starting to realize that their kind of sex is simply theirs, there is no label to put on it - it’s truly just their expression of love and lust for one another, it’s not something that can fit inside a nice, neat box of “normal” or “abnormal”. She wonders if this is what sex in a real relationship is supposed to be like, if things revolve around trust and honesty more than anything else. It’s a funny thing that she’s never thought of it that way, has never really thought much about the emotional parts of sex except for the general concept of “love”. But there is so much more, and Robin has been showing her that every day they’re together.
She had been excited to try the toy he bought for her, excited to see just what it might feel like, to explore yet another new thing with him that might have her moaning until her throat is sore. She even did a little research on it (thank god for the incognito browser), so she knew what to expect, how to prepare, all the things she needed to know to make sure there were no surprises. Which is how she found out that there was actually quite a bit of proper preparation to do this right, and since lube seemed to be the most important ingredient in the mix, she wasn’t about to settle for the cheap stuff - she is a Mill’s, for god’s sake, and a bit more refined.

So she had bought the groceries she needed and stopped off at the “adult” store afterward to get the things she needed. On her way out she remembered that the Henry had a school field trip coming up at Halloween, and she needed to send twenty dollars cash with his permission slip. So for her last stop in town, she ran to the bank to hit the ATM to get the cash she needed.

Everything was normal, completely normal - she got out of her car and walked up to the machine, slid her debit card in, punched in her code, and did a fast-cash withdrawal of twenty dollars. As usual, she hit the button to print her statement balance - she keeps a good eye on it, money has been tight for her and Robin since the storm and the last thing she needs is a bunch of overdraft charges. Then she hopped back in her car, tucked the bills into her wallet, looked at her checking account balance - all was good - turned the engine and buckled herself in. She was just about to tuck the little paper into the other slot in her wallet, when her eyes passed over her private savings account, and her entire world suddenly came to a screeching halt.

Fifty million one thousand five hundred seven dollars, and seventy-seven cents.

She had stared dumbly at the number, certain her contacts were failing her.

$50,001,507.77

And then it had finally sunk in.

FIFTY MILLION ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED SEVEN DOLLARS AND SEVENTY-SEVEN CENTS

She had screamed, had literally screamed in shock, then decided she needed to see it on the machine, she needed to make sure this wasn’t some kind of printing error. She had wrenched open the car door and in her haste, had forgotten to unbuckle, so she wound up slingshooting back into her seat for a minute while she wrestled with the buckle, then sprinted back up to the ATM, shoved her debit card in with hands that were positively shaking, punched the code, and sure enough, when she had selected the screen, it calmly displayed all ten digits as if this was any other day.

Regina doesn’t remember the drive home at all. She only remembers that she was sitting in her car in the garage when the boys had come out to see what was taking her so long, then had promptly dragged her and her groceries inside. She wasn’t expecting to get her inheritance until February, she didn’t have a plan for how to tell Robin about it, or what it would mean for them, and jesus, it was his birthday, and he and Roland were leaving for England the next day, and this was definitely not the right time to launch into a discussion about her new status as a multi-millionaire. So she had done her best to act as normal as possible for the rest of the day, had made him his cake and enthusiastically used the toy he got them, and while Robin was fucking her six ways to Sunday, she was able to pretend that nothing had changed.

It’s selfish, and she knows that she has to tell him, she knows what this will mean for saving the camp. Regina knows that every minute she doesn’t tell Robin about the money that she’s being cruel, letting him stress about something that no longer needs to be worried about, but she was too shocked to tell him on his birthday, and she isn’t willing to do it over the phone.
She hasn’t been able to sleep at night, hasn’t been able to taste her food, hasn’t been able to have a decent orgasm since Robin’s birthday. It’s the stress of keeping this from him, she knows that, but she’s truly afraid of how he’ll react. She doesn’t know if he’ll be angry that she never told him about the money, or hurt that she never offered it up when the camp was in crisis (even though she couldn’t have accessed it). She’s afraid he’ll be embarrassed or upset that she can now single-handedly stuff their bank accounts so full of money that they could literally do nothing for the rest of their lives and never run out. She’s terrified beyond all rationalization that he’ll look at her like people used to when she was growing up, like she isn’t a real person with hopes and dreams and emotions, that he’ll put her back in that gilded cage she fought so desperately to be free of and he’ll start to see her as Regina Mills, Multi-Millionaire, instead of just simply, his Regina.

Robin had sort of asked her to marry him this summer, which had made her panic at the time. She’s been thinking about it though, just like she told him she would, and she’s starting to warm up to the idea, is starting to think her hesitation might have been a bit silly. She loves him, wants to be with him, cannot imagine her life without him, ever, and she has very few logical reasons for not marrying him. He hasn’t asked her again though, and she hasn’t brought it back up - she knows he loves her, but now… now there is this snarky voice in her head - her mother’s voice - that wonders if she tells him about her money, can she be sure he’s asking her to marry him because he loves her, or because he needs the money to save everything?

Regina knows that Robin isn’t like that. She knows that he really, truly loves her - in spite of his flaws, and hers, he has done everything he could to show her how deep his feelings are for her. But money like this, it’s almost akin to having a death in the family. It changes people, it makes them act in ways they normally wouldn’t, it can bring out the absolute worst of the worst in a person, and she’s seen it too many times to completely ignore the warning in her head.

Her Locksley boys are coming home from England in three days, are returning after a month-long absence while they’ve been visiting Robin’s former in-laws, and she promises herself she’ll find a way to tell him the second he returns. She isn’t trying to be a terrible person, she’s not trying to hurt him by withholding it, but she doesn’t feel like it’s something she can casually announce over the phone, especially since she has never mentioned it to him before.

She loves Robin and Roland so very, very much - they, along with her Henry, are her whole world, they are her family, and she’s never had one like this, hasn’t had a support system so extensive in her entire life. The repercussions that might occur when she tells them this ridiculously life-changing news have her so afraid of losing everything, that she is honestly, helplessly paralyzed by it.

It’s taken her a while to figure out how it all transpired, how on earth she was granted an early dispersal on the same money she had been denied only a few months previous. The only people who knew about her money were Regina and her mother, and her mother is dead, so she went around and around in circles for a few days, racking her brain, before she finally remembered a brief, and what at the time was completely insignificant, conversation from July.

The conversation is fuzzy, Regina hadn’t had a reason to commit it to memory, but she absolutely does remember that Mary Margaret had asked why she didn’t use her father’s money when she left Graham, and Regina had told her about her trouble with the trust.

She’s on her way to see her step-sister now, to confirm what she suspects - because she’s almost certain that Mary Margaret got Leopold to lean on someone to get her money released, and she really, really hopes she’s wrong. She doesn’t want her wonderful, loving father’s memory tainted by that awful pig.

When she pulls up to the apartment complex she immediately spots David carrying a huge cardboard
box out to his truck, which happens to be loaded down with a plethora of other boxes. As she approaches, Mary Margaret appears in the doorway with another box, calling out to David about how this one’s fragile and needs to go in the backseat.

“Regina!” Mary Margaret exclaims the second she sees her, and that cheery attitude that used to grate on her nerves so much seems to have less edge to it these days.

“Are you moving?” Regina asks, forgetting her manners entirely, but too curious not to ask.

Mary Margaret breaks into a huge grin and announces excitedly, “David and I are moving in together!”

Personally, Regina thinks it’s a little soon for them to be moving in together - they’ve only been dating for a few months - but for once she manages to keep her opinion to herself and congratulate them instead.

Regina asks to speak in private with Mary Margaret, and the two of them head inside.

“How did you do it?” she immediately asks without pretense. She has to know if Leopold was involved, she has to.

Mary Margaret smiles sweetly but doesn’t play coy. “In a nutshell, discovered that it can be quite helpful to be Leopold Blanchard’s daughter,” she says.

Regina groans, then asks quickly, “So that’s it? Your father got the money released?”

Mary Margaret’s eyes immediately go wide, her expression serious as she reaches out and grabs Regina’s hand tightly. “God no,” she gasps, “He had nothing to do with it, I’m sure he doesn’t even know. I made a few calls, and after several visits to our family attorney’s office, well… I hope you won’t be angry with me Regina, but I got them to change your trustee to me.”

Regina’s jaw drops. “To you???”

“Yes,” her step-sister continues, “It took some time, a lot longer than I thought it would actually, and I’m sorry about that, I was trying to get it to you right away but it just got finalized. My lawyers pulled a few strings, I think, or maybe they called in a favor or two, but anyway, we got it changed, and the second it was entrusted to me, I relinquished the funds.”

Regina has no idea what to say, so she reverts to her usual skepticism. “Why would you do that? Why would you go through all that trouble?” she tries to keep the disbelief from her voice but knows she fails.

