A Matter of Perspective

by RumbelleDearie

Summary

Set in an alternate universe, Belle French returns to Storybrooke Secondary School as the new librarian. Much to her surprise her former teacher Mr. Gold still works at the school. Adapting to her new adult relationships, Belle finds that she has much more in common with Mr. Gold then she thought. And the two begin to form an unusual relationship.

Updates whenever I can. Rest assured this story will be completed.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
"Love doesn't always make sense; especially to those on the outside.

But in the end really...It's all just A Matter of Perspective."
Chapter One: The New Librarian

"Behind every exquisite thing that existed, there was something tragic." -- Oscar Wilde: The Picture of Dorian Gray.

Belle held the small golden key in her left hand, fumbling it's sharp divots between her fingers. The golden ring that held the circular, white, plastic label, rested against her sweaty palm. The label in her hand read library. The print was small, rounded, and had a certain amount of grace to it. Belles pace was fast. She was nervous. Tomorrow was a big day for her and she wanted to be as prepared as she could. Her black 4 inch heels clicked along the tan ceramic floors as she made her way around a corner. Her head was tilted down staring at the key in her hand. Belles heart fluttered as her eyes quickly met the obstacle she was about to collide with. Before she could react, her chest and arms collided against a hard broad chest. Her forehead scarcely brushing against what she could only assume was the obstacles chin? The key to the library fell out of her hands and made its way to the floor, along with a stack of books and papers carried by her cohort. The man she had run into let out a deep grumble of frustration at the mess their collision had created. Belle bent down immediately, picking up the loose pieces of paper that had achieved freedom from their paper clip restraint. At first Belle was confused when the man hadn't bent down to help her; after all, both parties were equally guilty of the accidental outcome. However, she assumed that he seemed to believe the mess was entirely her fault and that he expected to watch her while she cleaned up the mess. Just when Belle was about to apologize for the accident, and then give him a sharp word about not helping her, the man began to speak.

"What are you doing here? School starts tomorrow, dearie." He gnarled with an eerie grin emerging between his thin lips and a crook at the corner of his mouth.

He thought she was a student?

"Oh! No... No I'm not a student!" She expressed with a tone of humour in her voice. Even though it was exactly what she had feared would happen.

Belle heard a crack and a clank as the man bent down, now curious, to help her stack up the books and papers. When Belle noticed the cane in his right hand, she suddenly felt guilty about seeking his help on the floor. Her face began to portray her embarrassment with the reddening in her cheeks. She looked up to gain a glimpse of his features. The mans shoulder length brown hair, with gleaming grey highlights, covered his tan leather skin which was cracked but well cared for. The wrinkles around his eyes and mouth spoke of untold pain and sadness. Belle smiled a little when she picked up the last book and read the title aloud.

"The Picture of Dorian Gray." She smirked and recited from memory, ""Those who are faithful know only the trivial side of love; it is the faithless who know love's tragedies."

The man was alarmed and albeit a little impressed, not that the small auburn haired girl before him needed to know that. She handed over the last copy of Dorian Gray and he placed it on the pile they had reconstructed together. He shifted so that his left knee was supporting all of his weight and brought his right foot level with the ground once again. His cane was vertical once more and all his weight was placed with both his hands on the handle, struggling to resume his body in the upright position. In this time Belle had already managed to stand from her squatting position, despite her heels betraying her balance and almost giving into gravity once more. Regret streamed through every ounce of his being that he had decided to join her on the floor. He quickly realized that he would be
unable to get up without seriously injuring his leg further. The bile rose in his throat at the thought of having to ask her for help; a girl he didn't even know and wasn't entirely sure if she was on school grounds legally.

"Dearie, I could use a little help." He exhaled, the force he was applying to his cane was tiring him quicker then he cared to admit.

"Oh! Of course." And Belle was over at his left shoulder helping him without a second thought. She allowed him to shift some of his weight onto her, as she helped pull him onto his feet without applying more weight to his right leg then was necessary. Now that he was completely upright Belle realized that he was only a few inches taller then her with her heels on. And that his eyes were brown. A rich, dark, empty brown. She smiled and bent over to retrieve his papers and novels from their pile on the floor. There were at least 20 copies Belle figured, and although The Picture of Dorian Gray was not a very thick novel she was astonished by their weight and thought perhaps she should carry them for him. It was almost as if he could read her mind and at that moment he reached his arm out and offered to take half of the stack. He tucked the books between his left side and left arm gesturing for her to follow him. It wasn't like him to usually accept help. But something about her made him feel safe to do so.

"So you know your Oscar Wilde." He said as the clank of his cane echoed through the empty hallways, and Belle had wondered how she managed not to hear it before.

"I like the lenses the novel uses to describe love. You know to me, love is... love is layered. Love is a... a mystery to be uncovered. I can't imagine it being as simple as the typical romance novels portray it." He thought he saw a gleam in those endless blue eyes of hers. She was so youthful. Full of spirit. And perhaps what he would only describe as naive. Why couldn't he stop looking into her eyes? It took him a moment before he remembered that he was an intelligent human being capable of scholarly thought.

"So, would you say that you're one of the faithful or faithless?" He stated remembering the quote she had offered him only moments before.

"Well I'd like to think I'm of the faithful. My life hasn't been eventful enough for me to lose faith in love yet. Love is hope, it fuels our dreams." Belle paused. "And yourself?"

"Ah, well I'm not much of a dreamer. Most would say that I'm a difficult man to love." The crook at the edge of his mouth returned. Belle couldn't decide if that grin was an attempt at a sincere smile or an attempt at intimidating her. Oddly she felt both. "Love. It's like a delicate flame. And once it's gone... it's gone forever." Belle could hear the sadness in his voice, and his lips turned into a narrow frown. The two fell into silence for a moment as Belle followed him to an unknown destination.

"So a...are you planning on reading Wilde with your students?" Belle asked adjusting the stack of books and pile of papers in her hands.

"Yes... Uh." He paused and turned to face her, leaning his cane against his leg and reaching his hand out for her to shake it. "It's Mr. Gold. Head of History, but I also teach English." Belle balanced the books with her left knee and left hand as she reciprocated his shake with her right, even though she already knew who he was. She hadn't recognized him immediately, but she would remember the sound of his voice any where.

"Belle French." She stated with a smile. And he looked at her quizzically waiting for her title. And he began to wonder if she really wasn't allowed to be on the premises.

"And your title?" He asked in a tone that he would never admit was hopeful.
What a pretentious question. Belle thought, until she realized he wanted to know what her position at the schools was.

"Oh right! I'm the new librarian!" Her voice cracked slightly with the embarrassment of having forgotten to introduce herself properly.

"The new librarian?" Gold didn't know that the school hired a new one. Especially one who still looked like a student. With the exception of her sheer white blouse, black pencil skirt, and most importantly her black heels. "I was just on my way to retrieve the key to the library from the office." He gestured to the direction the two had been walking together. That's when it hit her. A look of panic fell over Belles face and Gold had worried that he had unintentionally frightened the young girl, no women, no girl. Defiantly a girl. Usually when Gold frightened someone he knew that he was doing it.

"The library key!" She shouted breathlessly and ran back in the direction they had previously come from. Belle had forgotten to pick up the key after it fell to the floor when she collided with Mr. Gold. Mr. Gold hobbled after her until he found her on the floor once again, the stack of books at her side. Belle dragged her hands along the floor frantically searching for the misplaced key. She was going to lose her dream job before it had even started!

"Looking for something dearie?" Mr. Gold said almost mockingly to the girl on her knees. The bottom of his cane was standing a top the library keys label. Belle let out a hopeful gasp as she crawled towards the key on her hands and knees. When he didn't remove his cane at first she looked up at him from the ground. Innocent. It sent a shiver down his spin. Her innocence was washed away when her brow furrowed.

"Mr. Gold. Would you be so kind as to remove your cane." He lifted his cane slightly and Belle reached for the key quickly, as if she excepted him to slam his cane down at any minute. Belle stood from the ground finding herself all to close to Mr. Gold. But neither flinched at first. Until she backed away to retrieve the stack of books. This time she didn't wait for him. Instead she started on her way to the library walking slightly ahead of him.

Belle struggled with the key in the lock, and the task wasn't any easier with Gold's gaze on the back of her neck. The library's double doors were cream, along with most of the walls in the school. The circulation desk sat to the immediate right of the doors. In front of the desk was a small area of tables and chairs. To the left was a sitting area with couches and coffee tables. Along the back wall was a computer lab with almost 40 desktop computers. The book shelves took up the remainder of the space along the furthest right side of the library. Belle finally got the door open and she placed Mr. Gold's books on the circulation desk. She turned the lights on and then in turn the computer at her desk. Gold had followed her in and placed his set of books beside hers. He picked up his pile of papers and placed them under his arm.

"So what did you need from the library?" She asked, still reeling in the anger he had caused her by denying her the library key. Belle couldn't understand how one minute he had been completely agreeable, and even pleasurable to carry a conversation with. And the next minute he was back to that nasty, manipulative, scornful teacher.

"I need you to put this copy with editorial notes on hold for the students to utilize during the year." Belle grabbed the book and started to add it to her catalogue.

"So what brings you to Storybrooke Secondary School a day before school starts?" Gold asked eyeing the girl. Those auburn curls looked seemingly familiar. And her accent was unforgettable. So how come he couldn't quite place her?
"I could ask you the same thing?" She said with a sassy raise of her brow. It was almost a dream come true that she could talk back to him like this now. She remembered many a day when she wanted to argue her opinion till she was blue in the face. But he always seemed to have an intellectual quip. She hated to admit it, but he had always been brilliant.

"There isn't much waiting for me at home. I'm a bit of a workaholic. When I'm not working on my book I might as well be here preparing for the mindless youth." He rolled his eyes and flipped his hand in the air.

"You're writing a book! Will you tell me about it?" She asked eagerly.

"No." He snarled immediately. Belle felt sore from his harsh tone. She printed out a barcode and started to apply it to the spine of the novel Mr. Gold had handed to her. Belle gave in to the silence and decided to answer his question. After all, he had obliged hers.

"I'm here a day early because I just wanted to make sure I was prepared for tomorrow. This job means a lot to me. And... I want to be good at it." She said prideful.

"You're a librarian dear, not a rocket scientist."

"Well, excuse me for putting a value on my work. Just because being a librarian isn't an occupation you respect it doesn't make it any less important." Belle had unknowingly stood up from her stool and had her index finger poking into Gold's chest. Gold was flabbergasted. The petite girl and her little finger had stood up to him. And the beauty in it had almost rendered him speechless. So instead he laughed authoritatively.

"Careful dearie. I don't know if you've heard but I bite." He leaned into her finger his eyes glaring at hers. Belle had no idea how to react. He sensed her moment of contemplation and took advantage of her weakness. "Afraid are we?" His teeth snarled like a beast toying with it's prey. Belle didn't let the closeness or sudden heat scorching through her body faze her. And she looked as fierce as ever. Or as fierce as a small brunette in a little black skirt could.

"I'm not one of your students Mr. Gold. You can't scare me with idle threats and a snarl that's one laugh away from a smile." Belle stared at the crook at the corner of his lip, and she thought it quivered at her last sentence. Gold was fascinated by the way she stood up to him. He rather liked it. After eyeing each other, as if they were continuing their argument with their eyes, Belle took the opportunity to back away, grab her newly catalogued book and moved toward the 19th century literature section. Gold took the moment to let out the smallest of smiles. It was an honest smile. And he had no idea why. After carefully sliding the book onto an eye level shelf Belle turned to find that Mr. Gold, resilient as ever, had followed her. She let out a sigh that was mixed with frustration and fright from his unexpected appearance.

"Do you need anything else from the library Mr. Gold?" Her tone was sassy, she was giving him... attitude?

"No." Her tone had quickly whipped away any hint of the smile his face had once adorned, and his tone in turn was rough. He sighed. Remembering his gentlemanly values. "I just wanted to say goodbye Miss French. I best be heading home anyways. And I just wanted to wish you luck... for tomorrow." She smiled, her temper eased again. But he couldn't let her think she had won so easily. "Even if you are just a librarian." He smirked eagerly and turned quickly. Practically running, more like hobbling, to get out of the library and escape the fury he knew was to come.

"Why you! Mr. Gold!" She picked up a book and resisted the urge to throw it at him. Instead she started to chase after him. He picked up his novels from the circulation desk, tucking them under his
arm with his papers, and made his way to the double doors. "Just when I thought you were capable of being a decent human being!" Belle had reached her desk and instead started to throw her sticky notes and erasers at him, missing terribly every time. He struggled unable to get the door open, and Belle took the opportunity to pick up her stapler and take careful aim. With the door finally opening he paused to look at her as he stated:

"Good day Miss French!" He said smiling like a fool. With that Belle let out a grunt and threw the stapler right at his head. Mr. Gold ducked narrowly avoiding the stapler, which hit the door and broke as it fell to the ground. With that Mr. Gold went through the door frame allowing the door to close behind him. He headed down the hallway towards his classroom praying slightly that she didn't follow him. Gold knew he would not be able to outrun her again. Fortunately, Belle just stepped out into the hallway yelling after him.

"Careful Mr. Gold! Everyone knows it's best to have the librarian on their side." She thought she heard him chuckle. Belle let out all of the built up air in her lungs with a lengthy sigh. How could one man manage to hit all of the right nerves? And suddenly, Belle was unsure how she was going to survive then next year working with him. Her nerves increased as she returned to the library to work on her preparations. Ignoring the mess her anger had caused she sat down on her stool in front of her computer. And Belle couldn't help but let out a modest smile.
A Bit of History

“When your heart knows the truth, it never forgets.” -- Shannon L. Alder

Gold’s black Cadillac approached the salmon pink Victorian style manor. His car pulled over the lip of the driveway, easing up the incline. He put the car in park as he turned off the engine with a twist of his wrist. He slowly climbed his way up the nine stairs to reach the landing of his porch. The stained glass windows on the double doors were leaving their colourful patterns across the hard wood floors with the help from the setting sun. He hung up his coat on the coat rack and ventured right, up the few steps to the nearby landing. The landing led into an open floor concept living room, kitchen, and informal dining room. There was a grand fireplace in the living room with a stack of newly cut wood resting by the hearth. Gold marched into the kitchen, heading directly for the kettle resting atop the gas range stove. He filled the kettle with water, turned on the burner, and reached in a nearby glass cabinet for a tea cup and saucer. The tea cup he picked was white, with golden trim along the top, bottom, and handle, with royal blue flower stems painted on each side. The saucer, obviously, matched. It was his favourite set. As he waited for the kettle to boil he moved into the informal dining room. There was a very large oak cabinet on the back wall in which he pulled out the bottom drawer, taking amongst its content some old papers and duo tangs, and placed them on the coffee table in the living room. The kettle began to hiss and he returned to the kitchen in order to assemble his tea. With his tea in hand he moved over to the grey couch. Once sitting down he brought his right leg up, elevated onto the coffee table, and gently rubbed at his knee. He let out a small sigh of relief knowing their was less pressure on his joints. He took a sip of his tea and paused to admire the new decorative dagger he had acquired resting on his mantle piece. Gold was a collector. Antiques, and historical objects were his specialty. In fact, much of his home looked like a museum. This dagger in particular was a very rare find. The dagger was legend to hold mystical and magical powers. The existence of such a dagger was even recorded in stories by the Brothers Grimm. And Gold found he rather liked the glorified butter knife.

After feeling the affects of the soothing tea on his body, Gold began to muddle through the paper’s and duo tangs on the coffee table. He was severely perplexed that he was unable to recall how he previously new ‘Belle French’, or if he even knew her at all. Normally, Gold prided himself on his memory. It was one of his many talents. He flipped through the duo tangs, which were labelled by year. Upon their meeting at the school, Gold had thought she looked no more then twenty years of age. However, he knew that she must have taken several years of study in order to became a certified librarian. His hand came to rest upon a duo tang labelled 2008. He racked threw it’s contents, heading towards the F’s. When he saw her name. Belle French. Neatly typed under the header of a lengthy paper. Upon reading the title of her argumentative essay the memories flooded back to him.

*The tiny girl with the auburn curls. Her innocent, shy, and delicate smile. She sat alone, with a book in hand, at the front right corner of the room. His students usually avoided the front row. But she appeared to be brave enough, or foolish. She was such a quiet girl that he could often forget she was there. Until little Belle French would speak up to argue her opinion against his. But try as she might, he would beat her down until she failed, gave up, or lost.*

But one thing was certain, this new Belle French did not give up on a fight, and she was almost adept at beating him in one. The essay in his hand was entitled ‘Once Upon a time.’ He remembered, that Belle had argued that all of the Grimm fairy tales were really all related to one another, that the characters were intertwined and one in the same. Belle had taken a particular interest in the character of Rumplestiltskin and how he could be easily weaved into other Grimm stories. Mr. Gold had found the essay inspired. He had a soft spot for fairy tales and so had his son. He had given her an A. Stating that she had not disserved an A plus because although she used multiple sources of historical
literature she needed to grow up and expand her literary horizons. He remembered now, as he did even then, that he was lying. He just took pleasure in denying her an A plus. Even though, if he recalled, he had given her a ninety-eight percent in the final course. That was the highest grade he had ever given out.

Little Belle French had grown up to be a librarian, the librarian of her old high school in fact. And Gold himself, had been the young woman's teacher. Gold smiled, studying the differences between the girl and the woman. For he had decided, especially after having a stapler thrown at him, that she was in fact a fierce woman. And one thing was certain in his mind; he was excited to see her tomorrow.

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The little bell above the door jingled as Belle walked into, 'Game of Thorns', her fathers flower shop. A large man barley hiding between a bouquet of red roses peaked his head up timidly.

"Belle! How was your first day at school?" Maurice French said in his blubbery accent.

"I told you father, the first day is tomorrow. I just wanted to get started on my work a little earlier." She reached the big burly man and he bent down in order for her to place a loving kiss on his cheek. "If you're alright on your own father I'd like to head upstairs to take a bath?"

"Of course dear, of course. Just bundling roses. Haven't had a single customer all day." His tone was worried. But then it always was. Belle knew how much her father's shop was struggling. But she also knew how much the shop means to him, and meant to her mother. Belle wished she could help her father more, more then the free labour she provided that is, but she was already buried in a mountain of student loans. But with Belles new job she had faith that it was all going to get better. She could help support her father so he could retire, and she could start to pay off her debts. Even if that meant they would have to live off toast and pasta for the next few years.

Belle walked into the back of the shop and towards the staircase that led to the apartment above the store. The apartment door was unlocked but Belle had to shove her shoulder against the door in order to force it open. She moved through the apartment, picking up stray clothes her father had left lying around, and pushed open the door at the very back of the flat. Her bedroom was small. The walls were a light grey with royal blue trim amongst the edges of the crown moulding. Her double bed took up most of the room. Her bed had a white metal frame with posts on all four sides. The head board featured metal roses artfully moulded amongst the white bars. Her sheets were gold, her pillow cases too. And her duvet was royal blue with golden roses on it. There was an elegant white stand up dresser on the right side of the bed and a small round night side table on the left. The night side table held a water glass and stack of books. There were books all over the floor in her room; Belles bookshelf had been filled years ago. She flopped her coat and purse on her bed and kicked her heals off. Belle exited her room and turned into the room to the immediate left of her bedroom. Their bathroom was small, and dingy. But their was a beautiful claw foot tub begging for Belle to soak in it. She closed the door and turned on the bathtub tap. She unzipped the back of her black skirt letting it fall to her feet. She lifted her white blouse above her head and dropped it to the floor. She reached to her back unhooking the clips of her sheer black lace bra and moved the straps off her shoulders, dropping the bra atop her blouse. Finally, she stepped out of her matching panties, leaving them in the pile of her clothing. She grabbed a jar of bubble bath from underneath the sink and pored in part of its pinkish contents. After returning the bubble bath to the sink she tested the water with her hand. Once satisfied with the temperature her sleek naked form disappeared into the tub. The bubbles were clinging to her body as she lowered herself further, emerging her shoulders under the water and her knees raised slightly above. Belle welcomed the warmth and eased her body as her muscles began to relax and her tensions streamed out.
It had been ages since Belle had returned to Storybrooke Secondary. After graduating she went backpacking through Europe with her best friend Ruby. After being away from Storybrooke for a year she was not entirely eager to return back to the small town. She had applied to the University of Maine as an English major and history minor. Belle was thrilled when she was accepted. She packed her bags and moved into residence without hesitation. Belle had always known she wanted to be a librarian. It was either that or a writer, and Belle figured she could always write on her own time. It took her two years to complete her Masters in Library Science after finishing her undergrad. And after six years of studying away from her home, and her father, she knew she needed to return to the small little fishing town. Belles father had not faired very well without her. And the flower shop had done even worse in her absence.

But mostly, Storybrooke hadn't changed much. Belles worst fear about returning to work at her high school was that she would appear to be a student. And her first fear had already come true! She sighed heavily increasing the tension in her chest. Mr. Gold had thought she was a student, even though he hadn't remembered her being his very own student. Was she really that forgettable?

Belle had certainly not forgotten him. He hadn't really changed since she last saw him, so many years ago, when she turned in her final exam and thanked him for a wonderful year. He had always been an ass. The schools meanest, most manipulative, selfish, and yet brilliant teacher. Belle always hated to admit that she found him brilliant. Belle hadn't expected Mr. Gold to still work at the school upon her return. After all, he hated working with 'the mindless youth'. He was certainly wealthy enough to retire, what with owning half of Storybrooke as a supplementary income. Belle thought that perhaps he was too lonely to leave. Any man would be lonely. In that big mansion of his, all alone. Mr. Gold had been alone for as long as anyone could remember. But why?

Belles mind settled on images of his smile. That stupid little crook that would form at the corner of his mouth. Her tensions were melting away into the warm water once again. Mr. Gold hadn't changed much since the last time Belle saw him. He hadn't aged like her father. But there was so much more sadness in him. His face spoke of pain, longing, and loss, rather then pure anger and disappointment at the 'intellectual capacity of today's youth.'. Belle had thought that perhaps the man behind the mask was different too. That he was capable of being a decent human being. After all she was his co-worker now. But Belle quickly found out that he was just as childish as he had been six years ago, but unfortunately so was she. Belle giggled out loud remembering the look on his face when she had chucked the stapler at him. He was still the same man who would refuse to turn her A's into A pluses because he couldn't bare to see her win. And although he was a juvenile ass, Belle was just as much impressed by him now as she was back in high school. As the nerves in the pit of her stomach began to relax in the soothing water, one thing was certain in her mind: she was excited to see him tomorrow.
"Isn't it nice to think that tomorrow is a new day with no mistakes in it yet?"--Lucy Maud Montgomery: Anne of Green Gables.

It was a new day. The first day. And Belle was prepared for it. The staff congregated into the gymnasium at some ungodly hour of the morning. Principle Mills had called them in early in order to recite her 'New School Year' speech. Belle thought the woman just liked to hear the sound of her own voice. Regina Mills had been principle at Storybrooke Secondary for ages. The job just seemed to fall right into her lap. Belle sat timidly in her chair watching the staff arrive. There were many new faces that Belle hadn't seen when she was in school. A young women with short black hair entered chatting with a young man wearing a whistle around his neck. Belle assumed him to be the gym teacher. Two young men, both in leather jackets, and looking entirely to sexy to be teachers emerged laughing at one another. One of the men she recognized as Mr. Booth, the English and Creative writing teacher. Mr. Hatter the home economics teacher entered with Dr. Whale, head of the Science department. Dr. Whale had been in his first year of teaching when Belle took his grade eleven biology class, and Mr. Hatter had been her home economics teacher all through out high school. A third thin man entered, leaning against the door frame as if that was as far in as he was willing to come. He too was wearing a leather jacket. Belle wondered what was going on at the school with attractive teachers and leather. Her mind drifted to imagine if Mr. Gold had ever adorned any leather. She giggled mercilessly drawing the attention of the woman with the short black hair who had sat a row in front of Belle with her gym teaching companion.

"Hi! I'm Mary Margaret Blanchard. I'm the schools secretary. I'm also Principle Mills personal assistant, even though she would never admit that. She certainly doesn't pay me any extra for it." Mary Margaret smiled brightly. Her cheeks pushed up by the warm grin consuming the space on her face. Belle smiled back.

"I'm Belle French. I'm the new librarian!" Belles heart jumped about twenty feet every time she remembered that she was the librarian!

"Well welcome Belle. This is my husband David. He teaches gym, as you could probably tell." The man sitting beside her let out a charming smile, flashing a segment of white teeth in Belles direction. The pair made a wonderful looking couple. They appeared very honest sitting next to one another with David's arm around Mary Margaret's shoulders. Mary Margaret pulled out a snow white wallet taking out a picture of a baby wrapped all in blue. "This is our son Neal." Mary Margaret was glowing with pride. Belle gratefully took the pictures, stopping to look at one with Mary Margaret and a slightly younger looking woman with long blond hair. "Oh, that's my sister Emma. My mother and father had adopted her shortly before my mother died. She really helped me survive Regina's wrath; Regina married my father some time shortly after my mothers death. But since my fathers death... let's just say Regina has never cared much for Emma and myself." Belle was surprised by how forthcoming Mary Margaret was. She seemed to be one of the most trusting people Belle had ever met. And she liked that very much.
"Your son is beautiful." Belle said, concluding that that was the correct thing to say after all the information she had just received from Mary Margaret. Regina Mills shot an evil glance in their direction and Mary Margaret rolled her eyes, eliciting a smirk from Belle. But just when she thought she was about to get scolded like the school girl she used to be, the familiar tapping echoed in the gym. Mr. Gold had arrived and Regina's attentions were shifted directly towards him. She seethed with rage, clenching her fists and grinding her teeth at the near sight of the man. Gold also stopped at the door acknowledging the man who leaned against the door frame.

"Ah. Mr. Gold. How good of you to grace us with your presence." The sarcasm seeped through Regina's voice. She droned on for the next twenty minutes about her high expectations for this year, some of the changes she was implementing, the consequences of disappointing her, and rounded out with what a great staffing team they had. That was when Belle froze. Regina had directed her attention, and everyone else's in the room, over to Belle sitting with her legs crossed on her chair. "This is Miss Belle French. She will be the schools new librarian. She comes completely qualified and will be an excellent resource for all of you this year. Play nicely please." Regina snarled, flashing a glance to Gold. Regina knew that if anyone was to mistreat her gifted new librarian it would be Gold. And Regina didn't want to scare Belle away; finding a librarian willing to work in Storybrooke Maine was a challenge facing any principle. "You are dismissed everyone. Have a wonderful first day." The gym emptied quickly. Gold had retreated before Belle had the chance to send a smile his way. As she stood up from her chair Mr. Hatter made his way over to her.

"Belle French." He smiled, pleased with himself, adjusting the scarf around his neck. Belle remembered the crazy stories students used to come up with about the hidden cut on Jefferson Hatter's neck. Some kids thought that he was really a serial killer and one of his victims tried to kill him in order to escape. Others said that maybe he had tried to hang himself, and obviously failed. Whatever actually happened to him, all Belle knew was that he was one of the warmest teachers she had ever had. "It's lovely to see you dear." And he held out his arms to her for a hug. Belle was happy to oblige. "What are you doing back in Storybrooke?" His smile put her at ease. She was feeling awkward enough as it was.

"Well I've always wanted to be a librarian. And my father really needed me." She said, her voice shaking slightly at the later sentence.

"Well I think you'll make a wonderful and insightful addition to our school. I know the hallways will certainly be warmer with that precious smile of yours." Belle blushed. "We still have a few minutes before the student's start arriving. Care for a tour?". He asked holding his arm out for her to take. Belle reached for it and allowed the man to lead her out of the gym. "Don't be afraid to call me Jefferson dear, I think you'll settle in soon. Most of your teachers have retired now anyways. Dr. Hopper left just last year to open up his own practice. And can you imagine, Gracey, my Grace, do you remember her? She'll be starting high school this year. Along with the principles boy, that should be interesting. I can't believe she's grown up so fast." Jefferson rambled on like that for a while, mindlessly showing her rooms that she already knew existed. Belle just nodded, feeling welcomed. "Oh Belle, this is Graham Humbert. He teaches law and politics." Jefferson directed Belle to the tall man in the leather jacket. The jacket had a red stripe under the color which was flared up. His face was covered in a scruffy beard and neatly combed hair.

"Hi Belle." He said warmly in a deep Irish accent. "Lovely to have you. I'll definitely be stopping by the library for your help this year." He smiled taking a bite of a bright red apple in his hand.

"Then I guess I'll brush up on my knowledge of law." Belle smiled. And the two liked each other immediately. It was hard not to like Belle. Especially with that beautiful smile of hers. Jefferson walked her back to the library talking about his daughter Grace who had been but a little girl when Belle was in school. Jefferson was a single father and it was not uncommon for him to spend hours
talking about his Gracey.

"Well Belle, I hope your day goes smoothly. I guess I'll be seeing you around."

"Thank you...Jefferson." She hesitated for less than a second but told herself to do the brave thing. And he beamed up at her as soon as she had done it.

"Goodbye Miss French." He said very officially and turned towards his classroom. Belle opened the library doors to find the lanky man who stood at the door of the gym sitting on one of the chairs with his feet up on the table. Her destroyed stapler was in his hands.

"Now how is it, that your stapler is already broken on the first day love?" His grin widened. The man was apparently pleased with himself for startling her. He was even more satisfied when her cheeks began to redden looking at the stapler.

"I lost my temper yesterday and the stapler may have fallen victim to it." Belle stated as she walked over to the circulation desk and sat down on her stool. She then looked at the man, looked at his feet on the table and let out a disapproving "Eh-Hmm." He seemed to get the message and disdainfully took his feet off the table. He got up from the chair and swaggered over to Belles desk, leaning his hands on the counter top.

"You know you should really come see me about that. Your temper that is." Belle raised her brow at the man. She didn't know why but she was indulging him. It seemed to amuse him and Belle didn't want to get on the bad side of any of her co-workers. Especially not after her disastrous encounter with Mr. Gold. "The names Will. Will Scarlet. I'm the guidance counsellor."

"Nice to meet you Will, I'm..." But before she could continue he cut her off.

"Belle I know." He intentionally raised his eye brows up twice.

"You don't look like a guidance counsellor Mr. Scarlet?" Belle stared at his jeans and jacket.

"Ah well, I'm not a very good guidance counsellor. The kids call me the Knave of Hearts!" He raised his brow at her again. He really seemed to favour them. "The kids mostly come to me for personal stuff. But don't tell Regina that or I'm fired." Belle laughed slightly. She could see why the students felt comfortable coming to him.

"Well. Mr. Scarlet, I promise not to tell Principle Mills if you promise not to put your feet up on my tables." Will smirked.

"That I can do Miss. French!" He lifted his hands and playfully hit them back against the counter. With a smile he began to walk towards the door. "Welcome to Storybrooke!" He shouted to her on his way out. "Oh and might I ad, you have quite the lovely figure in that skirt of yours Miss. French." With that Will left swaggering off to the guidance office. Belles mouth opened slightly. Her first day had certainly started out very unusually.

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Mr. Gold hadn't visited her all day. In fact, they hadn't even seen each other in the halls or the staff room. Secretly, he had been avoiding her. Gold was looking forward to seeing her again. But that cowardly part of his old self began to take control and suddenly he was all nerves. But fortunately, one student in his last period class had asked one of the stupidest questions Gold had ever received in his teaching career, and as a result he was able to rip the boy to pieces and regain his powerful, brave, and monstrous demeanour. About half an hour past three, when most of the students and staff had left the school, he limped over to the library. He knew she would be there, doing extra work or
getting ready for tomorrow. Gold took a deep breath before entering the library and finding her typing away at her computer. Belle looked up and smiled. Although her insides were screaming of undecipherable emotions. Mr. Gold walked over to Belles desk and leaned his cane against the desks side. He placed his hands, folded atop the counter and that crook at the corner of his mouth returned. Belles eyes brightened.

"So tell me dear. What was it that fascinated you so about Rumplestiltskin?" His tone was not entirely friendly. And Belle wondered if perhaps she went to far with throwing the stapler at him. But she couldn't help but feel a small thrill of happiness when he had remembered.

"So you remember now?" She said disguising her happiness level with disdain.

"Frankly, I'm quite ashamed that I forgot." His statement was honest and true. And Belle was fluttering on the inside. Why on earth was she fluttering on the inside? "Can you ever forgive me Miss. French?" Gold gave her an honest smile. And in this moment Belle wouldn't have believed you if you told her he wasn't always such a well humoured gentleman.

"It's Belle. And you've already been forgiven Mr. Gold." She paused. "But can you ever forgive me for throwing a stapler at you?" Gold laughed. And Belles worries eased.

"Of course dear! I rather enjoyed your little act yesterday." He smirked maliciously. And Belle sighed, the smile wavering from her face. She was not in the mood to be sassed by him after receiving sass from young people all day. He sensed the change in mood and an array of curse words streamed through his mind about what a fucking idiot he was. Gold contemplated his next move. He wanted to please her. He just had no idea how. Belle wasn't making it any easier for him by choosing not to ad to the conversation after the nature of his last remark. Gold sighed building up his courage.

"It's Reagan. My name. You may use it, that is, if you like?" He waited with baited breath.

"Reagan. I never knew." She smiled and Gold's knees buckled.

"Most people don't." He said raising his brows and tilting his head. His hair fluffed from side to side. Belle waited in silence for a moment. And then she gingerly reached her hand out to place it over his folded pair. Gold's heart stopped. And when she didn't remove her hand right away he thought it might never start again.

"Thank you." She said in a tone only slightly more audible then a whisper. Her azure eyes in tandem with his molasses brown.

"For what." He asked bewildered. And if a stranger had interrupted it would have appeared as if they were whispering secrets between the two of them.

"For your name." Belle's eyes unwavering from his. Most never survived eye contact with the beast for this long. "You didn't have to give it me. It just... It's made me feel better, that's all. I've been afraid of being treated like a student." She made a face as if her feelings were silly. And with that she withdrew her hand and her eye contact. Gold felt his heart beat again. And yet all he wanted was for her to return her gaze and touch upon him.

"Well I can assure you Belle. You will have none of that on my part." He paused and she smiled. "It's quite clear you've worked hard to get here. And I'm sorry for my behaviour yesterday. I have been known to be..." He couldn't find the word and she was much to eager to assist him.

"Childish?" He sneered at the word. But gave in!

"Perhaps." Belle let out a dainty giggle. It was unlike anything he had ever heard before. Belle had
never laughed, or smiled like that when she was a girl. Gold found that he rather liked this Belle French. Much to much.

"Will you walk me out?" She mused. Turning off her monitor and grabbing her brown purse from underneath the desk. Gold was flabbergasted. But he had no objections. He wondered if it was to much to offer her his arm. He did it anyway. If she chose not to take it he could always pretend to be adjusting his suit jacket. But Belle took his arm with no hesitation. Belle parted for a moment to turn off the lights and lock the door. They walked through the lonely halls together stopping at the main office to return the key. Regina Mills was still sitting in her office attending to her work. Belle tried to be as quiet as possible placing the key on the key ring. Just as Belle turned to leave Regina's head popped up.

"Belle!" She stood up from her chair, opening the glass door and entering into the main segment of the office. "How was your first day?"

"It was nice, thank you Regina." Belle smiled. And Regina's eyes wandered over to Gold hovering in the hallway.

"The teachers treating you nicely I trust?" She edged her head to Gold and Belle turned to look at him too. He was attempting to evade their eye contact. "Don't worry about him Belle. He's all bark." Belle smiled to herself remembering their first encounter when she had stood up to him with her finger against his chest. "If he gives you any problems Belle just let me know. I'd be thrilled to have a reason to get rid of him." Regina dawned a deliciously malevolent smile on her face.

"It's alright Regina. Everyone's been wonderful, including Reagan." Belle reached her hand up to still on Regina's arm.

"Who's Reagan?" Regina asked bluntly. And suddenly Belle didn't know whether Gold had wanted Regina to know his name. But then again, Regina could easily come across the information if she wanted to find out. But Belle decided against clarifying. He had given his name to her not Regina. And it made Belle feel special. Even if it was only a name.

"You can relax Regina. I'll see you tomorrow." Belle smiled and returned to Golds' side, taking his arm once again. Regina watched them in awe. What on Earth just happened? Regina thought to herself.

Belle and Reagan walked out the front doors of the school arm in arm. The pair walked over to the teachers parking lot. When Gold noticed only his and Regina's cars amongst the painted yellow ports he turned to Belle and asked,

"Where's your car dear?"

"Oh, I don't have one, I walk." Belle stated, hiding her shame because she knew the only reason she didn't have a car was because she couldn't afford it.

"In those shoes, dearie?" Gold's eyes turned towards the four inch stilettos. They were black with white at the toes, tuxedo style.

"I can manage just fine. I'm quite equipped to walk in them thank you very much!" Belles vocal quality raised in pitch with the pride she demonstrated in herself.

"I can see that." Gold said, letting his eyes wonder up her legs, her pleated grey skirt ending just above the knee. "Allow me to drive you home. I'm assuming you still live above the flower shop? It's hardly out of my way." Gold waited with bated breath. Belle didn't want to say yes. But at the same
"Alright." She smiled. "Thank you." Gold walked Belle over to his black Cadillac and opened the passenger door for her. His car was clean, as was everything in his life: meticulous. The leather was cold against Belles bare legs. She immediately turned on the heater once Gold had started the engine; Maine was not the warmest of States considering its north eastern local, and the cold weather had come earlier this September. Gold chuckled at her ease and willingness to take control. A feature he quite enjoyed. Belle hesitated however when it came to changing the radio station. He sensed her hesitation and instead of prancing on her weakness like he had last time, this time he comforted her.

"Feel free to change it Belle." Belle leaned forward fiddling with the knob on the car radio. She settled upon a station providing classical instrumentals. Her head leaned against the window watching the houses and trees blur as they sped past. There was something comforting about their silence. Belle felt safe, and so did Reagan. The drive over to Belle's apartment was around ten minutes. And although the walk wasn't an arduous one she was grateful for the ride. Gold parked his car in front of the shop. And at first Belle hadn't even realized that they had arrived. She was lost in a world that didn't even exist to her.

"Belle." He said quietly to her. But her attention was given to the families crossing the street in their fall jackets, holding hands and smiling. "Belle." He gingerly tried for a second attempt. When she didn't respond he reached his hand over and gently placed it on the top of her thigh. Belle closed her eyes at the touch, but did nothing else. She was unmoved. Gold called to her once more, "Belle, you're home.". With that Belles eyes opened and her head returned to the upright position, concealing the flesh of her neck back under the collar of her fall coat. Gold quickly pulled his hand away, hoping she might not have noticed he ever placed it there in the first place.

"Sorry." Belle said pensively. Thoughts were racing through her mind. Her cheeks reddened and the redness began to spread along her neck and further down, although he didn't need to know that. Belles heart was pounding as she told herself over and over again...Do the brave thing and bravery will follow. So Belle leaned over to Reagan and placed her lips lightly to his left cheek. His stubble was rough against her lips but at the same time his skin was soft. He was tender. "Thanks for the ride Reagan." He loved the way his name sounded rolling off her lips. The two smiled tentatively at one another.

"You know... Belle I could pick you up tomorrow. That is if you wanted? I mean only so you wouldn't have to walk that is."

"Oh. Reagan. I usually arrive at the school fairly early. I probably leave before you do." Belle placed her hand on the door handle.

"Well what time do you usually leave? You know... it will be snowing in Storybrooke before you know it. Or have you forgotten how bad our winters can be?" Belle gnawed at her bottom lip contemplating his offer.

"I usually leave the shop at seven." Belle opened the door and started to get out of the car. Ducking her head in so that she could still speak with him.

"Then I'll be here at seven."

"Fine, but I'm buying the coffee." And before he could protest the little auburn haired librarian closed his Cadillac door with a smile. She waved goodbye to him from the door of her fathers shop. And as he pulled away she reached her hand down to her left thigh rubbing gentle circles in the area his warm hand had once been. Her face smiling.
"I love you like a fat kid loves cake!" -- Scott Adams.

"God I've missed that smile around here." Belles father beamed up at her, black circles under his eyes. He was building bouquets that Belle knew would only wilt and be thrown into the compost.

"What is it that put such a grin on my girls face? And who's car was that I saw you getting out of?"

"It's Reagan Golds." Although Belles face was still all smiles her fathers turned into a frown. Belle continued but he wasn't really listening to her. His mind was petrified from the moment she said Gold. "He still teaches at the school and he's offered to drive me so I don't have to walk. Isn't that sweet of him Papa? He's really quite a different man than I excepted..." Moe's ears could no longer take the words coming from his daughters mouth and his mind was ready to snap now that it had caught up with the conversation.

"Gold is no man Belle! He's a beast! And he is certainly not sweet! You should stay away from him... he's no good, no good, rotten to the core. I don't care if you have to walk 100 miles to get to that school you will not be taking his charity! I can't bare to think what that monster will do to you trapped in the confides of his car!" For a moment Belle actually began to think about all the things Gold could do to her in his car, but she remerged into reality when her father smashed his hand against the glass counter shattering it. Moe was shaking with rage and confusion. And now he was bleeding, thanks to the small pieces of glass embedded in his hand.

"Father, no one decides my fate but me!" Although he had angered Belle she reached for the dusty first aid kit hanging by the front door. She used tweezers to, not so delicately, pull the glass shards from her fathers fist. The alcohol wipes stung as she rubbed them over the surface. "He's just a lonely man offering to drive a poor woman to work." She placed a bandage tightly around his hand covering the open gashes.

"We're not poor Belle." Her father detested under his breath. But Belle heard his remark.

"Yes we are Papa! The store is in debt, we can barely afford the apartment, I'm drowning in student loans, and you're too afraid to give up the thing that's ruining us!" Perhaps Belle had gone to far with that last remark. Her father was already a broken man as it was. And the shop was all that was left of his true love. He got up and headed towards the store entrance. "And where do you think you're going?" Belle used her librarian scowl on the old man.

"To the Rabbit Hole!" With that Moe French left Belle standing in a mess of glass heading towards several beers with his name on them. Belle wondered if he would even come home that night and set about to cleaning up the already doomed flower shop.

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Despite her fathers badgering Belle waited outside the store front with two coffee cups in hand and a bag with a Granny's Diner label on it. The midnight black Cadillac came to a rolling stop right in
front of her and Gold reached over opening the door for her. Gold had barely managed to sleep the
previous night. He had gotten home and spent what felt like hours in front of the mirror looking at his
cheek where she had kissed him. It meant nothing of course. It was just an innocent little token of
appreciation from an affectionate woman. But Gold couldn't help but feel light on the inside. It was
an unusual feeling for the man with an extraordinarily dark soul.

"Morning!" The beautiful creature chirped as she entered the monsters car. Like Belle had expected,
her father hadn't returned home that night. She was only marginally worried. He had done this
before, even when she was just a girl. Belle placed the coffee cups in the cup holders and kept the
bag seated possessively in her lap. She buckled her seat belt and kept her head facing forward. Gold
wasn't one-hundred percent sure, but he thought he had gotten fairly adept at reading Belle, and he
sensed something was off.

"Is something the matter dear?" He hadn't put the car in drive yet.

"It's just...How could you tell something was wrong?" She turned engaged to Reagan.

"It's your eyes. They um... there's a sadness to them." Belle was fighting back tears. "What's
troubling you?" He intimately tucked a stray hair behind her ear. He let his fingers slide along the
shell of her ear, stroking her hair lightly. For some reason Gold's brain had trouble reasoning around
Belle. The result was a level of physical embraces that Gold had not expressed in years.

"It's my father. He went out drinking again last night and he didn't come home. He's sixty now and I
worry what the alcohol does to him. He's already an idiot sober." Belle flashed a guilty smile. And
Gold hated to admit it but Belle was more then accurate. He bit his tongue and curbed his rudeness.

"I have an...associate. If you like, I could give him a call and make sure your father makes it home
alright?" Gold was like putty in her hands. He couldn't bear to see her cry.

"You would do that for me?" Of course he would do that for her! He would do anything to see her
smile. Gold had quickly realized that he couldn't live without that smile. And he had only known this
version of Belle French for three days! Gold was acting ridiculous. Pull yourself together man!

"Of course. It's no bother. I wouldn't have to lift a finger, that is, except for dialling the phone
number." He managed to achieve a large laugh from Belle. Her smile was back and his heart seemed
to melt in his chest.

Gold rounded the corner into the schools parking lot at 7:15. The two were an hour early and headed
strait for the library, key in hand. Once Belle got the door open she placed her coffee and the
Granny's bag on the table nearest to the circulation desk. She moved behind the desk to place her
purse under the counter and took off her purple coat and hung it on the coat rack behind the desk.
She offered to take Reagan's black coat and hung it up as well. Mr. Gold was dressed in his usual
waistcoat and suit. Today it was an onyx black suit, black shirt, and black waistcoat, with a yellow
and blue stripped tie. Belle was much less formal, although incredibly stylish. She wore a lacy plum
long sleeved shirt and a brown knit skirt with black panty hose. Her hair was tied up into a lose bun,
with several of her curls framing her face. She had a light amount of make-up on and Gold
appreciated how it drew all his focus to her radiant eyes. Belle joined Reagan at the nearest table and
propped herself onto its' surface, leaning over the Granny's Diner bag.

"Now, now Miss French, tables are for working and eating, not sitting. We don't need to be scolded
by the librarian do we?" He leaned off the back of his chair and closer to the table. "I hear she has a
bit of a temper." Gold narrowed his eyes. He had no intention of amusing her, but apparently that
was the effect he had had on her.
"Well Mr. Gold. I don't think we need to worry about the librarian. I have a feeling she won't mind."
Belle giggled and Gold swallowed, resting his back against his chair, and yes, he was starring at her legs. "I didn't know what you liked, so I got a few pastries and muffins." Belle said as she pulled out a plethora of options for Reagan to choose from.

"I'm usually fairly easy to please, Belle. As long as you didn't get any apple Danishes. I have a tendency to avoid apples."

"Hmm." Belle made an adorable face with the new information she had learned about him. "I've never been very fond of apples either! I'm a sucker for pastries with chocolate on them! Any excuse to eat chocolate for breakfast is a good one in my opinion!" Belle took a large bite of a chocolate covered croissant. Gold couldn't help but chuckle at her. It seemed very fitting to him that Belle loved chocolate. Gold stumbled upon a lemon Danish and picked it up in one of the napkins she brought.

"The lemon Danish, happens to be my favourite breakfast pastry from Granny's, and as much as I hate to admit it, the women makes rather delightful scones and tea biscuits." Belle smiled. She was glad she had picked out something he would eat. She had been afraid that he might have sat there and watched her scarf down all the pastries she had bought because she couldn't bare to see them go to waste. Belle took a sip of her coffee and cautiously wiped her mouth clean with her napkin. "So Belle, where did you end up going to university?"

"I got accepted to the University of Maine for English and history on a partial scholarship. I also did my Masters in Library Information and Science there," Gold took a drink of his coffee, studying the woman in front of him. "Where did you study? It must have been some place fancy, what with how intelligent you think you are?" Belle giggled and Gold felt her figurative jab right between his ribs. He could no longer let her reign so freely around him.

"I happened to study history, English, and a small amount of art history at the University of Edinburgh way back when. I also happen to be a certified lawyer from The New York Law School. But I got my teaching degree here, at the University of Maine. You best watch yourself with your quips dear. You don't want me on your bad side." Gold grinned eerily. But Belle wasn't going to let it stop her.

"So...you were born and raised in Scotland?" Belle asked. Gold diverted answering her question; he was only capable of so much civility, and he had already been using all of it during the drive to work. So instead he threw her query back at her.

"You were born and raised in Australia?"

"That wasn't a yes or no Mr. Gold." Belle was just as willing to play dirty if Gold was.

"Neither was that, Miss. French." He raised his brow and Belle sighed. It was clear that she was the adult here. And if she wanted to maintain her relationships in such a way she was going to have to be the mature one here.

"Yes. I was born and raised in Australia. My father and I moved over to Storybrooke when I was fourteen. My mother had always wanted to move to the States. She wanted to live in a small town and open up her own flower shop. We had quite a large extended family back home, I think my mother liked the idea of keeping things small, less attention on herself. My mother died when I was thirteen and my father decided he was going to make her dreams come true for her, even if it was too late. So we moved here. I felt more alone then ever when we got here. It was Ruby who saved me. Ruby Lucas, she works at Granny's?" Gold nodded his head reassuring her that he was following her tale. "Well I came two months into the school year, in a new country, and I'd just lost my mother.
Ruby was a great friend to me from the start, she's still my best friend now." Gold cringed internally, he had mixed feelings about the Lucas girl, but mainly the Lucas Girls Grandmother. "We actually spent a year backpacking through Europe after high school together. I always wanted to see the world. It didn't take much to convince Ruby to come with me, she kept saying something about lemurs. My father on the other hand, he has trouble letting me go." Belle's voice stilled in deep thought about her mother.

"Now I'm sorry for being so crass." Gold didn't usually apologize, even when he was in the wrong. Normally, he would wit or criticize others until they forgot they deserved an apology from the man.

"I suppose I shouldn't expect any less from you." Belle's tone was sarcastic, she had not intended her comment to be hurtful and he understood. Belle paused. They both finished their pastries but Belle was more then eager to grab a chocolate chip muffin and start to nibble at it. Gold simply stayed seated staring at her. "I know my mother would have been proud of me. She loved books. She used to read to me every night. I think that's why I wanted to be a librarian." Belle swung her legs back and forth as she began to eat her muffin again.

"What was your favourite European destination from your year abroad?" Belle's face lit up. She quickly chewed the contents in her cheeks and took a quick sip of coffee.

"France. We got to spend a lot of time in little towns and quiet villages. Ruby didn't want to leave because she caught the attention of a particularly handsome young man, and much to my regret I was her translator." Belle rolled her eyes.

"You speak French?" Belle only nodded. "You continue to surprise me with your talents Miss French. I'm afraid I've underestimated you."

"I think you'll find me surprising in many ways Mr. Gold." Gold wasn't sure at what point they had reverted back to their surnames. And he also wasn't sure if they were just using them to flirt with one another. But Gold believed it was not possible for a young lady like Belle to return his attentions, if only to be polite. They were silent while she finished the muffin. Gold thought she might have been debating eating something else but she folded up her napkin and decided against it. Gold sighed. He was going to give into her.

"To answer your question, I was born and raised in Scotland." Gold gritted his teeth immediately. He couldn't escape telling her now. "I don't like talking about it much." He hesitated.

"It's fine Reagan. You don't have to tell me." She had used his first name again. Well now he definitely had to tell her.

"I was raised by my aunt and her partner in Glasgow. I met my wife in high school and we married while I was in University. She wanted to come to America and I would have done anything to please her." Belle looked over to his ring finger. The finger was empty and Belle didn't know that Mr. Gold had ever been married.

"What happened to her, your wife?" Belle asked. Gold had no idea how to answer. The truth was much too complicated and he was not ready to share it yet.

"Uh... we divorced. She's been dead for nearly fifteen years now."

"I'm sorry Reagan." Gold brushed off Belle's concern and instead stood up.

"I better be going. Things to do." Gold abruptly grabbed his coat from the coat rack and sulked out of the library leaving Belle perched upon the desk. Belle was terrified that she had offended him.
Without thinking of the consequences she followed him out into the hall and shouted after him, much like she had upon their first meeting.

"Don't think you can get out of spending time with me so easily Mr. Gold!" And although Gold hadn't turned around to face her, he did stop walking towards his classroom. Belle took that as a sign of his recognition and she returned to her library. Gold chuckled and he resumed his pace. And as sullen as their last topic of conversation had made him he couldn't help but let out a bashful smile.

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Belle's morning was uneventful, but she enjoyed a pleasurable lunch with Will Scarlet and she spent an engaging afternoon with August Booth and his creative writing class, who visited the library for an assignment they would be working on. Thirty minutes after the school bell had rung Belle was not entirely sure if Reagan would still be willing to drive her home today. She turned off all the computer monitors and went to grab her coat. Much to her surprise he stood outside of the library waiting for her.

"I didn't think I'd be seeing you around her for a while." Belle locked the library door and turned to him.

"Well like you said Miss. French, I can't get out of spending time with you that easily." She giggled, but stifled her laughter. Belle returned the library key to the office and followed Reagan to the front doors. She halted for a moment. And he held out his hand for her. Belle timidly took his hand in hers and he walked her over to his car. This time the silence in the car was not comforting. Gold was tense and Belle was agitated. Gold pulled up to the flower shop and put his car in park. Belle hurried to get out, opening the door but stopping herself before leaving.

"I'm sorry if I've done something wrong Reagan." Belle bit the bottom of her lip as she waited hopeful for a response.

"Don't be. It's entirely my fault. Talking about my ex-wife puts me in a bad mood. I have a lot of negative memories where she is concerned." He bowed his head in shame.

"Will I see you tomorrow morning?" Belle asked, her smile weakly returning to her face.

"Of course." Belle leaned forward to kiss his cheek again but she stopped herself. Instead she backed out of the car and smiled, waiving goodbye to him.
"A friend is someone who knows all about you and still loves you."— Elbert Hubbard

Belle had to unlock the shop door; her father hadn't been sober enough to open the store today. Belle walked up to the apartment and to her relief found her father sprawled out on the couch. Just like Reagan had promised her. She made her father a warm cup of tea and brought him two aspirins.

"Papa, wake-up. I need you to take these for me, and drink up, please." Moe grumbled in response.

"I'm so-rr-y Be-lle" Moe slurred his words at Belle. And suddenly she never appeared so small in her life.

"I know Papa." Belle stroked his head and went into her bedroom. She tossed her shoes off, jumped up on her bed, and took her panty-hose off. Her mind settled on Reagan Gold. And Belle let out a frustrating sigh. She rolled over and let out a scream of frustration into her pillow. When that hadn't worked she picked the pillow up and threw it at the wall, landing right in front of her door. Things had started out so well and turned on a dime. Why had she brought up his past? She was stupid. She should have known he wouldn't want to share with her. But at the same time she wanted to know. She wanted to know about him, understand him. She wanted...him. Why did she want him! Belle picked up another pillow and threw it at the same wall. She reached over to the floor of her bedroom and searched for her cell phone in her purse. The phone rang.

"Hey Ruby!" Belle was already relieved to hear her best friend's voice.

"Hey Belle! How are you? You didn't call me after your first day? Was it good? Was it a disaster? Oh my gosh you have to tell me about your co-workers."

"Well Ruby, I actually had a bit of a rough day today, but hearing your voice has already improved my mood."

"Oh darling, tell me all about it!" Belle went on to tell Ruby about the great staff and even some of the students who always brightened her day. But what Belle really wanted to talk about was Gold. And it made her insides tremble.

"I can't believe you got to spend the afternoon with August Booth, even if he was teaching, I know I..." Belle interrupted Ruby, absorbed in her thoughts.

"Ruby do you remember Mr. Gold?"

"Eh yes. He owns the inn, and the diner. He still teaches? I'm pretty sure he gave me a C in grade 12 English. Granny was not pleased."

"Well he's been driving me to work, and home." Belle was drawing little circles on her left thigh.

"What? Gold drives you?"

"Yes. He...he a... offered to drive me so I didn't have to walk, and we ate together this morning; I bought us breakfast."

"Was it weird?" Ruby's tone was inquisitive more than anything else.

"Not at first. He's actually been really sweet. But..." Belle was surprised by how easily the answer
"Wait sweet. Did you just use Mr. Gold and sweet in the same sentence?" Belle's father let out some grumbling noises and Belle got up to pick up her pillows and close her bedroom door. Even if her father wasn't sober yet she didn't want him privy to more information than necessary.

"Yes I did Ruby." Belle was blushing as she paced the small distance in her bedroom. "He's been treating me like an adult, but then he goes and acts all childish, and you know my temper, I fight right back. I'm worried I upset him today. He just makes me so nervous. And I have no idea why I care about what he's thinking or feeling." Belle flopped back down on her bed. If the mattress wasn't so soft she was sure she would have made a thumping noise.

"Belle..." Ruby's voice was soft.

"Yes." Belle bit her bottom lip.

"You didn't just bite down on your lip did you?" Belle was shocked! How could Ruby tell? Belle quickly dropped her lip from her mouth.

"How could you tell..." Belle's voice was almost a whisper.

"Oh. No. Belle." Ruby was quiet at first but then her booming voice exploded over the phone. "You like him! Oh my gosh Belle! You have a crush on Gold. OMG" Ruby was squealing.

"I do not. We're co-workers. He just...interests me. And I admire him. I feel like I could learn a lot from him..."

"Yeah he'll teach tons of things... in bed!"

"Ruby!"

"What, I know my Belle. Come on girl! You care about what he's thinking and feeling! And you bit your bottom lip! I know you girl. You might not know how you feel about him but, girl, I do!" Belle sighed staring at her ceiling fan.

"Maybe I do like him."

"Oh my gosh. I knew it, I knew it." Ruby went on to gloat a little longer before the line quieted down. "But why, Belle?" Belle rolled her eyes.

"I don't know Rube's. Maybe I'm just being silly."

"Listen Belle, he may not be the typical guy these phone calls are usually about between us, but if anyone can tame that beast, it's you." Ruby was sincere, and Belle was glad she had a friend in her.

"Now tell me about you and this loosing your temper thing?"

"Oh Ruby! I threw a stapler at him!"

"Oh my gosh! A stapler!"

"He was mocking me and I had to fight back!" Belle stated in her defence.

"Forget liking the guy, I think you might be in love Belle." Ruby said the word love in a derisive sing song tone that made Belle blush. She was thankful that Ruby couldn't see the expression on her face.
Gold felt like an idiot. He wanted to share things with Belle. He had no idea why; he never shared things. That's why it was so difficult for him. Gold pulled in front of 'Game of Thrones' to a nervous Belle. She hid at her side a Granny's Diner bag but displayed the two cups of coffee in both her hands. Gold reached over and opened the door for her. Belle placed the coffee's in the cup holders. She sat back in her chair, put on her seat belt, and tucked her bags between her feet on the floor of the car. Perfectly in sink, the two turned to one another. They were silent. And then in perfect unison both apologized.

"I'm sorry." Belle winced.

"I'm sorry." Gold said with a sigh. The two blushed. And Gold let all of the air from his lungs escape.

"Oh." Belle explained. And they were both grinning sheepishly at one another.

"I was rude yesterday..." Gold went on.

"No, it was my fault. You shouldn't have to share with me." Belle shook her head in that adorable, but completely absurd way in which she thought she had done or said something silly.

"But I want to share with you Belle." Belle's heart fluttered and she bit her bottom lip. Maybe Ruby was right. "It's just difficult for me. No one has ever wanted to know the things about me that you do." Belle shot him a sorrowful smile. She reached down and held up the Granny's bag in her hand.

"I didn't know if you would still want to?" She gestured to the bag containing the breakfast that she had purchased before he picked her up.

"Of course! Who could refuse a meal with you, Miss French." Gold had managed to make her giggle again and she was smiling the whole way to work. Gold couldn't help but feel satisfied and completely nervous at the same time.

The first two weeks of school found Belle happily settling into the environment and her routine. But mostly, it was deepening her friendship with Reagan Gold. Belle looked forward to her breakfasts with Reagan. They would talk about novels, plays, books of poetry, and famous authors. They would also discuss history and historians. They often talked about her adventures in Europe, and Reagan would even share details of his up-bringing in Scotland. He would share his knowledge on subjects that interested her, and of course they argued; mainly over the meanings and significances of highly regarded literature. Their arguments were mostly civil; except once when Belle became so over eager to defend her opinion she jumped out of her chair, bumping into the table, and spilling her cup of coffee everywhere; including on Reagan. Belle had apologized profusely and dabbed at his thighs with her napkins. Belle was halfway up his second leg when she realized what she had done and handed him the napkins, backing away to clean up the table. Fortunately, he wasn't as furious with her as she had expected, and he didn't even say anything about her unplanned contact.

Reagan slowly began to open up to Belle. Regretfully, mentioning his ex-wife. Belle was just glad that he no longer stormed out of the room. He even mentioned a son to her once. But he hadn't elaborated on the matter, only stating that he had "lost him" long ago. Belle felt it was best not to pry, especially not so soon. Belle, on the other hand, was an open book. He took an interest in her and that was something Belle was not used to. She had been invisible much of her life, extraordinarily so when her mother had died. Reagan actively wanted to learn about her.
Belle usually spent her lunches in the library. She tried to keep it open for as long as she could; she wanted the students to take advantage of the library as a school resource. By the second week of school Belle had a group of regulars who were always seeking Belles book recommendations or help on assignments. One such student was Henry Mills. He was a sweet and kind boy, quite the opposite of his mother. Regina Mills had adopted Henry during infancy. She was a strict guardian; but she cares more for the boy then she would care to admit. But Belle saw the smiles and affectionate touches the two shared. And once Henry admitted to Belle that, even at twelve, the two still read together sometimes. On the rare occasions Belle didn't eat in the library she would eat with Mary Margaret or Will Scarlet in the main office; even with the prying ears of Regina near by. Regina was the first to comment on Belles unique choice in chauffeur. Belle simply told her how kind it was of...Mr. Gold... to drive her, and that he was entirely pleasurable company. Belle was just glad that no one had noticed that they eat breakfast together before preparing for their days.

Although it was Friday, and the school was mostly deserted by 3:30; including Regina who had left early to spend the weekend with her son, Belle remained re-shelving books. Reagan followed her around leaning heavily against his cane. It annoyed Belle immensely that he simply stood there watching her. Today she was wearing a ruffled black blouse with red checkers and a salmon pink skirt. She was also wearing a pair of brown closed toed four inch heals that provided a particularly pleasing view of her calves. With a stack of books in hand, Belle raised her brow suspiciously at Reagan. His tongue gently emerged as he wet his lips in necessity for delivering his next message. Belles focus shifted to his tongue and she bit her bottom lip briefly. It was such a brief moment that she was sure he hadn't seen the desire fill her eyes, but he had, and she quickly returned her librarian scowl in his direction. He smiled sinfully.

"It's the weekend love. Don't you have anything better to do?" He gestured to the pile of books in her delightful arms.

"Well I would, if perhaps you helped me rather than standing there gawking at me." Belle bridged the gap between them and gracefully swayed around Gold to reach for a new stack of books sitting on the cart behind him.

"But I like to look at you Miss. French." He whispered in her ear as she leaned into him. After his comment Belle pulled away rolling her eyes at him.

"Look who's being smart-mouthed again. Don't you have anything better to do this weekend then stand here and watch me work?" Belle wasn't really angry; in fact, she enjoyed aggravating Reagan, but she pretended to be steaming because she knew how much he liked it when she got feisty. Belle was right; Gold was pleased, and he let out a weak laugh.

"Really dearie? You expect me to have plans. The man you met at work a day before he was being paid to do so." Gold's hands were flapping about. They typically gained momentum when he was in a thrilling conversation; or when he was in a particularly sassy mood.

"Don't you remember Mr. Gold? You're also speaking to the woman who was at work a day before she was being paid to do so. Or did you forget that, just like you forgot I was your student." Belle humfffd.

"It's not my fault you were so forgettable." He growled at her and Belle bit back immediately.

"And it's not my fault you're an ass." Her all too familiar finger was wagging in his face after she placed the last book on a high shelf. Belle stomped around him this time to pick up the remaining stack of books on the library trolley. Gold was laughing snidely at her.

"My weekends consist mostly of attending to business arrangements Belle, and that is why I am
decidedly not eager to return home."

"Well what do you do to relax then? You can't spend your whole weekend working?" Belle crouched down to place a book on the bottom shelf looking up at Reagan.

"You'd be surprised dear. I don't relax." He glared down at her and followed her eyes as she sensually rose to her upright position.

"Everyone relaxes." Belle's brow was raised again, seductively. And Gold had the urge to sink his teeth into her, and nibble every part of her soft flesh.

"Ah, but I'm not like everyone." He followed her into the next row of shelved books.

"You certainly aren't." And she smirked at her own comment.

"If you must know, I like to work on my book!" He was defensive, like a self assured child. Ignoring his tone, like she often had to, Belle beamed up at him; she was still interested in knowing what Reagan's book was about.

"Your book! Will you tell me about?" She stopped shelving expecting to enter an actual conversation with him but was quickly denied that pleasure, or punishment.

"No!"

"Why not Reagan?" Belle was sincere.

"Because." But he was persistent.

"Because why?" So she was saucy.

"Because, if you don't stop teasing I might take my cane to you!" Belle dropped the books resting in her arms and they crashed to the floor. She bit her bottom lip and a sudden heat rose in her pelvic region. He stared at her, and she stared back. They were still. Her breathing was laboured and her eyes were wide open. She bent down slowly, not because she was scared but because she didn't want to lose his gaze, and she didn't. He stared at her on the way down, his grip tightening on his cane. Something on his lower half twitched. He was hardening. And suddenly what was an idle threat became something much more. She was forced to break her gaze from his to retrieve a book and the moment was shattered. Gold adjusted and attempted to bend down beside her.

"No, no, Reagan it's fine I've got it." She protested but he joined her picking up the spilled books. They rose together; mere inches between them. Belle's heartbeat was fast and her breath was heavy. She was staring at his lips and he mirrored his gaze to hers. Reagan took the back of his hand and softly caressed her cheek. Belle looked up, locking her sight with his eyes. They seemed to lean in, closer. Belle wasn't entirely sure. She slowly rose on her tip toes, clenching the books to her chest. But it all stopped. He removed his hand and backed away, leaving Belle breathless and on her tip toes. They seemed to be silent for an eternity. Belle composed herself, letting the flush on her cheeks dissolve. And she began to breathe again.

"So I guess that was payback for when I made you drop your books?" She raised her brow again and expressed a long thin smile. To her relief, Gold laughed. And she knew that they would be alright. They remained in silence as Belle put away the remainder of the books. Gold simply watched her, absorbed in his thoughts of her. When she had finished and grabbed her coat he offered her his arm, like he had so many times before. But their contact was different, intense and unpredictable. Everything had changed.
They parted so that Belle could return the library key to the office. And at first Gold hadn’t re-offered his arm to Belle. But Belle was determined not to let him revert back to old habits; so she snuck her hand down, brushing against the back of his, until his palm turned granting her entrance. She interlaced her fingers with his, and their silence was blissful. Hand in hand, with their fingers entwined, they covertly walked over to Reagan's Cadillac, as if they had an unspoken secret with one another. When they got to the car Reagan opened the door for Belle, forcing them to leave one another's grip. Once seated, Belle suggestively placed her hand on her thigh, hoping Reagan would reach out for it again once in the car. Instead, he placed his hand on the consol, just out of reach, but close enough that it still felt like they were embracing. During the drive to the flower shop Belle didn't dare to make eye contact with him, lest it scared him away. He moved his hand onto the gear shift and put the car in park. Belle unbuckled her seat belt and turned to face him. She looked at him curiously. Her blue eyes sparkled. And Belle was feeling bold.

"Are you ever going to gain the nerve to ask me out Reagan?" He was speechless and immediately turned to her; their eyes met and she smiled weekly. He was unresponsive. So Belle leaned forward and placed her lips to his left cheek and her hand to his right. Her kiss was soft, and slow to leave his face. When her lips had left she let her hand linger. "Thank you for the ride Reagan." And before he knew it she withdrew her hand from his face, and her body from his car. It was the first time she had kissed his cheek since the very first time two weeks ago. And Gold was frozen. She was waiving to him from the door, but his car remained in park. So Belle opened up the door to her fathers shop and disappeared inside it.
A Budding Romance?

Chapter Summary

Reagan finally asks Belle out...

Chapter Notes

Hope you have a great New Years! xoxox

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"All is fair in love and war."-- Francis Edward Smedley: Frank Fairleigh

"What took you so long! It's the weekend girl!" Moe French sat behind the counter, which now had a fresh glass tabletop. He was actually filling out an order, contemplating whether to accompany the flowers with a purple or pink ribbon. He settled on choosing both; he might as well get some use out the ribbon.

"I had to work late Papa; I had books that needed re-shelving." Belle walked over to her father and helped steady his hands so they could work together to tie a bow around the flower stems.

"Thank you Belle."

"Father have you been drinking today?" Belle asked watching the tremor in her father's hands as he cut the ends of the ribbon to equal lengths.

"Belle! How could you think so little of me?" Moe looked down to his shaking hands, embarrassed. "I've just been a little unsteady lately. You know how my nerves get the best of me and you taking rides from Mr. Gold does nothing to ease them!" Moe's tone was sulky and Belle rolled her eyes at his ability to direct the conversation towards her pitfalls.

"If it weren't for Mr. Gold I would still be working at the library right about now Father." Belle spoke like she did when she was a young girl, rhythmically, in order to calm her father and give Moe the small amount of parental satisfaction he needed from her. Her attempts failed. There was no altering Moe's train of thought where Gold was concerned.

"Speaking of Mr. Gold, what's his car doing just sitting there? You've already left, why can't he just leave you alone?" Belle giggled, turning to find the Cadillac still parked in front of the shop where she had left him.

"I expect he's in shock." Belle smiled.

"In shock? From what?"

"I kissed his cheek." She answered easily.
"You what? You insolent foolish girl! Why on Earth would you do a thing like that?" Moe was furious now. He bolted up from his position on his stool and towered over Belle. His voice was echoing throughout the confined shop. But Belle was brave and didn't let him faze her.

"Because he needed it." She stated openly.

"What? And if he needs a little more next time, are you going to give that to him too?" Moe was both appalled and concerned.

"I'm not a child Father. And that's not what I meant! I wanted to kiss his cheek. He hadn't asked me to do it. But I knew he needed it. I know these things about him! He would be too scared to ever ask such a thing from me."

"Gold scared? You best be careful Belle. If he decides he wants something from you, I'm sure he'd sooner take rather than ask!"

"No he wouldn't. He's different. You don't really know him!"

"And you do Belle?"

"He has a son! Or had a son. I think he's gone now." Belle couldn't help it. She just sort of blurted it out. But as soon as she said it she felt awful. It was a secret Reagan had confided in her. And now she was blabbing it to her father just so he wouldn't judge him so harshly.

"And that's supposed to ease my concerns. Any man can become a father Belle. It doesn't take much. That's exactly why you shouldn't be getting rides from him!" Moe's emotions had reached anger at this point. His daughter was not one to be a fool, hell she was usually smarter then him, but her foolishness right now was enraging Moe. He might not have ever been a mother to Belle, especially as she got older, but he had warned his daughter against men. That much Moe was sure. So he couldn't understand why she was being so naive. Especially concerning the most ruthless and cruel man in town.

"It was just a silly kiss on the cheek Papa!" Belle walked behind the counter edging closer to Moe, testing to see if he would let her embrace him. And he did. Her father might have been angry but he was still a big softy. "Don't worry about me Father." Belle said to the broken man.

"All I do is worry about you Belle." Moe choked up, his anger eradicated by a single hug.

"You worry to much, about me, the shop, and Mum." Belle reached up cupping her fathers face with both hands. "You need to stop Papa. Let me worry about the shop, Mum, and you." Belle was pleading with the big man. She returned to hugging him, hiding the tears in her eyes.

"Right Belle. Right. You're a good girl. A good girl. You know what you're doing. I'm sorry." Moe backed away from their embrace slightly. "But I don't trust that man. And you're all I have Belle. All I have." And before he knew it she had suckered him right back into their hug.

"I know father. I know." Belle was heavyhearted but she didn't let it show. Moments later her father shied away from their embrace whipping his large hands over his face and moved towards the flower shop door. Gold's car was no longer parked in front of the store.

"Where are you going?" Belle inquired.

"The rent is due on Saturday." And with that Moe backed out of the store and onto the street. Belle was confused. She watched her father as he turned the corner escaping into the Rabbit Hole. The rent is due on Saturday. What did he mean by that? Well obviously Belle knew what he had meant.
But why did he say it? And Belle quickly realized that her father had not intended to be around when their landlord would come to collect the rent tomorrow; and it probably had something to do with the fact that they were short.

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Belle sat on the wooden bar stool behind the glass display case. She understood why her Father would bind flowers to make the time pass. She had already cleaned the store front, tended to the green house, and filled out their two orders by noon. After returning from Granny's for a quick lunch break Belle decided to open up her Fathers accounting books. She was terrified to read them. Part of her didn't want to know how bad it was. When she opened them up Belle was shocked to find that her father hadn't recorded any of the finances from the past year. So Belle set to work jotting down numbers. She wasn't superb at math, and some of it was going straight over her head. After working for an hour, and achieving little success, the bell on the shop door chimed. She looked up, happy to be taken away from her task, and smiled. Reagan Gold was standing in the middle of the shop wearing an impeccable suit and handling his cane. The afternoon sun was beginning to sparkle and it illuminated his silhouette.

"Reagan how can I help you?" Belle stood up from the stool prepared to help her customer. Belle wondered who he was buying flowers for. Her stomach jumped when she hoped that maybe they would eventually be for her, but then it turned when she thought that perhaps they were for someone else.

"I'm here for the rent Miss French." Gold's voice was calculated. He was not here for flowers. He was not here for pleasure. He was certainly not flirting with her. He was here on business. Belle's heart sank before it felt like her aorta wrapped itself around her heart and started squeezing.

"Oh. I had no idea you were the landlord." She shook her head adorably and smiled.

"That I am." He raised his brows with sass. Even Mr. Gold couldn't be all business when it came to Belle French. Belle stayed silent and unmoved standing behind the counter. She stared at him and he stared back. "Well do you have it?" He mused.

"Oh, Right." Belle let out a small noise representative of an embarrassed giggle. She bent down and pulled out a roll of cash from a small locked box in one of the cabinet drawers. She stood up hesitantly, holding her arm out with the money. Suddenly, but very briefly, Belle had understood why so many people were afraid of Mr. Gold. His eyes were sharp and his mouth in a malevolent grin. There was an intensity to him. He snatched the role of money from her hand.

"Um. We don't quite have all of it yet. All the money for the apartment is there, but we're about half shy on the shop." Belle gnawed on her bottom lip. She had no idea how Mr. Gold was going to react.

"Well I don't rent you half of the shop, now do I?" And part of Belle wanted to smack the attitude right off his face, but the other half of her was terrified.

"Perhaps maybe you could just give me a little more time to sort together enough money to help him out."

"I don't do that Miss. French. A deal is a deal. Your father and I have a very specific rental agreement. And don't think I'll give you a break just because we're co-workers." And Belle spat out her reply before she could really think about it.

"What about because we're friends?" Gold laughed at her. And Belle felt like a child.
"Really dearie?" Gold still chuckled to himself.

"Will you accept another type of payment? Perhaps there's something I can do for you? Cooking? Cleaning? Anything! Just please, don't take this out on my father." Belle was pleading. And Gold rather hated to see her like that.

"Perhaps you should be spending less on your morning coffees and breakfast Miss. French and instead putting it towards the rent." His nostrils flared and his teeth emerged from his thin lips. He turned and headed towards the door.

"Wait! Wait! Mr. Gold. Please." Belle had chased after him to the door and found herself grabbing his arm with her hands to keep him from leaving. Gold stopped with his back to the door. Belle didn't back away or let go of his arms, she merely softened her grip. "Isn't their some kind of deal we can make? Please leave my father out of this." Gold searched her eyes as the wheel in his head began spinning.

"You'll do anything?"

"I'm prepared to make a deal with you Mr. Gold in exchange for an extension on the rent."

"I'll do you one better. You come out on a date with me, and I will forgive this months rent." Gold didn't give her time to respond. He backed out of the shop and ducked into his car, driving away quickly. Belle was standing in the door way with a confused look on her face. She wasn't sure why, but the start of a tear began forming in her eyes. She turned, unsure of what had just happened. She had not said yes to him, but perhaps he wasn't giving her a choice. After all, he could recognize a desperate soul when he saw one.