“After you set me up with David, and what I learned in September, I figured it was the least I could do.” Regina swallows thickly, fighting down her emotions as Mary Margaret continues. “I know it doesn’t fix anything, I know it doesn’t take away the awful things that happened to you, but you’re my sister, the only one I’ve got, and I… I wanted to show you that I love you, I’ve got your back, no matter what.”

And God, that’s just such a Mary Margaret thing to do. Jesus, this girl is seriously the nicest person on the planet.

Regina pulls her in and hugs Mary Margaret tightly as she tells her, for the first time ever, that she loves her, which is probably a mistake, because her sister breaks into tears of joy at the sentiment and nearly squeezes all the air from Regina’s lungs with her exuberance.
When the younger woman finally collects herself she steps back, looking up at Regina with a satisfied smirk as she says, “And I want you to know that I took a page from your book,” her voice grows in excitement as Regina wonders what she’s referring to. “I told my father where he could stick it.”

For the second time in the last ten minutes, Regina is shocked to her core.

“It’s really not a huge deal,” Mary Margaret chatters on, “Since Daddy always paid for everything, I’ve got a ton of savings, and David and I are moving in together anyway, so we’ve got two incomes to spend, and we don’t care about all these stupid expensive things in the first place.” Her sister is rambling, giving her every tiny detail about her decision, but Regina can’t find the heart to cut in. “But anyway, I wanted you to know that I’m officially cut off from my father’s money - I’m going to make a fresh start, just like you did.”

Regina tries to tell her that she didn’t need to do that, that she wouldn’t hold it against her, but Mary Margaret is adamant that this is all wonderful, that everything’s coming up roses, so after a few minutes Regina gives up on trying to convince her otherwise. And then she tells Mary Margaret that she’s proud of her, and it re-starts her sister’s waterworks all over again.

On her way out, Regina mentions quietly that she hasn’t told Robin about the money yet, and that she’d really like it if Mary Margaret didn’t spill the beans. She gets a sworn vow that it won’t leave the two of them, but also this sweet, understanding smile from the girl that makes her looks wise beyond her years.

Her heart is less heavy as she makes the short drive home, stunned by the realization that suddenly she’s stopped thinking of Mary Margaret as her step-sister, but truly as her sister.
She’s been gone a long time. A lot longer than he thought she would.

When Regina had left after lunch to go visit her father’s grave, he assumed she’d be back in an hour or two. He knows how important her father is to her, knows how much it helps her to visit him and do whatever it is she does when she’s there (he’s never gone with her and she’s never invited him). She always looks happier, less stressed when she gets back though, and he wholly supports her doing whatever activities take that worried crease out of her brow, if only for a little while.

Especially lately, because Regina’s been acting weird, and he hasn’t a clue why.

It started on his birthday - she had come back from the grocery store and been… off. He had originally thought she was nervous or uncomfortable with his request to use that new toy, but then she had taken the initiative with it, told him she enjoyed it, and she was more than willing to go a second and third round without it that night. Robin had cuddled her hard afterward, had done his best to worship her body, and was certain that by the morning she would be back to normal. Only, when the morning came, he woke up to an otherwise empty bed, her side having been vacant for so long that the mattress was cold.

She’d left him a note on the kitchen island explaining that she’d gone to visit her father, and she hadn’t returned until he and Roland were almost ready to leave for the airport. She had assured him that nothing was wrong, that everything was fine, and being that he’s not a suspicious bloke and he trusts her, he believed her and went along on his merry way to the motherland.

But he could tell from their first phone call that something was definitely up.

She wouldn’t say what it was, she insisted that everything was fine, but as the weeks dragged by he could tell that she hadn’t been sleeping, that she wasn’t eating well, could see the strain in her face whenever they did a skype call, and when they managed to sneak in few virtual sessions of intimacy, he came away with the suspicion that she may have faked her arousal.

He’s starting to feel a bit insecure. Perhaps it’s not her, perhaps it’s him. Maybe she’s lost interest in him, maybe he isn’t treating her as well as he used to. Maybe she’s found someone else.

Or maybe she’s taken a job in the city, and she’s going to be moving out tomorrow, leaving this failed camp and its owner behind her for good.

They’ve just returned from England, and Robin’s trying to learn from the mistakes he’s made with her - he’s trying to make sure that he doesn’t lose her out of stupidity or misunderstandings, that he doesn’t let his temper get the better of him, that he listens to what she says and makes sure he tells her what he should.
But it’s bloody hard to do that when she’s acting so dodgy. He briefly wonders if this is how she felt when she discovered that box of his archery trophies.

It’s dark when she finally returns, and it’s mid-November so the nights come early now, but he’s worried anyway. He had thought they’d spend every minute together today, that they’d want to cuddle up, touch, talk, and just enjoy their boys and one another as much as possible after being apart for so long. Apparently not.

Her cheeks are flushed from the cold, and he’d expected that, so he had run her a hot bath, poured her a glass of her favorite wine, set up Alexa to play some soothing music, and littered the bathroom with candles. He’s hoping if she can warm up and relax, and perhaps see how much he cares, how much he’s missed her, that she’ll be willing to tell him what’s wrong. Because something is definitely wrong.

She gives him a quick kiss on her way to the bedroom, intent on changing into something more comfortable for the evening, and he follows her in, changing her path from the direction of the closet to the master bathroom instead. He wraps his arms around her from behind, and she smells so good, Christ, he’s missed her smell, and he can’t help but whisper, “I love you, darling,” as he kisses her temple, the corner of her jaw, the side of her neck as he opens the door and shows her just what he’s done for her.

Regina breathes, “Oh, Robin,” her hands smoothing over his forearms for a moment, then drifting up to her face. Her body starts to shake against him, and he pulls back, trying to see her face because certainly she’s not… she can’t be… can she?

She is.

She’s crying. No, not crying, she’s sobbing.

Bloody hell.

Regina Mills is not a crier. He’s watched her entire life fall apart around her without her shedding a single tear. He has watched her face her demons head on without blinking. He has seen her react to violence and abuse without so much as cringing.

If anyone is the crier in this relationship, it’s definitely him.

So the fact that she’s crying right now completely, utterly breaks him. He scrambles for some sort of explanation, tries desperately to figure out what on earth he has done that could have caused this, but can come up with nothing.

He tries to turn her, tries to hug her but she pulls away, goes to the bathroom sink and splashes water on her face. She seems to collect herself, pats her face dry with a hand towel and catches his eyes in the large mirror as she says quietly, “Can you,” she swallows thickly, and his brain automatically thinks - anything, he will do anything she asks of him - “Can you go away?” His heart about falls out of his chest, but she continues, “This is wonderful, really, but I… I need a few minutes alone, okay?”

Robin rubs his hand over his mouth in frustration. She’s been alone. He feels like she’s avoiding him, and he misses her, can’t understand why on earth she needs more time alone today, when it’s the first day they’ve had together for an entire month.

Unless she wasn’t alone.

Unless there is a reason she doesn’t want him to see her naked. Like scratch marks on her back, love bites on her breasts, stickiness between her thighs.
Stop-it-stop-it-stop-it.

He tries to push down those fears, this is Regina, not Marian. Regina would never do what his late wife did. Never. He knows that, he does, he does - but fuck all if her behavior isn’t scaring the shit out of him.

He nods and leaves her there, slumps down on the couch with the boys and lets them pick out a movie. It’s almost another hour before she joins them, and she sits on the far end of the couch, snuggling up tight with Roland, who is understandably quite needy for her tonight - so much so that he climbs right in her lap. She strokes her fingers through his son’s thick curls, and he catches her kissing the top of the boy’s head almost every time he looks over at her, her eyes staring blankly toward the telly but obviously not watching the film at all.

She’s really fucking scaring him.

They agree to let the boys stay up until ten - they’ve missed each other too much to call it an early night, then Regina spends a long time tucking in Roland, chatting with him for almost double the time she normally does (which is typically pretty lengthy anyway). When she rejoins him upstairs he’s sitting on the chaise, trying to look relaxed, but actually scared out of his bloody mind.

Now that the boys are asleep, he’s going to talk to her, going to get her to tell him what’s going on, because he can’t stand the thought of spending another minute in this awkwardness that’s been brewing.

When she nears him, he opens his mouth to speak, then immediately chokes when, out of the blue, she pulls off her (his) hoodie and the little cami she has underneath, shucks her pants and climbs into his lap in just her underwear.

Fuck.

She’s kissing him with this wild desperation, her thighs bracketing his legs as she presses her body tight to his, her hands going to the hem of his shirt and tugging it up and off before he can even form a second thought. She’s bloody gorgeous, Christ, the undergarments she’s got on were obviously planned - she’s wearing a tiny thong that’s pretending to be knickers and a matching mesh bra that’s completely sheer - oh god - so he can see her nipples right through it, all in a color that can only be described as fuck-me red. He gets hard so fast, just with the few kisses she’s giving him, with the vision of her all over him, with her hot breaths and little moans and that apple scent of her hair around him. He vaguely recalls that he’s supposed to be doing something, knows he was going to do something, but suddenly he can’t remember what, and when she tugs at his waistband, pulls him out, and shoves herself down on his cock with his pants still on, whatever he was going to do suddenly doesn’t seem so important.

She starts riding him immediately, starts riding him fast, and he’s - Jesus, he has no idea what’s gotten into her but - fucking hell - she’s so hot and so worked up and how is she this wet already? that he just goes with it. He lets her bounce on him without any guidance, he’s too busy trying to get his bloody sweat pants off so he can move, but she’s not stopping or giving him any sort of help, she’s just working herself hard up and down his length, panting as her bright red fingernails dig into the tops of his shoulders. He finally gets his legs free but instead of flipping her onto her back or trying to work her hips for her, he just rests his hands on her thighs, leans back and watches her tits bounce, watches her bite her bottom lip and throw her head back as she works herself on him.

It occurs to him suddenly that she’s fucking him, seriously fucking him - this is not sex, it’s not making love, it’s her fucking him, and he has no clue what the hell is happening or why she’s acting like this, but there is no way he’s going to try to stop her or suggest anything other than what she
seems to have already planned. If this is what she wants, what she needs, she can have it. He has never been able to tell her no, and he’s not about to start now.

They shouldn’t be doing this in the living room though, they’ve been almost caught before, and with the way she’s moaning and breathing and gasping as she slams down on his thick length, and the insanely loud sounds of her ass slapping against his thighs again-again-again, there’s very little stealthiness going on here. He can only hope that the boys stay in bed, because this isn’t really a shining example of sex ed he wants to them to see - in fact, he’s pretty sure if they see this it’ll freak them the fuck out.

At the same time, he is just a man. And Regina is so tight, and so wet, and so desperate, with her sweet, plump tits bouncing in his face, still locked away in that sexy-as-fuck bra - she’s such a fucking tease - that he cannot possibly be expected to interrupt her. He can’t. It’s humanly impossible. But he can tear those tiny knickers off so they stop chafing his cock - so he does.

She doesn’t even notice, she just keeps taking him fast and deep; her body feels so hot against his, he can see the beads of sweat collecting between her tits, on her neck, at her brow, but - fucking hell - she just keeps going, keeps up the speed and intensity, and he finally decides he can’t stand it, he’s got to do something here, so he moves his thumb to her clit - and she - what the fuck? - she slaps his hand away.

He figures he must have just surprised her, so he tries again, and again she slaps at him, mumbles, Stop, I don’t want to come, then digs her sharp fingernails into his shoulders and drags them over the top and down his pecs. Fucking hell that hurt, he thinks she might have drawn blood, and when he looks, really looks at her now, he notices she’s got this expression on her face that he can only describe as broken.

Forget the boys, now he’s freaked the fuck out.

“Hey,” he rasps, his hands going to her hips to try to hold her still.

She fights him, keeps rocking against him, keeps trying to slide up and down his length.

“Are you alright, darling?” he tries again, but she just grabs his shoulders harder, fights his hands - christ her thighs are strong - and continues to fuck him.

“Regina,” he raises his voice, to no avail.

“Regina, stop,” he says, scared for her - what the hell is happening? - and fuck, of course now his stupid cock decides he’s close to coming. He chants No-no-no-no in his head on a loop, this time trying to hold her up instead of down, but that doesn’t work either, she continues to fight him, and bollocks, this is worse, because now the head of his cock is taking most of the stimulation, fuck, her tits are right in his face and he’s so close - ahh god - he can’t - he’s trying but he can’t - he can’t stop it.

He comes, feeling like a complete prat, his hands leaving her waist to smash against his eyes - god-bloody-damnit - as the hot pleasure streaks through him, churning low and hot in his lower belly then up from his balls - he can’t believe he’s coming, fuck. He spills inside of her, gives her several hot jets of it as his hips jerk and he gasps with how good it feels, and how bad it feels at the same time. She’s so wet, so tight, christ, the way she strokes on his cock just feels so incredible that he can’t stop filling her, he wants to stop, but fuck, it’s been an entire month and he can’t, he’s completely helpless beneath her, and when she’s drained him completely and the rush starts to finally subside - he realizes that she’s still not stopping.
Robin knows he’s going to soften in a minute, and then this is going to get even weirder, and christ, he’s had e-fucking-nough.

He surges up under her, and she tries to fight it, pushes hard on his shoulders, but he’s stronger than she is, and he locks his hands around the backs of her thighs and stands quickly. She’s shoving at him, her nails biting, and she has this wild look in her eyes, she’s still working her hips on him like she can’t stop herself, and he’s done. He’s so done. He is going to figure out what the fuck is going on if he has to tie her down and spank it right out of her.

He gets her in their bedroom and manages to lock the door, but she’s completely lost control, she’s thrashing and pushing and yes, still trying to fuck him. He nearly loses his balance just trying to hold onto her, then gives up entirely and throws them toward the bed, where he attempts to get on top of her and get some bloody control of the situation.

But she fights like hell, and things go a bit sideways - Robin has never used force on a woman, would never hurt a girl, but he’s trying to stop her from hurting herself with this barmy outburst she’s having, and she’s not giving him anything to work with, so the only thing he can think of to do, is get on her and hold her down until she regains some semblance of control.

So that’s what he’s doing. She’s facedown in bed and he’s straddling her arse, her legs kicking while he holds her arms down and tries not to get headbutted in the face when she flails. He tries to reason with her multiple times, and when that doesn’t work, he drops his whole body down on her, his chest to her back, legs on legs, arms on arms, tucks his face down next to hers, and just starts saying I love you on repeat, until finally, thank god, she stops.

They lay there for several minutes, both breathing heavily, flushed, and sweating - he’s got some scratches that already sting, possibly a few bruises from their little scuffle, and he thinks she might too. He’s so flabbergasted by whatever it was that just happened that he doesn’t even know what to say, so he asks bluntly, “What the bloody hell do you think you’re doing?”

A beat of silence passes and he’s worried she isn’t going to respond, but then she snaps, “I wanted it hard and I wanted it to last, but apparently that’s too much to ask for.”

He grins with relief, because there’s that verbal armor of hers, and it might be strange if it was anyone else, but just the sound of her sarcasm has him feeling better, like he’s found her again when she was lost in whatever this was.

He tries to keep his voice calm and quiet as he ignores her jab and replies, “Well, you scared the life out of me. What’s going on with you?”

She’s quiet again, and he can feel the tension in her shoulders and back, in the flex and release of her fingers.

A shock of dread runs through him and his voice is a rough whisper as he leans to the side to try to see her face and asks, “Are you breaking up with me?”

She snorts.

And it’s such a dumb thing for her to do, such a ridiculous reaction to his very serious question, that he starts to laugh. He rolls off of her and stares at the ceiling, and decides that now that she’s acting like a sane person, he’s just going to wait for her to explain.

So he waits.

And he waits.
And he waits.

And finally she turns on her side and looks at him, says, “I’m not breaking up with you, I’m sorry for what I said, how I acted.”

He shifts his eyes to her but stays on his back and asks, “Mind explaining what just happened?”

She takes a deep breath and flops down on her back, wiggles around for a second - taking off her bra, apparently - then just lays next to him with their arms touching as they stare at the ceiling.

“I’ve um,” she swallows and he hears the saliva click in her throat. “I’ve been having some anxiety issues lately.”

It makes him sad that she’s been going through something while he’s been gone, and he has this overwhelming urge to comfort her. “I could tell over the phone, you know,” he says softly, and she mumbles, *Oh god,* but he continues, “Regina, I know you, and you’ve been off since my birthday. What’s happened that’s got you so worked up?”

“It’s nothing you’ve done,” she reassures him, and he loves her for it, because even while she’s going through whatever this is, she’s still trying to make him feel better. *Christ,* he loves her. “It has to do with my father, and I’m just not sure how to handle it, I don’t know what I’m supposed to do, and if I don’t get it right, things could be... I’ll lose so much.”

“Why’re you being so vague, darling?” he asks quietly, trying to be patient but still not understanding. “Won’t you tell me what it is so we can have a go at it together? We’ve been getting pretty good at that since the storm, haven’t we?”

She smiles softly at the ceiling and says, “We have, definitely.” She pauses, rubs her hand over her eyes and says, “But this is something I have to figure out for myself - I thought that I’d know how to handle this before you came home, and I just, I still haven’t figured it out. It’s like I’m frozen with indecision, and today you were just so wonderful, and so thoughtful, and *jesus,* I missed you so much while you were away. But all I can think about is this thing, and I love you so much that I just needed to touch you, you always make me feel so much better, and I think I just, I think I had some kind of anxiety attack in the middle of it.”

Her laugh is self-deprecating, and he hates that she won’t tell him, but he won’t push her. If it’s something to do with her family he knows that it’s sensitive material for her, and she’ll tell him when she’s ready.