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Belle's father hadn't returned until Monday morning. He hoped that he was sneaking into the apartment early enough that Belle wouldn't catch him. He was very wrong. From the moment he shoved the door open Belle emerged from the bathroom with her hair brush in hand. She was almost ready for work. Her face was red as she swayed over to her father with a scolding look on her face.

"How could you!" She threatened him, pointing the hairbrush at his chest like it was a sharpened blade.

"How could I what Belle?" Moe played dumb.

"Don't give me that. I know you're trying to sneak in; because I know you left me on purpose!"

"I'm sorry Belle. I knew we were short. I barley convinced him to give me an extra day last month. I thought he might be easier on you."

"I can't believe you father." Belle set her brush down and eased off on the man. She grabbed her purse off the couch and put on her purple coat.

"Oh Belle." Moe moped and Belle looked at her father disappointingly. "I'm sorry."

"I know." She began to open their apartment door.

"Wait Belle." Moe paused gaining the courage to ask a question he didn't necessarily want the answer to. "How did it go?"

"I took care of it." Belle began to leave the apartment, but Moe stopped her, gently grabbing her arm.
"What does that mean Belle?"

"Relax Father. I made a deal with him. He's going to forgive this month's rent."

"Oh no, Belle why would you do such a thing?" Moe's arms had left Belle and were now flapping about.

"I have to go Father, Reagan will be picking me up soon." Moe sighed with frustration. His daughter was impossibly stubborn. Belle marched downstairs towards the flower shop. She was still a little early for Reagan to pick her up, but not early enough to run into Granny's; but after Reagan's comment on Saturday Belle didn't think getting them breakfast was entirely the best course of action. Although it was exceptionally cold out today, Belle stood outside the flower shop, waiting; Belle had no intention of spending a second longer in the same building as her father, even if they were divided by a floor and ceiling. The wind was lively, dancing over her skin and sending chills down to the bone. Belles purple coat was warm enough for fall, but she was regretting her decision to forgo her scarf and hat. She could always duck back inside and grab them. She was sure Gold would honk for her if she wasn't waiting. But it was already seven on the dot and Gold would be seething in anger if she were late. Not to mention Belle had no desire to come back into conversation with her father. Mostly, it was Belles feet that were cold, in her nude four inch heels with little black bows at the tips. She would seriously need to start wearing a pair of fuzzy winter boots and changing them once she arrived in the warmth of work. Soon it was five past seven, then ten, and when quarter after rolled by Belle knew something was wrong. She tried ringing Gold but her call was denied. It hadn't gone to voicemail, he had simply chose to ignore Belle. He wasn't coming.

Furious, Belle started marching down Main Street in her heels. It would take her a while to reach Storybrooke Secondary. Her feet were numb, and she was so angry she couldn't concentrate. First, he had practically forced her to join him on a date as a matter of a business transaction in order to cover her fathers' debt, when all she really wanted, desperately, was for him to truly ask her out. And now he had stood her up like the child he was. Because he was what, angry with her? Or no longer considered them friends; he had laughed at her when she had stated it on Saturday. Belle's blood was boiling as she rounded the bend leading up to the school. She pushed through the double doors, every fibre of her being aching with anger. It was still only seven thirty by the time Belle reached the school; thus it was still empty, spare the janitorial staff. Most the staff didn't arrive till eight am, starting with Mary Margaret who always had things to prepare in the office.

Belle French stormed threw the hallways, heading straight for Mr. Gold's office. Her heels were smashing against the tile floor. She had no idea what she was going to say to him but she knew she was going to be yelling it. Belle came to a momentary halt in front of his door. She took a deep breath storing the air in her lungs and forced the door open. Gold sat at his mahogany desk, leaning back in his reclining chair tearing a part papers with a red inked pen. Part of him was shocked to see her standing there, shaking from the cold, and anger? But part of him was pleased that she had come. Little Belle French was cross with him, and he liked it very much. Unable to contain it, that wicked smile rolled over his face. It fed Belles anger. And just as he was about to open his mouth, with no doubt a sassy remark, she stopped him with that dammed finger of hers waiving in the air.

"Don't you even, you childish, idiotic, asinine...What were you thinking? Don't answer that. You weren't thinking! You were playing! One of your stupid little games. Why couldn't you just pick me up? Is it the rent? Are you cross? Because you shouldn't be! In no way is this my fault! And to take it out on me...Why, you're the same self indulgent manipulative little fu...who can't stand to lose the upper hand!" She paused, remembering how to breath.

"Mmm...I rather like the angry you Miss. French." He was being saucy.
"Did I even get a choice?" Belle asked the question, well one of the many questions, she had been struggling with all weekend.

"No." He snarled, recalling their deal. Belle glared at him and let out a judgmental sigh.

"Are you threatened by me Mr. Gold?" Belle raised her brow moving closer to his desk. She leaned down placing her hands on the desk, palms down. He laughed at her. Leaning in closer to her, he slowly lifted off his seat. His mouth just slightly passed her face, reaching her ear. His breath was heavy against the side of her face.

"On the contrary dear, I find our foreplay rather stimulating." Belle swallowed hard. His sentence had two meanings, one that rather pissed her off and the other leaving her wet in an instant. She leaned back as to make eye contact with him, both of them crouching over the desk. Her eyes suddenly became tender. "And look at that, I'm winning again." And Belle lost it, shoving a frenzy of fists, curse words, and open hand slaps at his shoulders and chest. She was almost in tears, and she needed to seriously re-think bottling up her emotions. Reagan sensed her shift, and grabbed hold of her wrists easing her movements as the delicate tears started to flow. "Belle. Belle. What is it sweetheart? Don't be silly now, tell me what's wrong?"

"For crying out loud! I liked you! Really, really liked you. Why couldn't you have just asked me out?" The anger in her voice was gone, instead it was shaking.

"I did." He stated shamefully.

"Properly!" She was pleading with him, her wrists still victim to his grasp. He was quiet.

"Because...Because I was afraid you would say no." Her tears began to fall again, less gracefully. But they were no longer tears of sadness, for her rage was building up again. He eased his grip on her wrists, barley holding them anymore.

"So instead you took away my right to choose?" Reagan hung his head in shame. He was still the same coward he had always been. Worst of all, was now Belle knew it too. "Oh Reagan." Her eyes searched his. And her hand tentatively reached up hooking at the back of his neck and tousling his hair between her fingers. She slowly leaned up, softly placing her lips to his. Reagan let out a sigh at the delicate touch. His bottom lip encased between her warmth. His nose brushed against her cheek feeling the moistness from her tears. They pulled back slightly, tilting their heads and taking each other lips into their mouths once again. She had kissed him. And he was kissing her back. Her tongue began to trace along his bottom lip. Reagan reached his hand up to her cheek and Belle deepened the kiss. Regan opened to let her in as Belle angrily explored his mouth, her tongue sweeping over his. The kiss became messy as Belle concentrated her fury on his mouth. She tugged at the hair at the back of his neck and he placed two forceful hands on the waist of her coat. They came to a stop, if only for the lack of oxygen. They stillled, foreheads resting against one another and Belle could feel the tears swelling in her eyes. She mustered a brave face and rather stubbornly stated, "No one takes away my choice. No one decides my fate but me." Belle turned towards the door, but paused. "Friday at seven. You can pick me up from the shop. You can pick the place, but you're paying." With that she closed the office door behind her, leaving Gold standing in his office speechless. He sat down on the edge of his desk and let out the remainder of air in his lungs. He placed his hands up to his lips and although he knew Belle was still mad at him, he couldn't help but smile. He couldn't believe the effect little Belle French was having on him.

Chapter End Notes
I would love to hear your thoughts!
Belle had a whole week to get through before Friday. And although every part of her throbbed with anger towards Reagan, there was one part that was incredibly forgiving; her lips, okay and her tongue, maybe it should just be labelled as her entire mouth all together. Then again there was also that knotting in the pit of her stomach and the pooling between her legs. The more Belle thought about it her body wasn't mad at Reagan at all. But her brain certainly was. And her heart was aching. One thing was for certain, Belle didn't like the feeling of being bought. Belle was able to channel some of her anger by aggressively shelving books during the morning. An intensified librarian scowl settled across her face. Usually, Belle was her cheery self with the students; but today she understood why Mr. Gold took pleasure in making them squirm. There she was thinking about him again! Why did her stream of conscious always lead her to thoughts about him? It only aggravated her more, and before she knew it she was yelling at Nicholas Zimmer for using the computers to play Candy Crush.

During lunch Belle slumped down in the chair beside Mary Margaret's desk, the one usually reserved for Belle.

"Wow! What's put you in such a mood Belle? I can practically feel the anger radiating off you." The two women took out their lunch containers; Belle had left over fettuccini and Mary Margaret had a Caesar salad with extra croutons. Will Scarlet came over from his office and joined them, just as he was about to sit a top Mary Margaret's desk Principle Mills stuck her head out,

"Desks are not for sitting Mr. Scarlet."

"Yes Ma'am Principle Mills." He pouted sarcastically as he brought a chair over to the front of Mary Margaret's desk, it's legs scraping roughly against the floor as he moved it. Regina raised her brow giving him a look worthy of an Evil Queen. Belle chuckled, but her face returned to a disheartened frown as she tossed about her fettuccini.

"What is it Belle? Having a rough day over in the library?" Mary Margaret asked with concern in her heart.

"Sorta." Belle sighed. "I had a fight with someone recently."

"Who with?" Will questioned, with a mouth full of pop tart.

"Will! It's none of your business." Mary Margaret sounded alarmed with the mans bluntness.

"Its alright Mary Margaret. It...um." Belle bit her bottom lip. "It was with Mr. Gold." Belles cheeks
flushed. Her body was betraying her again! Regina's head popped up at the mention of Gold and she opened the glass door of her office.

"Has Mr. Gold been giving you trouble dear? I would be more then happy to have a word with him in my office."

"Oh no. Thank you Regina but the fight wasn't during work hours. And it was about...it was about personal matters." Will, Mary Margaret, and Regina all made separate shocked facial expressions. Regina was the first to speak.

"What are you doing with Mr. Gold outside of work hours?" Regina's tone was harsh. Like she didn't want the two spending time together. Belle rolled her eyes.

"I hardly think that it's any of your business Ms. Mills but I appreciate your concern." Regina opened her mouth to tell off the foolish girl for being sharp tongued with her, but then she remembered how much she needed the librarian. So instead she turned and retreated into her office. But that didn't stop her from listening in on the trios conversation.

"She's got a point though doesn't she? What do Mr. Gold and little Belle French do in their spare time together." Wills mind was racing through rather sexual extra curricular activities.

"Oh Will, leave her alone, she's already upset." Mary Margaret came to Belles defence and she was grateful for it. "He really did a number on you didn't he?"

"He just knows exactly how to make my blood boil, you know?"

"No." Mary Margaret replied outright.

"That's because you have a passionless marriage Mary." Will began leaning back in his chair, as the front feet left the floor and he rocked suspended in the air with his right foot on the edge of Mary Margaret's desk. Regina was snickering in her office.

"I do not!"

"Yes you do. You two are way to sweet with each other. Don't get me wrong it's charming and all, but it probably wouldn't kill you to spice things up the bedroom."

"Will" Mary Margaret and Belle said in unison as Belle slapped the back of his head and Mary Margaret kicked his legs from underneath the desk. Their physical impact sent Wills chair rocking all the way back and he quickly fell to the ground with a forceful thud. Regina shot up, entering the main office again.

"Mr. Scarlet don't you have work to be doing? Or in your opinion, does this school no longer need a guidance counsellor?" Will quickly picked up the chair and slumped into his office. The two girls giggled when Mary Margaret's face suddenly lit up.

"Oh Belle! You know what we should do? It's two dollar Thursdays at the Rabbit Hole. Tequila shots are only two dollars a shot! Me, you, Ruby, and Emma should go! I'd love for you to meet my sister and you could probably use a night out."

"This Thursday?"

"Are you up for it?"

"Sure I'd love to. Thank you Mary Margaret." Belle's mood was already improving.
Belle spent the rest of the day sorting through boxes of donated books. The activity was calming. And before she knew it the school bell had already rung and she had worked well past three. The library door opened and Mr. Gold entered. Belle raised her head and frowned.

"Oh no. Don't even."

"I was just here to offer you a ride home Miss. French."

"Oh." Belle was utterly shocked. "So you offer me a ride now, but where were you this morning?" Gold did not respond to her. "Well no thank you. I can manage the walk home by myself."

"If that's what you truly desire." Belle let out an attitude filled sigh.

"It is."

"Well then, I'll see you tomorrow?" He paused for confirmation. No answer. "I'll be at your fathers shop for seven in the morning." Silence. "Like we used to?" But Belle continued to ignore him until Gold had no choice but to retreat and head home without her.

***

This time Gold had kept his word. He was parked outside her fathers shop at seven precisely on Tuesday morning. But Belle was not waiting for him like she usually did. Instead when she emerged from the shop door she ignored him and started walking down main street. Gold started his car and slowly rolled down the street, matching her speed as she walked down the sidewalk. He rolled down his window and spoke.

"What on earth are you doing dearie?"

"I'm walking to work." She replied without looking through the window of his car. She kept her face forward so she wouldn't have to look at him.

"And why have you chosen to walk?" Belle came to a halt, sharply turned, and glared at him through the window.

"Because I'm playing your stupid game!" Her tone was bitter. "And I'm going to win it." Gold smiled, the crook at the corner of his mouth devilishly taking over. Belle looked away before he could catch her returning a wicked smile and she started walking towards Storybrooke Secondary. Gold continued to follow behind her, slowly. She increased the sway in her hips in order to purposefully tease him. She knew he was watching her, and she knew he enjoyed it. But what he didn't know was that she enjoyed it too. As angry as Belle was, she was going to play Gold's game, and she was going to win. And hopefully she would teach him a lesson in the process.

When she arrived at the high school she parted ways with Mr. Gold, her ducking into the library and him into his office. From then on they would continue to ignore one another. Avoiding each other at school as much as possible. Their were several things they were trying to avoid, their argument, the date, their kiss, the undeniable tension between them that they both refused, absolutely refused, to acknowledge. And yet, they continued on like this for the whole week. Avoiding one another. And when the work day had ended Gold would follow her home in his car. They would continue their dance the next morning as his car trailed behind her swaying hips. The game continued. They would rarely speak during their unusual journeys to and from work. But Belle would always say good morning to him before walking off to Storybrooke Secondary. And she would always say good bye to him before entering the flower shop for the night. Gold didn't know how much longer he could take this.
When Thursday afternoon came Belle was almost tempted to hop into the car with Gold. She had been standing all day and she knew Ruby was going to make her dance tonight. Instead she walked towards the flower shop. Her heels were rubbing in uncomfortable places; she really needed to get some appropriate winter boots. And Gold's car slowly trailed behind her, drawing the usual judgmental eye from the townsfolk. She stopped to say goodbye to him like she usually did when Gold unexpectedly replied.

"How much longer is this going to go on Miss French?"

"You're not tiring of our little game are you Mr. Gold? As fun as it's been, I would be happy to accept your defeat in the form of a forfeit." She smiled prideful, burying her sadness within. But he caught it. And he felt guilty.

"I'm sorry Belle." He squeaked, and her heart ached a little. She put on a brave face. After all, she was winning.

"Well, It's a little late for that now isn't it?" They paused. "Goodbye Mr. Gold. I'll see you tomorrow?" He nodded in reply and she disappeared into the flower shop. Moe was waiting for her, standing right by the door peering through the blinds.

"If your walking home again girl why does he follow you around like that? Should I be calling Sheriff Swan?"

"We're just playing a game Papa, you wouldn't understand." She started to walk past him heading for the stairs leading to their apartment.

"A game." He followed her.

"Yes it's a game." She paused on the bottom two steps of the stairs, making her eye level will her father who remained on the floor.

"Is it some kind of kinky foreplay?"

"Oh god Papa." Without answering further she raced up the stairs.

"You're right I certainly don't understand." He mumbled to himself. Belle leaned over the banister shouting back down to her father,

"I'm going out with Ruby tonight."

"Yes dear, I remembered." He shouted up to her as he waddled back to his counter in the flower shop.

Belle opened up her closet. She wasn't entirely sure what to wear tonight. She had no doubt that Ruby would be wearing something skimpy, but Mary Margaret was more of the wholesome type, and she had never hung out with Sheriff Swan socially before. She settled on an entirely too short black dress that clung to her every curve. She laid out the dress on her bed and placed a pair of bright red heals to go with it. Before getting ready, Belle made dinner for herself and her father. She managed a load of laundry, compiled together the book list Jefferson had asked her for, and even managed to take a quick soak in the tub. She put on her dress, heals, and burgundy leather jacket. She paused. Looking at herself in the mirror. Part of her didn't want to bother getting all dolled up. She would have rather curled up to a good book. But she needed this. It was going to be fun. And she hadn't been out to a bar with Ruby since college. So she applied her smoky eye, mascara, and
finished with a swipe to her lips with her favourite red lipstick. She left her room, knowing Ruby was going to be meet her at the shop at nine. Her father was watching wheel of fortune re-runs with a beer bottle in hand.

"My Gods Belle, I don't know if I should let you out of the house."

"I'm Twenty-five years old Papa." She glowered at him.

"You and Ruby stick together please?"

"Of course Papa, I'm always careful." She walked over to the couch, leaned down and placed a kiss on the top of his head. "Ruby should be here, I best get going."

Ruby was waiting for Belle at the flower shop door. It was a short walk to the Rabbit Hole from there. Emma and Mary Margaret were already standing at a waist high table and Mary Margaret enthusiastically waived them over. Mary Margaret was wearing a shimmering blue dress that hugged tightly around her waist but fanned out at her hips and flared over her knees. The dress was held onto her body by two thin straps, complementing the a-line neckline. Emma was wearing a hot pick, knee length, sweetheart neckline, dress that clung to every inch of her body. It was almost as provocative as the number Ruby had concocted for the evening. Ruby wore a red dress the colour of her namesake. Not only was the dress backless but it barley reached her mid thigh. But this type of outfit was nothing out of the ordinary for Ruby. Ruby and Belle reached Mary Margaret and Emma's table, exchanging hugs amongst the four of them.

"Belle, this is my sister Emma, Emma this is Belle." The girls hugged.

"Mary Margaret's told me a lot about you Emma."

"All good things I hope?" The off-duty Sheriff sent a glare towards her adoptive sister.

"Defiantly." Belle reassured her.

"Well I heard you were having a bit of a rough week so we took the liberty of ordering the first round of shots!" Emma said gesturing to the four shot glasses sitting on their table. The women each picked up their shot, clinked glasses, downed their drinks, and celebrated.

"Round two please Johnny!" Ruby shouted to the stout bartender. The girls spent the next hour taking shots and dancing on the dance floor. Belle had forgotten how much she missed this, being with her friends, forgetting about her worries. She suddenly realised why her father spent so much time drinking, and it broke her heart. Unable to dance any longer Belle made her way over to the booth Mary Margaret had procured about ten minutes before.

"My feet are so sore!" Belle let out a sigh of exhaustion. "We're going to regret this when we have to get up for work tomorrow."

"You're telling me, I still have a newborn to go back home to." Ruby and Emma had now joined the two girls over in their booth.

"This is wicked fun! We should do this every Thursday night!" Ruby beamed ecstatically.

"Oh god I don't know if I could handle you every Thursday night Ruby!" Emma jested. Johnny made his way over to their booth and placed a colourful cocktail in front of Belle.

"Oh Johnny, I didn't order that."
"The gentleman at the bar bought it for you." Johnny retreated to the bar and began a conversation with the gentleman in question. The man at the bar looked over his shoulder to Belle and smiled mischievously.

"Ohhh." Ruby squealed.

"Oh god." Belle rolled her eyes. "Does anybody want this? I really don't need a hangover for tomorrow." Ruby smiled widely happy to oblige sipping at the drink placed in front of her friend.

"He's cute Belle, you should go over and talk to him." Mary Margaret stated.

"No she shouldn't! That's Keith Nottingham. I usually have to lock him up at least once a weak for public intoxication." Emma glared at the man at the bar and he turned back towards Johnny.

"She can't anyways." Ruby stated sipping at the cool drink.

"And why not?" Mary Margaret questioned.

"Because she's already in love with someone."

"Ruby!" Belle jabbed her friend in the gut. Her friends lips had always had a tendency to loosen after one to many drinks.

"Belle! You're in love?" Mary Margaret chimed and Emma rolled her eyes, sensing the pain in Belles eyes. She could tell when a girl didn't want or wasn't ready to admit the things she was feeling. "How come you've never told me?"

"Because I'm not in love." She stated mater-o-factly.

"It's Gold." Ruby blurted out struggling to keep the straw between her lips.

"Of course it's Gold! I can't believe you're in love!" Mary Margaret sighed dreamily.

"No, not like gossip gold, like the man Gold." Ruby snickered a little.

"Oh My God Ruby!" Normally, Belle would have been furious with her. But Belle knew their was no stopping Ruby when she got drunk. Her only comfort was that Ruby would have a terrible hangover tomorrow morning, and hopefully no one else would really remember the content of their conversation the next morning.

"Wait Gold, Gold." Emma was suddenly interested in the conversation. Whereas Mary Margaret was ironically silent, a shocked 'o' forming on her mouth.

"She threw a stapler at him. She's in love with the bastard."

"Ruby! I'm not in love."

"You threw a stapler at him? The more I learn about you Belle the more I like you." Emma smirked.

Mary Margaret finally composed herself. "Your in love with Gold. Mr. Gold." The previous excitement in her voice had all but disappeared now.

"I'm not in love. How could I be? We've only known each other for four weeks. Besides, he's a childish, egotistical, manipulative ass."

"I couldn't have said it better myself." Emma stated.
"Don't lie Bluebelle, you've known him longer than four weeks; he used to be our English teacher."
Ruby quipped.

"Yes, but we've only known each other as equals for four weeks."

"Equals? Gold treats you like an equal?" Mary Margaret's voice was high pitched.

"Mostly." Belle hid a smile by biting at her lip.

"That's impossible." Emma remarked.

"He sees me as an adult now, unlike other people in my life. He values my opinions and challenges me intellectually. Although he acts like a complete ass, he also has this...softer side. He's a complete gentleman..." Ruby cut Belle off, continuing her list for her,

"And you like his sexy hair, and his sexy cane, and you want him to bend you over your circulation desk and take you hard!"

"Ruby!" Belle and Mary Margaret scolded. But Belle was beginning to blush, the red heat rising up her neck and pooling on her cheeks. She couldn't hide it.

"Oh my gosh" Emma was on the verge of laughing.

"Belle you're blushing!" Mary Margaret smiled playfully.

"That's so adorable." Ruby gazed at Belle as if she were a sneezing puppy.

After having composed herself, Mary Margaret reached her hand over to Belle. Comfortingly, she placed her hand on top of one of Belles and gazed sincerely into her eyes. "It's okay Belle. I of all people know that you can't control who you love. Did you know David was married when I first met him?"

"He was?" Belle said, stunned by what the new information implied. And Mary Margaret nodded her confirmation.

"Even if you're not in love with Gold, I think it's rather sweet that you might like him." Both women smiled and Mary Margaret withdrew her hand from Belles.

"I mean I could like him, but he did something stupid, and then I did something stupider. And it's all ruined now."

"Don't even get me started on stupid decisions." Emma rolled her eyes.

"Yeah Emma did a whole lot of stupid with Graham last Friday." Mary Margaret beamed gleefully.

"Graham, no way! There is nothing stupid about that! Good for you Emma!" Ruby winked at Emma approvingly.

"You're kidding right? I'm pretty sure Regina is also sleeping with him." Emma argued and Belle was just glad the conversation had drifted from her personal life.

"Yeah but their not exclusive, I hear it's an on and off type thing." Ruby encouraged.

"Well, it doesn't mean I'll be doing it again." Emma stated with an air of finality to it.

"I doubt that." Mary Margaret teased her sister.
Ruby returned the topic of conversation towards her innocent best friend, "Okay, but ladies Belle isn't the type of girl to make stupid decisions?"

"Is this what's been bothering you all week? Is it why you two were fighting?" Mary Margaret interjected.

"What exactly did you do Belle?" Ruby asked as Belle bit her bottom lip and let out a sigh. She might as well get it out, there was no stopping Ruby at this point. She quietly said,

"I kissed him."

"You what?" Said Mary Margaret.

"Was it good?" Emma curiously asked.

Ignoring their questions Belle went on to explain, "I was angry with him. He made me accept a deal with him without giving me a choice." Belle paused. "I guess I just took it out on his lips?" She said with a smile and couldn't help but chuckle. Soon the other girls were laughing along with her.

"You took it out on his lips! Belle!" Ruby was beaming.

"Remind me to never make you angry." Emma smirked.

After the laughter died down Mary Margaret shot up. "Wait Belle you made a deal with him?" The women quickly became quite. The last time Mary Margaret had made a deal with Gold she had almost lost sight of who she truly was. And Emma still owed him a favour from the last time she dealt with Gold. Ruby on the other hand, she was to clever to even strike a bargain with the man. She always made sure their rent was paid in full and on time.

"I made a deal with him in exchange for forgiveing my fathers debt on this months rent."

"What kind of deal?" Mary Margaret tentatively asked.

"He's taking me out on a date. Tomorrow night." Belle felt a hundred times better finally letting the information out.

"What?" Emma's mind drifted to seedy thoughts.

"And that's what's been bothering you." Mary Margaret said coming to an understanding of Belles emotions.

"Well wait, isn't that a good thing Bluebelle?" Ruby asked, clearly confused.

"No it's not a good thing. He made this about the debt. It's a deal. He's buying my time. He took away my right to choose. And now everything's all muddle up."

"Don't you see Ruby. Belle wanted Mr. Gold to ask her out, but not like this. And now she is obligated to him for an evening, in which he is technically paying for her. And now she has these conflicting emotions; she's furious that he chose to buy her, thus asserting his superiority or possession over her, but at the same time she knows she likes the man and can't help but think it could be like a real date." Mary Margaret's thoughts dwindled off, clearly proud of herself for reaching that level of clarity.

"Even if I wasn't drunk, that wouldn't have made any sense." Ruby sulked into the almost empty cocktail.
"Just because you entered a deal doesn't mean he can force you to do anything Belle," Emma stated. "Don't let your feelings cloud your judgment. If he so much as touches you..." Emma warned but Mary Margaret cut her off.

"Calm your Sheriff instincts. I'm sure Belle will call you if she has a problem. Besides, Gold might be a wise-ass jerk but I don't think he would ever lay a hand on a women without consent."

Throughout the girls conversation the man from the bar had been continually eyeing Belle. And now he turned around from his place perched on the bar stool and began walking over to the girls booth. He had a bear bottle in one hand and his other was in the front pocket of his jeans. His hair was long, and greasy. At one time Belle might have thought of him as attractive but tonight she was certainly not in the mood. The girls halted their conversation and centered their eye contact with the man.

"What you didn't like the drink I bought you?" Keith said locking eyes with Belle. "Because I would happily purchase something more to your taste." He winked at her.

"Buzz off Keith. She's not interested." Emma rejected the man for Belle.

"I wasn't talking to you now was I Sheriff." He took a swig of his beer.

"He's a real charmer." Mary Margaret said under her breath.

"My names Keith, could I perhaps buy you a drink you'll actually enjoy?" He asked Belle.

"Um, thanks Keith. But I'm trying not to drink to much tonight. But Ruby certainly enjoyed the beverage." Ruby looked up and smiled.

"Well perhaps Ruby would like another?" Nottingham directed his question to Ruby.

"She'd love one, but it doesn't mean you're getting anything out of her in return." Ruby stated in the third person and gave him her most seductive smile.

"Actually, we probably should be going Keith. We all have early starts tomorrow." Belle started to shove Ruby out of the booth. Mary Margaret and Emma were also in agreement.

"Oh come on ladies! It's barley midnight!" The women grabbed their coats and moved passed Keith towards the exit. They paused just outside of the Rabbit Hole.

"Do you and Ruby want a ride?" Mary Margaret asked Belle.

"Oh no, we should be fine. Granny's isn't to far from the shop."

"Okay well, I'll see you tomorrow Belle." Mary Margaret gave her a warm hug.

"It was great hanging out with you Emma." Belle offered the woman a warm smile and Emma returned it.

"Yeah it was more fun then I expected." Mary Margaret looked positively triumphant by Emma's remark.

"I had a blast we should do it again!" Ruby yelled into the quite streets of Storybrooke and the girls began to laugh with her. They said their final goodbyes and Mary Margret and Emma made their way over to a nearby idling car. Belle recognized David in the driver seat and saw a sleeping baby Neal in his car seat. They waived goodbye as the car drove off.

Ruby looped her hand through Belles outstretched arm and together the two walked down main
street Storybrooke singing their favourite song and laughing about the events of the evening. It was the most fun Belle had in a long time. And she was glad to have found friends in Mary Margaret, and now Emma. And although Belle was still uncertain about her feelings towards Reagan Gold she was certain about one thing; she was looking forward to the next girls night.

Chapter End Notes

Next Chapter we get to the date!!!
"If you're stressed it's fine dinning we suggest. Be our guest. Be our guest. Be our Guest." -- Howard Ashman and Alan Menken, Be our Guest. Beauty and the Beast.

Belle had a splintering headache. She rolled out of bed, tripping over last nights clothes and shoes as she made her way over to the bathroom. First, she took a long hot shower and brushed out her curls. Then, she dressed in a lace inlaid navy blue dress and accompanied it with black nylons. Once clothed, Belle walked into the kitchen and put on the coffee machine. Next, she put a piece of bread in the toaster and rooted through the fridge for the leftover Spanish rice for her lunch. While she waited for her toast and coffee she grabbed two Tylenols and swallowed them down with a glass of water. After locating her purse, she began filling it with the daily essentials. Her toast popped up and she buttered it before munching it down on her way to the bathroom. Once in the bathroom, again, she applied a thin layer of make-up, brushed her teeth, after finishing her toast of course, and began to carefully dry out her luscious curls. When her coffee was ready she poured the steaming liquid into a travel mug and performed a final check to ensure she hadn't forgot anything. The verdict: she was good to go. Belle wrapped herself up in her purple coat and opted for black ballet flats; there was no way Belle would be able to survive the day in heels. She closed the apartment door behind her and headed down the stairs into the flower shop.

It was 7:02, Belle was late. It was only two minutes. But Gold had already allowed himself to worry within the span of one hundred and twenty seconds. Belle was never late. Especially since she had learned about his feelings towards tardiness. Perhaps she wasn't coming into work today? Was she avoiding him because tonight was the night of their date, or rather their business arrangement? Had something horrible happened to her? While Reagan was fumbling through his pockets for his cell phone the bell above the flower shop door chimed. Before he could process what was going on the passenger door of his car was opened by a very exhausted Belle French. Gold was absolutely shocked to see her sitting their beside him, reaching over to the heater and placing the vents on full blast. It was not like Belle French to give up so easily. Yet just like that she had let him win. Belle on the other hand, was not at all surprised that she had given in. The second she saw his car waiting for her, warm from the heater, with a cushioned leather seat, and a place to rest her feet, the slightly hung over Belle knew she was willing to forfeit their little game and accept the scrutiny at a point when she was less hangover.

"What on earth are you doing--" But Belle stopped him before he could go any further.

"Shhh. Not so loud." She cuddled up on the seat of the car bringing her knees to her chest.

"You look awful." He stated, as he put the car in drive.

"Well good morning to you too." Her tone was harsh: sarcastic.
"I'm sorry Belle, that was rude of me."

"No, not really." She sighed with contentment having the warmth of the car finally soaking into her skin.

"Even you could make a hangover look beautiful."

"Eh. That line was so bad it makes me want to puke."

"That's the alcohol talking dearie."

"No I'm pretty sure it's you."

"Someone's in a fiery mood."

"Oh stop it." Her tone was desperate. Praying the man would just shut up so she could get a few minutes of peace and quite.

"And why are you, the responsible Miss Belle French, hung-over on a Friday morning?"

"We had a girls night--" Belle was about to say 'so that I could drink away my feelings about you', but she thought better of it. "I didn't really drink that much. I guess it's just been a while since I went out like that. It's not really a hangover I just have a splintering headache and don't feel like moving."

"That's exactly what a hangover is dearie."

"Oh whatever, it's just not a very bad one."

"Then you won't mind if I turn the radio on?" He reached his hand out toward the dash.

"Don't you dare Reagan! Not if you're very fond of keeping that hand."

"I only tease darling." His infamous crook formed at the corner of his lips as he reviled in Belle's apparent suffering. "But I am surprised you caved in on our little game so easily."

"Listen I was not in the mood to walk, and I'm not in the mood to hear you gloat about winning either; frankly I'm not in the mood to even hear your voice. If you could put into practice that small amount of patience you have and hold off until a less hung-over point in my life I would greatly appreciate it. Besides if you wait, you'll have my full attention the next time you plan on chastising me." She humffed finally stating her peace.

"Truthfully dearie, I was ready to give in yesterday. How about we call this one a tie. Or we can just forget this little ride ever happened."

"Thank you Reagan." She sighed into the seat of the car and allowed herself to doze off the best she could.

"It's no matter Belle."

Belle's day went by fairly well. By noon she was feeling much better. And by the afternoon she was feeling much more like herself. But as the day wound down she got closer and closer to facing its inevitable conclusion: their date. When the bell rang, Belle spent about ten minutes completing her tasks in the library. She walked over to Reagan's office and found he wasn't there. So she walked to his last period class to find him whipping down the chalk board.

"Belle, I'm surprised to see you here." Reagan usually met Belle in the library.
"I finished early. I was hoping to get home quickly today. I have a date to prepare for you know."
She raised her brow.

"Do you now?" He quipped.

"I was hoping that you would still give me a ride?"

"Of course. I just have to grab my things from my office."

He did not offer to lead her out today. And they did not attempt to hold hands either. They kept their
distance. Both feeling uneasy and unsure about the night's main event. He opened the car door for her
and she graciously entered.

"I see someone's feeling better?" He stated staring at her smile.

"Yes thank you I am." The remainder of the ride was quiet. Until Reagan pulled up alongside the
curb at 'Game of Thorns'.

"I'll be here at seven. We have a reservation at Dante's, so you know the dress code. I hope you like
Italian?"

"Dante's, I've never been." Belle said, admitting to know very little about the dress code of the
establishment.

"I'm sure you must own a formal dress amongst the countless others in your wardrobe."

She rolled her eyes. "I'll see you at seven Reagan."

"Goodbye Belle." She waived goodbye to him before she ducked into the flower shop.

She was excited. But she shouldn't have been. She knew it wasn't a real date. But once they got this
over and done with their friendship could move on. When Belle went upstairs to the apartment she
began completing her daily household tasks. She was even kind enough to prepare dinner for her
father, even though she wouldn't be joining him. She still hadn't told her father the nature of her deal
with Mr. Gold. She was hoping to avoid that all together. But after going out with Ruby and the
others last night there was no way her father would believe her if she said she was headed on another
girls night out. Besides she didn't want to lie to him. And if she told him she had a date he would
badger her until he found out which lovely gentlemen was attempting to court his daughter. And yes
she was a grown woman, if she didn't want to tell her father she shouldn't have to. But Belle and her
Papa were different. They were all each other had. And although Moe had his flaws, he loved his
daughter dearly. So after a quick check on the pork chop she was cooking she turned to face her
father who was sitting on the couch.

"Papa. About my arrangement with Mr. Gold." Moe acknowledged her by giving a signal of interest
that encouraged her to go on. "Well, he's taking me out on a date tonight, in exchange for forgiving
last months rent."

"What? Belle! Why didn't you tell me this was the nature of the agreement? It's wrong! He'll take
advantage of you! You can't go!" Moe barked at his little girl.

"This is exactly why I didn't want to tell you Papa. Look, this deal is going to solve one of your
problems. And I think it could have been worse. Part of me is actually a little excited." Belle didn't
dare tell him that the other part of her absolutely hated Mr. Gold for even proposing a deal in which
he bought her as a commodity.

"You're excited Belle?" Moe stared at her like she was an utter fool.

"Yes, I haven't been on a date in a while. And he's taking me to Dante's Papa!"

"That big fancy Italian restaurant?" Moe questioned, his interested always peaked at the mention of food or money.

"Yes." Belle confirmed, as she turned off the stove top.

"Belle if he expects something from you...dear you don't have to give it to him just because he's buying you a fancy meal and forgiving the rent." Moe said cautiously.

"I expect Mr. Gold will be a gentleman Papa." Belle was smiling.

"You really are excited Belle, truly?"

"I think I am Papa."

"Well then I suppose I'm happy for you. After all it is simply a business arrangement. Perhaps you might get a pleasurable evening out of it. But I swear if Mr. Gold tries anything! You call Sheriff Swan. I have her on speed dial. I still don't trust that man Belle."

"I know Papa."

"At least once this is over maybe that awful man will leave us alone.‖ Belle rolled her eyes. At least the conversation had gone much better then she expected it to.

Belle opened up her closet door and studied the hung dresses. Reagan was right; Belle had many dresses in her wardrobe. But still, she had no idea what to wear and continued to stare at her close for then next five minutes before she reached a decision. She settled on a brand new red dress she had bought in the hopes that she would one day attend a Christmas party. The dress had a low cut, but tasteful, sweetheart neckline. It had a snug empire waist but flared out to just above her knees. Belle took a shower before zipping herself into her dress and applying a liberal amount of make-up, ensuring she included red lipstick to match her dress. Belle kept her hair down allowing her curls to bounce against her shoulders. She completed her ensemble with a pair of solid white high heels and a matching white clutch. She was ready. She wearily emerged from her room, checking the time to make sure she wasn't running late. As she walked towards the apartment door she drew her fathers attention.

"My Belle, all grown up." He said, looking like a bluberring whale.

"Don't be silly now Papa."

"You make quite the woman Belle." Maurice was becoming emotional.

"Thank you Papa."

"Shall I come down with you?"

"No I'm fine on my own Papa. Don't wait up for me. You need your sleep."

"Your planning to be out late Belle?" He asked nervously.