He stares at the ceiling for a few minutes and chews it all over. “Christ, you know, with all this cloak and dagger I was afraid that uh, that perhaps you had found someone else.” He doesn’t mention his suspicion of her having found a new job - it’s suddenly too probable to think about.

She sits up suddenly and rolls to face him, her hand on his chest, right over his heart as she looks him dead in the eyes and says firmly, “Absolutely not. No way. Never.”

He pulls her head down and kisses her, and *there,* there she is, *there’s* his Regina. *Finally.*

When their lips part she sighs heavily and rests her head on his chest. He moves so he’s got his arm wrapped around her and says quietly, “Well that’s a relief. I was worried I was going to have to punch David, and I really just started to forgive him for eyeing you up in the first place.”

She laughs softly but she’s still so tense against him, so he tries to comfort her, squeezes her tightly and drops a kiss to her forehead. “Listen, why don’t we save the serious discussion for tomorrow? I’ve missed you entirely too much over the past month to spend another second making you feel
anything but incredible.” Not to mention that he absolutely does not want to hear about the golden opportunity that is surely awaiting her elsewhere.

She nods against his chest, her hand stroking lightly, lovingly.

He decides he needs to break this sour mood they’re in, so he adds, “And if you’re going to act like a wild animal during sex, I’d like a bit of a warning, so I can cut your fingernails before you come at me,” he jokes.

She gasps and sits up, as if just realizing that they literally wrestled like WWE champions five minutes ago.

“Oh god, oh my god, Robin, I’m so sorry,” she winces, her face full of guilt as she traces the scratch marks on his shoulders and chest. He watches her run her hands over him lightly, so soft, and he notices - bloody hell - that he’s got a bruise in the exact shape of her perfect bite, right in the meat of his shoulder. He doesn’t even remember that happening.

“I really don’t mind,” he soothes, carding his fingers through her thick hair, god he’s missed the feel of her hair. She genuinely is a gentle person, and they both know that - it’s not like she’s going to start marking him up just for the fun of it. “It’s actually pretty hot, but still, a bit of forewarning might be helpful, so I know that you’re doing it on purpose, and not because you’re having an anxiety episode.”

That pulls a laugh from her, and he’s relieved. He loves her so much, christ she scared him, but after talking like this, he’s certain that whatever it is she has to tell him is nothing to worry about. It would take an act of god to get him to leave her, he can’t even fathom his life without her anymore.

He rolls them so he’s on top of her and kisses her deeply, sweetly, then bumps her nose with his and says, “Now, I know you weren’t getting off while I was gone,” she starts to deny it but when he gives her a knowing look, she apparently thinks better of it and meets his eyes as she nods. He kisses her again, then runs his mouth along her cheek to her ear, where he lets his voice drop an octave as he says, “So let’s see if we can do something about that, shall we?”
She’s missed this.

No, that’s not quite right.

She’s missed him.

Regina has missed Robin so much that it’s a little embarrassing, and she has to fight her inner demons to keep the self-loathing from invading her head for the millionth time in the last four weeks. There’s this terrible little voice that scolds her for becoming so emotionally dependent on a man, that tells her she doesn’t deserve him, that when he finds out her secret he’s going to hate her, and her anxiety level is extremely high because of it. She fights those thoughts, those feelings, because Robin literally tells her to, because he knows her so well by now that he can see it in her eyes, notices the tension in her shoulders even before she recognizes it for herself. He whispers comforting words to her as he holds her, his lips right against her ear, *Love you so much*, and *That’s it’s gorgeous*, and *Just feel, my darling*.

He’s propped up against the headboard and she’s leaning back against him between the vee of his legs, her back to his chest, both naked, as he plays with her breasts. She’s been so stressed that even though she’s tried desperately on several occasions, the best she’s been able to do is have a mediocre orgasm while he’s been away, and that was with her vibrator pressed against her clit for longer than she thinks is probably healthy. His strong, warm hands feel so good as he kneads her breasts, she’s not small chested but his hands are so large he can squeeze, and press, and mold them to his will, and it’s extremely soothing to sit here against him and let him do this for her.

She’s wet from it, really wet, even though he’s not intentionally playing with her nipples yet, he’s just massaging in a way that is so sensual and slow and patient, that when paired with the sweet words and praises he whispers to her, calms and riles her up all at once. Regina loves this, loves the way he’s starting them over tonight, acting like she hadn’t just lost her mind with panic over the idea of losing him, that he can hold her and touch her like this in a way that makes her feel so safe that she doesn’t think about a damn thing except for how good it feels when he lifts, rubs, and - mmmm - bounces her heavy breasts.

Robin slides his hands up and down her front side from her collarbones to hip bones, stroking soothingly, dragging across the swells of her breasts for several strokes, as he drops kisses to the side of her neck and down the top of her shoulder. She has her hands on his knees, flexing and releasing, trying to return his soft touches as best she can in this position.

On the next upstroke he cups her breasts and starts circling his thumbs around the edges of her areolas, smoothing lightly around and around without giving the tips any attention. She squirms against him a little, the wetness in her sex growing, that tingling warmth in her clit intensifying with her anticipation as he teases her.
“You’ve no idea how often I thought of your perfect tits these last few weeks,” he murmurs, his fingers flexing in his excitement before he goes back to circling his thumbs around her nipples again. “Idreamt of touching them, of how good they feel in my hands, how you arch your back - yeah babe, just like that - when I stroke the very tips of your nipples, christ.” He directs his circling thumbs to the centers of her pink tips, and her arousal jumps, her kegels clenching in need as she licks her lips and starts to breathe through her mouth.

“Is that better, darling?” Robin asks softly, pressing another kiss to her shoulder, “Is that what you need? For me to rub your nipples like that? Does that make you hot for me?”

Regina lets out a shaky breath and nods, her hips swiveling slightly as he switches from circles to quick, up and down strokes across them.

“Are you wet for me?” he rasps, turning his hands over and strumming the backs of his fingers across the pebbled tips. “Is your hot little cunt getting ready for me?”

“Mmhmm,” she half-moans, half-answers, fingers digging into his knees a little. God that feels good, he always knows just how to touch her, jesus.

“I bet your clit is already swollen,” he continues, nipping at her earlobe then sucking hard at the corner of her jaw, “I bet it’s hard and sensitive and just waiting for me to suck on it.”

She whines a little, doesn’t mean to sound so pathetic but - god - that sounds so good she’d do just about anything for him to make that happen.

Robin pinches both her nipples, then tugs up and down, bouncing her breasts a few times before he twists and releases, pinches again and holds as he tells her, “Touch your clit and tell me how it feels.”

Regina lets out a sharp breath, too turned on now to be self-conscious, and immediately slides her hands up her inner thighs. She slips two fingers through her slick sex - oh god, she’s so wet - then drags some of her slippery arousal up to her clit and starts to rub slow, firm circles. She drops her head back on Robin’s shoulder - ohhhh - this feels so good, and he continues to play with the tips of her breasts, flicking, circling, and pinching in varying order.

“Describe it, love,” he reminds her.

She licks her lips and closes her eyes, forcing herself to just feel, to focus on how ridiculously good he makes her feel.

“Mmm, swollen,” she says, and her tone is low, raspy as she continues, “Firm… sensitive… god Robin, I’m so wet.”

He pinches her nipples a little harder and says teasingly, “Just how I like you.”

She smiles - jesus she loves him - how does he know that this is what she needs?

He goes back to slowly circling over her nipples, and tells her, “Rub your clit in time with how I’m working your tight little nipples, darling, let’s do this together, yeah?”

Her heart aches for him, positively swells in her chest with how much she cares about him, how wonderful she thinks he is, god, he’s perfect. She matches her fingers to his, keeping the easy, constant circles going, letting that slow, wet heat build and pool at the apex of her thighs, rolling her hips slightly at the same time.

Robin sucks on the crux of her neck and shoulder, lets his teeth scrape over her smooth skin, then nip
lightly before dropping more kisses over her shoulder. He pinches her nipples and she pinches her
clit accordingly, trying to match the firmness - ahh... god - this feels so incredible.

He rolls her nipples between his thumb and forefinger, around and around, and she does the same,
the tingling heat intensifying in her clit as she shifts her legs a little wider, giving herself better access
to the swollen bud.

“How’s that feeling, love?” he asks, his thumbs circling, circling. She shudders.

Her voice is breathy as she tells him, “So good.”

“Are you nice and wet now?” his voice is like gravel, accent thick, and it belatedly occurs to her that
he might be just as turned on as she is by this.

“God, yes,” she pauses and licks her lips, “I can feel it dripping down.”

He moans and sinks his teeth lightly into her shoulder. “Your decision,” he increases the speed of his
thumbs, and she matches it - goddd - she’s starting to get close and she’s so relieved - jesus - she
needs to come. “Do you want to come like this, or do you want my mouth on you?”

Regina wants his mouth, she really does, but she doesn’t want to stop what they’re doing - it’s been a
hell of a month and she’s gun shy about her orgasms as a result, afraid she’s going to hit the edge and
not be able to tip over it, as has recently happened so often.

“This,” she gasps, adding, “But please, faster - mmmm.” He immediately acquiesces, starts working
her nipples nice and quick, and she’s starting to pant, her mouth feels dry and her sex so wet -
ohhhh god.

“Rub how you want, love, give yourself what you need,” he rasps, tweaking the pebbled, sensitive
tips of her breasts, his fingers pulsing fast - ohhh, oh god.

She speeds up on her clit, rubbing a little firmer, the fingers of her other hand scratching lightly up
and down the inside of her thigh, causing goosebumps to break across the toned muscle.

“Close,” she whispers, rubbing faster still, can clearly hear the sounds of her soaked sex making little
wet noises as she flurries her fingers over her clit - down to press and tease at her entrance - then
back up to rub fast, fast.

“Your body is so hot against mine, darling,” he says, “You’re going to come so hard, you’re so pent
up, christ, you really needed this didn’t you? Needed me to come all the way back from England just
to rub your pink little nipples and get you off, isn’t that right?”

“God yes,” she gasps. She’s tightening up, her thighs trembling with her excitement. “Please,” she
begs, so needy - god - she’s so needy for him, “I need, please, I need -”

He pinches her nipples hard and says, “I know babe, I’ve got you,” then tugs and twists and strums
across them quickly, and she arches back, thrusting her chest into his hands as her clit throbs and
throbs and throbs.

She’s so close - fuck - she’s rubbing hard and she’s going to, she’s - oh god! - she’s rubbing, rubbing
and - jesus - she’s going to come, is - oh, oh! - is coming - shhhhit.

Robin switches his assault on her nipples to firm, slow squeezes of her breasts as her back arches, her
inner muscles clench and pulse - oooh, oooh - wetness slipping down her to drip on the sheets, her
clit throbbing with hot intensity under her fingers as she rubs around and around - fuck, oh, god - her
hips jerking as her orgasm shocks like electricity through her entire body. Regina slams her thighs closed and Robin hugs her tightly to him as she stretches her legs out straight in front of her, toes flexing, the rush of endorphins hitting her hard and pushing a shiver through her with how damn good she feels.

The second she regains her senses she turns his arms and straddles him, kissing him hard, over and over as she rasps, I love you, and Need you against his lips. His hands are at her waist, holding lightly, smoothing little circles around and around the flare of her hips as her desperation for him takes over for a moment.

She sucks his bottom lip hard and pulls back, presses her forehead against his to regain a little composure, then confesses, “I missed you, god I missed you.”

Robin grins and it’s beautiful - he’s beautiful. Sitting back on his thighs, she traces her fingers over his smile lines, completely enamored with him, smoothing the pads of her fingers across his brows, his cheekbones, the soft cushion of his lips. She caves and kisses him again, but pulls back to admire his eyes once more - to soak up that gorgeous cerulean blue that is so different from her brown, is so bright in comparison to the dark in hers. “It’s selfish of me to say this,” she starts, “But before tomorrow comes and we talk about... things, I want you to know that I...” she trails off - talking about her feelings is so difficult for her, but he deserves this, she needs him to know this if she wants a chance at keeping him. Softly, sweetly, she strokes her hands down his neck and over the tops of his shoulders, biting her bottom lip for a second before she tries again and says, “You told me once that I was your everything, and I want you to know, because I don’t think I’ve done a very good job of showing you -” she sniffs, meets his eyes and says firmly, “Our boys, you, and me - this is, you’re my family, my everything.”

His eyes immediately go red and teary, and she loves this about him, that he’s such a soft-hearted guy inside, that he cries when he’s emotional, or upset, or really, really happy. It’s adorable, and she hopes that Henry sees it, that he sees what a shining example of a good man Robin is. It’s something she is going to emphasize to her son, something that not even Daniel could have shown him, and even if Robin decides he wants out, she wants her son to know that it is more than okay to cry sometimes.

Robin shifts forward, moving slow enough not to startle her as he lowers her down on her back and settles on top of her, his hands in her hair, his belly pressed against hers as he suddenly smirks at her. “Alright, who are you and what’ve you done with my Regina?” he teases, “Where’s the woman who rolls her eyes when I get teary-eyed? The one who has trouble saying I love you but easily shows me every day? The one who comes so hard sometimes even she can’t stay conscious for it?” he smirks, wiggling his eyebrows at her before he drops a quick kiss to her lips. “Is she here?” he asks, kissing down her neck, “Or how about here?” he continues, sucking hotly across the tops of her breasts. She can’t not smile as he teases her, his forest scent all over her, the rasp of his beard scratchy but not abrasive against her sensitive skin. He moves back up to her chin, nips the edge and kisses along her jawline to her ear, “Hmmm, not here…” he rasps, and it makes her shiver. He kisses across her forehead, then straight down the bridge of her nose, pausing to tease, “I mean, you look just like her - bloody gorgeous you are - so maybe we just won’t tell her about this little tryst we’re having. Think you can keep a lid on it, love? She’s got a right temper, wouldn’t want to risk getting caught.”

Regina rolls her eyes and laughs at his ridiculousness. Jesus, she loves him so much.

“There she is!” he exclaims with fake surprise, kissing her while grinning, and she giggles, (oh god, yep that’s a giggle), in response to his teasing. He makes her so happy, she knows that she’s never
felt like this before, has never been in love like this.

“You’re an idiot,” she smirks, running her hands up his back, leaning up to kiss down his throat, letting her tongue slip out to press against his salty, warm skin. “But I love you,” she sucks lightly at the dip between his collarbones, then pushes so they roll and she’s on top of him. He’s so gorgeous - he tells her these things all the time, how beautiful she is, stunning, perfect, but he is too, and he definitely doesn’t give himself enough credit.

She kisses along his collarbones, letting her teeth scrape lightly as she slides from one side to the other, then starts to work her way down. His hard length bumps her ass as she descends and she smirks, lifts one eyebrow and makes eye contact as she shifts over him so he’s pressed against her center, but not inside of her yet. Robin just shrugs and bites his lip, folding his arms behind his head so he can watch her suck and kiss and nip at his chest. She curls her fingertips to drag her nails lightly across his ribs, and goosebumps break across his skin as his breath catches. God, she loves that he reacts to her like this, that just a few easy touches get him squirming. She keeps moving down his body - she loves his abs, jesus this man has great abs - and she gets a little caught up here, outlining the dip between his muscles with her tongue, her fingers making long strokes across his hot skin, fingertips tracing his obliques, quickly followed by her lips and tongue.

She keeps sliding back until she’s at his thighs, and she shifts so she’s straddling his right one, the wide, strong muscle firm against her core as she reaches for his cock. He’s so hot against her palm, the skin silky soft, and jesus, her heart is absolutely pounding just from looking at him, from stroking her fingers up and down his length. She tips forward and starts to tease him, flicking her tongue across the head of him, tasting a bit of herself but not in a bad way, as she sucks lightly down the underside all the way to his balls. She spends some extra time there, it’s not something she always focuses on but knows how sensitive he is, how good it feels when she does, so she uses both her hands and mouth to gently massage and suck as she grinds down on his thigh.

She’s aroused and wet for him again - he makes it so, so easy to be - and it feels wonderful to press her core against his leg, to rub herself on him as she starts to suck on his thick length, the breath hissing from between his teeth as he arches his back and one of his hands tangles in her dark hair. She runs her tongue over him, swirling at the top, around and around to tease and increase his pleasure, then flicking against the edge of the wide head of him, before pulling him in deep down the back of her throat. She pulls him deep for several turns, lets him get a little further with each stroke, her fingers tight at the base of his cock, making up the difference that her mouth can’t, until she finally adjusts enough that when she focuses and relaxes her throat, she can take him way down without gagging.

His fingers tighten in her hair and she hears him curse - soft pants of fuck, and bloody hell slipping from his lips as she pulls up to breathe for a quick second then slides him right back down. She’s too excited though, too aroused, because she presses her sex against his thigh and moans with the pleasure it creates, which accidentally causes her to gag. Robin moans a desperate, “Oh fucking christ!” his fingers tightening in her hair and holding her down on him as her throat contracts, his hips jumping off the bed with the sensation. He releases her hair quickly and her hands immediately go to his abs to shove him back down as she pulls her head up with a smack of her lips, and tries to catch her breath while she grins.

“Fuck, so sorry love, christ, didn’t mean to hold you down,” he gasps, his mouth hanging open, saliva coated cock so hard and rigid as it lays against his belly that she’s sure it’s close to hurting.

Regina laughs softly and moves to straddle him - it’s her fault really, the fact that he’s apologizing is so unneeded and so heartwarming that it just makes her love him more. She takes him in hand and quickly slides him through her wetness once, twice, then raises up on her knees and sinks down on
him.