"No, but I know you'll sit on that couch worrying yourself into a mess. And I don't need you
worrying for me. I need you staying healthy. So I need you to get your sleep."

"I make no promises Belle."

"I know you don't." Belle walked over to the couch and placed a kiss on the top of her fathers head. She then walked over to the apartment door. "Goodbye Papa." With a final smile Belle made her way downstairs to the flower shop.

Regan Gold was waiting for her, leaning against the side of his Cadillac. She was slightly early; for fear of being late he assumed.

"You look astonishing Belle." He was smiling like a fool.

"You can't even tell what I'm wearing I just have on my coat."

So she was in a sassy mood, Gold thought to himself. "What, the lady can't take a compliment, even from an old beast?"

"You're not old. You're also not a beast. And I only take compliments when compliments are due. So you can tell me again, once I have my coat off." Regan opened the passenger door for her and she ducked in.

"And I am very much looking forward to that." He closed the passenger door and walked over to the drivers side.

Dante's was farther away then most of the restaurants in Storybrooke. It was near the edge of town and gained a rather high end clientele. Storybrooke residents rarely entered the building unless they were employed by it. Belle was in awe as they drove up to the stand-alone building. The restaurant was two stories high and the patio area was decorated with fairy lights making the whole building shimmer. They even had a valet service! Belle didn't even think anywhere in Storybrooke had a valet service. A young man opened the passenger side door and offered his hand out to Belle. She gently accepted and he helped her out of the Cadillac. And after Reagan handed his keys to the valet the young man offered him Belle's arm. Together, arm in arm, Reagan led Belle into the foyer of the restaurant. They were greeted by a hostess displaying a warm smile.

"Good evening Mr. Gold, your table is right this way."

Reagan and Belle followed the hostess throughout the table filled restaurant. They walked towards the back of the restaurant heading straight towards a doorway with draped red curtains. Walking through the curtain revealed a private room with a table romantically set for two. The walls were covered head to toe in mirrors and their was a grand chandelier handing from the ceiling. The room looked like a sparkling diamond. The hostess took their coats and informed them that their server would be with them shortly.

"My, my, I was incredibly correct. Absolutely beautiful. You are positively radiant Belle." Belle blushed.

"Thank you." She began swaying from side to side, allowing her nerves to reach the forefront of her mind. "You look very handsome too. Impeccable Mr. Gold." She bit down on her bottom lip. And Reagan began moving closer to her, filling the large gap between them. Belle's mind raced with a thousand questions; 'what is he doing', 'why is he coming closer', 'oh my god is he trying to kiss me already'. But he continued on, moving just passed Belle and pulling out her chair for her. 'Oh'. Belle felt silly all of a sudden. Reagan remained, gently tucking her and her chair in. He took his place at the chair facing her and a young women carrying two slender glasses of water entered the room.
Reagan made a wine selection for the two of them and the waitress left to give them more time with their menu selection.

"This room is absolutely amazing! You didn't have to go to all this trouble." Belle said looking up at him from behind her menu.

"Yes I did." Belle felt her insides swooning. They were not supposed to be doing that. She was still supposed to be cross with him. But she couldn't help it. "I take it by your small talk you have decided what you would like to eat."

"Oh yes, I'm having the lobster ravioli."

"Even in the towns nicest Italian restaurant she chooses something with seafood in it." He joked.

"What can say I like the taste of Maine. If my decision is so poor what are you having then?"

"Well I too was planning on having the lobster ravioli but I can't now, now can I?"

"Oh! We could order two things we both wanted to try and just share!" Belle said, pleased with the promise of getting to eat two different, and most likely exquisite meals, in one sitting.

"I don't share food." He said bitterly gritting his teeth.

"Well maybe now's a good time to start?" No reply. "So what should we get then? How about the Lasagne, no I bet you don't like Lasagne. Oh how about the mushroom risotto!"

"Do I really get much say in the matter?"

"No. See, it feels awful to have your right to choose taken away from you." Belle looked at Reagan, eyes void of emotion.

"Belle-" He regretfully pleaded.

"No, forget I said anything. We're moving on." She turned away and closed her menu. Fortunately, Belle was saved by the arrival of their waitress who took the order from Belle and promised to bring out two empty plates so they were free to share. The waitress left smiling. The two dinner companions remained quiet, both avoiding making eye contact with the other. Moments later Reagan gained the courage to start a conversation. After all, that is what adults usually did on dates. Wasn't it? Reagan himself couldn't remember. It had been at least ten years since his last one.

"So how is your father doing?"

"Like you actually care."

"Perhaps I do."

"Well in that case he's doing well. Much better than before. I never properly thanked you for the time you, or rather your associate, brought him home to me safely." Belle reached out and placed her hand on top of one of Reagan's. "Thank you Reagan." Reagan opened up his hand, turning so that his palm was facing up, and cleverly took Belle's hand within his own. His thumb began rubbing small circles over the top of Belle's smooth skin. They played together. It was soothing. Romantic. Their breath contained tightly within their chests. No one dared breath. Not even the waitress who had returned with their wine. She placed it on the table and practically ran out of the room. After a few minutes Regan let go of Belle's hand to pour the wine. Belle, rather ungracefully, nearly chugged her first glass in hopes that it would maintain her courage. Reagan kindly poured her
another glass and she smiled wearily.

"Nervous are you?" He cooed as Belle took a sip of her second glass of wine.

"Terribly." She responded, sneakily placing her hands under her thighs. If she sat on them she would resist taking another drink. Because if she took another drink she might get tipsy, and if Belle got tipsy, she would most likely make a decision she would highly regret.

"Well that makes two of us. I haven't been on a date in at least a decade."

"And yet you have a private room at the back of Dante's." She said raising her brow, her tone inquisitive and questioning. He chuckled, flashing his white toothed smile, with the exception of his gold tooth, and brought his hand to his face pinching the bridge of his nose. That was not the reaction Belle was expecting from such a comment, nor was she expecting his retort.

"I don't bring my many conquests here to woo them into sleeping with me before I murder them and dispose of their bodies in the harbour, if that's what you're worried about."

"Reagan." Belle's tone was scolding.

"Can't handle a joke luv? You started it." The way the words rolled off his mouth it wasn't an accusation, there was something sensual about it. Like an invitation to continue the fight. Like it would pleasure him. Belle began to warm at the thought. That all this time his endless rows with Belle had been giving him some kind of pleasure. Belle knew the feeling of a tight not in her stomach and a throb between her legs all too well from their countless arguments. Belle began to feel a little buzz in the bundle of nerves hidden safely between her folds, and the aching sent a blush to her cheeks. Gold held his breath, sensing her squirm slightly. Had he felt it too? Adverting her thoughts immediately, Belle returned her scolding voice upon him.

"Really? Are we going to do this now?" But apparently the scolding had only heightened his desire. And suddenly Belle didn't know what she was asking for, and she could see it in Reagan's eyes that he didn't know either. Belle's hands shot out from beneath her legs, grabbing her glass of wine and downing the whole thing. It seemed she was already heading towards a bad decision tonight, at least she could blame it on the alcohol tomorrow. After a long period of silence the tension eased slightly, and was passed when Reagan's sorrow filled voice answered Belle's original question.

"I simply have a private room in the restaurant Belle because the burden of a man eating alone is tiresome enough without the judgment of on-lookers. I don't need the extra grief." And suddenly Belle's heart no longer ached with desire but sorrow for the man in front of her. He was so often alone, sad, and judged. It was no wonder he wore a mask, and played silly games to compensate for the aching within him. Belle felt privileged that he would share such insecurities with her. But the minute the words left Belle's mouth she was still shocked. She hadn't even thought about what she said before the words so carelessly slipped from her mouth:

"Well now you never have to eat alone again." 'Stupid, stupid, Belle.' She thought to herself as she once again held Reagan's hand within her own.

"I've been alone for so long Belle." He said weakly, the untold pain and sadness she saw in his eyes upon their first meeting slipping out into his vocal tones. "I'm going to mess this up." He said squeezing her hand within his slightly. "Whatever this is. I'm going to ruin it."

"Don't say that--" She protested faithfully.

"But I already have. All you wanted was for me to ask you out. Properly, like you said. But I was to
much a coward. I still am. That's all I ever was and that's all I'll ever be. Instead I decided to buy your
time like some sick perverted little fucker--" She cut him off.

"I don't think you're a coward Reagan. I think you made a mistake. I think you've made quite a few
of them in your life. But that doesn't make you a coward. You are opening up to me. You're being
vulnerable. Even right now, you're telling me the truth, no matter how difficult it is to tell or how
difficult it is to hear. Yes, you're a bloody fucking bastard, buying me when you knew you could
have had me for free. That's what makes this so sad. You could have always had me Reagan."

"But why?" The tears prickled in the corner of his eyes.

"Because I can see the good in you, because I believe you're changing. But most importantly
because your heart...is true."

"Belle, no one...no one could ever love me."

"I might. If you can give me the chance. But you have to let me in Reagan." Belle pleaded as they
searched one another's eyes.

"See I've made a bloody mess of things." Belle sighed removing her hand from his.

"Tell you what." She took from within her clutch a large handful of money. "It's all here. The money
my father needed for last months rent. You take this money-" She paused pulling out some extra
bills. "-with interest, and his debt is paid."

"Belle I...I don't understand."

"You and my father are even. His debt is paid."

"But Belle--"

"And this, no longer has to be a business arrangement."

"Belle." His face had some resemblance of a smile as his mind caught up to process her offer. For
someone so sharp Belle was utterly annoyed by how slow he was at processing her prompt.

"But I would like you to ask me again. Properly. Please."

"Here? Right now?"

"It's as good a time as any." Belle said with a smile.

Reagan stuttered slightly. But he could do this, he would do this, for her. She was extending an olive
branch and he would be damned if he didn't accept it. "Belle French, you absolutely miraculously
smart, beautiful, witty, and clever women. Would you do me the honour of going on a date with an
old beast like me?" Belle's smile stretched from ear to ear as she blushed at his complements.

"Now how could a woman refuse such a proposition. Even if it's from an old beast." Belle stood up
from her seat and leaned over the table. She reached her hands forward, gently cradling Reagan's
face within her palms. Belle's thumbs gently stroked against his smooth skin, he had shaved for their
evening together. Belle gently brushed her lips against Reagan's. He lightly moaned into the kiss
savouring the feel of her moist and supple lips between his. They regretfully pulled away from the
sweet kiss, Belle's bottom lip scraping between Reagan's teeth as they parted. Belle's eyes fluttered
with ecstasy her pupils dilating as the ocean of blue consumed them. Staring at one another with her
hands still upon Reagan's face Belle spoke:
"You have to let me in Reagan. Promise me?"

"I promise Belle." She smiled.

"Good." She said as she let go of his face and returned to her chair. "I think we should get out of here."

"What?"

"Give this date a fresh start. Why don't we get our food to go and head down to the pier?"

"It's the first week of October, in Maine, darling. We'll freeze."

"Where's your sense of adventure!" He smiled at Belle, who was radiating with excitement.

Their waitress returned to the private room with Reagan and Belle's dinner in hand. Before she could reach the table, an ecstatic Belle stopped the waitress in her tracks.

"Actually, we'll have our dinner to go thank you. And can you pack in a slice of the lemon meringue cake, oh and another bottle of wine!"

"Of course." The waitress replied a little stunned, staring towards Gold for the final seal of approval.

"Well you heard the lady. You can charge the bill directly to my account. We'll also be needing our coats."

"Of course. Right away Mr. Gold." The waitress darted out of the room, in a hurry to prepare their to go package. Moments later she arrived with a rather large brown paper bag, a bottle of wine, and another waitress who carried Reagan and Belle's coats. Reagan helped Belle into her coat and placed a generous tip onto the table, it was especially generous Belle thought considering they hadn't even made it through the meal. Linking arms again Reagan and Belle headed out of the restaurant, perhaps a little too giddy, and waited for the valet to return Gold's Cadillac. Gold opened the door for Belle, she placed their bag on the floor of the car and crawled into the seat with the bottle of wine held tightly in her grasp.

"To the pier then?" Gold said as he entered the drivers seat and put on his seat belt.

"To the pier." Belle confirmed.

The pier was right beside the harbour of Storybrooke. It was a peaceful and beautiful place to take walks during the day. Many residents of Storybrooke would often pass by, if you could withstand the smell of salt and fish. But living in Maine, most of the residents were used to the smell. However, the piers were particularly beautiful at night, with lights strung along the railings and the stars reflecting on the water. Once Reagan parked the car Belle skipped over to a nearby bench. She placed their food and wine on the bench and rushed back over to Reagan who was just getting out of the car. He could tell by her light mood that her two glasses of wine were slightly getting to her.

"Isn't it wonderful!" She said inhaling the fresh air. It was crisp, but not quite cold yet.

"It's beautiful Belle. This was a wonderful idea."

"Careful Mr. Gold, flattery will get you everywhere." Gold laughed as they sat on the wooden bench together. Belle opened up the bag taking out the container of lobster ravioli. The restaurant was kind enough to give them glasses and utensils, but Belle had a feeling Gold had ended up paying for it somehow. Taking a ravioli on her fork Belle raised the pasta to Reagan's mouth with a glimmering
smile on her face. Reagan's tongue darted from his mouth allowing Belle to feed him the ravioli. While he chewed she picked up another piece and placed it inside her mouth. Her face lit up immediately. Reagan loved how much Belle appreciated food. "This is wonderful!" She said chewing her final bites. They continued to eat the ravioli, feeding one another, until it was completely gone. Belle took out a shaking hand reaching for the bottle of wine as she lost the battle to her chattering teeth. It was a little after eight and the air had become increasingly chilly as the wind in the harbour picked up.

"You're freezing darling." Reagan went to take off his coat and give it to Belle.

"No! It's fine." Belle protested, giving up on the wine, her numb fingers unable to open it. But that's when a better idea crossed Belle's mind! "Reagan will you take me to the flower shop?"

Hiding the disappointment of ending their evening, just as it had begun going so well, Regan replied gentlemanly. "Of course dear." He handed her the keys to his car. "Why don't you go warm yourself up in the car, I can get the rest of our meal."

Belle complied. Happily seated herself in the Cadillac as the heaters began to warm her up. When Reagan returned she smiled at him brightly, taking the bag and wine from him.

The drive to the flower shop was a short one, but Reagan didn't risk speaking in case he ruined the evening that had gone so much better then he expected. He pulled up to the flower shop, like he had so many times before, Belle unbuckled her seat belt, grabbed their things, and opened her door to leave. Reagan was such an idiot. He should have gotten out, opened her door, smiled, kissed her, or hell anything other then sit there in the car like a speechless idiot. Thankfully, Belle's beautiful face ducked back into the car staring at him and smiling.

"Aren't you getting out?" She asked quietly, and with bated breath for his response.

"Of course, where are my manners." He said turning the engine off and slowly walking over to Belle's place on the sidewalk. Cautiously, Reagan moved closer to Belle, almost, but not quite, pressing himself against her body. He raised his hand to tuck one of her curls behind her ear and continued to brush the back of his hand against her cheek. He looked longingly at her parted lips before slowly embracing them with his own. It was a gentle kiss that made Belle feel loved and worshiped. When they finally parted Reagan's forehead rested upon Belle's, savouring her company for as long as he could. "I had a wonderful time Belle." He whispered to her, the taste of her mouth still tingling on his lips.

"Aren't you coming in?" She whispered back, tentatively grabbing one of his hands within her own.

"Belle--" He had no idea what to say. Of course he would love to go in with her. But her father was home. And he didn't know if they were even ready for that yet. Not to mention that hadn't been with a woman in years.

"We can just finish our meal, in the warmth. You don't have to stay, you don't even have to come in if you don't want to. My dad will be upstairs anyways--" Before Belle could ramble any further Reagan nodded his head and with his hand in hers Belle lead him into the flower shop.

Chapter End Notes

A cliff-hanger...I know I'm awful!
Hope you enjoyed it!
Thanks for reading! xoxox
Within The Flower Shop

Chapter Notes

It's still pretty teen, but better safe then sorry.
Happy Reading!

"Relationships don't always make sense. Especially from the outside."--Sarah Dessen, Along for the Ride

The bell chimed as Belle French and Reagan Gold entered the flower shop. Reagan was a bundle of nerves, even though he had absolutely no expectations. It was the thought of the unknown that terrified him even more. He was usually so in control, but not when he was around Belle.

The couple made their way over to the glass counter that held the cash register. Belle placed what was left of their meal on the counter and went in search for two stools. Belle returned with a smile and encouraged Reagan to take a seat.

"Relax would you." Belle said taking the container of risotto out of the Dante's to go bag. Reagan reached for the bottle of wine and poured a healthy measure into both of the glasses. He still had to drive home, so opting for this second glass wasn't the smartest idea, but right about know he felt a little liquid courage couldn't hurt.

"Your father won’t mind?" He asked as Belle grabbed a fork, scooping up a mouthful of rice and mushrooms.

"If we're quiet he won’t even know we're here. But, I can't say he would be too thrilled learning you've taken me on a real date now and that I'm hoping for a repeat performance."

"Repeat performance? Truly, Belle? You wish to go out with me again?"

"Is this your way of asking?"

"Oh believe me darling I plan on only asking the proper way from now on." She laughed and Reagan tasted his first bite of the risotto.

"Careful Reagan, if you wait to long I just might have to ask you myself." He smiled at her. Reagan hadn't felt this happy in years. "I think I liked the ravioli better, but it might just be because the risotto is lukewarm." Nonetheless, Belle ate another mouthful of the risotto.

The two continued eating, talking, and drinking until what was left of their meal was gone. Except for their desert.

"You picked lemon meringue." Reagan said raising his brows at Belle.

"I figured if the lemon pastry was your favourite at Granny's then a lemon meringue would certainly entice your taste buds." Belle smiled wickedly.
Instead of taking a piece of cake on her fork she dipped her finger into the meringue filling and held it up to Reagan's mouth. Belle inhaled sharply when Reagan's tongue made contact with her finger. After thoroughly stroking his tongue over Belle's finger Reagan enclosed his mouth around her completely. Once in his mouth, Reagan's tongue began swirling around the digit causing Belle to hold her breath within her breast. As Reagan sucked her finger in and out of his mouth Belle began moving closer to his body, until their hips were making contact. Reagan pulled his mouth away to place a final, soft kiss to the tip of Belle's finger. He looked positively animalistic, starring into her eyes, laden with desire. His eyes only darted away momentarily when he saw Belle's finger dip back into the filling, before gently stroking the glob of lemon meringue onto her tongue. She kept her mouth parted, the yellow custard glistening on her silky tongue, waiting for him to retrieve it.

"You little minx." Reagan managed to hush out in a gust of breathy need before darting his tongue into Belle's mouth.

The two kissed passionately, the sweet and tangy taste of the lemon meringue mingling about in their mouths. Reagan's hands went to the nape of Belle's neck, forcing her into a deeper kiss as her fingers racked through his silky hair. With one hand drifting aimlessly on the small of Belle's back, and gently stroking the bare skin at her shoulder blades, he pushed her body into his. Belle became aware of the sharp hardness pushing against her stomach and she moaned desperately into Reagan's mouth. When one of Reagan's thumbs brushed at the undersides of Belle's breasts her head shot back, her bottom lip desperately held within Reagan's teeth to prolong the kiss as she gasped for air. Belle's neck was exposed as Regan licked up her pulse point, planting gentle kisses before he decided on the specific section of skin in which to bite down and suck. The action caused Belle to go weak in the knees and she faltered backwards coming into contact with the back of the glass counter. Sensing the weakness, Reagan lifted Belle up so that she was sitting on the counter and he was standing between her spread legs. Once satisfied that he had left an angry mark on Belle's neck, Reagan returned his attentions to her sweet lips, just to make sure he had gotten all of the meringue filling.

Belle's nails were now scratching through Reagan's scalp sending shock waves of pleasure throughout his body and pooling in one area specifically as the blood pumped through his inflamed member. Ignoring his need Reagan's hands patiently waited, brushing along the edges of Belle's plump breasts, never quite touching, and the teasing was driving her crazy. Sensing her need Reagan uttered a simple word asking for the permission he desired,

"Belle--"

"Gods yes." She answered just before his large and callused hands rose to cup her breasts, gently scraping over her pert nipples in the process of his tenuous massaging. Belle was in utter ecstasy at the contact, and her body began to relax completely, easing further onto the counter. When suddenly her elbow came into contact with the bottle of wine and sent it smashing to the floor. "Ignore it." She squealed as Reagan's caresses hesitated, but regained momentum as she wrapped her legs around his waist, edging his heat closer to her core. Belle began tugging at Reagan's tie and he ever so hesitantly found the zipper of her dress, sliding the zipper down no less then an inch when they were disturbed by thundering footsteps and a booming voice.

Moe French stood in front of the couple slack jawed with a flashlight in one hand and a baseball bat in the other. Moe must have heard the ruckus Reagan and Belle were making and with the smashing of the wine bottle thought someone had come to rob the shop. At first both Belle and Regan hadn't noticed Moe's arrival, being so busy with their tangled tongues. But the minute Moe spoke Reagan's hands stilled on the zipper of Belle's dress and their lips parted with a look of absolute shock on Belle's face.

"What the hell is going on down here? Belle what on Earth are you doing?" Moe starred at the two,
Belle's legs were still wrapped around Reagan's waist as he leaned over her body. "You!" Moe yelled pointing the end of the baseball bat towards Mr. Gold. "You, get your hands off of her Gold."

Moe edged closer to the couple and Gold shot his hands into the air, surrendering. Fortunately, the interruption and shock had put a damper on the mood and Reagan was slowly softening within his trousers, although the tell tail bulge still remained. Belle unwrapped her legs from Reagan's waist, hopped off the counter, and pulled the hem of her dress down. Moe moved closer to Gold and when he noticed the state of Gold's trousers, and that he had probably been rubbing that thing all over his daughter, Moe raised the baseball bat heading strait for Gold. Belle quickly stood between the two men, causing Moe to regretfully lower the baseball bat.

"Papa, Papa it's alright. I invited Reagan in. This was my decision. He's done nothing wrong."

"Done nothing wrong, has he." Moe sarcastically scoffed.

"Papa, I wanted this." Moe shuddered, but Belle adamantly took Reagan's hand in hers. They were both trembling. But she remembered: Do the brave thing and bravery will follow.

"Belle how could you?" Moe's tone was one of anger...again.

"I'm a grown woman father--"

"But you said this was a business arrangement. Just a date you said! A date Belle? If you had really whored yourself out just to cover the debt you should have at least had the decency to do it at Gold's house. Or was this part of your sick fantasy Gold?"

"Enough Mr. French!" Gold snarled his very best snarl at the man. "I will not have you say such things about Belle. She is a kind, brave, and pure hearted woman who deserves to be treated with more respect!"

"Says the man who was dry humping her--" Moe yelled, raising the baseball bat once again.

"Father--" Belle shouted. Meanwhile, Reagan had unconsciously gripped the shaft of his cane, and was holding it up in an offensive position. Worried things would become physically violent Belle turned to Reagan, placing both her hands on his, stilling the canes movements. One look from his sweet Belle had eased the look of violence in Reagan's face and he halted his actions. "Reagan he's just shocked. I'm sure he didn't mean it...It's not his fault, he doesn't understand everything." She paused. "Listen, I can handle him...why don't you...um father would you at least give us a minute?" Belle asked glancing a look back to Moe French who took a few calming breaths and watched from a respectable distance as his daughter said goodbye to her...lover? Belle tugged gently on the lapels of Reagan's suit after she had tidied up his hair. "Why don't you go home Reagan? I'll be fine. I had the most wonderful time, truly. And please remember the things I said." Reagan nodded in acknowledgment as he brought his rough and shaky hands to her smooth and beautiful face. Belle leaned in to rest her forehead on Reagan's. "I really would like to do this again." She admitted, ignoring the laser eyes from her father.

"Oh sweetheart." Regan placed a sweet kiss to Belle's lips, gentle and pure. After their lips parted their foreheads remained pressed together, simply being together.

"Are you sure you're alright to drive home...you've had almost two glasses--"

"Oh don't think that means I'm letting him stay in my house!" Moe interjected ruining the moment he had been so obviously spying on.

"I'll be aright Belle." Reagan reassured.
"Be safe. I can't wait to see you tomorrow." Reagan smiled at the thought. "Will you call me when you get home?" Belle asked.

"Yes." He replied, and they finally parted.

Belle watched as Reagan left the shop. She had a blushing smile on her face and had almost forgotten about her father until he loudly cleared his throat in her direction. Belle turned around, hiding a role of her eyes, and faced her father.

"Belle I thought you were smarter then that! You owed him nothing!"

"I know father and Reagan knows it too. Is it so hard for you to believe that I was making out with him because I wanted too!"

"Yes Belle it is. You're gorgeous, and kind, and smart--"

"And I suppose you didn't think that maybe I find Reagan attractive and kind and smart--"

"But Belle, how could you?"

"I've always been able to see the best in people, including you father." Moe's heart softened. It was true, his daughter always saw the best in people. She was a very forgiving girl...woman. "Being with Reagan was my own choosing. Papa, I like him very much."

"Belle he's a beast." Moe pleaded.

"No he's not. He's a man Papa, and a bloody good one. He's just misunderstood. He needs someone to break down his walls. His heart is full of love if only people would love him back. And your judgment wont help him any." Belle paused taking in a deep breath. "I plan on seeing him again Papa."

"Are you saying that you love this man Belle?"

"I think that I could Papa." Moe shuttered, and then his entire body seemed to relax.

"My little Bluebelle in love?" Moe moved towards his little girl and placed his hands on her bare shoulders, tenderly.

"Maybe Papa." Belle smiled, overwhelmed with emotions. And her father embraced her for a large hug. Belle always loved hugs from her father. He was warm and large, just like a cuddly teddy bear.

"I suppose if anyone can see the good in that man Belle, it's you."

"Thank you father." Belle let out a large sigh, relieving some tension from her body. "It was a real date you know. He was just too afraid and stupid to ask me out properly. But I gave him the money for the rent, and well he asked me out, properly."

"That sounds awfully confusing Belle."

"Yes, I suppose it is rather. But things are always complicated with Reagan."

"Reagan. Reagan Gold." Moe said testing the way the name sounded. "I never knew his first name, even when--" The realization dawned on Moe "Oh god Belle he was your bloody English teacher!"

"I know Papa, but we're co-workers now. He treats me like an equal. He's been my closest friend at work."
"And...a...and how long have you two been...intimate?"

"Oh god Papa! I...that...was...I'm so embarrassed! That was the first time...as far as we've ever...oh god I'm just gonna go to my room now is that--" But Belle's panic was cut off by the ringing from her cell phone. Belle walked over to the glass counter, which she would never look at the same way again, and picked up her white clutch. Digging out her cell phone was easy enough, even with the watchful eye of her father. But her wide grin betrayed her when she saw the name of her caller; Reagan. Belle bit down on her bottom lip. "Um...it's Reagan dad." Belle said as she tried to make her way around her father so she could take the call in the privacy of her bedroom.

"Oh no you don't!" Moe stopped her and gently grabbed the phone from Belle's hand. "Belle is a little busy at the moment Mr. Gold. Yes, yes, we're all very glad that you made it home alive. No...yes...yes I'll tell her. Um...yeah...sure...I will...you have a good night too Mr. Gold." Moe ended the call and handed it to Belle before speaking. "He...a...He said that he looks forward to seeing you tomorrow and wishes you a good evening." Belle smiled even though Moe looked slightly mortified. "Now you better clean this mess up Belle."

"Of course Papa." Belle said as she reached up and placed a small kiss to her Papas cheek. Although Moe appreciated the gesture he couldn't help but wipe at his cheek knowing that her lips had just been on Gold's moments ago.

It took Belle about ten minutes to clean up the shattered glass and liquid from the wine, as well as the wine glasses, utensils, and food that came with their meal. Belle was even kind enough to clean off the glass counter with table polish. As she swept up the floor, ensuring all of their mess was clean, Moe had returned to check on her. Belle looked up at her father. A look of contemplation on his face, this was the most brooding she had ever seen her father partake in. Belle spoke up, a sudden weight hanging about on her chest.

"Papa? Have...have I disappointed you?" Moe looked up, shaking himself out of his daze and moving closer to his daughter.

"Oh no Belle. You could never disappoint me honey. It's just difficult. I'm a little confused by your decision. Did you happen to notice how much older he is Belle?"

"Alright, so he's a bit older then me, but you were ten years older then Mama. They're just numbers anyway aren't they?"

"Belle--"

"What is it Papa?"

He hesitated. "I'm going to do my best. To understand. To keep you happy Belle."

"Oh Papa, thank you!" Belle dropped the broom and hugged her father again. Moe was certainly going to try his best, for Belle.

Meanwhile, on the other side of town, Reagan pulled into the driveway of his salmon pink Victorian with a smile brimming from ear to ear. He had a million things streaming through his mind; Belle French actually like him! He had gotten to kiss Belle French! And oh god, he couldn't even think about the other things he had, and had almost, done with Belle French before his dress pants became entirely too tight at the crotch.

Although the evening had ended in less than ideal circumstances Reagan was ecstatic, because Belle
French had wanted to go out with him again! And although there were still many uncertain elements in his relationship with Belle, Reagan was certain about two things in particular. Firstly, that was the best date that he had ever been on! And secondly, Reagan Gold had a new appreciation for sharing food!

After unlocking his front door, hanging up his coat, and putting his keys in a small bowl that rested on an antique table in the front foyer, Reagan dug out his cell phone to call Belle. To his surprise Moe French picked up. And although it was terribly awkward, judging by Moe's tone he was handling the situation much better then before. After beckoning Moe, and hopefully Belle a good night, Gold proceeded upstairs to his master bathroom; a cold shower was definitely in order. After turning on the tap and stripping Reagan grabbed his hardened cock in hand and proceeded to fist himself into oblivion with one word on his grunting lips,

"Belle!"
"The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. Resist it, and your soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself, with desire for what is monstrous." -- Oscar Wilde: The Picture of Dorian Gray.

Gold hadn't taken himself to hand in a number of years. He very rarely had to. But his rendezvous with Belle last night had left him with an unfinished, and very pressing problem. And as Reagan awoke on Saturday morning he realized that his dreams of Belle had gone strait to his penis...again! Reagan rolled out of bed, hoping that perhaps it would just go away as he got prepared for his day. But the problem was, he couldn't stop thinking about Belle; and every time a thought of her popped into his head his damn cock twitched with excitement. Painfully erect and throbbing with want the damn thing was becoming a problem. Ritually, Reagan turned on the shower tap and stepped inside.

He grabbed the base of his cock firmly, leaning one hand against the wall for support. He carefully adjusted his weight, leaning mostly on his good leg before he slowly stroked up his shaft. The flesh was soft and slightly darker then the tan of his body. His vein pulsed as he edged ever closer to the tip. His milky fluid already building up and leaking from his slit. Reagan grunted as he finally applied pressure to the tip of his cock, spreading his pre-cum along the shaft. Allowing pleasure to overcome him Regan began thrusting his hips into his fist. His climax building as he imagined Belle's sweet mouth wrapped around his hard flesh. With four forceful tugs Reagan found himself streaking the shower tiles with his cum, thoughts of Belle's blue eyes carrying him through the aftershocks of his orgasm. After coming down from his high Reagan stepped out of the shower and his mind was flooded with questions. What was the protocol for this sort of thing? Did Reagan have to tell Belle he wanked himself silly to thoughts of her...twice?

With the exception of his adventures in the shower, Reagan's weekend was relatively normal. He ran his usual Saturday errands, collecting rent, getting groceries, and checking on a few properties. But he also had the pleasure of exchanging several text messages with Belle. The messages had started on Saturday about two hours after Reagan had...sated himself.

"Morning Reagan :)" Reagan's phone had first beeped as he finished chatting with Dr. Hopper about a maintenance request on the therapists building. Reagan was quite new to texting but Belle had easily remedied that throughout their friendship.

"Good morning darling. I trust you slept well?" He replied with a foolish smile.

"I did thank you. hbu?" Hbu, what the bloody hell was that?

"Sorry, how about you? :p" She quickly corrected her shorthand for him.

"I had an interesting night...I thought about you." He admitted.
"I thought about you too. I'm sorry we got...interrupted last night." Reagan's heart clenched knowing that Belle had thought about him too.

"How is your father doing by the way?" He cautiously asked. Reagan hadn't had to worry about what a woman's father thought of him in at least thirty years. And he was a very different man thirty years ago. Either way he had always wound up disappointing people.

"He calmed down after you left. He's taking it much better. He said he would do his best to understand and accept us." Reagan smiled. The approval didn't matter to him, but he knew it would to Belle.

"I'm very glad, I shall be on my best behaviour then." He replied truthfully.

"You, on your best behaviour...we'll see how long that lasts ;p." She teased him and he couldn't help but chuckle.

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The sun glared angrily through the curtains of Gold's bedroom. Reagan rolled over, away from the window, in an ill fated attempt to gain a few more minutes of sleep until his alarm clock began frantically buzzing. He sat up quickly, rubbing the sleep from his eyes; he got to see Belle today!

Reagan pulled up to Game of Thorns ten minutes early. Immediately he noticed Belle marching towards his car with two coffee cups in hand. Reagan got out of his Cadillac and stood outside of the passenger side door waiting for Belle to reach him. Belle greeted him with that bright smile of hers and he felt like a giddy school boy.

"Morning Reagan." Belle came to stand in front of him, leaning up to brush her lips to his. He let out a soft sigh as she pulled away. He would never get used to the ecstasy of Belle's lips. Pulling himself together Reagan opened the door for Belle and returned to the drivers seat.

The minute Reagan closed the car door behind him he was rewarded with an armful of Belle. Her hands hand reached for his face immediately as her lips ambushed his. After the initial shock wore off, Reagan was enthusiastically returning her kiss and dipping his tongue into the places that made her squirm. It was absolutely amazing to be able to freely kiss Belle French. But just when their hands began to wander, Belle knew it was time to end the kiss. She regretfully pulled away but smiled gleefully up at Reagan.

"I certainly hope to be greeted like that every morning." Reagan chuckled as he still held Belle within his embrace.

"Well I'm glad I didn't disappoint."

"Your kisses could never disappointment me! Although, I still can't believe you gave up on our little game just because you had a hangover." Belle rolled her eyes. "I half expected you to stubbornly refuse a ride today." The arrogant son-of-a-bitch raised his brow at her and Belle playfully slapped his shoulder, edging out of his embrace.

"I can't believe you Reagan!" Belle buckled her seatbelt and Reagan began the drive to work. Belle knew she should have been angry that Reagan felt the need to rub his win in her face, but instead she could barely stifle her laughter.

"What? You said I could freely chastise you once you weren't drunk. Well I'm collecting." He snickered, and the two began to share a subtle laugh. But Reagan of course was only teasing her, he loved to tease, he had no intention of chastising her, not anymore.
"You're a bloody difficult man you know."

"Ah, yes, but you Belle French, are a woman who likes a challenge." He smirked, that sexy crook at the corner of his mouth twitched as his jaw clenched slightly. Belle narrowed her eyes at him before she felt a surge of energy in her lower stomach.

"Stop the car." She said quietly and he looked at her confused. "Pull over. Please." Reagan complied, pulling the car over only two minutes away from their final destination.

He put the car in park as he began to speak, "Belle is something--" before he could continue Belle cut him off. She leaned over him and reached under his seat, pulling up the lever and sending his seat flying back. Reagan was in a state of utter shock and it was adorable. Carefully minding their cups of coffee in the cup holders Belle undid her seat belt and climbed over to Reagan's side straddling his lap. "Belle, what on earth--" Her lips came crashing down on his in a passionate lock of lips. Since Friday Belle had been so full of need and want and he did that thing with his smile, oh hell who was she kidding his face alone was enough to get her heated!

Belle was aggressive, nipping on Reagan's lips as his hands stroked the edges of her spread thighs. He had no idea what was going on but he was glad it was. Her tongue sought entrance into his mouth and their tongues quickly set a steady rhythm that consumed one another. Belle's mouth was like a sweet burst of citrus and honey. Reagan suckled on Belle's lower lip, staring into her desire heavy eyes.

Between kisses, parted lips, embracing tongues, panting breaths, and wandering hands Belle began to speak...presumably explaining her sudden act of desire. "Please." She said with her lower lip between Reagan's teeth. "Reagan." She kissed him once more. "I've been...aching" She breathed. "Since Friday." He captured her lips and tongue as her words made him moan into her mouth, his cock hardening beneath her heat. "Wanting...wanting you."

"Oh Fuck!" Reagan exhaled through heated breath.

"Please." She pleaded, as her hips began rocking, seeking the appropriate amount of friction on her clit from his pulsing erection.

"What exactly are you asking for Belle?" Reagan questioned as she grinded against his thickening cock.

"Touch me. Please." She said as she wrapped her arms around Reagan's neck and delved her fingers into his hair sensually massaging his scalp. God how he loved that!

Reagan planted open mouthed kisses to Belle's neck and gently licked over the love bites he had marked her with on Friday. His hands slowly pulled her skirt up, tucking it into the waist band. Reagan blindly tugged at her cotton leggings, failing miserable to remove them. Belle sensed his struggle and lifted herself up slightly. Reagan moaned when his cock lost contact with her heated centre, but he quickly re-focused his attentions and successful pulled Belle's leggings to her knees. Reagan wanted to take his time, but Belle was struggling holding herself perched a top him so he pulled her panties down too. Belle rather roughly returned her weight to his thighs as Reagan's hand sought out her core. Reagan wanted nothing more then to stare at and worship her cunt, but the confines of the car and eagerness within Belle prevented him. Reagan wasn't exactly sure who the cry came from when his fingers first brushed against the liquid building in Belle's folds. Reagan's hand started stroking her, spreading her wetness, causing Belle to shift against his hand. Reagan experimentally stroked over her clit, to the sides, and just underneath when Belle let out a desperate cry.
"Yes, right there!" Belle cried burying her head in the crook of Reagan's neck as he resumed his mouth on her neck. He wanted to feel her breasts but her coat was in the way and there was no way they would be getting naked at this point. Reagan moved further back on her pussy, circling the pumping muscles at her entrance before he slowly pushed his index finger into her heat.