He groans and throws his head back, and she can’t help but to lean forward and kiss his throat, her hands pressing against his chest for a minute then sliding down to intertwine her fingers with his as she pulls his hands up by his head.

Regina presses down heavily on his hands, using just her hips and legs to work herself up and down his length, biting her lip with pleasure when he starts to thrust up to meet her. She moves slowly, closing her eyes and living in the feel of him as his cock drags in and out of her, filling then leaving her empty, over and over, the press and tight stretch of him so welcome after his absence for the past month. She rotates her hips slowly as she slides down him, her breath catching when he bumps that sensitive spot in her, but she doesn’t target that, just keeps working herself on him, up and down, swivel, up and down, swivel. She rolls her hips slowly, and - goddd - that feels amazing, so she does it again, pressing down on his hips to keep him deep, and making that little arch of her back as she tips her hips forward and back, again - mmmmh - again.

She lets go of Robin’s hands, so she can lean down and kiss him, his mouth way too tempting for her to resist as he rocks deep inside of her, his knees bent as he works his hips up to her. She feels like she’s finally redeeming herself for her earlier behavior, like she’s making love to him instead of fucking him like a crazy person, and it helps, it gives her some relief from the anxiety she’s still trying so hard to push to the back of her mind.

Regina kisses him until her lips feel swollen from the press and scrape and pull of it, her hips still moving slow, slow, but her breaths, her heart rate fast with her arousal. He presses up, his hands tight on her ass as he rolls them so he’s on top, and she gasps loudly when he shoves into her hard, deep, driving her into the bed with his first thrust.

“Love the way you move on me,” he rasps, kissing her chin, her jawline, “Feels so good, you’re so sexy, you make me so hard, fuck, want to feel you come on me, it’s been too long and I can’t go without it anymore.”

Regina moans in response - she loves the way he talks to her, how he can work her up with sweet sentiments just as much as he can when he’s whispering filth to her. She rocks her hips up to him on his next thrust, licking at his lips when he comes back to kiss her, one of his hands carding through her thick black hair and the other sliding across her stomach and down, down, until he can rub her clit.

She’s on fire for him, has been for what feels like forever, the wet heat messy between them, her insides tight and sensitive as he works in and out of her, thrusting just a little faster, faster. It’s a perfect rhythm, not too fast, just enough to let the bounce in the mattress help them, shoving her hips up with the spring-back. Regina slides one hand around his thick neck, scratching her nails lightly at his hairline, kneading the muscles for him, arching her back to take him just a little deeper on each thrust.

Robin drops a wet, needy kiss to her lips, then repositions himself so he’s kneeling between her thighs as he shoves a pillow under her ass, his hands spreading her thighs wide, her knees bent as he slides his thick cock back into her. The new angle makes her - ooooh - desperately on the first stroke, her hips are tipped up so he presses against her g-spot now, and he holds her thighs open, staring at where he’s penetrating her as he whispers, “So perfect, fuck.”

He slides his hands inward and licks his lips - jesus he’s so hot - as he lays the pad of his thumb along each of her outer lips and starts to rub in time with his thrusts. His thumbs press her lips against her clit as he circles them in opposite directions, pressing together then pulling apart, pressing and pulling, together-apart, together-apart - fuck - speeding up as he thrusts faster, deeper.
Regina’s nipples are tight little peaks, still sensitive from earlier, and she runs her hands over them, playing lightly, squeezing her breasts and massaging them, then pinching the tips hard and gasping as he starts to really thrust. The slap!-slap!-slap!-slap! of his thighs against her and the slick, wet slide of his cock is loud in their bedroom, but she doesn’t care for a second. He’s incredible, amazing, so thoughtful and selfless - oh! mmmmh - her clt is so sensitive, she can feel her pulse pounding in it, the rub and release of his thumbs and repetitive bump against her g-spot so intense - goddd - he feels so good.

She moans a low, drawn out, “Ohhh goddd!” when he shifts his hands again, one moving to pull up on the soft flesh of her mound, exposing her clt better to him as he presses the pad of his thumb directly to it and starts to rub firm, fast swirls on her.

He continues to rock his hips into her, the quick slide of his cock driving her up so high, the tightness inside of her a molten, liquid heat that burns and burns through her sex. Her clt gets more and more sensitive as he rubs and thrusts, and finally - god - it’s too much, the wave of tingling pleasure surges through her, starting in her clt and radiating out fast, her thighs shaking hard as her inner muscles contract around him, and he’s so thick - jesus, fuuuck - he’s so big inside of her, and the feel of him stretching her ratchets her up higher, her hands twisting in the sheets as he fucks into her with hard, punctuated strokes. Regina clenches and spasms, can’t even catch her breath as her clt pulses under the swirl of his thumb, and she has to gasp for air, choking back her moans as best she can - mostly failing - as the pleasure washes over her. It’s deliciously long - she comes and comes, her lips parted and neck arched back as he works and works her, one hand pressing down on her lower belly and causing him to rub even harder on her g-spot with each thrust - fuuuuck - his deep voice scratchy as he tells her in that sexy-as-hell English accent, “So hot, fuck babe, that pussy’s so tight, you’re milking that cock, can’t stop - ahhh god - you’re gonna make me come - christ!”

He tips forward over her when he comes, his big body pressed against her as he raps his hips fast, pounding his thick length into her, and she’s still coming apart - is grateful for him, grateful to wrap her arms around his thick chest so she can cling to something while her body shatters and shivers as he fills her with his release.

Robin’s hips slow against her and he immediately brings his lips to hers, kissing her deeply, his tongue sliding against hers and stroking aggressively, flicking at the roof of her mouth before he bites at her lips, then switches quickly to slow, lingering kisses. God - he’s sexual perfection. Jesus.

They don’t even bother to right themselves in bed, he just grabs the quilt that’s half hanging off the edge and throws it over them, and she snuggles in tight against him, refusing to let herself think of tomorrow. She loves him, can’t stop from telling him that over and over - god she loves him so much - she whispers it against his chest, pressing kisses over his heart, her hands skating over his body as if to memorize him. She vows that she’s going to get wrapped up in him tonight and think of nothing but the feel of his pulse against her cheek, the warmth of his hands on her skin, his breath at her hairline. This moment is theirs, and she’s going to stay in it for as long as she can keep her eyes open.

Which, unfortunately, isn’t very long at all.
Regina wakes feeling surprisingly refreshed, arching her back and stretching like a feline under the soft quilt as she reaches for Robin with a smile, so excited to be waking up next to him again. It’s been such a long, stressful month, and just him being here makes her feel better, makes her think that maybe things aren’t as bad as she originally thought.

She keeps reaching though, and when she opens her eyes, she realizes she’s alone. That’s not quite how she had imagined this morning, she was hoping for something a little more… interesting. Had hoped he might wake her with those warm kisses on her neck and chest like he sometimes does, or perhaps that she could do the same for him, could bring him around with a few hot touches and well-placed kisses. Apparently not.

Regina tries not to feel upset by it, he’s probably just still on London time and couldn’t sleep, and when she heads into the bathroom to take her morning shower, she confirms it. He’s left her a note letting her know that he woke early and went over to camp to meet with Kristoff in an attempt to get caught up on how things have been going for the last month. She smirks at his terrible handwriting, then runs through her usual morning routine, hoping that the boys aren’t up yet so she can surprise them with a big breakfast. Roland must have told her six times last night how much he missed her apple pancakes, and she’s intent on making them for him.

When she pads out to the kitchen in leggings, thick socks, and one of Robin’s forest green camp hoodies (which at this point she fully considers hers), she’s excited to see that the boys aren’t awake, or at least, they haven’t made their way upstairs yet. There’s a moment of brief panic - she had stripped in the living room last night and she knows Robin ripped off her underwear - oh god - but the clothes are nowhere in sight so she assumes he picked them up earlier this morning. Thank god for that man - that could have been seriously embarrassing.

She bought groceries yesterday in preparation of the boys coming home - she and Henry don’t go through nearly the amount of food that Robin and Roland do, so there were quite a few things to stock up on, and she knows she has all the ingredients she needs to get breakfast started quickly. Henry specifically requested a ham and cheese omelet instead of pancakes, and normally she doesn’t make separate meals for the kids, but she gives in this time because she can’t spoil Roland and not Henry. She might seem tough, but when it comes to her boys, she can admit that she’s ridiculously soft-hearted.