"Oh Belle you're so tight." Reagan said as he slowly pulled out his finger before re-thrusting into her wet channel. With the first thrust, Belle bit down on Reagan's neck, sending a surge of pleasure to his cock and a moan escaping from his lips. Reagan doubled his efforts and added a second finger as Belle continued rocking on him, seeking her pleasure. Reagan scissored his fingers causing Belle to pick up her pace, her climax building. Eventually, Reagan's thumb joined, rubbing and applying pressure to Belle's clit as his fingers relentlessly fucked her. Belle's breaths were coming in pants as Reagan sought out her mouth. Belle was so out of breath she was barley able to return Reagan's kisses as she rested her forehead against his, her body slowly embracing numbness. With a crook of Reagan's fingers into that soft sweet spot that makes Belle scream she came with a blinding light. Reagan stroked Belle through her orgasm as she road it out, prolonging her pleasure for as long as they could make it last. When the ache slowly ebbed away Belle sighed, staring into Reagan's beautiful eyes.

"Wow." Belle said finally regaining function of her brain.

"Wow." He conquered. "You're fucking beautiful when you cum luv." And Belle smiled. Reagan raised the hand covered in Belle's creamy fluids to his lips as he sucked down her juices. Belle bit her bottom lip at the erotic sight and then forcefully sucked Reagan's fingers into her own mouth, cleaning herself off him. "At this point I feel obligated to let you know that after Friday I jerked off thinking about you...twice." Belle giggled. It was quite endearing of him to tell her, and it thrilled her to know he thought of her as he came.

"Well then, It seems that you owe me an orgasm." Belle smiled wickedly and Reagan mirrored her grin.

"And I have never been happier to be indebted to someone." He said as he tucked a lose curl behind Belle's ear. Belle placed a chaste kiss to his cheek before moving her hands along Reagan's thighs. Reagan grunted when Belle's soft grip freed him from his pants. Belle couldn't really get a proper view of him to appreciate but she didn't need her eyes to tell her how wonderful he was, her hands could do that. The skin on Reagan's cock was soft, in contrast to the rigidness of his current state. The skin under his shaft was tender and his balls smooth. Belle's finger traced along the trembling vein that led from the base of his shaft to the tender tip which was already leaking fluid. Belle took her hand away from Reagan's cock momentarily and he lamented the loss immediately. But when he saw her hand dip into her pussy, coating it in the fluids of her bliss he held his breath eagerly in anticipation. Belle's coated hand returned to Reagan's cock, covering him in their mingled fluids and creating the right amount of lubrication that allowed Belle to stroke him to the edge of a teetering peak. Reagan's head shot back in the car seat, muttering Belle's name over and over again until he broke. Reagan's seed erupting onto Belle's hands in long spurts, mucking up his pants where his fluid spilled. Belle licked down the cum on her fingers, her eyes brightening when she tasted his salty musk. She brought her lips to his; Tasting himself on her lips was more erotic then Reagan had ever imagined, causing him to deepen their kiss.
Belle continued to kiss Reagan until she felt dizzy. "Now you owe me two orgasms." She stated with a smile and Reagan let out a deep chuckle.

"And I can't wait for you to collect!" They smiled at one another before Belle hoped off of Reagan's lap, returning to her seat, pulling up her pants and un-tucking her skirt. Reagan looked down at his ruined pants as he tucked himself away. "It's a bloody good thing I keep a spare suit in my office."

"Sorry about that." Belle blushed.

"I'm not." Reagan smiled, or rather snarled. When finally he adjusted his seat and continued the drive to work.

Reagan and Belle's little detour had caused them to arrive at Storybrooke Secondary with ten minutes to spare before the morning bell. Before parting with Belle, Reagan took off his scarf and tenderly placed it around Belle's neck to cover the marks he had left on her. After parting ways with a kiss in the parking lot Reagan had just enough time to rush into his office and change his suit before partaking in the mundane insanity his day would most likely offer.

Come lunch time, Reagan contemplated visiting Belle for lunch, but he thought better of it. One hand job from a woman in his car did not mean they were in a relationship, and thus Belle would probably want her space. The last thing Reagan needed was for her to think he was too clingy. After all, she was his only friend, and if he fucked this up he would not only lose a lover, he would lose his best friend.

Come lunch time, Belle had contemplated visiting Reagan for lunch, but she thought better of it. She was so nervous during their date when she realized that she felt more for him then just friendship, she didn't want to overwhelm him with the depth of her true feelings. So instead Belle made her way over to the office to join Mary Margaret and Will like usual.

When Belle entered the office Will was already sitting beside Mary Margaret munching loudly on a sandwich. Fortunately, Principle Mills was not in her office, most likely dealing with a crisis somewhere. Belle grabbed a chair and pulled it over to the front of Mary Margaret's desk.

"Hey Belle!" Chirped Mary Margaret and Will mumbled his hello through a full mouth.

"Hello, enjoying our sandwich are we Will?" Belle said smiling at the man.

"Yes, thank you very much." He said sarcastically, knowing Belle was teasing him for eating something other than a pop-tart. "Ana's started packing a lunch for me." He explained to ease Belle's confusion. "And I say any woman who can make a sandwich this good is a keeper!" Belle's mouth fell open slightly and she looked towards Mary Margaret for confirmation.

"He's going to propose to Anastasia!" Mary Margaret happily revealed, thrilled she no longer had to contain the secret.

"Will is it true?" Belle asked.

"I just have to find the bloody ring." He stated rather annoyed by the excitement streaming from his two friends.

"Congratulations Will! I'm so happy for you!" Belle stated, wrapping her arms about Wills neck.

"Well she hasn't said yes yet, now has she?"

"But she will!" Mary Margaret assured him.
The trio set to eating their lunches while Belle and Mary Margaret gave Will advice on planning his proposal. The two women were so excited that Will had jokingly asked them to do it for him if they were so keen! But Will's smart remark got him a swat on the back of his head from Mary Margaret for being a smart ass. For such a confident man Will was terrified to ask Ana to marry him. Belle knew it was because of how deeply Will cared for his girlfriend. That was one thing most people didn't notice about Will, because his ability to love and deep devotion was hidden behind his carefully sculpted cocky attitude.

The door to the main office opened sharply as Principle Mills stormed her way in, a look of frustration settled on her brows. Principle Mills stood right behind Belle, staring down at Mary Margaret, who jumped the minute Regina entered.

"Mary Margaret it appears the mishap in the chemistry lab was a false alarm. I would appreciate it if you put another warning in Phelix Berrie's file please. If that boy doesn't straighten himself out soon he's going to find himself expelled!"

"I don't think it's necessarily his fault Principle Mills." Regina glared down at Belle, who had turned her head, angling her neck, in order to face the woman properly. "He's been having a difficult time since his parents died." Belle was surprised when Regina hadn't bit her head off for defending a student and disagreeing with her. But when Belle looked over to Will and Mary Margaret they too were staring directly at Belle with wide eyes and dropped jaws. That was when Belle realized, Reagan's scarf had shifted when she turned to face Regina, revealing her neck full of bite marks and bruises.

"Oh my." Mary Margaret managed to say during the long period of silence.

"My Miss French, you continue to surprise me." Regina smirked, her tone wicked. "But you know what they say about the quiet ones." Belle quickly adjusted Reagan's scarf, covering up her hickey's.

"I guess your date went really well then?" Mary Margaret questioned. But Belle shhhshd her, not wanting to talk about this in front of Regina.

"M please." Belle pleaded, nodding her head in Regina's direction hoping Mary Margaret would understand that she didn't want their boss privy to the information. Mary Margaret went quiet, looking up at Regina uneasily.

Regina rolled her eyes. "Very well I can take a hint." She sighed walking into her glass encased office.

A few moments later Mary Margaret whispered, "But it was...him. Wasn't it?"

"Yes!" Belle gave in with a blush to her face.

"Wait, wait a minute. Tell me. Who is him? You can't just dangle that in front of my face and not tell me? Who are you banging French?" Will gushed eager to learn the identity of Belle's mystery lover.

"We're not banging...exactly." Belle defended. "But that's beside the point. Please don't ask me who he is Will. He won't appreciate being gossiped about. Besides we've only been on one date."

"Wait...this wouldn't have anything to do with the fight you and Gold had last week...about, what was it again...personal matters?" Will questioned, knowing that he had put two and two together.

"Oh Will." Belle sighed, and everything went to hell when Regina stepped out of her office, standing 'inconspicuously' at her door at the mention of Gold.
"Mrs. French, I hope you know relationships between co-workers are strictly frowned upon unless otherwise declared to the human resources department. We wouldn't want any problems occurring at work now would we?" Regina stated with a devilish smile.

"Well then I suppose it's a good thing I'm not exactly in a relationship yet Principle Mills!" Regina's scowl returned. "And it would do all of you very well to remember that my personal life is none of your business." Belle stated vehemently.

The room was still. Until Regina sulked back into her office. Then softly, and unexpectedly, Will and Mary Margaret began to laugh, and Belle soon joined them. Belle wasn't entirely sure what exactly they were all laughing at, but the subject of her love life had ceased to be a topic of discussion from that point on, leaving the group of friends to enjoy their lunch breaks together.

Belle spent the last two periods helping Graham's law classes find books and online sources to help them with their mock trial assignment. Belle was exceptionally thrilled when the bell rang and she made her way to Reagan's office, even leaving some of her books un-circulated. Gods! She was slacking already she was so smitten. After knocking lightly on Reagan's door Belle entered, closing the door behind her. Reagan looked up at Belle smiling. He immediately walked over to her, grabbing her at the waist and taking her lips within his own. Belle closed her eyes and eased into his touch, a touch she yearned for and was happy to receive. Reagan parted their lips much sooner then Belle would have liked but they were still at school after all.

"Let me just grab my coat." Reagan said, picking up the heavy black jacket from his coat hanger and collecting his briefcase. Belle smiled as she graciously took his arm. The pair walked past Regina in the office who nodded in acknowledgement when Belle returned the library key. Belle's face went a blush the minute she returned to Reagan, wondering what thoughts were streaming through Regina's mind as she studied Gold in disbelief.

"I feel obligated to tell you that Regina might know." Belle said quietly to Reagan as they left the inner building of the school.

"She what?" Reagan paused.

"She saw the marks on my neck." Belle said hanging her head and looking down at the shine of Reagan's crisp black dress shoes. Reagan placed a finger under Belle's chin directing her to meet his gaze.

"Good." Reagan replied to Belle, causing her to blush unsure of how his thoughts made her feel.

"Good?"

"Good." He re-stated, wanting so badly to kiss Belle right here in the entrance to the school, but by holding Belle's chin with Regina lurking nearby he was already pushing his luck.

Their drive to Belle's apartment was filled with much more chatter then usual. Belle was lively, comfortable, and even Reagan was completely at ease with the little librarian. She recounted her day to him, the news about Wills impending engagement, her work with Graham, and finally re-counting in detail her little incident with Regina. Reagan's Cadillac rolled to a graceful stop directly outside of Game of Thorns. But Belle didn't make the slightest indication that she planned on getting out of the car.

"We're here lovely." Reagan said to her.
"I know...I know." Belle said shaking her head in that adorable manner when she felt silly. Reagan reached his hand out, placing his index finger under Belle's chin and brushing his rough thumb along Belle's sweet lip. She stilled, looking into Reagan's dark brown eyes. He continued to run his thumb along her mouth, staring at her rosy pink lips. "Kiss me please." Belle said timidly. Reagan's hand cupped Belle's face as he leaned in sharply, kissing Belle reverently. Belle rested her hands on his chest, wanting to be close to him. Belle's nose brushed against Reagan's moist lips as the parted, resting their heads against each others brow. Belle leaned a little closer, brushing her lips against his, but not taking another kiss. They remained in the moment. Happy to be together.

Belle spoke softly, "There's a..." She hesitated. "There's something I didn't tell you this morning." Reagan tensed, becoming nervous. Belle placed a reassuring hand to his cheek as they remained rested against one another.

"There is?" He asked, trying not to be worried about where Belle was taking the conversation.

"Yeah. My dad, sorta, kinda wants to speak with you." Belle said biting down on her bottom lip, swollen from their kisses.

"He what?" Reagan stated, surprised with the information as he backed away from Belle slightly.

"I don't think you're in trouble." She reassured him. "He wants' to apologize. I think. Probably." He stared at her speechless. "Look, will you at least come in, for tea?" Reagan stared at her dumbfounded as he struggled with his answer. He couldn't say no. This was his beloved little Belle's father after all. If Moe wanted to apologize, Reagan could do this. They were both adults after all.

"Ah, sure." He finally replied rather un-confidently. "How bad can it be?"

And they smiled together.
"An apology is the super glue of life. It can repair just about anything." -- Lynn Johnston.

Belle pulled Reagan past the front of the flower shop and over to the worn wooden staircase. Even though he owned the building and knew exactly what it looked like everything felt foreign to him. He was entering Belle's home. She was inviting him into a part of her life. This was great, the next step in a healthy relationship, but all Reagan could think about was that he was gonna fuck it up somehow. He knew Belle's father meant a lot to her, even if he wasn't exactly dad of the year material. But hey, Reagan hadn't been that either. Suddenly, Reagan realized that he might have more in common with Moe French then he first thought, even though Moe was a blundering walrus.

Belle turned the door handle, and braced her shoulder against the door as she pushed it open.

"You know you really should have told me about that." Reagan said gesturing to the apartment door. "I'll send Mr. Dove to fix it."

"Oh it's fine really. We're used to it." Belle stated sweetly and Reagan tensed as they entered into the apartment.

Moe was laid out on the couch watching the history channel. "Oh good, you're home Belle!" Moe said as he fumbled to sit up from the couch.

Belle smiled at her Papa before she turned to stroke her hands over Reagan's shoulders, easing his tension. "Relax baby." She whispered into Reagan's ear as she encouraged him to take off his coat, Reagan shuddered. Belle slowly eased the coat from Reagan's shoulders and hung it up on the coat rack for him. She put her hand at the nape of his neck, soothing him before moving over to the kitchen. Reagan followed her, his gate uneven as his cane clicked against the floors. Moe had already laid out the tea things as he turned the kettle on, waiting for the water to boil. Moe had seemed very prepared, at least he was giving this an honest effort. Belle reached into the fridge pulling out the milk carton and placing it on the table. "Have a seat Reagan." Belle said gently as she noticed him standing around idly in the small kitchen.

Reagan complied. Happy when Belle took a seat next to him. Belle offered her hand to him, knowing he would need the reassurance. If Belle was honest she needed it too, she had no idea what to expect from her father. Moe joined them, waiting for the kettle to boil.

"I hope you like Earl Grey Mr. Gold. It's probably not the fancy stuff you're used to but it's my Belle's favourite." Moe said beaming at his little girl.

"That's quite fine Mr. French, thank you."

"Call me Moe please."
"Ah, Reagan." Reagan said as he offered his hand to Moe for a shake. Awkwardly Moe accepted, nodding as he shook Reagan's hand, his daughter beaming.

"Reagan. Who'd have thought! I didn't even think you had a first name. Didn't even know it back when you were Belle's teacher." Moe said emphasising the word teacher and hoping his hidden meaning made it through to Reagan. Unfortunately, it had also made it's way to Belle.

"Papa--" Belle warned her father, turning to face him properly. It was the first good look he had gotten at Belle and suddenly he was still. Everyone went quiet, unhappily accepting the awkward silence.

"Um...Belle." Moe said, bringing his hands up to his neck, indicating the mark's all over Belle's.

Belle held her breath and Reagan swallowed hard, his Adams apple bobbing up and down. No one knew what to say as Moe stared. Belle dropped her head, staring at the table and Reagan tightened his grip on Belle's hand. Moe noticed them tense together, his daughters hand held adamantly within Reagan's as they glanced looks between one another. Moe laughed. Unsure how to solve the problem, instead he chose to ignore the fact that Reagan Gold was probably fucking his baby girl. Moe cringed, hell he wanted vomit! Fortunately, the kettle began whining and he stood up sharply, setting himself to work on their tea. Belle bit her bottom lip as Reagan soothingly stroked his thumb over Belle's knuckles. They could get through this...together.

Moe returned with the tea cups. Belle placed two sugar cubes within Reagan's tea before stirring it with a spoon. "Thank you darling." Reagan expressed his appreciation and Belle smiled adding one sugar cube and a little milk to her own cup. Moe stared over his tea cup, observing his daughter and her companion.

"I would like to apologize...erm...Reagan. For my poor behaviour on Friday." Moe said, pleased when his daughter gave him her smile of approval.

"I suppose I should apologize as well, for the awkward nature of our first meeting." Reagan stated and Belle blushed, ready to die from embarrassment.

"I just wasn't excepting that, or this, well, any of it really." Moe said. "But I'm willing to look past, everything, for Belle's sake." Moe said, not exactly hiding his uncertainty for Reagan.

"As am I." Reagan said happily, adding, "For Belle's sake."

The men had come to an understanding and Belle was positively gleeful.

"So are you two an...an...item now?" Moe asked reluctantly.

"Oh." Belle said, not knowing the answer herself. Reagan chose to remain silent not wanting to say the wrong thing. "I...um suppose we're...dating?" Belle's accent thickened as she turned her questioning tone towards Reagan.

"Yes, dating." Reagan smiled in accord. Happy that they achieved a small level of commitment, even though if it was up to Reagan he would have her as his wife in a heartbeat.

"Good, that's nice." Moe stated. "Belle said something about the deal not counting anymore, you see I was just worried when I found you two--"

"I assure you Mr. French...Moe, that my intentions towards Belle are honourable."

"Right." Moe said, thinking their definitions of the word honourable must vary.
"For goodness sakes Papa, it's the twenty-first century and I'm a grown woman. Now stop your sulking and enjoy your tea. Why don't you tell Reagan about the new hybrid plants your growing in the greenhouse? He's quite an excellent listener."

Moe sighed, but he was thrilled to talk about his flowers, and once Moe got started it was hard to get him to stop. After informing Reagan of the new species he planned on naming Collette Moe moved his topic of discussion to that of his late wife, which then got him talking about his little Belle.

"And you know my brave girl travelled before she shut herself in all those books for school. She sent me postcards from everywhere!" Moe got up to go and fetch his scrapbook.

Reagan smiled at Belle taking the brief moment alone together to place a quick and chaste kiss to her lips.

"Its going well, I think." Belle stated and Reagan nodded.

Moe returned to the kitchen with his scrapbook in hand. If there was anything the two men would ever be able to bond over, it would be their adoration of Belle. Moe eagerly explained the postcards and pictures in his scrapbook to Reagan. And to be completely honest, Reagan was enjoying himself. Belle looked much younger in some of the pictures, her face rounder, and her body had yet to embrace the fullness of her womanhood. Reagan smiled at the woman sitting next to him. His thoughts strayed to how much he longed to see her hidden figure beneath, his desire to plant kisses to her naked body. Reagan coughed, trying not to focus on a naked Belle. Belle chuckled, as if she knew exactly what he was thinking about.

"And here, that was her first day off to university. Gosh my BlueBelle really is all grown up. She's wonderful isn't she? Coming home to help her poor father with his debt, working in my shop, even though she's got all those school debts of her own. And now she's got herself a good job. A librarian! You know she's always wanted to do that! Her Mama would be so proud." Reagan stroked his hand along Belle's cheek, and Moe noted the tenderness of the action.

"Do you have much of it my dear...student loans?" Reagan asked, in what he believed was a rather subtle manner.

But Belle could see through Reagan's disguises so easily, "Oh no Reagan. Don't you even think about it."

"Alright. The thought hadn't even crossed my mind."

Moe raised his brow, not understanding the hidden context going on between them. "What, what is it?"

"Reagan was about to offer to pay off my debts. Which he is not going to do--"

"Why not?" Moe asked, knowing it would solve most of their problems.

"Because I will get to it myself. I can take care of us just fine Papa." Belle stood up to press a kiss to her fathers cheek.

"Right. Of course you can Belle." Moe acknowledged, and the subject matter was dropped quickly. Instead Moe showed Reagan more of his scrapbook while they finished their tea in what to an unsuspecting viewer might look like a family that got on rather well together.

After the tea and conversation was finished, Moe and Reagan shook hands one final time before Belle walked Reagan out to his awaiting Cadillac. Reagan leaned against the hood of his car and
Belle stroked her hands along his chest, smiling up at him.

"That went very well. Thank you for doing that Reagan."

"It was rather civil wasn't it?" Reagan quipped and Belle only shook her head playfully before giving Reagan a sweet kiss. "I do love kissing you." Reagan said as he took Belle's lips in for another go.

"My fathers watching." Belle said as their lips parted to make way for a new angle. The couple looked up to a window on the second floor of the flower shop, a curtain was pulled open and Moe French appeared, looking down on them. When Moe was caught he threw up his arm in a surrender position, and closed the curtain in apology. Surprisingly, Reagan only found himself chucking, remembering he did a very similar thing the first time his son had a girl over. But the chuckle only lasted momentarily before Belle's mouth was upon his again.

With the aid of privacy Belle sought to deepen the kiss, opening her mouth to Reagan and tapping her tongue against his bottom lip. Reagan revelled in the sweet taste of her as they made out against the hood of his car. A few minutes later their lips parted to smiling faces.

"I better get going." Belle said as they looked back to the flower shop, only to find Moe right back in the window spying! This time they both laughed. "I'll see you tomorrow Reagan."

"Goodbye Belle." He said, the crock at the corner of his mouth twitching with glee.

Belle marched back upstairs to the apartment and hung her coat back onto the coat rack. Moe was still standing at the window, watching Mr. Gold drive away. He turned to Belle who was rinsing the tea cups in the sink.

"He's different with you Belle."

Belle turned her head and smiled at her father. "I told you he was. You just have to get to know him. The real him. He's not particularly fond of sharing it." Belle smiled.

"Right." Moe paused. "I'm just worried he's going to break your little heart Belle." Her father said with nothing but sincerity and Belle's hands stilled around the tea cup.

"How many times do I have to tell you Papa. You needn't worry about me so!"

"I know my girl I...I know." Moe nodded anxiously, their was clearly something weighing on his mind. "Um...look, Belle. I'm just going to nip over to the Rabbit Hole. I wont stay to long just a drink or two, catch up with the fellas," Moe said as he walked towards the door putting on his jacket.

"But Papa you promised! No more Rabbit Hole!" Belle said walking over to her father, her hands ridiculously covered in bubbles from the dish soap.

"I know Belle, don't you worry. I'll be quick. A treat for my good behaviour yeah? I'll be right back."

But he wasn't.

***

Moe French walked into Game of Thorns at eleven in the morning on Tuesday. He flipped the sign to open and sat behind his counter after retrieving a tall glass of water and two aspirin. He had broken his promise to Belle. Moe should have felt ashamed, but he wasn't. He knew when he made that promise he would never keep it, he was a weak man.
After spending an hour in his greenhouse Moe was just about to head upstairs for a quick lunch when the bell above the front door chimed. Moe turned to the entrance of the shop only to be utterly surprised to find Mr. Gold standing there.

"Gold? What are you doing here?"

"Easy now Moe, I thought we were trying to get along, for Belle's sake?"

"Well Belle's not here, now is she?" Moe bit back, letting his foul mood show.

"Speaking of Belle, she will be rather glad to know you made it home." Reagan said as he walked closer to the front register.

"She asked you to check up on me?" Moe questioned.

"I simply told her I would swing by the flower shop during my lunch break."

"Well, I'm fine, you can leave now." Moe sulked, gesturing for Gold to leave.

"Now that's no way to treat your customers Mr. French!" Mr. Gold stated in the eerie playful tone he used when mocking someone beneath his intelligence.

"You want to buy some flowers?" Moe was surprised. "For Belle?" He asked.

"Obviously." Reagan retorted dryly.

"So you've messed up already? Begging for my girls forgiveness. I told her you'd be no good, that you'd break her heart--"

"Rather the contrary Mr. French. I'm simply a man, buying flowers for the woman he is courting as a means of endearment." Reagan spat back at the larger man who now stood still trying to digest Reagan's last sentence. "They're a gift Moe." Reagan clarified. "I simply wish to please her, a surprise, a token of my affection..." Reagan went on and Moe stopped him realising he was being made fun of now.

"Alright, alright I get it!" Moe said defensively, and yet a little embarrassed. "What do you want?"

"A dozen red roses, with..." Reagan paused for dramatic affect, knowing it would make Moe's wound deeper, "a few Tuberose's braided into the stems." Reagan smiled sinfully.

"No! Absolutely not!" Moe responded horrified. A bouquet like that stood for passionate love, and...pleasure. Moe shuddered.

"Relax Moe, I wasn't serious. It was a quip."

"Yeah, well another joke like that and I'll have a bloody heart attack! It's bad enough you leave hickeys all over her, I don't need reminders that your fucking her." Moe yelled.

"Even if I was Moe, we both know Belle is better than that." Reagan defended and Moe went quiet. "Actually Mr. French I would simply like your finest Orchid."

"They're her favourite." Moe said quietly.

"Yes I'm aware. And you don't object to me buying a flower that symbolizes her beauty."

"Oh shut up Gold." Moe said as he fumbled through the small greenhouse at the back of his shop in
search for the best orchid in his current supply. "She prefers the white." Moe said as he returned with the flower, already placed in a decorative pot with pale blue ribbons tied around it.

"Thank you Moe." Reagan said before handing over his credit card.

"Tell Belle I'm sorry." Moe said shamefully just before Reagan left the flower shop.

"She knows Moe." Reagan reassured the blubbery walrus.

Reagan returned to Storybrooke Secondary and headed straight toward his little librarian. There was a small number of students in the library, clearly spending their lunch breaks studying. Reagan walked over to Belle's desk. He had a smile on his face and she had her sweet little nose in a book. Reagan cleared his throat to gain her attention. Belle's head shot up, worried she was caught reading on the job, but she was relieved to see Reagan.

"He's fine Belle." Reagan reassured her before she could erupt with worry. "He made it home safely, and he even says hello."

"Thank you Reagan, truly."

"I know darling. I got you something." He said with a gleeful smile.

"You got me something?" Belle questioned as her face lit up with anticipation.

Reagan pulled out the potted orchid from behind his back and placed it gently on the circulation desk.

"Oh Reagan, it's beautiful!"

"As are you Belle." He said, almost in a whisper, and Belle blushed.

"They're my favourite. It's going to brighten up the library just nicely." Belle said adjusting the flowers place on her desk.

"I..." Reagan hesitated. "I was also wondering, if you would like to go out with me again?" He asked so hesitantly that Belle's heart broke for him.

"I would love to go out with you again Reagan." Belle smiled and Reagan's face lit up like a child's on Christmas morning.

"Say this Saturday, I'll pick you up at seven?"

"Alright, but we're going to Granny's this time and I'm buying." Belle said, pleased with herself.

"Of course darling, how could I refuse you?" Reagan said, his big brown eyes shining with joy. Belle's grin was going from ear to ear, lifting her cheeks and showcasing the light flush Reagan had caused on them. Reagan let out a breath. He knew he was an idiot but he was still so nervous to ask her. Belle was perfect and Reagan was a coward. He didn't deserve her. But now that he almost had her, he was going to do his damned best to keep her. Belle leaned closer to him, her elbows resting on the surface of her desk.

"I really want to kiss you right now." She whispered, and Reagan felt a pull in his lower extremities.

"Gods Belle." She smiled at him wickedly.

"Ehmm. Excuse me Mr. Gold." Came a small pre-pubescent boys voice from behind Reagan.
Reagan turned awkwardly with his cane to find Henry Mills standing behind him.

"I'd like to check this out please Miss. French." Henry said, smiling up at the librarian.

"Of course Henry. Wise choice." Belle said as she scanned the copy of J.M. Berries Peter Pan. Henry smiled at Belle as she handed the checked out novel to the boy.

"Thanks Miss. French. Goodbye Mr. Gold." Henry said as he walked away from the two and headed toward the doors of the library.

Gold made sure the coast was clear of prying teenagers before engaging with his little librarian again. "Um Belle." He said nervously, before taking in a breath to confidently state his next sentence. "I was hoping to propose a deal with you."

"Oh God! Not another deal! Especially not after you just successfully and rather charmingly asked me out." Belle said sending Reagan one of her seductive, promising smiles.

"Please Belle just hear me out." He asked, the pitch of his voice a little lighter then usual. Belle raised her eyebrow in response, questioning Reagan's statement. He continued. "When there are two interested parties a deal can always be struck." Belle chuckled.

"Alright, lets pretend I'm interested then." She said placing her palms on her desk, and bracing her weight on her arms.

"It's about your debts."

"Reagan! I already told you no. Why do you have to be so stubborn?"

"It's in my nature." He quipped, smiling mischievously at her.

"You better not be about to say something stupid." She warned, but allowed him to proceed.

"I'd like to help pay off your debts, in exchange for your services." He stated honestly.

"There you go, you said something stupid! My services? What the hell Reagan!" Belle yelled in a whispered tone as not to alert the reading students.

"Oh god no, I didn't mean it like that!" He said realizing what Belle thought he had asked of her. "I want your services as a librarian, or a researcher."

"So what exactly would the parameters of this deal include?" Belle said, giving the poor man a chance.

"Well, it's not necessarily a deal per-say. Why don't we call it a job instead?" He said eagerly, hoping the re-phrasing would appeal to the small brunette.

"Where is this going Reagan?" Belle asked, tired of Reagan dancing around his proposition.

"It's about my book Belle. I'd like your help."

"What?" She asked surprised and finally genuinely interested in what Reagan was offering her.

"I need...let's call it a research assistant to help me with my book. I would like for you to come to my house every Sunday. I'll pay you a wage for your assistance...you can put it towards your debts, or give it to your father, or you can spend it on books for all I care, but I know you'll do the sensible thing. I would even give you credits in the publishing. That could be great for you, if you want to
"What kind of research? Why would you need my help?" Belle said, honestly not seeing the value of her skill set.

"Trust me. It will become very clear to you when I show you the material I've gathered for the book thus far."

"So you want me to accept a deal with you, without fully knowing the terms of what's excepted of me?"

"Do you trust me Belle?"

"Yes." She said without a second thought. "Alright, I will be your research assistant in exchange for an hourly wage."

"You're sure?"

"Yes."

"Then the deal is struck." He said smiling. "Thank you."

"For what? You're the one helping me with my debts." Belle said.

"Believe me, you're helping me far more then you know." Reagan said with a final smile and a brush to Belle's hand.

Belle French trusted Reagan Gold.
Getting Into Trouble

Chapter Notes

Check out the lovely new cover art! I finally figured out how to put it in the first chapter. As a result, each chapter has gone up one, I hope that's not too confusing for you.

Small Trigger Warning: See End Notes

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“My knight may not wear a coat of shining armour, but his code of glowing honour will never fail to protect me from evils far worse than any fire-breathing dragon.”
— Richelle E. Goodrich, Smile Anyway: Quotes, Verse, & Grumblings for Every Day of the Year

Belle French racked her hands through Reagan Gold's hair as she placed a warm kiss goodbye on his eager lips.

"I'm excited for Saturday." Belle said as she pulled her lips away from her suitor.

"I am incredibly excited for the company. However, I am less excited for the food." Reagan stated bluntly.

"Hey, I happen to like Granny's." Belle said swatting Reagan playfully.

"Then I shall endeavour to enjoy it just for you." He said tucking a stray curl behind her ear.

"Mr. Gold, are you sweet talking me?" Belle said in a tone of mocking shock.

"Can't a man try?"

"Yes you can, but only because I love the sound of your voice." Reagan growled deep in his throat but Belle French got out of the car before he could claim her lips in another kiss. "Goodbye Reagan!" She said cheerfully, before making her way up to the apartment.

Moe French was sprawled out on the couch, half asleep. He made an effort to move when Belle entered the apartment, but winced in pain when his head started spinning.

"I'm glad to see that you made it home Papa." Belle said as she hung her coat up on the coat rack. "I was so happy to hear from Reagan that you were alright. I'm glad I have one man in my life I can count on." Belle said bitterly. She had never been so harsh on her Papa before. But Belle was tired of broken promises and heartache. Maybe he would listen to her if his sweet Belle became a little more indifferent.

"Belle...Don't give up on me...I'm sorry." Moe grumbled as Belle walked towards her bedroom.

"I'm going out with Reagan again on Saturday. Oh, and I'll be spending Sundays with him from now on too."
"What? But Belle, you help me in the shop on Sundays?" Moe stuttered.

"Reagan's offered me a job Papa, a paying job. It'll help with the debts."

"Belle, why?"

"Because." She sighed. "He's just trying to help. I'm just trying to help." And with a weak smile Belle retreated into her bedroom, closing the door behind her.

Belle flopped down on her bed and pulled out her favourite book, *Her Handsome Hero*. It wasn't high class literature but her Mama used to read it with her when she was small, and Belle had always loved stories of adventure and romance. She read for nearly two hours, forgetting all the problems racing through her head, until her phone beeped impatiently. Belle ignored it, turning the page of her novel instead. When it buzzed loudly again Belle regretfully put down her novel in favour of her cell phone.

She had five unread messages in her group chat with Ruby, Emma, and Mary Margaret:

Ruby: "So ladies, I was serious about doing this whole girls night thing again. Anyone up for more 2 dollar Tequila shots this Thursday?"

Emma: "Seriously Ruby! You're already ready for more?"

Ruby: "That's a trick question right? ;p"

Emma: "Why not, I'm in!"

Mary Margaret: "I'll have to double check with David first."

Another girls night, Belle thought as she read the messages over. She wasn't particularly happy with the idea, but she did have fun the first time.

Belle: "Alright I'm in, but next time we have a girls night in!"

Mary Margaret: "David said he would watch Neal so I'm in too."

Ruby: "This is great! We should start a tradition."

Emma: "Oh no Ruby!"

Mary Margaret: "I agree with Belle, next time we do a girls night IN."

Ruby: "Oh come on girls live a little."

Belle: "Same time as last time?"

Ruby: "Totally! See you then girls!"

And so it was settled, another girls night at the Rabbit Hole.

***

Belle wore a small sequined blue dress, black pumps, and a black leather jacket Ruby had given her in college. After meeting Belle at the flower shop, Belle and Ruby walked arm in arm to the Rabbit Hole. Ruby was in an especially good mood this evening, her white toothy grin emerging through her blood red lips. Belle and Ruby claimed the same booth they used last week and waited for Mary
Margaret and Emma to join them. Mary Margaret arrived first, and she and Belle eased into a conversation about the fit Regina had thrown in front of a student's parents.

Emma arrived about twenty minutes late, with a furious look on her face. "Sorry I'm late. Sidney Glass was trespassing on private property again."

"Here have a drink." Ruby said as she passed over a tequila shot. Emma took the drink, shooting back the alcohol fairly quickly.

"Thanks Ruby I needed that." Emma said as she reached across the table and took Mary Margaret's shot, and then proceeded to down Belle's as well.

"Wow, slow down Emma." Mary Margaret scolded her little sister.

"Regina broke up with Graham and now he won't leave me alone." Emma blurted out as she waived Johnny over for more drinks.

"So you're not interested?" Ruby questioned, wondering why on earth Emma would want to reject Graham Humbert's advances.

"It was one time. And okay, maybe I could have felt something for him, but it's weirder then you know, the things with Regina...I just--"

"You don't want to let yourself fall for him because you're afraid of getting hurt again. I've heard this a thousand times from you Emma! It's okay to let yourself settle down." Mary Margaret said to her sister.

"Why settle down when there are so many single men in Storybrooke?" Ruby said as she searched the bar for potential candidates.

"Excellent point Ruby, in fact, I could use a little--"

"Emma!" Mary Margaret cut her sister off.

"Speaking of single men, Whale and Booth appear to be looking our way. What do you say Emma? Wanna get into some trouble?" Ruby said as she appraised the two men standing by the juke box.

"Gods yes!" Emma said quickly. Ruby and Emma left, much to Mary Margaret's dismay, in order to pursue Whale and Booth.

During the entire conversation, Belle sipped quietly at her long island ice tea and smiled softly to the man at the bar. Keith Nottingham was keeping his distance, but the moment he had seen Belle he sent her a non-threatening and rather sympathetic smile. It would have been rude for Belle to ignore him. Except for buying her a drink he had never really done anything to offend her. Besides it was entirely more interesting to watch the man converse with the bartender then it was listening to Ruby talk about her need for sex.

"Belle, Belle!" Mary Margaret's voice finally brushed into Belle's consciousness.

"Sorry Mary Margaret. I was day dreaming again."

"About Gold?" Mary Margaret said in a lilting sing-song tone.

"I don't appreciate being mocked Mary Margret." Belle stated adamantly.

"Oh I'm sorry Belle. I didn't mean to tease. I'm actually quite excited for you. Clearly things went
well between the two of you?" Mary Margaret said raising her brow and studying the healing marks on Belle's neck.

"Yes. They went well." Belle said with a small smile.

"Good that's good. You have to start somewhere." Mary Margaret said sweetly. "So tell me about it?" Belle looked at Mary Margaret for a moment. "Oh god no, not it, it, but your date." Mary Margaret corrected herself horrified and Belle chuckled.

Belle proceeded to tell Mary Margaret about her date and her relationship with Reagan. The maternal side of Mary Margaret couldn't resist interrupting to give advice and compare this, or that, to something her and David had been through. Just as Belle was getting into the details of her father Mary Margaret's phone started ringing. Apparently baby Neal was having a rough night and David needed her help getting him to settle. Mary Margaret gave Belle a hug goodbye and asked her to say goodbye to Emma and Ruby for her; Mary Margaret didn't want to interrupt the ladies conversations with Whale and Booth.

Unfortunately, that left Belle sitting alone at her booth watching Emma and Ruby shamelessly flirt with her co-workers. Belle groaned. This was exactly why she hated drinking with Ruby in college; she would always abandon her for some guy. Belle took out her cell phone in an effort to curb her boredom; Reagan had left her a sweet text message hoping that she was having fun with her friends tonight. At first Belle smiled, but she suddenly felt overwhelmingly sad. Reagan was the exact person who she wanted to be with right now. Belle dialled Reagan's number; the phone rang two times before his rough brogue emerged on the other end of the line.

"Hello Belle."

"Hey Reagan." Belle said, hoping she was loud enough for him to hear her over the music.

"What are you doing calling me love? Shouldn't you be drinking with your friends?" He asked politely.

"Actually, Ruby ditched me for me Whale, Emma ditched me for Booth, and Mary Margaret ditched me for Baby Neal. But I guess I can forgive the last one. Essentially, I'm sitting here at a bar alone, when I would much rather be with you."

"I would be thrilled if I were with you too Belle." Reagan said softly into the phone and Belle smiled the minute she heard it.

"Reagan can you come pick me up?" She asked hopefully.

"Of course darling. I'll be about fifteen minutes."

"Thank you Reagan." Belle said smiling with relief.

"Goodbye Belle."

"See you soon." Belle finished as she put on her leather jacket, grabbed her purse, and paid her tab. Before leaving the Rabbit Hole Belle awkwardly interrupted Ruby and Emma, letting them know of herself and Mary Margaret's absence, as well as wishing them luck tonight.

Belle stepped outside of the Rabbit Hole, walking to the side of the building where she knew Reagan's Cadillac would find her. It was much too cold out for just a leather jacket, but Belle hadn't wanted to stay in the bar any longer then she already had. Belle took out her phone, checking the time as she leaned her back against the brick wall.
A strong sense of aftershave and whisky strangled Belle's nostrils as she turned her head to find Keith Nottingham standing beside her.

"Not having a good night love?" He asked, his voice deep.

"Not really, no." Belle responded politely, looking down the road for a glimpse of Reagan's car.

"You're friends leave you for those blokes?"

"Yes." Belle said truthfully, checking the time on her phone again.

"Shame, your own friends leave you for a possible shag." Keith had leaned closer to Belle, slouching so that his shoulder could rub up against hers and she tensed. Belle was no longer interested in continuing their conversation as she made an effort to move away from him but he placed on hand above her head against the wall, towering over Belle. "You know I could still make your night good if you want. We could be quick." Keith said as one of his hands slid up Belle's thigh, tugging at the hem of her dress.

"I'm not interested Keith. Please leave me alone." Belle voiced, turning her face away from his, so she could be further from his lips.

"Now you don't really mean that. I saw you smiling at me. I know you want it." Keith's large hand grabbed at Belle's waist forcing her against the brick wall, as the hand at her thigh pushed up her dress, tugging at her panty-hose. He placed his sloppy mouth on her neck, but when Belle refused to grant him access to her mouth he forced her, dragging his tongue into her mouth as Belle sobbed. She tried to kick, and push at him, but he was so much bigger then she was. Just as Keith ripped apart Belle's stockings she heard a fast gust of air and then a loud cracking sound. Keith quickly pulled away from Belle, tumbling to the ground as another hit knocked the wind out of him and caused an eerie snapping noise. Belle cried out, not seeing clearly through her tears but she would recognize that cane anywhere, even as it was being impaled onto the larger man's skull. Silent and unmoving Belle quietly pleaded.

"Reagan, please." She remained unable to move, her tears having ceased as her shock set in. "Please Reagan. Take me home." And although it was no more then a whisper, Reagan stopped immediately, his cane half way in the air and a grunting Keith at his feet.

"Of course darling." Reagan said as he walked closer to Belle, but she flinched at first. He gave her a moment before she accepted his embrace and led her to the car. Reagan turned back to the filth lying on the floor. "Don't you ever touch her, or any woman again without their permission, do you understand me?" Reagan snarled at Keith. "I said do you understand me?" Reagan repeated holding up his cane in a threatening manner.

"Yes, Mr. Gold. I understand." Keith pleaded like a child, his face bloodied, bruised, and broken.

The drive to the flower shop was silent. Reagan had asked Belle if she was alright and if she wanted to go to the hospital, but Belle didn't speak. Reagan suspected she was still in shock, but he would take care of her until she felt better enough to decide for herself. He would call Emma as soon as Belle was home; Keith most likely wouldn't be going anywhere judging by the amount of bones Reagan had most likely broken.

As Reagan rounded the corner, Belle's hand latched onto his thigh, her nails digging into his leg through the fabric of his suit pants. Belle's eyes were wide, shaking with uncertainty.

"No, please. Take me to your place? I...I don't want to be alone...I...can I stay with you...please?"
Belle's voice was hesitant, afraid he would say no to her. But Reagan could never say no to her.

"Of course darling." Reagan said as he reached to his thigh and gently stroked his hand along the back of hers. It calmed her slightly, and he was able to pry her fingernails from his thigh and instead welcomed her hand into his own, his thumb tracing affectionately along her skin. His touch was comforting, and soothing. He was gentle with her. Belle knew that Reagan would always be gentle with her.

Belle breathed in deeply. Focusing on calming herself as images and scents flashed through her body. She shook in her seat, her muscles aching from how rigid they were. That's when she heard it, the soft whispers made their way through to her consciousness. Reagan was reciting the story of Beauty and the Beast. A tear ran down Belle's cheek. The story had been one of her focal fairy tales in her final essay in his grade twelve English class. Her mother used to read it to her in order to calm her down; It worked especially well during thunderstorms and nightmares. And wasn't that exactly what tonight had been? Belle was flabbergasted that Reagan had remembered. And although his storytelling skills weren't exactly up to par, his voice was perfect; his thick Scottish droll rolling out the words in an easy whisper. Belle allowed herself to close her eyes and listen to him as he calmed her nerves and warmed her heart, their hands still joined together.

Belle knew she could trust Reagan Gold.

He was going to take care of her, and everything was going to be alright.

Chapter End Notes

And a cliff-hanger too...I know I'm an awful human being!

Have I mentioned I love you guys...xoxox!

Trigger Warning: There is sexual assault and violence in this chapter. If that's a problem for you I would stop reading at..."A strong sense of aftershave and whisky strangled Belle's nostrils as she turned her head to find Keith Nottingham standing beside her." But you could continue reading at..."The drive to the flower shop was silent."
Reagan led Belle, holding her slightly by the elbow as they climbed the steps to the stained glass front door of Reagan's house. He opened the door and led Belle into the front foyer. He took off his coat and hung it up. Reagan delicately placed his hand on the small of Belle's back, encouraging her to follow him up the small landing and into the kitchen.

"Tea?" Reagan asked, inertly unsure of the etiquette for this situation. Belle nodded, as Reagan encouraged her to sit down on the sofa, her limbs shaking. She was still in shock.

Reagan pulled out his cell phone as he put the kettle on the stove. Reagan called the Sheriffs department, letting Deputy Mulan Fa know about the attack and also asking her to pass the word on to Sheriff Swan when she could. By the time Reagan finished, whispering the events into his phone, so as not to disturb Belle, the kettle was whistling fiercely. Reagan got the tea things ready, struggling to carry the loaded tray with his cane over to Belle's spot on the sofa. Belle startled as he approached but regained her composure. Reagan tentatively handed Belle a cup, making sure it was secure within her grasp before sitting down beside her. Belle drank the cup happily, allowing the liquid to warm her insides. A cup of tea always made things better.

Reagan paused. The silence surrounding them, with the exception of the ticking from the old grandfather clock in the corner. He was worried to ask, he didn't want to upset her. But Reagan summoned up the courage,

"Belle, darling? Are you...are you hurt?" He asked his voice cracking under the strain.

Brave sweet Belle, snapped out of her daze digesting his concern and sent him a weak smile. He cared. "Yes...I think I'm fine, just a little shaken."

"Oh Belle." Reagan said raising his hand to her cheek, but he suddenly stopped himself, worried she wouldn't welcome the touch. Belle raised an unsteady hand to meet his and brought it up to her cheek. She wasn't afraid of him. Yes, she was frightened as she watched Reagan nearly beat Keith to
death; yes, she was afraid of the darkness that rested deep within him; yes, she was afraid that she was falling absolutely and hopelessly in love with the gentle man before her; but no, she was most certainly not afraid of his touch. Reagan smiled to Belle as she leant into his touch. A burden of unspoken words rested upon Reagan's lips.

"I smell like him." Belle said softly, the tears finally re-emerging in the corner of her eyes.

"Then let's get you washed up and clean?" Reagan asked, waiting for Belle's consent.

Belle nodded, so Reagan took her hand within his own, abandoning their tea in favour of marching up the stairs to his master bedroom. The room was rich, the walls a deep red with deep cherry wood wainscoting. There was a large four poster bed, covered in golden silk sheets and a plethora of decorative pillows. There was a fireplace to the left, with two sitting chairs placed comfortably near the hearth. Just passed the fireplace were two doors, one leading to the walk in closet, and the other to the master bathroom.

The master bathroom featured a double vanity on the left, a very large step in shower in the right corner, the toilet beside it, and a large claw-foot tub furthest into the room. Reagan turned the tap of the bathtub on, testing the temperature before he inserted the plug at the bottom. Reagan didn't have any bubble bath but he did have some oils under the vanity. Reagan placed a honey scented oil into the tub, the water becoming a diluted honey colour as the tub continued to fill to the rim. Reagan turned the tap off and then grabbed some clean towels from underneath the vanity, placing them on the top of the toilet seat. Reagan started to move closer to Belle, the exit in his site when Belle stopped him before he could get anywhere near the door.

"Will...will you help me?" Belle asked. There was no amount of seduction in her tone, she was serious, desperate, unable to do it herself.

Reagan looked entirely unsure at first, his mouth slightly parted at the shock of what her request entailed. He pulled himself together. "Of course darling." He said as he slowly moved closer to Belle, who had her arms wrapped around herself securely. Reagan leant his cane against the counter and gently placed his hands to Belle's face, cradling it gently. Reagan focused Belle's eyes upon his, sensing her uncertainty but also her desire for help, for it to be over. "Belle, I'll be gentle. If...If I do something you don't want, stop me. Just let me know." Belle nodded.

"I trust you Reagan."

"Good. Good thing." Reagan stuttered as the tears slowly began to fall from her face. "Hey, it's okay darling. I'm here. We'll make it better." Belle nodded as Reagan's hands moved to sturdy her shoulders. Reagan ever so slowly pulled the leather jacket off of Belle's shoulders, folding and placing in on the vanity. When Belle didn't flinch or protest Reagan slowly reached his hands to the hem of Belle's dress. "Um, I'm going to take your dress off now." Reagan warned Belle, his fingers hesitant near her skin but she nodded, the tears falling much slower from her face now. Reagan's fingers hooked under the hem of the dress and slowly pulled up, rubbing against the curve of Belle's hips, revealing her pale stomach, brushing against her breasts, and snagging on her shoulders slightly as she raised her arms to allow Reagan to pull it over her head.

Reagan folded the sequined dress and placed it with the leather jacket. Belle was unable to blush, no matter how nervous or embarrassed she would normally be standing before a man in her underwear. Belle brought her hands up to cover herself slightly. Reagan fought the urge to look, he would respect her, but she was such a tempting beauty.

"I won’t look Belle." He said softly as he awkwardly reached a hand behind Belle, stilling over the clasp of her bra. She was wearing a matching navy blue lace set that at any other moment would
have Reagan all over her, but this was different. Belle nodded her consent and he unclasped her bra, letting it fall to the floor softly.

Belle inhaled a breath, removing her hands from her body. "It's alright Reagan, you can look."

"Belle--" He said not thinking it was the best idea, even though he knew he would restrain himself.

"Please. I'd rather you look, then avoid making eye contact like there's something wrong with me." Belle said, as her breasts began to rise and fall with the weight of her increased breathing.

"There's nothing wrong with you sweetheart." Reagan pleaded. To reassure her, Reagan looked down at the vast expanse of ivory skin. He took in the small swell of her breasts, her rosy nipples, puckered from the crisp air. "You're...you're beautiful Belle." He said softly, and even Belle could believe it. She felt the tenderness roll throughout her body, soothing her aching heart.

"You can touch. Don't be afraid."

"Right." Reagan whispered as he gingerly placed his hands on the skin of Belle's naked waist. She was cold and they needed to get her in the tub soon. Reagan awkwardly bent to the floor, his ankle protesting every step of the way. Reagan placed a small kiss to Belle's hip bone before moving to the band of her nylons, they were ripped and Reagan's stomach turned. Reagan carefully pulled the black nylons down Belle's thighs. Belle placed her hands on Reagan's shoulders for balance as she stepped her feet out the panty-hose. Reagan took the tattered material and tossed them in the wastebasket. He briefly looked up at Belle before he tucked his fingers into the waist band of her panties. "Ready?" Reagan asked, and Belle nodded. Reagan slowly pulled down the lacy fabric, easing over the curve of her arse and bearing her dark curls before smoothly ghosting over her thighs, leaving a trail of gooseflesh. Belle leaned on Reagan as she stepped out of the fabric, completely bare before him. Gosh she was breathtaking. Reagan struggled to stand up, leaning his weight against the vanity. He picked up Belle's panties and bra and added them to the pile of Belle's other clothing. "Come on love." Reagan held out his hand for Belle, who softly placed hers within his own. Reagan led Belle into the tub, limping heavily along the way.

"Stay please." Belle asked as she slowly sank into the water, letting it embrace her aching body. Reagan nodded as he pulled a small stool from beside the shower to sit by the bathtub.

"Better Belle?" He asked quietly.

"Much." She replied with an exhale of breath. "Will you help me wash?" Belle asked, looking at Reagan's face, constricted with deep lines.

"Sure." Reagan said, getting up from his stool to grab a cloth, some soap, and shampoo, before returning to his spot at the edge of the bathtub. "Would...would you like your hair first, or would you...

"Could you scrub my skin please...I...I don't want to feel it anymore." Belle said softly.

"Of course." Reagan said as he dipped the cloth in the water and lathered it with the soap. He paused. He could no longer see her body through the water but touching Belle would be an entirely different story. It was unfair that they had to do this, and part of Reagan wanted to go back and kill Keith. Instead he softly placed the cloth to Belle's neck, rubbing in circles as the soap began bubbling against her skin, rubbing away Keith's sent, his touch, the feeling of his breath on her body. Belle was softly crying again, and Regan placed a soft kiss to her temple in comfort. He rubbed the cloth along Belle's shoulders, and her collar-bone. He was attentive in his scrubbing, but at the same time being carful not to burn her skin. Reagan paused, realizing he was going to have to go further down.
He set down the cloth and began to take off his tie, placing it by the side of the tub. Next he began unbuttoning his waist coat and then dress shirt, exposing his chest, before neatly folding his cloths by the edge of the tub. Naked from the waist up, he could better help Belle. Reagan picked up the cloth, and Belle handed him the bar of soap. He gently pushed on Belle’s back, leaning her forward so he could scrub down her spine. Reagan dipped his arms into the water, reaching her skin at the base of her spine.

"Is that good dear?" Reagan checked.

"Yes. I'm fine. You can continue, please?" Belle mumbled as she shuffled her back against the tub again.

Reagan adjusted on his stool and stared down at Belle's breasts. He sighed softly before gently tracing the cloth over the tops of her breasts. Reagan moved the cloth to the side of Belle's right breast before brushing against the undersides and lathering the valley between her chest. Belle was breathing softly, her eyes closed as Reagan bathed her body. He moved to the other breast, avoiding her nipples at all costs. Once her flesh was slick with a soapy sheen he sucked in a breath before carefully caressing her nipples. Belle didn't even flinch at his touch, and so Reagan took it as a sign that his gentle cleaning could continue.

Reagan's hands dipped into the warm water of the tub as he soothed the cloth along Belle's stomach and sides. He was gentle and thorough. But as Reagan's forearms dipped into the water he hesitated. Belle opened her eyes and saw Reagan's hand holding the cloth stilled at her abdomen, just over her thatch of curls.

"I can do it if you want." Belle spoke up, taking the cloth from Reagan's hand.

Reagan nodded silently as the water sloshed around while Belle attended to her more delicate areas. When Belle had thoroughly wiped her curls, dipped into her sex, and awkwardly cleaned the flesh near her rear end Belle lifted her leg out of the water, resting it on the edge of the tub and placing the cloth on her knee, prompting Reagan to continue his work now. Reagan moved his stool and picked up the wash cloth, brushing it against Belle's creamy white thighs and calf's. He moved the cloth down to Belle's toes playfully cleaning between each small digit, causing Belle to laugh sweetly. Reagan smiled and continued his routine to Belle's other leg.

"Ready for your hair Belle?" Reagan asked as he abandoned the wet cloth in the bottom of the tub.

"Yes please." Belle responded, and shifted her body so that Reagan would have room behind her to wash her hair.

Reagan moved his stool over, bringing the shampoo with him and settled himself behind Belle.

"I...I don't have a cup or anything, you're going to have to dunk. Is that alright sweetheart?"

Belle responded by scooting her bum down to meet her heals, her knees rising out of the water, so that she could lean her head back into the tub, soaking her chestnut curls. Reagan weaved his fingers in and out of Belle's hair, thoroughly soaking her brown curls. Reagan tapped her shoulder, indicated she could sit up while he squeezed a healthy measure of shampoo into his hand. He tenderly massaged Belle's scalp, working the shampoo into her hair. Reagan was certain he would clean her until Belle felt content any trace of Nottingham was gone.

Reagan and Belle worked in tandem as she re-submerged her hair into the water while he made sure to clean the shampoo from her locks.
"All clean love. Would you like to stay in and soak for a while...I can make more tea?" Reagan said as he dried his hands and forearms off before putting his shirt back on, but forsaking the waistcoat and tie, he even left the top three buttons undone.

"Um, no." Belle paused. "Id like...I'd like."

"What is Belle? Name it and it's yours." Reagan said earnestly.

"I'd like to go to bed." She admitted.

"Of course." He replied.

"Will you help me?" Belle asked raising her hand out of the bath water and offering in to Reagan.

"Right, one second." Reagan said before limping over to the vanity to retrieve his cane. He took Belle's wet hand within his own and helped to pull her out of the tub, being mindful of both of their weak balance in the moment.

Belle stood, naked and dripping onto the beige tile floor. Reagan grabbed the fluffy yellow towels from off the toilet seat and wrapped Belle's hair within one towel before hand drying her body. He then carefully wrapped the towel around Belle's body, tucking it within itself at her underarm.

"Come on Belle." Reagan said as he took Belle's right hand within his left and led her into the bedroom. He sat her down on the edge of the bed before he briefly disappeared into the walk-in closet. Moments later Reagan re-emerged with a pair of dark blue silk pyjamas. They were clearly a pair of Reagan's and the fact that she was going to get to wear something of his made her happy. He would be all around her and she would be safe.

Reagan helped Belle out of the towel and into the pyjamas. After buttoning up the shirt he brought his hands to her face, cupping it softly and Belle smiled into his touch.

"I'm much better Reagan, just a little shaken up." Reagan nodded. "I'd really like to sleep now." She finished softly.

"Of course. Here you can use my bed." He said as he pulled down the duvet cover and sheet, preparing the bed for her.

Belle climbed into the bed, taking off the towel that had her hair wrapped and handing it to Reagan gingerly. Belle pulled up the covers while Regan retreated to the bathroom, putting away the towels, draining the bathtub, and cleaning up the mess they had made. Reagan returned to Belle's bedside, the mattress sinking as he sat next to her. Reagan pulled up the covers, making sure Belle would be comfortable before he stroked the damp hair from her face.

"Sleep well Belle." He said before slowly rising from the mattress.

"Wait." Belle said, stopping Reagan in his tracks. "Will you stay with me please? Tonight?" Belle asked shyly, a bit of trepidation in her voice.

Reagan nodded heavily. "Of course. Allow me to clean up downstairs before I join you?" He asked seeking her permission. And Belle nodded.

"Just, leave the light on while you're gone please?"

"Of course." Reagan replied before leaving Belle alone in his master bedroom.
Moments later Reagan returned, smiling at Belle who was struggling to keep her eyes open before entering his closet to change. Reagan returned in a black pair of silk pyjamas similar to Belle's own.

"May I turn off the light Belle?" He asked softly so as not to alarm her.

"Yes."

Reagan turned off the light and made his way over to the four poster bed. He sat down on the bed, leaning his cane against the place between the nightstand and the bed before laying over top of the covers. Belle rolled over to face him. Reagan was incredibly stiff and steadfast beside her.

"Under the covers please?" Belle said, with almost a hint of laughter in her spirit at the thought that he would sleep on top of the covers simply for her own piece of mind.

Reagan smiled into the darkness before getting comfortable underneath the blankets. He was thankful that she had chosen the left side of the bed because it meant his bad leg was free to have space on the right. Belle quickly scooted closer to him, wrapping her arm about his waist. Reagan was shocked by the touch, but immediately wrapped his arm about her shoulder. She was snuggled safely within his embrace.

"Thank you for saving me." Belle said, tightening her grip on his waist.

"I think you'll soon find that you've saved me darling." Reagan said in response and Belle smiled weakly.

Belle's breath slowed as she eased into the warmth Reagan's body provided. She embraced sleep. With Belle's soft breathing against Reagan's chest he too allowed himself to succumb to sleep beside his beauty. It had been a long night.

Chapter End Notes

I just want to cuddle Belle better.
Hello Everyone!

This one is a day earlier then I expected it to be, but today fit into my schedule better!

Wow I've missed this, but I officially only have 3 weeks left of my placement!

Bad News: If you also happen to read Little French Maid I wont be able to update that story until I finish with my practice teaching :(

Good News: I've gotten a brand new story in the works and cant wait to share it with you in June!

More Good/Bad News: A Matter of Perspective will update three weeks from now on May 19th like originally planned.

“Pull up a chair. Take a taste. Come join us. Life is so endlessly delicious.” -- Ruth Reichl

Belle had never been happier. Yes last night had been terrifying and unfair; Nottingham had taken from her and pushed her and Reagan to a place they weren't quite ready for yet. Even Reagan had frightened her at first, but then he had cared for her, and he held her close all night, like he was afraid she would drift away. This was where she belonged. Waking up with her head resting on his chest, his breath ghosting in her hair as his fingers meandered through her curls.

"Morning sweetheart." Reagan said softly as Belle fidgeted on top of him, wrapping her legs amongst the blankets and tangling with his own, she needed more of him. Belle rather awkwardly rolled into Reagan's body, throwing her arms around him in an unusual hug. Reagan let out a small umpff of discomfort as Belle brushed against his bad leg, apologizing profusely before looking up at him with those big blue eyes of hers, he chuckled through the pain. "Someone seems to be in a good mood. Are...are you feeling alright love?" He asked tentatively as her index finger traced along his silk pyjama top.

"I am. I want to wake up in your arms all the time now." She said quickly before burying her face in his chest, absorbing his scent and the feel of him against her skin as she squeezed him into a tighter hug. Why did she have to be so adorable? Having her rolling all over him really wasn't helping any. Terrified of frightening her, he placed a kiss to her temple before adjusting his hips and sneaking out of her embrace and the bed.

"We have work Belle. That is if you're up to it? I can call in--"

"No, no. You're right. I should like to be surrounded by my books." Belle said, getting out of the warm bed and tucking the covers in neatly, even going as far as plumping the pillows. Reagan smiled at her before softly taking her lips within his and leading her to the kitchen for breakfast.

Belle had called her father and told him that she had spent the night with Ruby, she really didn't want
him to know. But Moe French was nonetheless happy to see Belle back home safely on Friday night.

Work had gone well for Belle. Reagan had checked on her every spare second he had. Even Mary Margaret had inquired to her care, having heard from Emma. But Belle was fine. She was brave and what's more, is that she was happy. And she didn't need people looking at her like she was anything else.

Reagan of course had offered to cancel their date for Saturday but Belle was having none of it. She had bought a new yellow dress specifically for the occasion. Besides, Belle didn't know how much longer she could wait before she ravished the man the second she saw him.

Moe French helped his daughter into her white cashmere cardigan, and her purple winter coat, before placing a kiss to the top of her head. "Have fun tonight BlueBelle. Give Granny and Ruby my best."

"I will Papa." Belle said as she slipped on her white ballet flats and headed out the apartment door.

"Um Belle. Wait one second?" Belle paused, just before the landing of the staircase. Moe disappeared into the apartment, some rustling and closing of drawers echoing into the hallway. He returned momentarily with his hands behind his back and walked over to his daughter. "I've got something for you Belle." Moe said, raising his hands from his back and holding out a small golden chain. At the end of the chain was a small opalescent pearl, shining in the light. "It's your mother's necklace Belle." Belle smiled at her father in disbelief.

"I thought you told me you sold it to cover some of the debts?"

"I did. But a certain pawnbroker said something about a friends and family discount." Moe scoffed, but Belle's smile became even wider, her mouth parting in wonder. "It's yours now Belle. I want you to take care of it for me, for her." Moe choked.

"Oh Papa!" Belle hugged her father gratefully. He gestured for her to turn around, pushing aside her hair as he placed the necklace around her neck. "It's beautiful Papa!" Belle said smoothing her fingers against the pearl.

"As are you my darling."

"Tonight will surely be perfect now." Belle said gently biting down on her lower lip. She placed a kiss to her Papa's cheek before heading back to the stairs.

"Ah wait one more thing Belle!" Belle paused again, this time two steps down the staircase. "Will...Um...Are you planning on coming home tonight? Or should I? Will you--" Moe fumbled before Belle thankfully interrupted him.

"Oh, gosh Papa." Belle blushed. "Well I'm not entirely sure."

"Well you just let your Papa know if you're not. I don't want to be up all night worrying about you like Thursday." Belle cringed.

"Of course Papa."

"Stay safe Belle."

"I will!" Belle said before walking down the staircase and waiting in the flower shop.

Reagan's Cadillac pulled up about a minute later. He stepped out of his car in order to greet Belle as she walked out onto the sidewalk.
They smiled like fools. Tilting their heads both in the same direction and then laughing as they awkwardly greeted each other with an open mouthed kiss.

Granny’s was much closer than Dante’s. In fact they could have walked from the flower shop but Belle thought that would decrease the likelihood of them spending the night together. So instead they drove into the back parking lot of Granny’s before walking around to the front. Reagan held open the door for Belle and then followed her into the middle booth.

Everyone was staring. But they had expected it. Belle's father knew they were dating, as did many of Belle's friends, did Reagan have friends or even family, Belle wondered for a moment. But the town did not know they were dating. At least until now.

Granny stared as Reagan took Belle's coat for her, hanging it against the hook at the side of the booth.

"Yellow is an excellent colour on you darling." Reagan said as he looked up and down Belle taking in her radiance.

"Thank you Reagan." She blushed, pushing her curls to the side, showcasing the column of her neck and the flesh of her collarbone. Reagan wanted to bite down on the flesh and savour her taste, but then his eyes zeroed in on the small pearl resting a few inches above the swells of her breasts. He smiled sweetly.

"That, sweetheart, is a beautiful necklace." Reagan smiled coyly.

"Don't pretend like you don't know where it came from Mr. Gold." Belle emphasized her pronunciation of Mr. Gold as to indicate she knew exactly what part Reagan played in the matter. "I know you pawned it back to my father even though he didn't have all the money for it yet."

"And I'm glad I did! It looks so much better around your neck then it did in my cases." Belle smiled, before placing a kiss to his cheek. That caught everyone in the dinner off guard. And there was no doubt now that Mr. Gold and little Belle French were indeed on a date.

Granny made her way over to their booth as they made small talk while paroozing the menus.

"So what on earth is going on here?" Granny questioned.

"It's excellent to see you as well Willa." Reagan remarked sarcastically.

"I don't recall us being on a first name basis, Reagan." Granny bit back and Reagan stiffened with anger as she called out his first name. Belle was a little alarmed to learn that the two were on a first name basis. "So is he the mystery man you've been buying coffee and breakfast for the past two months?"

"Yes Granny." Belle said proudly.

"Enough chit chatting Granny there are other customers too you know!" Ruby chirped from behind the cash register, sending a wink to Belle. They haven't spoken since last Thursday. It wasn't really Ruby's fault; even if she did ditch her for a guy. But Belle wasn't really angry with her friend. In fact she was grateful she saved her from the prying of Granny, and probably everyone else in the dinner who was eavesdropping on the conversation.

"We'll have two burgers, extra pickles, and two ice teas please." Belle ordered for the both of them, double checking with Reagan that he approved of her choice. He nodded in agreement, pleased with Belle's selection.
"Alright then, but the pickles will cost him extra." Granny grumped.

"Actually, I'm paying tonight Granny." Belle said proudly, while reminding Reagan of her request to pay for the bill.

"In that case sweetie, you enjoy the extra pickles." Granny said with a maternal smile, and a brief touch to Belle's cheek.

Gold chuckled at how easily Belle could win people over; even when she was out on a date with the town monster. They sipped at their iced teas, after Granny had brought them to the table and left with an expressive eye roll.

"So, you call Granny Willa? Even Ruby doesn't utter her first name." Belle said with a hint of youthful glee in her voice.

"Widow Lucas is not particularly fond of her first name." Reagan admitted.

"Well what about you? Is that why you don't tell people you're name?"

"I told you." Reagan smiled and Belle smiled right back, easing into his charming trap and loosing focus of her curious questioning.

"Hey, you're trying to charm me out of answering my questions!" Belle's fiery side returned with a vengeance.

"Guilty." Reagan stated, cocking his head to the side.

"You promised to be honest with me. Remember? You have to let me in." Belle's blue eyes sparkled at him with sincerity. For a brief moment he looked away from her gaze as if he was unable to maintain it while the thoughts streamed through his mind.

"Mrs Lucas was my first tenant when I came to Storybrooke sixteen years ago. She used to watch my son. I got my teaching degree much later in life. I'd only been at Storybrooke Secondary for maybe two years before you got there. Mrs Lucas doesn't like her first name because it was something only her late husband called her. I on the other hand understand the importance of names. I don't give mine out to just anyone."

Reagan coughed slightly as Granny returned with their hamburgers and a refill for Belle.

"Well then I'm honoured to know you chose to give your name to me." Belle said graciously, avoiding the subject matter that most interested her. But she could only stifle her curiosity for so long, after all she did love a good story. "So, you and your son lived here? Together?" Reagan nodded. "I didn't know, I don't think anyone knew."

"Not now Belle. Not here. I Promise to tell you about him later. Please?" He had a begging look on his face, contorted and in pain.

Belle longed to know why it agitated him so much. But she forfeited the discussion until further
notice. Instead she talked about life back in Australia, adjusting to Storybrooke, recounting some embarrassing high school experiences, and what it was like living with her father’s debt problems. They talked and laughed, finishing their meals long ago and ordering a piece of chocolate cake for desert.

Reagan was true to his word and let Belle to pay for their meal this time. She accepted her coat from him gratefully before grabbing the lapels of his jacket and leaning onto her tip toes for a slow, but publically appropriate kiss. It seemed that the remainder of the diner patrons had stayed throughout their meal just to watch the odd couple. Reagan offered Belle his arm as they walked out of Granny's and towards the parking lot.

Reagan stepped into his Cadillac, after having already opened Belle's door for her, turned on the ignition and the heater before he stilled for a moment, absorbed in his thoughts.

"Would you care for tea at my place?" Reagan asked, the car still sitting idly in park.

Belle licked her lips before nodding her head in affirmation. The beginnings of a smile forming at the corner of Reagan's mouth as he changed gears and drove out of Granny's parking lot.

Belle was pleased to be at Reagan's again, specifically under better circumstances. She felt like she could appreciate the novelty more this time around. Belle suspected he didn’t allow many people into his private space.

After taking Belle’s coat Reagan led her up the landing to the formal sitting area and continued on to the kitchen himself. Belle sat down on the sofa, taking in the large fireplace, the antique clock, the gilded candelabra, and the ominous dagger. He had so many things, and Belle had so many questions.

Reagan returned moments later with a tray of tea things.

"I believe Earl Grey shall suffice." Reagan stated as he placed the tray on the glass table, leaning his cane against the side of the sofa as he sat to join Belle.

"You remembered! It's my favourite." Belle blushed.

"Well if I'm going to convince you to stick around I'd better stock up on the things you like."

"You are the thing I like Reagan." Belle said in a tone as if he were thinking like a silly child. But the comment had made Reagan's heart stop. "You're enough Reagan. That's all I want."

Reagan didn't know how to respond. He had never been enough before. Not for anyone. But beautiful little Belle seemed to be changing that.

Unable to form an appropriate reply Reagan instead leaned forward, his hand coming to Belle's cheek as he kissed her lips. It was a long kiss, as if he never wanted to let go. And as it finished he kept placing pepper light touches to her lips and cheek, before finding rest on her forehead. Belle smiled brightly.

After waiting in companionable silence, listening to the ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece Belle gained her courage. Now was as good as a time as any.

"You ah...you were going to tell me about your son." Belle brought up softly, and placed her small hand on his thigh for an added measure of comfort.

"There's nothing more to tell really." Reagan said looking into her honest eyes. "I lost him." He said
rather sadly but with a certain amount of finality to it.

"You promised." She said delicately. Although he had promised, if he wasn't ready Belle wasn't going to push him.

"His, his mother left us, for a younger man, my son was only eight."

"That must have been hard for you Reagan I'm sorry." Belle said, the thumb from her hand resting on his thigh slowly began to stroke against his pant leg. "What was his name?"

"Baeden, but I always called him Bae."

"That's a lovely name."

"It's Scottish."

"How long has it been since he passed away?" Belle asked hoping to gain a sense of their timeline. And although she was delicate with her question Reagan's response startled her. He shot up from the couch, raising his voice to answer her.

"He's not dead! He's just lost!" Reagan shouted. The anger building up inside him.

Belle was slightly frightened by his temper, but she stood up as well, softly placing her hands on his chest.

"I'm sorry Reagan." She pleaded, still a little frightened by his temper; but he had calmed down drastically since she touched him softly. "But how am I supposed to know if you don't tell me?"

Reagan nodded his head in defeat, and reached out for one of Belle's hands on his chest and brought it up to his lips, kissing her knuckles in apology.

"You're right Belle. I'm, I'm sorry."

"It's alright." Belle said as they both moved to sit back on the sofa. Moments of silence passed before he gained the nerve to continue.

"Bae's mother, Milah, my first wife, when she left I...I didn't know what to tell Bae. He was eight. How do I tell my boy his mother was leaving us for someone else? So I told him that she had died." Belle nodded, understanding where his motives were coming from. "But, uh, there was an incident. Five years later, Bae was thirteen, and Milah and her boyfriend--"

"The one she left you for?" Belle interrupted for clarification and Reagan nodded before continuing his story,

"They came for Bae. We were living in New York and they took him from me. Stormed into the house and drove off with him." Reagan was fighting his own emotions from the painful memories. "Killian was driving, and they got into an accident. Bae was fine and Killian was bruised up, but Milah, she ah...she died."

"I'm sorry Reagan. That's awful. You must have been terrified for your son." She paused. "But, what happened to Bae? How did you lose him?"

"I moved us to Storybrooke after that. A fresh start. Things were changing, and we were in a bad place in our relationship. Um...we grew apart, and he ran away, to Boston, when he was sixteen. We lost touch by the time he was eighteen. He hates me."
"I'm sure he doesn't hate you. You were just trying to be a good father. Taking him away from the dangers in his life."

"He was angry, I lied about his mother..."

"You did what you thought was best for him."

"I broke a lot of promises Belle." Reagan said his voice broken as she ran her thumb against his cheek. Moments passed.

"How old would Bae be, now?" Belle asked breaking the silence awkwardly.

Reagan let out the air horded in his lungs. "Oh." He thought about if for a moment. "He's thirty."

Belle's eyes widened, slightly shocked, but she brushed it off quickly.

"Oh god. He's older then you isn't he?" Reagan said embarrassed, brushing his hand over his tired face. Belle chuckled as she nodded in reply. Everything about their relationship was already unusual, so why not this as well! Soon they were both laughing.

As Reagan smiled at Belle she felt both a tug at her heart and a tingling between her legs. He had opened up so much to her and the information hadn't scared her away, it just made her want him more. All of him; his dark side, sweet side, funny side, charming side, intellectual side, and most definitely the physical side.

Belle lunged forward, her lips latching onto Reagan's in a desperate plea for touch. She wrapped her arms around his neck and scooted closer to him. As he opened his mouth to her on a sigh she moved forward to straddle his lap. Reagan's hands veered to Belle's waist, her yellow dress bunching up at her hips as she started the first movements of rocking against Reagan's body. Belle felt him hardening beneath her as she stroked through his silky locks, bucking against her to increase their friction. Belle went to the buttons on Reagan's waistcoat and in turn the ones on his silk dress shirt. She ran her fingers against the hot and newly exposed flesh of his chest, separating their lips so she could nibble at this chest. Reagan groaned when Belle's tongue dragged across his nipple. Her lips enclosing the bud that hardened from her touch, and her teeth scraping against the flesh. Reagan was straining in his dress pants as he pulled Belle back up for another kiss. Her hands drifted down further, brushing against his cock as she began pulling against his belt, the buckle clanking, and the leather whistling as Belle pulled it through the loops of his pants. Reagan froze as Belle's hands didn't stop, rubbing his shaft slowly through his pants. Abruptly, Reagan's hand grabbed at Belle's wrists, stilling them in the air, and away from his cock.

"Belle darling, I think it might be best to wait." Reagan said, loosening his grip on her wrists and tucking a lose curl behind her ear.

"What?" Belle asked, confused by the ceasing of their activities.

"It's a bit soon...and with...Thursday--" Belle angrily stood from Reagan's lap. "I appreciate the concern Reagan. But I'm not going to let Keith's drunken fumbling get in our way. What we have is real and it's good, and I want it. Reagan I want it." Belle leaned down to kiss Reagan's forehead before she turned around and walked briskly to the front foyer.

Reagan struggled to follow after her with his cane, and his erection, but he caught her in the foyer struggling to put on her coat.
"Belle what are you doing?"

"Apparently you don't want me, so I'm going home."

"You really don't think I want you? I'm standing in the hallway with a fucking erection Belle!" He paused. "I just don't think we're ready yet. Please Belle we need some time." Reagan pleaded.