The smell of food must lure the boys out of bed, because she hasn’t even pulled off the first batch of pancakes before they both appear in the kitchen, still in their pajamas. Henry is surly as usual, his hair adorably mussed and blinking sleep out of his eyes as he frowns and pours himself a cup of orange juice. Roland is the opposite, grinning and already chatting away with Regina about how good he slept, how happy he is to be home, how he’s so excited to tell her all about the cool things he saw in England and to show them the stuff he brought back with him.
Henry’s omelet is done first, just slightly before the pancakes, so she serves it up for him, kissing his forehead in sympathy - he is so like Daniel sometimes. Henry’s father hated mornings with an absolute passion, would rather sleep until noon then stay up half the night, and it’s comforting that as Henry grows up, her memories of Daniel don’t seem to hurt so much anymore. Instead, they make her smile - Henry may look like a Mills, but in personality he has always taken after his father.

She piles up Roland’s pancakes next, trying to pay attention as he talks at a hundred miles an hour, telling her all about cousins and castles and countryside, and she grins - god she’s missed this kid. When she sets the big plate of basically pure sugar in front of him he gasps comically - apparently he hadn’t been paying attention to what she was cooking for him - and it makes her laugh. He reaches for her from his barstool and gives her a huge, tight hug, raving about how these are his favorite, and she can’t help but to give him a kiss, then another, then a few exaggerated ones as he tries to good-naturedly squirm away. She’s laughing hard as he squeals his protest, Henry finally waking up a little and laughing too, encouraging Roland to, “Run for your life! Once she starts she’ll never stop!”

She plays into the game, peppering Roland with kisses all over his little face and the top of his head as he giggles, when suddenly she gets him with a wet one square on his cheek and he groans, “Agh! Mommomm! Yuck!”

Regina pulls back quickly, the sentiment shocking through her and making her heart positively swell in her chest while a flash of panic wells up - what is she supposed to do? How does she correct him? What on earth is the proper protocol for this?

But the boys seem completely oblivious to Roland’s slip as they start trading bites of pancakes for bites of omelet, debating whether omelets should be dipped in syrup, and if ham belongs in pancakes, and she just stares dumbstruck as they go on with their little uncomplicated lives. In the end, she winds up ruffling her fingers through Roland’s hair, pressing a kiss to Henry’s temple, and going back to the stove to clean up the mess without saying a word about it.

She gets the boys on the bus for school, then sends Robin a text, wondering where he is and how things are going.

*My Thief: S’alright, still at camp*

*Regina: ETA? Missed you this morning*

*My Thief: Missed you too, love - no ETA yet, just finished arena fencing, want to say hi to Rosie before I come up*

Regina adores how much Robin loves his horses. It’s something the two of them share - she grew up riding and has always loved her mounts as if they were more friends than pets. It’s such a rewarding relationship, horses are so intelligent, so unique, and bond in a way she’s been told is similar to a dog (although she’s never had a dog and can’t confirm or deny that). The bond between horse and rider is honestly why she got Henry into riding lessons in the first place - he’d been so lonely and she thought it might build his confidence, might help him come out of his shell. Regina smiles at the thought - looking at their lives now, she can say without a doubt that those lessons changed both of their lives.

She decides to head down to the indoor arena to check out Robin’s fence repair. She knows it’s been driving him crazy that he hadn’t had time to fix it before his trip, and she’s glad that he has one more thing checked off of his list.

His list that really, truly matters now.
Which he still doesn’t know.

Which she suddenly has an overwhelming need to inform him of.

Regina decides it’s a good time to tell him about her inheritance - the boys won’t be around to overhear if he gets upset (which she is certain he will), and if they’re going to have an argument (they are, she’s positive of it), she’d prefer to do it somewhere that they can be alone. It’s a mild day for November but still chilly, so she throws on her wool coat - the long black one that hits her at the knees, dons her tall black boots, and takes off down the trail, a knot in her stomach, her heart already aching, dreading what is to come.

Robin can’t stop staring at the ring he bought her, turning it over and over between his calloused fingers as he leans against the newly erected fence of the indoor riding arena, one foot propped up on the lowest rail. It’s a beautiful ring, truly fit for a queen, a perfect compliment to Regina’s style and character, and it occurs to him that even if she won’t marry him, perhaps he should give it to her anyway. He bought it specifically for her, he loves her, and she deserves to have it regardless of whether there are vows attached to it or not.

It’s a cool morning and he’s wearing his tan Carhartt coat, dark-wash jeans and boots, beard trimmed neatly and his cheeks just barely flushed from exertion as he takes a moment to think over the past year. He remembers standing here, just like this, with Regina when he first saw Graham’s engagement ring on her finger. He vividly recalls the jealousy, the disappointment and heartache he felt as the diamond flashed at him, can still feel the shot of annoyance at how it didn’t seem to match Her Majesty at all.

It’s been one hell of a year, and he fights a smirk. Between getting his arse kicked (on his birthday no-less) by Graham and those other fools, falling in love with Regina, getting to finally know Henry, the archery debacle, the storm, and now this - the end of Camp Sherwood - he’s surprised he hasn’t fallen into hysterics.

He wonders what they’ll all do after the sale is final. He’ll be able to keep the house and a few acres, at least that’s all paid for, but he has no idea where he might find a job. He doesn’t worry about Regina - she’ll easily find something in her field, she’s so versatile and between her education and experience, anyone would be lucky to have her. He does have some concern though, that whatever she decides to do might take her away from him, might lure her back to the city with Mal and Cruella to live the glamorous life he is certain she was destined for. Henry is adaptable enough now - Robin can clearly see it happening, can see the Mills family packing up and rolling out of his driveway in Regina’s black Mercedes, and he and Roland returning to the life they had before. Well, not exactly the life they had before, because now they’d know exactly what they were missing, and he’s not sure he or his son could ever get over that. He wonders if she’d let them go with her.

The thing is, Robin has no idea how to get her to stay. He feels like he can’t ask it of her, like he can’t even ask her to marry him, really. She’s been through so much in her life, has been used and misled, has been hurt and experienced such great losses that Robin doesn’t want to put restrictions or rules on her. He wants her to be utterly free to pursue whatever it is that makes her happy, even if
that doesn’t include people whose surname is Locksley.

So, he thinks he’ll give her the ring, because it’s a beautiful piece of jewelry for a beautiful jewel of a woman, and it’s selfish for him to keep it as ransom for a promise he’s almost certain she’s not willing to make. He twirls the platinum around and around in his fingers, admiring the way the large diamonds catch the light, letting himself fantasize for a moment what it might look like on her pretty finger, lets himself imagine her in his bed wearing just this ring, and he sighs heavily. He finally understands why Graham felt the need to beat the life out of him, why the man pursued her relentlessly after their break up, why he showed up and was ready to fight Robin just for the chance to speak with her one last time. Regina is just… everything, and he wishes he could give her what she so deserves.

She told him last night that he, Roland, and Henry are her family, that she didn’t think she’s done a very good job of showing him this (which is completely ridiculous, but he knows once she’s decided something there’s no use fighting her). The thing is, family is a beautiful sentiment, it feels wonderful to be included in the little circle of people she holds dear, but it’s not at all the same as if she had told him, Robin you’re my soulmate, or, I’ve never felt this way about anyone, or even, I can’t live without you.

And that is truly alright. It is. Being a part of Regina’s family is more important to him than any opportunity he’s ever had in his entire life, and he’s going to do whatever it is she asks of him. He’s perfectly content with just being her boyfriend, would be thrilled actually, to maintain the honor of it. Robin is certain he can make her at least somewhat happy - can make her smile, and laugh, can keep her satisfied in bed, can help her raise her son and be a decent example for Henry to follow once Robin figures out his new career path. Because, their children excluded, there is literally nothing else that matters more to him.

The crunch of gravel draws his attention, and he turns his head to see Regina approaching, dressed in all black like she’s headed to a funeral, when suddenly she pulls up sharply with a look of absolute despair on her face as she stares at him.

No, not at him - at what he’s holding in his hands.

Bugger.

It’s not quite how he imagined handing over the ring, thought perhaps he’d have some lovely speech to give her about how such a gorgeous woman deserves equally gorgeous jewelry, but it seems that’s not meant to be. After a brief pause, she continues toward him, steps up to the fence and mirrors his stance, stealing glances at the ring as she clears her throat.

At the exact same time he says, “I need to tell you something,” she says, “I need to speak with you,” and they both laugh at the awkwardness of the moment.

“I’d like to go first, if you don’t mind,” Robin says quickly - “What I want to say probably isn’t what you think,” he says carefully, indicating the ring. Her chocolate colored eyes are wide and quite obviously nervous, but she nods anyway, and he’s relieved to have the chance to explain this to her.

“I bought this ring a few months after we started dating, because I saw it while I was in the city and the second I laid eyes on it, I just knew it was the perfect ring for you.” He clears his throat, trying not to cry - the blasted tears come anyway but he fights the emotion hard enough that they don’t spill over. “I’ve come to realize that when I asked you to be mine this summer, that, well, not only was the timing absolutely appalling, but the question was also terribly unfair.” He pauses to sniff, rubs at his eyes for a moment then continues, “You’ve already had that great love of your life - I know that Daniel was the one for you, your perfect match, and I’m, well, I’m a shoddy replacement at best.”
Regina starts to object but he asks her to let him finish, and her eyes flash that tell-tale annoyance of hers but she allows him to continue anyway.

“I don’t want you to think for a moment that that makes me feel poorly - in fact, the opposite is quite true. I’m exceptionally pleased to perhaps be second best to him -” he’s trying not to cry but is failing, so he gives her a watery smile and tries for humor as he adds, “Though I do think I’m slightly better looking.”

Regina rolls her eyes but the annoyance is gone, replaced with what looks to him like sadness.

“We’re about to lose everything here at Camp Sherwood,” he continues, his voice cracks in the middle but he pushes on, “And you’ve been so wonderful in helping me to find a way to avoid all this, bloody brilliant you are, but at this point we both know that it’s not going to happen - I’m going to sell, and I think I’ve finally accepted that.” Again, Regina tries to interrupt but he talks right over her, he needs to finish this before his tongue gets too thick to speak anymore.

“But the reason I’ve accepted it isn’t because I don’t have a choice - truly.” Robin summons his courage for this part, because fuck, if he can just get this out, no matter what she decides, he’ll at least be able to sleep at night knowing he was completely honest with her, that there were no misunderstandings in this, that he was completely open with how he feels about her, about them. “The reason I can accept it, is because I’ve realized that I don’t need the camp to be happy. What I need to be happy is Roland, and Henry, and you, darling - and I need you to be happy too, so if I can see to that, well, I couldn’t possibly ask for more.”

There are tears in Regina’s eyes now, and she’s not crying, although he can see that she’s gripping the rail of the fence tightly from the white that’s showing in her knuckles. Christ, he loves her. “What we have together is so incredible to me, and I cannot imagine my life without you and Henry in it. But I completely understand your hesitation about marrying me, especially now,” he laughs softly, “So I want to assure you that being with you in whatever capacity you’ll allow is more than enough for me. I won’t pressure you into anything - I love you darling, more than I have ever loved another person, and I want to be a part of your life, in any way you’ll have me.”

Robin holds out the ring to her and says, “I want you to have this, with absolutely no strings attached - I bought this for you and you should have it, I want you to have it, and I -”

“Fifty million dollars,” she interrupts suddenly, her voice hoarse.

“I’m sorry?” he asks, completely confused.

Regina tucks her hair behind her ears and takes a deep, audibly shaking breath, her eyes red-rimmed and frightened looking as she tells him, “Fifty Million Dollars. My inheritance. I received the inheritance my father left me. It’s fifty million dollars.”

Robin laughs, because whatever the fuck she’s saying is absurd, and a bit cruel, if he’s being honest. Fifty million dollars - right.

“And I’m the Queen of England,” he counters, “There, now we’ve both said something ridiculous.”

“I’m not kidding,” she says firmly, straightening her spine and holding eye contact. “I wasn’t supposed to get it until February, when I turn thirty-five, but it was dispersed early.” She takes another deep breath and continues, “Robin, I’m telling you seriously, honestly, that right now, in this moment, I have fifty million dollars in my bank account.”

A strange tingle rushes down Robin’s spine, flares through his veins to his fingertips, his toes, up the
back of his head. She looks deathly serious as she says this, then she’s holding out her phone to him, and he takes it, stupidly staring down at the screen without being able to make sense of it.

He sees the familiar emblem of her private bank, the account numbers and her name, and then, there in ten big, bold letters, he sees the balance of her account. And it truly is fifty million dollars.

Robin’s hands start shaking so hard that he drops her phone, but he can’t even try to catch it. He has no idea what the bloody hell this means. His chest feels tight. He wonders if he’s old enough to have a heart attack. If he’s young enough to survive one.

“I didn’t know I was going to get it early,” Regina says quickly, picking up her phone and pocketing it. “I tried to get it released just before my last birthday and was denied,” she takes another breath and continues, but her voice is losing strength as she speaks. “I never told you because I didn’t want it to matter, I’m not going to change the way Henry and I live, I want to keep things the same, I don’t intend on running off to live like a millionaire.” She pauses again, voice shaking, stumbling over her words as she tells him, “For camp it wouldn’t have mattered, I wasn’t supposed to get it in time to stop the sale, but now… god, Robin, I’m so sorry I didn’t tell you, I was in shock when I found out, and then you left for England and I didn’t want to tell you over the phone, shit, I probably should have, I’m so sorry. I just, I didn’t want things to change, I love you so much and I couldn’t, I didn’t want to lose you.”

“You knew before I went to England?” he asks, and she nods. “My birthday?” Regina nods again, looking completely broken. “This is why you’ve been acting strange, is it?”

She licks her lips and meets his eyes as she says quietly, “Yes.”

He supposes he should be angry with her for withholding the information and letting him worry for an extra month, but he finds he really doesn’t care. It’s her money, and she didn’t have to tell him anything. The fact that she’s telling him now is quite thoughtful, really.

“I’m going to pay for the repairs to camp,” she adds, tucking back onyx hair that is already tucked back - a nervous habit that he is so familiar with now. “And I’m going to donate some to it as well, to make sure this can’t happen again.”

Robin almost smiles - Christ she’s nervous. She has certainly gotten herself worked up about all this.

“So, you don’t have to sell, Robin. You don’t have to accept the loss, or settle for anything.” She swallows thickly and Robin is so impressed with her bravery. She’s not crying, she’s not breaking down, she’s standing here straight as an arrow, looking him in the eyes and confessing like she’s next in line to the guillotine and he’s holding the rope.

“You said you were afraid you’d lose me?” he asks quietly, “What did you mean by that?”

She huffs out a frustrated breath and shifts uncomfortably in front of him. “I should have told you about it a long time ago, certainly when it showed up in my bank account. I don’t want things to change, I don’t want you to treat me differently, and I don’t want this to drive a wedge between us. It’s not mine, it’s my father’s money, and I just, I just want to help and then for everything to go back to normal, but I know that’s not possible.” Regina makes this horrible little noise in her throat like she’s about to break down, and that’s all he can take.

Robin reaches for her and pulls her in close, hugging her fiercely as he presses kisses to the side of her head and rubs her back. Her arms wrap around his waist and he’s relieved, he doesn’t want her to feel bad about this. He understands her fears and why she hesitated in telling him this.
Only, he’s not angry at all.

Robin pulls back from her and frames her face in his hands. “Regina, I’m not angry, I’m not hurt, and I’m not upset with you in the slightest, darling,” he says softly, kissing her then pulling back again. “I love you, and there is absolutely nothing that can change that, nothing that can change my opinion of you. You’re bloody perfect and I don’t care if you hate it when I say that.” He grins and she graces him with a short laugh, her eyes still sad and concerned but the fear seems to have abated.

He feels more confident, so he charges on, adding, “You can do whatever you’d like the with money, I hope you know that I certainly don’t expect you to invest in the camp, to save my arse. I meant what I said - you’re all I need, and I don’t want you to ever feel obligated to help just because you can.” Robin means this, has never been more serious in his life. “I mean it, darling,” he adds, “Do you understand? I need for you to believe me in this. I only want your happiness.”

It takes a moment, and another soft, sweet kiss, but eventually she nods, and he hugs her tight again. Honestly, she’s the most incredible woman in the world.

“I want to invest in the camp, though,” she says again, nodding vigorously. “I want to use my father’s money for this. I think it would have made him happy to help.”

Robin smiles and tells her, “Whatever you’d like to do, we’ll do. It’s your decision, love.”

He kisses her again, but she pulls back quickly, and now she’s got her hands on his neck, holding his eye contact as she says, quite strongly, “But now I need you to believe me in this - you’re second best to no one, Robin. I loved Daniel, yes, and maybe we were a perfect match, but I think I’ve made it pretty clear that I’m not interested in perfect anymore, and I never said he was the love of my life. You are the love of my life, and I can’t picture my life without you, either.”

And fuck, that’s just, this day cannot get any better. This is the best fucking day of his life.

Regina kisses him quickly then bumps his nose with hers and says softly, “So ask me again.”

Robin furrows his brow. “Ask you what, darling?”

Her perfect smile is absolutely radiant for a moment, then she bites her lip in that adorable way she does and takes his hand, the one he’s still holding her ring in, and clarifies, “Ask me that thing you asked me this summer.”

Robin’s heart slams against his chest. Oh god. Is she serious? She is. She’s fucking serious. Oh-god-oh-god-oh-god FUCK YES.

It takes him a moment to catch his breath, alright, two moments, but then he looks into her gorgeous eyes and asks, “Will you marry me?”

And though a minute ago he thought he couldn’t be happier, he is quickly proven wrong when she gives him another smile and says simply, “I’d love to.”

~Fin
End Notes

Not mine - if they were, they would do this stuff all the time.
As an avid fanfic reader, please understand that any similarities to other works are pure coincidence and absolutely not intended.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!