"I'll give you time." Belle said sarcastically, opening his front door.

"At least let me drive you home?" Belle paused and nodded, storming out to his Cadillac.

Belle stayed silent during the drive and Reagan didn't dare say anything. She murmured a quick 'thank you' before running into the flower shop. Reagan sat in his car momentarily and let out a large sigh. He hoped Belle wouldn't be to cross with him.

Belle barged through the apartment door, tossed off her coat, shoes, and stepped into her fuzzy blue slippers.

"Belle? Belle! What is it darling?" Moe French asked after his daughter who stormed through the living room headed straight for her bedroom.

"That bastard!" Moe heard her mumble from her bedroom.

"What is it love? Did he touch you without permission? I swear I'll kill him!" Moe said standing up and moving to Belle's bedroom. Belle leaned out over the doorframe.

"No! The exact opposite! He said we shouldn't have sex tonight that maybe we should wait! Like he just assumed I wasn't ready. But I don't need him looking out for me; I'm capable of making my own decisions and he was my decision!" Belle yelled, and Moe's face went from one of horror and disgust to one of pondering.

"Perhaps he's right Belle?"

"I'm a grown woman father! You're just agreeing with him because you don't want to think about me having sex with him!"

"Then maybe you should stop bringing it up." Moe said under his breath.

"Ughhh." Belle exclaimed as she moved to the kitchen, grabbing a glass of water.

"Um Belle, did you ever think maybe he's just not ready." Belle paused immediately. "You said that he assumed you weren't ready, maybe you're assuming that he is?" Moe's mental breakthrough shocked Belle.

Belle darted out of the apartment door, ran down the stairs, and out of the flower shop, still in her slippers and without her winter coat. To her relief Reagan had remained unmoved in his Cadillac. Belle took a moment to catch her breath then tapped lightly on the window of the passenger side door. Reagan unlocked the door and Belle stepped in, sitting next to him quietly.

"I'm so sorry Reagan." Belle said, tears forming at the corner of her eyes. "I never even thought that...maybe you're not ready either."

Reagan chuckled weekly. “My ex-wife instilled a lot of doubts in me.” He paused. "I'm no good at this Belle. I'm just going to end up disappointing you, and you'll resent me for it, and then all this
will be over before it even begun." He pleaded.

"You could never disappoint me Reagan. Oh gosh, I'm so sorry I ran out like that. And after you were so honest with me! Oh Reagan I'm an idiot!" Belle exclaimed her disappointment with herself.

"You're not Belle. Please don't think that, you're the smartest woman I know." Belle smiled happy they were working through such a silly misunderstanding.

Belle unexpectedly gasped "Oh god I practically jumped you that time in the car!" Belle's voice was agitated with remorse.

"Oh god no. Don't be sorry about the car! I am very, very, happy about what happened in the car. And I'm very much looking forward to those two orgasms I owe you. Just not quite yet?"

"You're right you know. I was just trying to forget Keith. But pushing myself wasn't the right way to do that."

"So you're not angry with me?"

"Absolutely not. Now come here, let's make out till my Dad comes down to drag me back home."

"Deal." Reagan said before pulling Belle into his embrace. "I love the slippers by the way." He said before they laughed into one another's lips.

And sure enough, ten minutes later Moe French was tapping against the car window.
Chapter Notes

So I PASSED my first year of teaching practicum! And I'm excited to start writing again. Our updates will now return to bi-weekly on Thursdays!

Happy Reading Everybody! xx

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Deals are my art form. Other people paint beautifully on canvas or write wonderful poetry. I like making deals, preferably big deals. That's how I get my kicks." -- Edward Koch

Belle had decided not to press charges against Keith Nottingham, and fortunately Keith had decided not to press charges against Mr. Gold. The incident was moving behind them and Belle was looking forward to moving on with her life, and Reagan.

Today was an exciting day for Belle. It was her first Sunday with Mr. Gold. Belle had no idea what to expect. She knew she would be providing her research assistance for Reagan's book in turn for an hourly wage; but the problem was Belle had no idea what Reagan's book was actually about. She had accepted their deal blindly, and if she knew one thing it was to never make a deal with Mr. Gold that you didn't understand. But Belle trusted Reagan, and the mystery of not knowing made her heart beat with pleasure. But mostly, Belle was just excited to spend the whole day with Reagan.

Belle wore a simple pale blue dress with white stockings that came to her mid thigh. Her running shoes, although warn and cold, were the only footwear suitable for her to walk over to Reagan's house in. She had never been to his house in the daylight, and she found the light quite flattered the salmon pink. The porch steps creaked as Belle walked up to the stain glass doors. She waited a few moments for her watch to turn to 10:00 before ringing the doorbell, the ominous sound echoed inside the empty house.

Gold greeted Belle at the door, welcoming her into the foyer and taking her coat for her. He led her up the landing and into the same living area. But this time the coffee table was covered in papers and books, research Belle assumed.

"So are you finally going to tell me what your mysterious book is about?" Belle's tone was a little too flirty for someone who was there to work.

"As a matter of a fact, I am." Reagan gestured to the sofa for Belle to take a seat. He held out a pile of papers to her, a staple at the top left corner.

"Is that?" Belle questioned and Reagan nodded.

Belle took the paper from him, seeing her name on the front page and the familiar title. Belle flipped through the pages, her eyes widening and her mouth opening slightly.

"This is my essay. What has this got to do with anything?" Belle questioned.

"You see, eight years ago, I had this student. Clever girl really, quiet but brilliant. And she wrote this paper, about fairy tales actually. She argued that all of the Grimm fairy tales were really all related to one another, that the characters were intertwined and one in the same. It was the most creative, inventive, and high quality paper I have ever received as a teacher. It reminded me of my son, and well, lets’ just say the idea stuck." Reagan finished his explanation.

"You based your book off my essay?" Belle said in disbelief.

"Quite right" Reagan paused, waiting for Belle's response.

"Wow." Belle exclaimed.

"It’s been my obsession quite literally for the past five years. I would understand if you feel wronged, it really wasn't my idea, I was going to put you in the forward, but I just--"

"It’s amazing." Belle cut him off. "I can’t believe you think that well of my high school work."

"You're brilliant Belle, you always were. That's why I'd love to have you here now. I've done so much research, expanded on your original concepts, added a few of my own, the book has a real direction, and all I need is you."

"Me? You want my help?"

Reagan nodded shyly.

"Well then, let's get to work. I can't wait to see where you've taken it." Belle said, grinning from ear to ear.

"Right." Reagan said happily, rustling through the papers for a specific piece. "So I started with Rumplestiltskin, you've got him with the miller’s daughter, and you argue his position in the tale of Beauty and the Beast. Did you ever think about Peter Pan? In certain etchings Rumplestiltskin has quite the resemblance to a crocodile..."

Reagan went on, his tone thrilled as ever, like a giddy school boy. Belle was just as excited as they went on about the material, pleased that she had accepted Reagan's deal. Belle could still not believe that he based his book on some of her ideas, and now he wanted her to work on it with him!

The two continued their work for a little over two hours.

"Time for a tea break I think?" Reagan asked and Belle's blue eyes shot up, her nose buried deep in a book.

"Oh yes please."

"Would jam and scones do for lunch? Or I can run out and get you something from Granny's?"

"Scones would be lovely with our tea, thank you Reagan."

Reagan left Belle to her devices while he went to prepare their tea and scones. He got out his favourite set, the delicate white ones with gold trim and blue hand painted flower stems. He thought Belle would appreciate them as he poured the hot liquid into the small cups. He brought over their
tea things like usual with the aid of a tray and the hindrance from his cane. Belle knew better then to offer her assistance. Reagan Gold was a proud man, and more then capable of doing things on his own.

"Here we are." Reagan said as he placed the tray on the table, set his cane against the couch, sat down, and carefully picked up his tea cup. Belle in turn, also picked up the delicate cup.

"Listen Reagan, I wanted to apologize again for the way I treated you on Saturday. I feel awful."

"Don't worry about it Belle."

"No truly! Especially after you were being so open and honest with me about your son, I'm really glad you told me Reagan."

"Well I suppose now would be a good time to tell you about my other children too." Reagan quipped but Belle let out a shocked breath, the small tea cup loosening from her grip and falling to the wooden floors with a thick clunk, the tea pooling on the floor. "It was just a quip Belle, I wasn't serious." Reagan said with a small giggle.

"Right." Belle said. Her mind no less panicked as she reached down to the floor immediately, and tentatively picked up the cup. Her head tilted up, looking right at Reagan and he noticed tears building up in the corners of her eyes. Belle didn't know why she became so emotional at the sight of the cup. "I'm so sorry, It...a...It's chipped." Belle said, fighting back the tears.

"Hey, hey, don't cry Belle. It's just a cup." Reagan said, placing a loving touch to her cheek.

"It's just you have so many nice things. I feel awful for ruining them."

"Oh Belle, you are the nicest thing in my life, believe me!"

"Oh Reagan." Belle said as she lunged forward and kissed Reagan with all her heart.

Reagan wrapped his arms around Belle, pressing her body tightly to his, her hardening nipples brushing against his chest. Reagan moaned as Belle's tongue begged for entrance, gently licking against the seam of his lips, as he eased his mouth open to her. They were making out like teenagers, each refusing to leave the other's lips, placing pepper light kisses before consuming one another again. Reagan began to feel himself hardening as they kissed each other breathlessly. Belle's hands moved from Reagan's hair and down to his chest, stroking over the taut muscles as she slowly adjusted her hips and moved to straddle him. Reagan's hand immediately went to Belle's hips, and much to Belle's confusion he ended the kiss, sinfully dragging her lower lip out between his teeth as the parted.

"You my dear are on the clock." He charismatically scolded her and Belle smiled brightly, a small blush crossing over her cheeks.

"Sorry sir, I'll get back to work immediately." She played along.

"You better! This book isn't going to write itself." Reagan quipped as Belle shifted against his erection, but only to move from his lap. "But I suppose one more kiss couldn't hurt." Reagan asked; his tone less playful this time and more as if he was asking for her permission. Belle smiled in response and Reagan gently laid her back on the sofa, his body covering hers as he began to place kisses down her neck, and across her collarbone, his tongue darting out to lick at her sweet flesh, before moving up to her jaw, until he finally placed a soft kiss at the corner of her mouth that had Belle arcing her back into his body. Reagan held her down at her hips as he shifted on the couch and finally placed her lips within his own. Just as Belle began feeling the tingly knot in her belly and a
heavy wetness between her thighs, Reagan separated their kiss and buried his head in the crook of her neck with an agonizing groan.

"Reagan?" Belle asked confused. "Are you alright? Did you cum already?" Belle asked, wondering if the pressure had become too much for him and he had spilled himself in his trousers.

Reagan tried to chuckle wickedly in response, but he only managed another painful grunt.

"It may have been a while Belle, but I am certainly more then capable of controlling myself from cumming in my pants like a giddy school boy," Reagan said disdainfully, but he hadn't made an effort to move from his position over her, his head leaning against her neck. Belle brought her hands up to his back and stroked him soothingly.

"What is it then?"

"It's my leg. It's cramped. I...I can't. The fucking position."

"Oh! Do you need me to move Reagan? Or, can you do it on your own...?" Belle asked nervously, knowing Reagan had a short temper, especially when it came to his leg.

"No, no, shit Belle, I'm sorry--"

"Hey, it's fine sweetheart!" Belle said. Cradling his face between her hands, making sure their eyes made contact. She could see the pain and embarrassment in them as he struggled to look into her eyes, radiating sincerity.

"Just give me a minute." Reagan said quietly, his anger easily soothed by her embrace and reassuring words.

"Take all the time you need. I rather like having you overtop of me." Belle quipped, hoping to ease the tension, as he smiled slightly over her, the skin at the corners of his mouth crinkling as the ends of his hair shifted over his eyes. Reagan placed a soft kiss to the corner of Belle's mouth before she felt him shifting slightly. He stiffly moved off of Belle and flopped into the couch, lifting up his cramped leg and resting in on the coffee table.

Belle sat up and moved to the floor of the sofa, gingerly placing her hands on Reagan's good knee, looking up at him.

"Can I help?" She asked softly.

"No, it a... it usually stretches itself out." He winced as he spoke and shifted slightly.

"Well, have you ever had anyone massage it before?"

"What?"

"Have you ever had anyone massage your leg for you? Work the cramp out?" Belle asked again, hoping she clarified her previous question.

"No, a...no ones ever...offered." He said quietly, a hidden memory present in his mind.

"Well I am. Would you like me to?" She moved a little, toying with the hem of his suit pants.

"A no...Belle you don't want to see it."
"I don't care about that Reagan." Belle said as she placed a kiss to his covered knee and slowly began rolling up his suit pants until she could fold the hem at his knee. "Your leg is a part of you, and I should like it just the same, no matter how flawed you believe it to be." Belle gently took his shoe off and then moved to his sock. "You know I happen to be quite fond of flawed things." She said rather playfully and he found himself smiling under her gentle touch.

Belle stifled her gasp as she removed the sock and saw the extent of the damage on Reagan's leg. His flesh was tight and rough, scaring over his ankle and foot. She suspected that his foot might have been completely shattered at one point. The bones in his leg had clearly not been set properly, and now she could see why he felt so much tension in his knee and ankle.

"Told you." He said bitterly, and Belle knew she could not lie to him, not when his self esteem was already so low.

"Truthfully, it is much worse then I was expecting. But I don't find it ugly in the least." She quickly reassured him and his body relaxed slightly. "I rather think it shows how much you've been through, that you survive, that you fight. I can see why it gives you so much pain now Reagan." He did not respond to her statement.

So instead Belle leaned down and placed a soft kiss to his ankle. Reagan's body jerked slightly and he groaned at the small touch. Belle backed away quickly, fearful that she had hurt him.

"I'm so sorry, did I hurt you?"

"No...no Belle. That was...that was lovely. I've just never...no one's ever..."

"Hush." Belle said softly, realizing Reagan was struggling and instead returned to his leg to place a multitude of soft kisses to his flesh, before gently rubbing his skin, soothing the tight muscles.

Reagan was softly humming as Belle worked, wincing occasionally as she hit a particularly tight nerve but together they worked it out. Truthfully his leg had never felt so at ease, specifically after a bad cramp hit.

"Will you tell me what happpened?" Belle asked quietly.

"I'm embarrassed." He said weakly.

"I'm sure it's not as silly as you think." Belle said shaking her head as she muttered to herself.

"I did it to myself Belle." He muttered desperately.

"What?" Belle couldn't comprehend how Reagan had thought he could accomplish this type of injury on his own.

"I was drunk when it happened. Milah, she ah, she told me she was pregnant, with Bae, and that she wanted...she wanted to get an abortion." He composed himself before continuing. "We got into an argument, I wanted to keep it, so I drank. She uh, she kicked me out and I got in the car, drove right off the road and into a tree. My ankle and foot were shattered. I was so fucking wasted I couldn't feel a thing that I walked back home on the broken bones in order to convince her to keep the baby." Reagan's voice was shaking now. "Milah called an ambulance, I went into coma, shock the doctors said, and I didn't wake up for about a month, not to mention the rehab afterwards. Needless to say Milah hated me even more. She blamed me for Bae, by the time I had woken up, she hadn't done it yet, and well it was to late then. She blamed me for the son, and she despised me because I was a cripple." Reagan couldn't control himself any longer. The tears began to fall from his cheeks. He had been bottling these emotions up all his life, never sharing with anyone. And Belle's heart ached for
the sweet man who walked on a broken foot in order to fight for the life of his unborn son.

"Shhhhh." Belle cooed, as she moved up to the couch and sat beside Reagan. She gently wrapped him in her embrace as she encouraged him to lean his head against her bosom as he softly cried it out. Belle stroked over his hair and whispered loving words into his ear as he slowly calmed down, and soon the tears subsided, but he remained in her embrace. "Thank you for telling me." Belle whispered and Reagan simply closed his eyes to enjoy her touch.

He spent the next hour in her embrace, feeling more loved then he ever had before.

Chapter End Notes

*dries eyes with a tissue* Reagan has come so far and I'm so proud of him!
Expectations

Chapter Notes

Happy Reading Everybody! xx

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“If you expect nothing from somebody you are never disappointed.”
— Sylvia Plath, The Bell Jar

Belle fastened the last button on her fall jacket as she crossed the road to Granny's. She was a little late for her meeting with Ruby and raced out of the apartment the moment she realised she was almost going to miss it. As a result, she forgot to grab her purse and didn't even button up her coat properly, she realised as she looked down to find the second from the last button was in the third empty loop hole. It was the nerves getting to her. Belle had been nervous all morning, she woke up nervous, ate her bagel nervous, she was nervous while she helped her father prepare the greenhouse for winter, she was nervous when she prepared their lunch, and they talked about saving up for a new washer. Belle was nervous. And it wasn't because of this thing with Ruby; truthfully Belle didn't blame her friend in the least. It was because she had a date with Reagan Gold tonight. A third date, at his house, for dinner...and desert. Every bone in her body was telling her that this was a big deal, that he was finally ready. And for some reason, even though Belle was more excited then anything to continue her relationship with Reagan, it made her nervous.

The bell above the diner chimed as she pushed the glass door open, the diner full with the mid afternoon crowd. Belle made her way to an open barstool at the counter; she had suspected that Ruby told people to leave it free for her.

"Hey Belle! Thanks so much for coming in." Ruby said as she emerged from the back room and brought an iced tea over to the counter where Belle was sitting. "I'm so sorry about Thursday. Emma told me, and I saw you guys in the diner, but I didn't want to interrupt, truthfully I thought Gold was gonna kill me, and you haven't really been answering my texts--"

"It's fine Ruby." Belle interrupted her. "It's not your fault Keith is an asshole."

"But it is my fault, I left you! I broke girl code rule number one."

"No you didn't, you were with Emma, and you thought I was with Mary Margaret." Belle paused. "It happened Ruby and it's nobody's fault but Keith's."

"You're to forgiving Belle, you know that?"

"Yes I do." Belle said sweetly as she took a sip of her ice tea, on the house according to Ruby. "And as for your messages, I have been quite busy with Reagan in the past week."

"Belle...?" Ruby prodded.

"Oh no nothing like that." Belle dismissed, looking around the diner to ensure they were far away from prying eyes.

"Haven't you guys been dating for like four weeks or something? I've usually sealed the deal after
four hours Belle."

"Ruby!" Belle scolded her friend. "Besides we've only actually been on two dates."

"And your point is?" Ruby teased.

"That it's none of your business." Belle remarked rather adorably.

"Fair enough." Ruby said, letting out a sigh admitting her defeat.

"Although, I am going over to his house tonight."

"Belle...?"

"Just for dinner." Belle said, as if she were trying to convince herself as well.

"Date number three?" Ruby asked excitedly.

"Yes."

"Belle...?"

"Alright, I might stay for desert...If he offers." Belle smiled, a small blush arising on her cheeks.

"Oh, he'll ask. Have you seen yourself Belle? You're goddamn gorgeous!" Ruby practically shouted throughout the diner.

"Ruby! Keep your voice down!"

"I'm sorry. I'm just happy for you!"

"Thank you." Belle said, as her ice tea gurgled, her straw struggling to pick up the last drops of liquid.

"Do you have everything that you'll need for tonight Belle?" Ruby asked as she reached for a new glass and offered her friend another round of ice tea, which Belle graciously accepted.

"I think so. I mean he asked me to bring dessert so I made lemon meringue pie." Belle blushed at the unknown secret.

"Oh Belle sweetheart. No I mean...things." Ruby raised her brows.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean Belle...If you’re planning on having sex with him..." Belle shushed Ruby again before she continued, lowering the volume of her voice. "Do you need any protection?"

"Oh!" Belle clued in, rather ashamed that it took her so long. "No, I'm on the pill." She replied sheepishly.

"Since when!"

"Since after my first date with Reagan actually." Belle said, her blush turning a bright crimson.

"Oh my gosh Belle! You haven't wanted a man this badly since...ever!" Ruby was practically squealing and Granny was sending disapproving glares her way.
"I should probably get going anyway." Belle said, catching the negative glare from Granny. But I'll text you later, if I'm not to...busy." Belle said as she hoped off the bar stool and put on her coat.

"Good luck with tonight Belle!" Ruby winked, as Belle made her way out of the diner.

***

"Papa what about this one?" Belle's voice echoed through the small apartment.

Moe sighed, it was the sixth time that afternoon that his little girl had called him to come and give his opinion on the dress she was wearing. It wasn't something that Belle usually did; she usually trusted her own opinion and only asked for second hand approval after she had chosen her outfit.

Moe walked towards her bedroom and knocked on the door, but ended up knocking on air, because at the exact same moment Belle swung the door open eagerly.

"What do you think?" Moe was just about to open his mouth when he was cut off. "I don't know? I think it's too much. I mean it's just dinner. At his house. His house is probably nicer than all the restaurants in Storybrooke combined. But it's still his home, so I should be able to go more casual. So the second dress, it's better right?" She waited briefly. "But no, he'll definitely be wearing a three piece suit; I should set my standards as high as he sets his, no?" Belle asked herself and Moe finally interrupted.

"Belle this conversation seems very one sided. If you don't need my help I'll be in the living room watching the football game."

"Oh no Papa I'm sorry." Belle said as she reached out to grab her Papa's arm and keep him in her bedroom. "Please this is very important to me Papa. Tonight, it's got to be perfect."

"Belle, we can't always expect things to be perfect, because if it isn't then you'll have nothing but disappointment. And I don't think, at least I certainly hope, he better to god not--"

"Papa, your point." Belle said, refocusing her father.

"I don't think Mr. Gold could ever disappoint you." He said with a hint of remorse, recalling the countless times Moe had done just that to his own daughter.

"Aw Papa!"

"Now, wear the white dress with the red roses. You're mother liked roses. And wear sensible shoes! You're going to be walking over there, and unless he drives you home, which he probably will, anyways you might have to walk back as well."

"About that Papa." Belle said, briefly looking down at her bare feet, her toes wiggling against the hard wood. "I probably won't be coming home tonight, so you don't need to wait up for me. You know in case you're worried." Belle said quickly before closing her bedroom door in order to change into the appropriate dress.

Moe stood there, in front of her closed door, mouth slightly opened. He would have sworn he felt his heart stop for nearly three seconds as he digested the information. Belle's door opened quickly again, Belle in the white dress with her hair down, a small red bag in her hand.

"I don't need to remind you that I'm a grown woman Papa, and I was just being courteous, I know you worry." Belle said as she reached up to the coat rack and put on her jacket.
"I'm not worried BlueBelle." Moe said quietly and Belle was about to defend herself once more until she realised what her father had said.

"You're not?" She said her brows wrinkled in confusion as she un-tucked her hair from the back of her jacket.

"No, I'm not. Just be safe Belle. Call if your plans change." Moe said simply, easily, almost too easily in Belle's opinion. Belle bent down to tie up her red converse. "That's a good girl, sensible footwear." Moe mumbled as Belle stood up again. He adjusted her hair, and then she leaned up to kiss her Papa's cheek.

"Alright then. You know, you can be quite wise when you want to be Papa. I'll see you later. Have a good weekend." Belle said awkwardly as she opened the front door and her Papa watched her walk down the staircase into the flower shop.

Moe closed the door once Belle had vanished into the lower level and let out a big gust of air. "It's about fucking time." He said with a smile and a chuckle that he quickly turned into an inconspicuous cough, even though there was no one in the room watching him.

***

Belle arrived at Reagan's home at precisely six o'clock. She wore the simple cotton short-sleeved white dress with little red roses on it. She brought with her a small red purse, hidden within its contents an inconspicuous extra pair of underwear and a spare toothbrush.

Reagan greeted Belle with a smile as he welcomed her into his house, hanging her coat up and leading her into the kitchen where he was placing the final touches onto their meal.

"I made lemon meringue." Belle said as she eyed the dining table, elaborately set for two, his place at the head and a place for her just to the right. "I hope it's to your liking." Belle said with a smile as she placed the dessert tray on the island in his kitchen.

"Oh, you know very well that I do." He said with a snarl, grabbing Belle by the waist and placing a kiss to her temple. "I hope you don't mind salmon?" Reagan also asked, gesturing to the meal he had been preparing for them.

"You now very well that I'm exceptionally fond of sea food." She paraphrased his words with a satisfied grin.

Reagan placed the pie in the fridge before placing the final garnishes onto their meal. He had prepared a salmon fillet with roasted potatoes and grilled asparagus. Belle had no idea that Reagan was such an exceptional cook, but it didn't surprise her really. He strived for excellence in all areas of his life, and he most likely cooked for himself and his son for many years. Reagan placed the meals on the table and courteously pulled out Belle's chair for her.

"Red or white wine darling? Unless you'd rather some water? I um, I also picked up some iced tea for you." He stated shyly.

"You bought iced tea just for me!" Belle exclaimed happily, and Reagan simply nodded passively. "Oh Reagan, that's so thoughtful of you. But I think I'll treat myself to a glass of white wine."

"Well you deserve it." Reagan said sweetly as he moved to the wine rack in the kitchen, making a selection of white wine and bringing it over to the dining table, where he poured them both a healthy measure.
Reagan sat to join Belle, who was eager to begin her meal. He smiled brightly as her face lit up at the first taste of her salmon, and instead of praising his work she simply shovelled another piece into her mouth which only caused Reagan to chuckle happily.

"Wow. Where have you been hiding these cooking skills Reagan? We're never eating out again! I'm going to make you cook for me all the time!" Belle stated excitedly before remembering some semblance of manners and wiped the corner of her mouth with her napkin.

"If it means I have you here more, then I find that arrangement rather agreeable." He stated as he held his wine glass between his fingers. And for some reason Belle found it extremely erotic, the intent gaze of his dark eyes, his hair gently falling into the front of his face, his impeccable suit, and his slender fingers gently embracing the delicate glass. Belle shifted uncomfortable in her seat before continuing eating.

"Is everything alright Belle?" He asked, eyeing her carefully.

"Perfect." She replied with a small blush before they continued their meal, mostly discussing their work on Reagan's book and the novel Belle had been reading. Reagan was even courteous enough to ask about Moe, who had nearly had a heart attack when Belle told her Papa that she expected to be staying at Reagan's tonight and that he should not wait up for her. Belle of course left that out when telling Reagan about the state of her father.

Both parties seemed very nervous, taking longer then necessary to eat their food, and acting much too cordial, even by Reagan's standards. When Belle had finally finished her salmon, there seemed nothing left to do but eloquently, or as eloquently as one could, chug down the remainder of her white wine. She wiped her mouth clean after gently placing the delicate crystal back onto the cherry wood table, when Reagan clearing his throat caught her attention.

"This isn't go well is it?" Reagan asked sheepishly.

"What! No! Why would you say that?" Belle asked, her accent thicker then usual.

"You drink when you’re nervous, or you feel you need the alcohol."

"But that doesn't mean things are going poorly. You cooked me the most wonderful meal anyone has ever prepared for me in my life--"

"But I bore you--"

"No! You stupid man you! You let me talk about fairy tales, and literature, and history, and everyone in my life has always thought me silly for it. You're smart, and witty, and you even care enough to ask about my father, even though I know you don't give a damn--" Reagan raised a hand to protest but Belle's continuous rant prevented him from speaking. "--but you know that I do, and so you ask because you care about me. I don't think I've ever had someone in my life that cares about me as much as you do. And that terrifies me. Because I know that I'm falling in love with you and I've never been in love before."

The house went silent, spare the ticking from the grandfather clock in the corner of the room. Reagan looked at Belle, an equal amount of fear and tenderness in his eyes that turned Belle's insides. She had forgotten to mention how sexy he was.

Reagan cleared his throat, his voice an octave higher then usual and his accent thicker. "So it's going well then?"

Belle smiled enthusiastically as a soft chuckle escaped her lips. Her tongue darted out of her mouth in
order to moisten her lips as she thought about an appropriate response, but came back speechless.
She stood from her chair, the feet sliding against the hardwood floors, as she got up and moved
around the table. She ventured to Reagan's side, who stared at her, his heart pounded because for a
good ten seconds he thought she was getting up to leave his home and never coming back, leaving
him like everyone else always did. But then she reached out to his chair, used all her force to swing
the chair away from the table, it really wasn't that difficult. Belle, although small herself, was quite
able of moving Reagan's weight. Belle moved into the empty space between his chair and the

table. She smoothed out the bottom of her dress before reaching out to Reagan's shoulders, gently
placing her palms on the soft fabric of his suit jacket before straddling Reagan's lap. Belle lowered
herself gently, into Reagan's awaiting lap, his hands instinctually reaching up to her waist as she
adjusted herself on him until she was situated comfortably. Reagan just stared at her in awe as his
thumbs traced smoothly on her sides.

"I would say it's going very well." Belle said as she brought her hands up to cup Reagan's face, her
thumbs gently soothing over his tired skin as she leaned down, closing the distance between them,
and placed a soft kiss to Reagan's lips. He sighed at the delicate touch, still not convinced that sweet
Belle was in his arms, let alone his lap for that matter. The kiss deepened, and Belle wrapped her
arms around Reagan's neck, the tips of her breasts pressing into his body as her fingers played with
the ends of his greying hair. His hands trailed to the expanse of her back, as she shifted on his lap
causing Reagan to grunt into Belle's lips. She carded her fingers through his hair as his tongue
entered her mouth, tracing over the spots that gave her pleasure and teasing her where he knew she
would enjoy it most. Belle was breathing heavily as his hands became bolder, his fingers clenching
into the skin at her hips as he began to harden beneath her, the heat from Belle's center spreading
throughout her body like an electric charge he could feel going straight to his plumping cock. His
thumbs reached the undersides of her breasts, gently testing their weight as Belle sighed into his
mouth, wanting more of him on her, wanting skin, and tongues, and heat. Her hands came to the
front of Reagan's chest, crossing over his collar and landing at the knot of his tie. Belle began to
undo the red silk, feeling the cold fabric slip between her fingers as she attempted to unlace it, and
Reagan didn't stop her. So Belle pressed on, un-looping the tie from its place and dropping it to the
floor, somewhere beside the leg of the chair they were seated in. Next, she went to the buttons at the
top of his shirt, popping the top two open with ease and immediately placing her hands on his skin.
His chest was warm, and tanned, and so much more of it was hidden that Belle just wanted him
naked. Sure she had seen his chest before, but this still felt like the first time. She was discovering it,
xplored his body, for pleasure, not comfort; for love, not safety.

Their lips parted, taking in as much oxygen as they could before Reagan's lips were on Belle's neck,
his tongue darting out to taste her flesh, her salt, and her desire. He suckled on the skin, leaving his
marks on her, nibbling at her flesh as her fingers undid a third, button, and then a fourth, before
moving to the bigger buttons at his waistcoat.

Belle rotated her hips, realising for the first time that Reagan was completely hard beneath her. They
groaned simultaneously, both aware of the hard flesh, and heat between them, completion only
separated by a thin layer of cotton and silk. They both shifted their hips, searching for a friction to
ease the gentle buzzing between their legs and the desire tightening in their bellies. Reagan licked a
trail up Belle's neck, his mouth enclosing around her ear as she leaned into the side of his face.

"I'm ready Reagan." Belle whispered breathlessly into Reagan's ear as she admitted defeat on the
removal of his shirt, which was hindered by the waistcoat and suit jacket.

"Oh." Reagan said, releasing Belle's ear with a sinful pop as they turned slightly, to look into each
others eyes; the blue in Belle's shinning brighter then he had ever seen it before, and his almost
completely black with desire.
"Are you?" Belle asked, her desire cooling down as she held her breath in anticipation for Reagan's consent. She had no idea if he was ready, well physically he had always demonstrated that he was quite apt for such an encounter, but emotionally was a complete different story with Reagan.

"I'm nervous Belle." He said shamefully.

"I am too. It's been a while for me and, I don't exactly do this with people I can't trust. But I trust you with all my heart Reagan." She said, tracing her hands comfortably through his hair, sending shivers of pleasure down his spine.

"I'm maybe even a little afraid... that once it happens, you'll leave, and and I--"

"Hey Reagan." Belle cooed, cupping his face and encouraging him to make proper eye contact with her. "I'm not Milah. I'm Belle. It's just Belle. I'm not going anywhere."

Reagan nodded. He could be brave for once.

"Do you want to be with me?" She asked, thinking it incredibly adorable that for such an intelligent man, when it came to feelings everything had to be in laymen's terms.

"Gods yes." He explained, that raw sexual desire returning to his posture, the one that sent shivers through Belle's body and wanted to make her scream for him.

"Then let's make love Reagan." Belle said simply, as if it was as easy as that. She stood from his lap, Reagan wincing as her weight was removed from his erection, not to mention his bad leg. Belle reached for his cane, hooked against the arm of his chair and handed it to Reagan. He took it blindly, and then accepted her delicate hand as she offered it to him. "Come on, I want you naked." Belle said eagerly and humorously, and it lightened the mood drastically, Reagan's shoulders practically lifting from their tense state.

There was no turning back now, as they left the kitchen and headed towards the staircase, but Reagan wouldn't have it any other way as the small hand tightened around his.

He would do everything in his power in order to please his Belle tonight, and for as long as she would have him.

Chapter End Notes

Cliff hanger! I know I'm awful. But our woobies are finally ready! And our rating goes up next chapter!
Complete Me

Chapter Notes

It's the moment a lot of you have been waiting for, hope it lives up to the expectations,

Happy Reading! xx

“Everybody-even monsters-need a little attention once in a while.”
― Rick Riordan, The Lightning Thief

After struggling up the stairs they came to a halt in front of a rich brown door that Belle recognized as the master bedroom. "No expectations okay. It's just you and me. And that's what I want." Belle paused. "If you'll let me stay, I'd really like to spend the night." Belle said, biting her lip in the dim hallway.

"Belle if you wanted, I'd let you stay forever." Reagan said, his crooked smile returning to his face, and that made Belle want to kiss him senseless, so she did.

She stood on her tip toes, hungrily grabbing his lips, and Reagan reciprocated, his mind thinking less and his body just...feeling. They pushed open the door and stumbled until they fell onto the bed together, lying beside one another, Reagan's cane being lost somewhere in the mix. They were a mess of limbs, and dishevelled clothing, and wandering hands, and parted lips.

"Belle you're so beautiful." Reagan said, reaching the back of his hand to brush against the smooth skin of her cheek and then trailing down to her neck and collar bone.

"Let's slow down a bit." Belle said breathlessly, her hands stilling on his chest. "We've got all night." She continued with a smile and Reagan nodded his head sweetly in agreement.

Their movements slowed and became more sincere. Belle reached beside her for the shoulders of Reagan's suit jacket and gently pushed the material off his shoulders, pulling the fabric over his arms until it was folded and placed on the nightstand. Their hands moved to his waistcoat in unison, undoing the buttons together and removing the fine fabric before attending to Reagan's shirt. Once Reagan's shirt was removed Belle moved closer to Reagan, once again straddling his lap, as she reached out for his chest and finally felt the satisfaction of his bare skin.

"God's I've wanted to touch you so badly." Belle said as her hands smoothed over his chest, her thumbs tracing his nipples and playing with them until they peaked to full hardness.

Reagan brought his hand up to pull at Belle's hair while his other hand toyed at the hem of her dress. He moved slowly up her exposed thigh, leaving gooseflesh across her skin as he went, until her skirts were bunched up at her hips, her white lace panties just visible, it made Reagan's cock pulse with anticipation. He took his hand from Belle's hair and set both hands to removing her dress; grabbing the ends of the white cotton and pulling them up-wards. Belle complied with Reagan's demand, raising her arms above her head as he exposed inch after inch of smooth skin, her quivering stomach, and then the lace of her bra, the fabric white and nearly see through, the peaks of Belle's
rosy nipples visible through the lace. Maintaining his willpower Reagan pressed on, lifting the dress over Belle's head and tossing it back on the bed somewhere with his shirt and waist coat. He didn't know what to do at first except simply stare. Belle was so beautiful, and surly he would ruin her.

Belle reached down and laced Reagan's hands within her own as she leaned down for a kiss, consuming him with her lips, tongue, and teeth. When Reagan had regained the momentum Belle took their hands and brought them to her breasts. She could feel Reagan's tongue stop within her mouth at the moment he realized what she had done, his thumbs tentatively scraping across her buds as he cupped the weight of her breasts in his hands. They fit perfectly. Belle smiled against his mouth as he reached behind her for the clasp of her bra, fortunately unhooking the material easily and reaching to her shoulders to remove the straps and toss the lacy fabric to the ground somewhere. His fingers traced over the skin of Belle's back, before sweeping around to the undersides of her breasts. Belle moaned as he kneaded her flesh softly, taking her nipples between his fingers and pinching the aching buds. Belle let out a small cry as her rocking hips slid into Reagan's erection. Reagan stifled his moan with Belle's breasts, sucking her nipple into his slick and heated mouth while he teased the other with his hand. His tongue worked circles on her areola and countered the smooth gentle caress with the scrape of his teeth over the hardened bud. Belle was rubbing herself against him desperately, the heat building within her and waiting to explode. Reagan kissed his way between the crevasse of Belle's breasts and licked over the neglected nipple before suckling the breast within his mouth.

Reagan's spare hand rested at Belle's waist, his fingers fanning out and tracing teasing patterns on her skin as he laved at her breasts. The hand ventured further, ghosting over Belle's stomach, causing her muscles to flinch at the light touch. His hand stilled at the lacy rim of her panties, playing with the band before he dipped his finger tips in. Belle's hands tightened in Reagan's scalp, as his fingers dipped further. His confidence grew as he felt the first bits of the coarse hair covering Belle's mound. His hand ran through it, until he was completely cupping her sex, absolutely astonished to find a wetness pooling in her thin panties.

"Yes!" Belle cried out in breathy heat, as she began to rock against Reagan's fingers.

Reagan doubled his efforts, his mouth concentrating on Belle's breasts as his hand traced through her folds, spreading about her wetness until she was slick and his hands were coated in her leaking juices. Reagan was attentive, exploring her body and listening to the sounds Belle made in response, discovering what pleased her the most. Reagan quickly found that Belle liked to have her opening teased, so he stroked a finger just above her pumping muscle, matching his touch with the rhythm of her hips shunting against his hand. On Belle's next thrust his middle finger slipped within her cunt, causing Belle to cry out, and Reagan to abandon her breasts with a wet plop, in favour of trailing up her neck until he could reach her lips and thrust his tongue into her mouth. Belle moaned as Reagan added his thumb, remembering from their previous encounter in his car that she liked to be touched just under her clit rather then directly on it. As Belle began to lift her body up and thrust onto his finger he carefully worked in a second finger, feeling her clench and stretch around him. Belle was so close, her breath hitching in the back of her throat as Reagan crooked his fingers within her, hitting that spot that made Belle burst with her pleasure. Her orgasm was long, and she road out the pleasure as Reagan continued to thrust and rub her down from the climax. Belle buried her face in the crook of his neck as she let the bliss consume her body, her channel clenching around Reagan, her thighs shaking, and her toes curled as her body worked her through the high. When the sensations eased, Belle cupped Reagan's face before kissing him breathlessly, opening their eyes to stare into one another as they kissed deeply, his fingers still buried within her body, aching around him.

"I only owe you one orgasm now." Reagan said, the crook at the corner of his mouth returning with that smart ass remark.
"I think not cheeky! Those orgasms are for me to decide when I get to collect, and right now, this is going to be mutually beneficial." Belle said with a wicked grin as she shifted off of Reagan's lap and elegantly, or as elegantly as Belle could, moved to the floor on her knees.

Belle spread Reagan's thighs apart with her hands and settled herself between his legs as she leaned forward and undid Reagan's belt buckle, the metal clanking profusely as she withdrew the accessory and tossed it to the floor with a thud. Reagan scooted closer to the edge of the bed so that Belle could be as close to him as possible, he had to make up for the lack of pressure on his tumid cock somehow.

Belle's hand reached forward, cupping the thick bulge in Reagan's pants and gently rubbing her hand over his member. Reagan sucked in a quick breath as Belle's hand continued to stroke him, her other hand soothing over his thigh. Belle smiled as she felt him twitch beneath her palm. She removed her hand from Reagan's cock and slide both her hands down his thighs to rest on his knees before leaning forward to press a soft kiss to the head of his cock through his dress pants. Reagan let out a cry of anticipation that got stuck in the back of his throat as he clenched his fists. Belle continued to mouth him through the fabric, until she slid her hands forward again, easing down the zipper of his dress pants. She moved to the buttons next and smiled sweetly up to him when she successfully undid all the restraints.

"Get up for me, please." Belle asked, indicating that she wanted to go further and remove all of Reagan's clothes.

He stood up reluctantly and let the material fall over his slender hips. He winced as he struggled to step out of his pants, using Belle's shoulders for support.

"Your leg okay?" Belle asked as she folded Reagan's dress pants and put them with his suit jacket on the nearby nightstand before softly inspecting the marred flesh of his lower leg and foot.

"Well I'm not about to stop now, if that's what you're worried about." He said jokingly but his laugh was cut short when Belle leaned up and hooked her fingers in the band of Reagan's black silk boxers.

"Good because I would very much like to have your cock in my mouth now."

"Fuck. Oh Fuck, Belle." He babbled aimlessly as she grinned mischievously up at him and pulled down his boxers, his cock springing free and bobbing heavily as he stepped out of his underwear.

Reagan waited with baited breath, ever self-conscious no matter how adequate he was to other men. Besides, Belle wasn't anywhere near an expert on the matter, but he was thick, and pulsing, and his slit was already weeping. Belle couldn't wait to wrap her mouth around him and taste his musk. Even more she couldn't wait to have him filling her.

Belle simply smiled, her eyes bright with wonder as she reached her hands up Reagan's thighs. She placed a kiss to his hip bone before reaching around to grab his arse. Her tongue darted out, just meeting the tip of Reagan's dickhead as she gathered the first drop of his pre-cum on her tongue. Belle tasted his essence in her mouth, its crisp salty musk, and warm spice aftertaste. Reagan closed his eyes and hummed in approval as her lips returned to him, kissing over the hard flesh before she reached a hand up, wrapping around his girth, his few sparse dark hairs tickling at the side of her hand that was closest to the base of him. Belle opened her mouth and directed Reagan's cock towards her; the flat of her tongue greeting the underside of his head first as she slowly wrapped her lips around his head. Reagan's hand traced through Belle's hair, his body tingling as he watched her bright blue eyes, and lips obscenely wrapped around his thick cock. Belle began working him in unison with her mouth and hand, twisting around the flesh at the base of him. She attempted to take
him in further, her tongue exploring him, the way his flesh moved with each tug from her hand. Her lips bobbed over him, her mouth meeting her hand as his slick flesh slipped down her throat. Reagan clenched his jaw as the head of his cock bumped against the back of Belle's throat. Belle released him quickly with a satisfying pop, taking more of him in than she could handle. She re-adjusted herself to continue but Reagan stopped her with the rough skin at the back of his hands coming to the soft skin of her cheek.

"I won't be able to hold off if you keep doing that." He said with a hint of shame in his voice. But Belle didn't see it that way.

"Well I don't think I could be able to keep it off either." She said, hoping to give him the confidence she knew was behind that wicked man of hers.

"Well, shall we find out?" He said, every bit as sinful and hungrily as Belle dreamed about, her insides twisting as she felt the pull of sexual desire return.

Reagan offered Belle a hand as he helped to pull her up from her knees. He brought one hand to her throat, stilling her beside him as he leaned down to kiss her. Belle stood on her tip toes, bringing their bodies closer until her bare breasts were pressed to his chest and his cock was jutting into her stomach. Reagan wrapped his arms around her waist and twirled Belle until her back was facing the bed. Reagan leaned into Belle further, encouraging her to fall back onto the bed. He brought his hands to the band of her panties and slowly pulled down the thin fabric before tossing them aside, exposing her body to him completely. Reagan crawled onto the bed, his body hovering over Belle and pinning her beneath him. He kissed along her neck and her cleavage, making his way to her fluttering stomach before settling himself between her legs.

"Gods I've wanted to worship you for so long." He said as Belle's legs relaxed and spread open for him. He ran his hands along her thighs, the anticipation mounting on both ends. Reagan licked his lips before he brought his fingers up to Belle's pussy, parting her folds and admiring her flesh. "Gosh you're so beautiful." He said as he admired her glistening cunt, Belle wriggling beneath his gaze, the hungry look in his eye was enough to make her drip with anticipation. He leaned forward and inhaled her scent; closing his eyes as he enjoyed it. They groaned in unison as his tongue made the first sweep of her lips, absorbing her flavour and craving more. He swept the plain of his tongue over her parted folds, tasting every inch of her and making note of which areas she reacted to most. Reagan brought one of his hands to Belle's stomach, pushing her down as he brought the tip of his tongue to flick over her clit. Belle arched her back and brought one hand to pull on Reagan's hair as he continued to flick her little bud, before licking it with the flat of his tongue and sucking it into his mouth. The altering sensations were quickly driving Belle back up to that peak. She began to rock against Reagan's face, as he reached his hands under to her hips, grabbing at her thighs and pulling her closer to him. He ate her out ferociously, relentlessly sucking on her clit, even going so far as to scrap his teeth over it, which left Belle panting at a loss for breath within seconds.

"I can't...I can't." Belle mumbled indicating she couldn't fight the impending orgasm any longer.

"Cum for me Belle." Reagan said as her clit was trapped between his mouth; the vibrations sending Belle over the edge once again. Reagan thrust his tongue into her channel, drinking down the juices from her orgasm. Belle nearly cried again as another small wave threatened to roll through her body, the thought alone increasing her arousal.

"Please Reagan. I can't wait anymore." Belle said, her face reddened from adrenaline and her chest heaving.

Suddenly, Reagan's need became vey apparent; his cock red and weeping, pulsing from the joy in watching Belle cum, but desperate to be consumed by her.
"Belle, I." He started weakly. "I don't think I'm going to be able to last very long." He said ashamed. But it didn't bother Belle, she knew it had been many years, she herself came within minutes under his skilful tongue, and god was it skilled.

"I didn't last very long either." She said humorously and Reagan smiled with pride at the memory of her face brimming with pleasure; Belle always knew the right things to say to him. "You deserve this Reagan, look at you." Belle said, gesturing to his tender cock, and reaching out to pump him, sweeping her thumb over the head and spreading his leaking pre-cum onto his shaft, Reagan practically hissed at the teasing. "I want you to cum inside me, please."

Reagan leant down and kissed Belle ferociously, unable to hold himself back any longer. He trailed his hands along her breasts and to her stomach before grabbing himself and lining them up blindly. The head of his cock bumped against her damp folds as they continued to kiss one another. Finally, Reagan found her core, and slowly eased the head of his cock in. He stilled briefly, gasping for air against Belle's mouth, barely able to hold himself upright at the sheer tightness of her body wrapped around his head.

"You alright?" He asked, knowing that although Belle had been thoroughly prepared, this could be uncomfortable for some women, Milah certainly always made a point to complain.

"Perfect!" Belle whispered.

Her eyes shot open, wide, the light blue nearly consumed by the black lust of her pupils, as she felt him slip into her with one swift motion. One thrust and he was buried to the hilt, stretching her, filling her, absolutely completing her. Belle moaned out in pleasure while Reagan set off about a hundred Celtic curse words.

"Oh my god." Belle said as he gave her body the time to adjust, nearly spilling himself the minute his cock was engulfed in her slick, pumping, heat.

"Holy shit Belle you feel so wonderful." He puffed before making eye contact with her and wiping the hair from her face which was stuck to her skin from the thin layer of sweat. Belle sent him a nod and Reagan moved his hips, withdrawing to the head before pushing back in. It was so good that neither wasted anytime before continuing, Belle raising her hips to meet Reagan's thrusts and Reagan pulling out all the way before pumping back into her heat. His pace was fast, and deep, with each thrust he wanted to feel all of her, more of her, wrapped around his cock and pleading for more.

Belle's channel was pulsing, the buzz from the third little wave of pleasure still eminent in her contracting muscles. The squeezing and pulling on Reagan's cock was driving him mad as his thrusts increased, unable to maintain a sense of control any longer.

"Don't let yourself think Reagan please." Belle said, knowing his self-doubt would crouch in and think he failed her if she didn't orgasm, even though she had clearly already had two or three orgasms. "Just let go, I want to see you let go, I want to make you cum."

And Reagan cried out weakly as he lost all abandon, pulling Belle's body closer to his hips so he could slam into her faster and harder. Belle let out an alarmed cry at the quick movement, and felt a jolt of pleasure as the altered angle hit a spot deep within in her that Belle didn't even know could bring her so much pleasure. Reagan completely let go, smacking his hips forward, his hair falling in front of his face as his nails gripped roughly into Belle's flesh. He came with an exhausting grunt, his warm cum filling Belle up, and shooting through her entire body.

Belle gasped for breath, Reagan was exquisite like that, the lines of his face tormented in pure lust and satisfaction. He slipped from within her, placing a kiss to her neck before moving down her
body again. Belle let out an obscene "Fuck." as she unexpectedly felt Reagan's mouth on her pussy again, swollen and tender from the fucking, but her body still craving that last climax.

Reagan was eating her out again, right after he'd just fucked her, and oh god was it hot. His hair a mess, all over his face, his skin heated, and his eyes hungry as he darted his tongue into her body tasting their mingled fluids. And god if it wasn't the sexiest thing ever, tasting Belle and himself, joined in bliss as he brought her off again, taking her clit within his mouth and easily pushing two fingers within her convulsing channel. She was already close, his cock having done most the work, as he eased in a third finger fucking her pussy as he bit down on her clit, glaring at her with his lust laden eyes, bits of his cum and her own juices leaving a slick sheen on his face as he ate her like a man dying of hunger. Belle knew she could cum on just the image alone as she watched him, his eyes never leaving her, only to focus on his task as his fingers filled her, it was a poor substitute for his cock, but Belle could still feel the stretch from him, the memory from when he hit her deep and sent an electric charge through her spine.

Belle came with a loud cry, her orgasm one of the most intense she had ever felt, ripping through her body, almost leaving tears in her eyes as he continued to work her through it, drinking her down. Belle could barely feel her legs by the time the waves settled over her body and Reagan was simply placing soothing kisses to her clit and lips, while tracing soothing circles on her thighs, his fingers covered in their mingled fluids.

Reagan moved up the length of Belle's body, admiring her skin all flushed and sticky; her face a picture of ecstasy, and he had done that to her. He smiled honestly, realizing all this time that he had nothing to worry about because she was Belle and she was beautiful...inside and out. She was perfect, and he was going to keep her forever, or as long as she would let him.

Belle sighed, her breath finally returning to a normal pace, and rolled onto her right side to face Reagan. They smiled at each other before Belle had to bite down on her lip to stifle a giggle, she was happy. Reagan brought his damp thumb to her lip and pulled down on it slightly before leaning in to kiss Belle; his face was wet with their mingled fluids and Belle could taste themselves on his lips. It was incredibly erotic, sharing one another like that. Reagan wrapped Belle in his arms; she was warm and her skin felt so good tucked up against his own. When they parted Reagan reached down and brought the thin sheet and thick duvet cover up, tucking it around Belle's shoulders the best he could. Belle reached out for a tissue from the box of Kleenexes on the nightstand and wiped Reagan's face off, whereas he sucked his fingers clean, adamant that it shouldn't be wasted, which just made Belle blush.

"What are you thinking?" He whispered softly, after moments of silence had passed with them gazing warmly into one another's eyes, and the occasional brush of a cheek, or tuck of a hair, while their lower half's played footsies beneath the sheets.

"That I can't wait to do it again." Belle said with a smile that relieved copious amounts of tension from Reagan's body. The sex had been amazing for him, just being within Belle was enough, but his pride made it necessary that Belle was pleased.

"You're insatiable." He said playfully, but truthfully he was thinking the exact same thing. "But Belle I, I'm older it--"

"Enough of that. Besides if you haven't figured out that I like my men older by now, then you're even more oblivious then I thought." She said kindly, but taking great pride in teasing him. Most people only got to see the beast, the town monster, but Belle saw this completely vulnerable man who desired so deeply to be loved. "Besides that was the best oral sex I've ever had, I only have one experience to compare it to, but I've never had so many orgasms in one go. You're a very considerate
lover." She said before placing a kiss to his cheek. "But I'm not ready yet either, I don't think I could even have another orgasm, not now anyways." She finished mischievously, hinting that she would like to repeat this activity again, tonight if possible.

"So what do you say to some desert? I hear there's lemon meringue?" Reagan said, the childish glee returning to his voice.

"I would love some!" Belle said enthusiastically. "But on one condition." She quickly added.

"And that would be?"

"We remain absolutely naked." Belle said, fighting the smile that grew upon her face.

"Ohh." Reagan said curiously as his tongue darted out of his mouth to lick his lips. "That sounds like a deal I would be happy to make."

"Good!" Belle squealed with excitement as she jumped out of the bed, picked up Reagan's cane from the floor and gently tossed it on the bed. "See you downstairs!" She said quickly before running off, her pert breasts bouncing as she shifted and he watched her rear end disappear into the hallway, her footsteps echoing on the staircase as she practically ran down them.

Reagan chuckled at sweet Belle before slowly getting up to join her downstairs, completely naked, except for his cane. As he made his way down the stairs Reagan couldn't possibly fathom how in the hell he had been so lucky as to find someone like,

Belle.
Chapter Notes

I've started my summer job now, so this fic will be updated in the evenings (we're still bi-weekly on Thursdays!)

My friend asked for some more well deserved smut for these two and I delivered.

Happy Reading Everybody!! xx

“Sexual pleasure is a passion to which all others are subordinate, but in which they all unite.”
— Marquis de Sade

Evidently, both Reagan and Belle had worked up an appetite because together the two had finished off nearly half of the lemon meringue pie. And true to Reagan's word they ate their dessert entirely naked, with very little foreplay to distract them from their food. Truthfully, there was more foreplay happening then eating; a brush of skin against skin, Belle's wandering eye always fixated on Reagan's arse. But when Reagan had placed a dollop of meringue filling on Belle's nipples it was game over from there on, licking lemon filling off of each others bodies, tangles of tongue's kissing, and hearts racing. It was some of the most unusual fun Reagan had had in years, even up to the point where he cleaned Belle off with a washcloth from the kitchen and she kindly reciprocated.

They then retired to his bedroom for a quiet evening in each others arms, watching the history channel until Belle had fallen asleep in his arms. Reagan couldn't quite bring himself to sleep, not when he had the most delicate, and brave woman resting softly in his embrace. He played with her hair, and let his fingers ghost along her naked skin. He loved her, he realized, as her chest rose and fell softly. But he wasn't quite ready to tell her. He couldn't be the first to say it, because no matter how good, and true Belle's heart was, she could never truly love him, no one could, no one ever had, and those who claimed to, always left him in the end. He was tired of being left alone, loneliness ate away at your soul and left a darkness that could consume, and Reagan had let it, he had let it consume him for many years; until Belle had reminded him what it was like to be in the light. He would tell her one day, he thought as exhaustion claimed him and his eyes fluttered shut.

Belle had awoken in the middle of the night, her body warm and comfortable, still tangled within the sheets, her back pressed up against Reagan's chest. She shifted slightly and was alarmed to find something gently nudging at her rear end. Well it wasn't something, she knew very well that Reagan was currently sporting an erection, and apparently had been for a while; she could feel a bit of pre-cum smeared against her cheek. Belle turned her head to see if Reagan was awake, but evidently he was fast asleep, his face calm, he looked tired truthfully. But Belle couldn't resist the pull to roll over and reach between his legs. She grabbed him around the base with one hand, providing a steady anchor as she began to stroke him with the other; she really didn't want to make him cum in his sleep, but rather wake him up and participate in a round two.

Fortunately, it didn't take very long for her leisurely tugs to cause Reagan's eyes to flutter open on a sigh, a soft grunt escaping his lips as he involuntarily thrust into her hands.
"Fuck." He said, practically inaudibly due to the heavy Scottish brogue. It turned Belle on to hear his voice so deep and thick, no doubt how he might have once sounded if America hadn't softened his accent over the years. "Is it morning already?" He slurred, his consciousness increasing and realizing that Belle had her soft little hands wrapped tightly around his cock, erect and evidently crying for her touch.

"It's almost two in the morning." She said with a smile before leaning in to kiss Reagan's lips gently, his bottom lip trapped within her own as she pulled away from the kiss.

"And what exactly do you think you're doing?" He said with a raise of his brow, his teacherly 'you're in trouble now' look that Belle had seen many a day during her time as his student, and co-worker.

"I would like to point out that you in fact started it."

"Did I now? Yet you're the one with your hands all over my cock." He said dirtily and it made Belle's insides turn with lust. Reagan grabbed at Belle's thigh roughly pulling it up until it was resting against his hip, and spreading her legs. He reached a hand down to join her, covering her small hand with his own as they tugged at his cock together, Belle's tight grip around the base of him the only thing preventing him from spilling his seed between the two of them. Their eyes were locked upon one another's; a deep animalistic lust in his and an arousal with a tiny mixture of fear in hers. Belle's breathing became more laboured, as she watched Reagan remain in complete control, his cock leaking down into the crevasses of their joined fingers, but no other evidence that he was struggling not to cum. He forced their grip closer, moving his cock towards Belle's pussy. "Is this what you wanted Belle?" He asks, the first bit of the torturous pleasure cracking through in his voice.

"Yes." She said roughly as Reagan gripped his cock firmly and moved forward to line them up, her hands still trapped beneath his own as he moved his blunt dickhead through her folds, spreading about the wetness and coating his tip. He loosened his grip so that Belle could pull her hands out and reach up to Reagan's chest while he continued to tease her folds, gently tapping his cock against her clit to send sparks of pleasure through Belle's quivering body.

Reagan pulled on Belle's thigh, lifting her leg higher on his hip; he had to be mindful because her limb was resting on his bad leg, before pushing into her in one sharp thrust. Belle wined at the stimulation, being so filled and her body so close to Reagan. The hand that had been on Reagan's cock remained between them, blindly teasing Belle's clit the best he could at the tight angle. He pulled out and thrust back in quickly, his pace shallow and deep, their flesh smacking into each other from the lack of room Reagan had to thrust. Belle's head was quickly buried in Reagan's neck as her fingers played with his peaked nipples, helpless to do anything more as he fucked her, his finger occasionally hitting her clit directly and causing her to rotate her hips to continue the simulation.

Belle's orgasm hit her hard, her head tilting up to look at Reagan, a soundless cry escaping her open mouth, her bottom lip plump and glossy. Reagan ran his tongue across her lip before taking it into his mouth, his teeth gently scraping the tender flesh as her channel clenched, and pulled at his thrusting cock. Reagan came, his cock pulsing and his seed filling Belle as he continued to thrust through their climaxes, his finger pinching her clit to prolong her pleasure.

They remained close, their bodies covered in yet another layer of sweat, Belle tucked neatly in Reagan's arms as he softened within her, the convulsions in her channel slowing around his member, until her limbs began to relax her body in pure pleasure.

"Go to sleep now Belle." Reagan whispered softly into Belle's ear, kissing her temple as he slipped from within her and set her leg down. Belle simply nodded and closed her eyes, tucking her body into Reagan's as she fell asleep in his arms.
The sun glared at Belle's closed eyes, the warm yellow haze causing her to squint until she could open her eyes fully. She was greeted by the soft touch of Reagan's fingers lacing through her hair, his warm chocolate brown eyes smiling down on her face, and a small sexy smile at the corner of his mouth.

"Morning." He whispered, and Belle thought she could get used to this.

"How long have you been up?" She asked, knowing that Reagan was an early riser. Reagan turned his head to look at the clock on the night side table that read eight-thirteen.

"About an hour."

"And you've just been laying here?" She questioned.

"Of course, I've got the most beautiful thing in the world to keep me busy." Reagan said honestly and Belle felt herself blushing, and smiling uncomfortably at the compliment.

"Why thank you." She said playfully, leaning up to kiss him longingly. Belle hooked her arm under Reagan's and reached up to the back of his shoulder blade before using her fingers to trace a path to the base of his neck and toy with his hair there. Reagan sighed at the touch and deepened their kiss. Belle boldly, flipped them over, rolling on top of Reagan until she was straddling his hips. "You realize it's Sunday." Belle said before grabbing Reagan's wrists and holding his hands above his head as she leaned down to kiss him. "I'm supposed to be on the clock." She continued, shifting down slightly to find Reagan's cock, already hard and ready, jutting into her arse. Belle leaned up, releasing one of Reagan's wrists and reaching a hand between her legs and towards Reagan's cock. She grabbed him firmly, holding his shaft against the flat plan of his stomach until she lowered herself to straddle his hips again, his cock trapped between her wet pussy and his stomach. Reagan struggled to remain quiet as Belle rocked her pussy along his cock, coating his shaft from base to tip between her folds. Belle returned both her hands to Reagan's wrists as she rocked against his cock, making sure to bump her clit with his head on every swivel of her hips. But soon Reagan was bucking up against her, wanting his cock to be buried deep within in her rather then teased by her lips.

"Now why would I want us working on my book when there are much more enjoyable things we could be doing." Reagan quipped before fighting Belle's hold on his wrists and instead flipping them over so that she was pinned beneath him. "You shouldn't tease me like that." Reagan growled against the skin of Belle's breasts before kissing her nipples. "You wouldn't like me to tease you, now would you?" He said, looking down upon Belle whose auburn hair was fanned out against the crisp white sheets. Belle licked her lips in response before biting down on her lower lip. "Or perhaps you like to be teased." He said, licking his index finger obscenely and then trailing it across Belle's skin, pinching her nipple roughly before continuing to lightly trace towards her small thatch of dark curls. "We do like our games, don't we?" Reagan teased before grabbing his cock and hitting her clit bluntly with his dickhead. He continued to trace her folds with his cock, rubbing his hard shaft against her wet folds, and making sure to rub against her clit where it would tease Belle the most. Soon she was beginning to cry out softly as he rocked against her pussy, placing his hand on Belle's raised knee for support. Belle struggled to fight off the pleasure as he rocked against her sex, his dripping pre-cum adding to the wetness as he smacked the head of his cock against Belle's clit before returning to sliding against her pussy lips.

"Faster!" Belle cried, admitting defeat to his teasing and not wanting to fight off the orgasm any longer.

Reagan complied with vigour, applying more pressure to Belle's clit and rubbing her off faster as he
slid against her. Belle came with a soft cry that turned into a desperate scream because Reagan had thrust his cock into Belle's core just as her orgasm had hit her. Her channel gripping him tightly as he withdrew only to thrust right back in. Belle nearly screamed again, as Reagan refused to let the sensations from her orgasm end but rather build her up to a constant state of pleasure that left her feeling like she was on the edge of shattering completely.

"Please! I can't take much more!" Belle said, as Reagan leaned closer to her, pumping his hips faster, his own orgasm drastically close from all their combined teasing. Belle shuttered again, this climax smaller, but no less intense with the combined pleasure from her previous orgasm. Belle felt like she could feel every nerve ending in her body tingle with the pleasure from her high. Just as Reagan was about to loose all control he withdrew from Belle's heat, spilling himself on her stomach with a soft grunt and a nervous curse. Belle wanted to ask him what was wrong, but she could barely catch her breath.

"Fuck. Oh shit." Reagan babbled aimlessly as he roughly lay down beside her, his entire body completely spent.

"Hey. Hey. What's wrong?" Belle asked rolling over to meet him, and making an awful mess of the sheets in the process, before cupping Reagan's face to ground him in the conversation, sensing a slight panic attack was on the verge.

"Oh, I'm sorry." He said gesturing to her sticky stomach, as he adjusted his focus to Belle.

"It's fine. I don't mind. If you want to cum on me you just have to ask." Belle said with a small chuckle, but sensed that that wasn't the real reason he was panicking so much. "What's this really about? Reagan?" He didn't answer. "Is this something to do with Milah? I'm not her remember." Belle said adamantly, she didn't know how many times she could stress the fact that she wasn't going to leave him.

"We didn't use, and that's how the whole mess started with Milah in the first place, we didn't use any protection! Fuck, sometimes, I just, I've never thought I could ever be a father again so it never occurred to me; but you are very much a young woman, and you'll hate me like Milah did--"

"Hey, Reagan shhh." Belle cooed. "It's fine. It's absolutely fine. I'm on the pill, I should have told you." She said, her eyes anxiously monitoring his every facial expression, his eyes in particular always had so much to express.

"You're on the pill?"

"Mhmm." Belle confirmed.

"Right. Good. I'm a fucking idiot." He said and Belle actually laughed at that before taking a more serious tone.

"Is that something you'd be open to...in the future. I know...I know you said you just never considered that you could be a father again, but I mean now, well now you could; and I was just, um, well, I think it's something..." Belle sighed, taking a deep breath to think about what she had to say. "I would very much like a future with you Reagan, but I always imagined myself having a child, and I need to know if that's something you see in your future too?" She said awkwardly.

"Children?"

"Yes." Belle nodded.

"You would want to have a baby...with me?" Reagan said, the shock and disbelief evident in every
unique line of his face.

"Well, if things, I don't want to be presumptuous, but...yes?"

"No ones ever...no one's ever wanted that before." He said so broken-heartedly it made Belle's heart weep for the man.

"Well I do! I want so much with you Reagan! But you've got to-"

"Let you in. I know. I would be absolutely terrified to be a father again. I did a pretty shite job the first time around. But I'd love the chance. I mean, especially if, well if you were there with me. You make me better Belle."

Belle bit back her tears as she leaned in to kiss him. The moment was perfect. Even when their lips parted and they remained smiling like fools at one another.

"But you know what I want most in this moment?" Belle began and Reagan shrugged his shoulders in response. "A shower!" She said humorously.

"Sorry about that." Reagan said with a wicked grin, one that told Belle he wasn't really sorry but would behave for her benefit.

"Don't worry, I think it's hot, makes me feel like I'm yours." She said before leaning in to sensually kiss Reagan again.

"Come on, let's get you clean." He said when their lips parted before going back in for one more quick and possessive kiss.

Reagan stood from the bed, offering his hand to Belle who took it gladly. In return, Belle searched for Reagan's cane, bending over, which Reagan couldn't help but stare at the pink flesh of her sex and the soft round curve of her arse and legs. Belle returned to Reagan's side and handed him the sleek black stick with the fine golden handle.

They walked hand in hand towards the master bathroom where Reagan quickly turned on the tap, the shower head of the walk in shower springing to life. Reagan leant his cane against the bathroom counter before limping back over to the shower. He pushed open the sliding glass door before reaching out for Belle's hand. She followed him into the shower, mindful of the slippery tiles until they both stood on the rubber mat, the warm water teaming down upon them.

Belle tilted her head back, letting the water soak her auburn curls. She was surprised when she felt Reagan's hands on her shoulders, covered in soap and lathering her skin. He moved to her neck, even cleaning the outsides of her ears before moving to her collar bone, and luxuriously lathering her breasts.

"Hey, don't hog all the soap." Belle said, struggling to keep her eyes open through the occasional patter of the water.

Reagan extended the soap, which Belle took and lathered her hands up enthusiastically before returning it to Reagan and placing her palms on his chest, scraping over his nipples. Reagan tickled Belle's sides in response, causing her to squirm around cutely. He slid his soapy hands towards her stomach and began cleaning off the drying cum, taking extra care to remove it from her belly button. He ventured lower to her curls, as Belle also made her way to clean Reagan's genitals. Their movements were languid, wet soapy skin, gently cleaning over wet soapy skin as the water beat down upon both of them.
When they had finished cleaning all the sweat, and stick, and sex from their bodies Reagan reached for his shampoo.

"It's not exactly very feminine, but would you like me to wash your hair?" He asked, looking down upon Belle.

"Of course, this stuff is nicer then anything I've ever used. Besides, it's unbelievably sexy that when I go home I'll still smell like you." Belle said before standing on her tip toes to kiss Reagan, dipping her tongue into his mouth. Reagan reached up to grip Belle's hair, massaging the shampoo into her scalp while they kissed, and then dipping her head back under the tap. He rinsed her hair before repeating with the conditioner. Belle hummed at his touch as their bodies pressed close together, their arms wrapping round one another. "I would offer to wash your hair, but I don't think I can reach." Belle said adorably. So instead, they altered positions so Reagan's back could face the tap and he could wash his hair. All the while Belle placed kisses to Reagan's body until his hands came to her face, cupping her jaw, and kissed her deeply.

Reagan turned off the tap and carefully got out of the shower. He picked up a fluffily white towel and held it open for Belle before wrapping it around her body. He then grabbed his own towel and ran it through his wet hair before tying it around his waist and limping to his cane.

"How about I make us some brunch? Then we can spend the afternoon looking over the last suggestions you made to chapter three?"

"I would love that Reagan." Belle said with a smile before they both retreated to change and ready themselves for the day. Truthfully Reagan took about just as long as it took Belle to get ready, except for the fact that she was drying out her curls while he headed downstairs to make pancakes for brunch.

The remainder of their afternoon together went just like planned. They made some more progress on the novel until, before they knew it, it was time for Belle to return home; Belle had promised her father she would be home by one so that she could help him with the remainder of the greenhouse cleaning.

So Reagan drove Belle home, his sleek black Cadillac coming to a slow stop in front of the flower shop.

"Thank you Reagan." Belle said as he put the car in park and turned to look at her.

"It's no matter." He said with a bashful smile.

"I had an amazing time this weekend." She blushed prettily like a young girl. "And I would very much like to do it again, sooner rather then later!" Her cheeks flushed an even sharper shade of red.

"I owe more to you then I can ever say Belle." Reagan said and Belle quickly grabbed the lapels of his suit jacket and plundered his lips. Startled at first he soon reciprocated the kiss, happily spending the next few minutes making out. When they eventually parted he placed a kiss to Belle's forehead before getting out of the car in order to open her door for her.

"Bye Reagan. I'll see you Monday Morning?"

"Of course Belle."

Belle leaned up to kiss him once more before looking up to the apartment window, her father once again spying. Belle retreated into the flower shop with a final wave goodbye to Reagan.
Belle couldn't wait for their forever.
Chapter Notes

My beta is back yay! So there should be fewer mistakes in the chapter now, thanks for the patience, and Happy Reading! xx.

“I’m going to claim you with the entire universe looking on, because you are mine, and you always will be, no matter where we go from here.”
― J. Kenner, Complete Me

Belle walked up the staircase towards the apartment door; she half expected her father to be waiting at the top of the stairs like he had on the night of her prom. Instead Belle made it to the door, shoved her shoulder against the wood, and entered the flat. She hung up her coat on the coat rack and made it all the way to her bedroom without so much as a word from Moe, who was inconspicuously laid out on the sofa, even though Belle had already caught him spying.

Belle went into her room, changed out of her dress and into a clean, but simple, blue dress, before kicking off her running shoes and putting on her blue slippers. She exited her bedroom and moved into the main living area.

"Did you eat lunch yet Papa?" She asked, moving into the kitchen and pouring herself a glass of water.

"I did Belle, thank you for asking." He said, neglecting to take his eye off the television.

"You're...welcome." Belle said uncertainly, slightly confused as to why Moe was being so courteous.

"Did you have a nice time with Mr. Gold?" Moe asked, his voice dry and rehearsed.

"I did, I had a wonderful evening." Belle said confidently.

They could do this. They could have an adult conversation, about adult subject matter, and both act like adults. That is, if Moe could even act like an adult.

"Wonderful?" He paused. "Hmm... I'm glad it lived up to your expectations."

"You're being awfully polite." Belle noted as she continued to drink her glass of water.

"I do have manners once in a while Belle." Moe said abrasively.

"Sorry Papa, that was rude of me."

"No Belle you're right. I'm trying to bite my tongue because while I'm happy you're moving forward with your relationship...it's hard for me to be happy about Gold having his dick all over you."

"Papa!" Belle said, choking on her water at his bluntness.
"I'm sorry Belle. It's just. Don't get me wrong, he's different with you. I've never seen him like that with anyone else, but he's still...Gold." Moe said pulling a face of disgust.

"I understand Papa." Belle said, taking the mature route. "And I really appreciate how open you've become about this. But I think that Reagan's going to be a big part of my life for hopefully a long time and--"

"Belle?"

"Well I mean, when I think about my future now, I think about him as well--"

"Belle?"

"Yes?"

"Are you saying that you want to marry him?" Moe said, his tone unreadable, except for the apparent shock.

"That's not what I'm saying. Well, it is. Maybe some day." Belle babbled.

"Then are you together now, you and Gold?"

"Well we haven't said anything--"

"Well you need to. If you want a future with that man, gods I can't believe I'm about to, you need to tell him Belle. Because I'm pretty sure he's a clueless fucking idiot when it comes to things like this so--"

"Papa..." Belle warned.

"Right, right, I know." Moe paused. "Just tell him. He's absolutely head over heels for you BlueBelle."

"You think?" Belle whispered, her smile brimming with hope.

"I know." Moe said as he stood from the couch and came over to place a caring kiss to Belle's temple. "But about lunch..."

"You didn't actually make yourself anything." Belle said knowingly, rolling her eyes slightly when they were interrupted by a knock at the door.

Moe went to the door as Belle prepared a simple sandwich for her lazy father. A tall man with a toolkit stood, or rather hunched, in the doorway.

"Mr. Gold sent me to fix your door." The man, who introduced himself as Mr. Dove said sweetly before Moe allowed him to proceed with his work.

"Dating the landlord has its advantages." Moe joked to Belle before beginning his sandwich.

It didn't take Dove very long to fix the door; and Belle would admit it was so much nicer not having to worry about it jamming again. After Moe had finished his lunch he and Belle had finished cleaning out the greenhouse and getting it prepared for the impending winter.

"Listen Papa, I promised Ruby I'd swing around at some point today, so I'm going to stop by Granny's and see her before I make dinner."
"Alright Belle. Just wear your sensible shoes! No more of those bloody heels." Belle chuckled at her Papa before running up to the apartment to grab her coat, and the sneakers she wasn't entirely fond off. The walk to Granny's wasn't even far. But her Papa had been extraordinarily good to her lately, and he hadn't relapsed in a while. Perhaps he really was trying to keep his promise.

Belle walked into Granny's knowing that Ruby wouldn't be working a shift, but letting Granny know she was heading on up. Granny gave Belle a simple smile, one that was difficult to read. Belle had accepted animosity from the residence of Storybrooke upon publicly sharing her relationship with the infamous Mr. Gold; but Belle hadn't expected her close friends like Granny to harbour such doubts as well. If Belle could see the good in him, why couldn't any one else? It really didn't take Belle all that long to chip away Reagan's defences. Two months. It had been two months since she bumped into him in the school corridor. She was still a little cross that it took him so long to remember her. But they still had a ways to go. Reagan still had secrets; Belle knew this. But he was slowly opening up to her, and she loved that he was a mystery to be uncovered.

Belle climbed the back staircase of the inn and headed up to the third floor: Granny and Ruby's private floor. She knocked on the front door before an energetic Ruby swung the door open and pulled Belle inside. Ruby practically raced across the apartment, dragging Belle with her. The two girls stumbled into Ruby's bedroom, Belle moving to sit on the edge of Ruby's bed as Ruby slammed the door closed behind her, resting her back against the wood and rather impatiently waiting for Belle to speak.

Belle smiled of embarrassment, heaving a deep sigh before letting her body fall back onto the mattress. Ruby squealed in delight as she hopped up onto the bed, practically jumping on the bed, although she was resting on her knees.

"I knew it! I knew it! I knew it!" Ruby squealed as she playfully tickled and flapped her hands in Belle's directions. "Oh my god! I'm so happy for you Belle! Was it any good? Well judging by the fact that you stayed over night; you probably wanted to stay for the morning sex, so yes it was good? Am I right?"

"Don't forget the midnight sex." Belle said barely audible, especially compared to that of her very chipper friend.

"Belle you naughty girl! I knew it! I was right! Mr. Gold is a secret fucking sex machine. I should have guessed it! Men with canes and sexy suits are always gods in the sack."

"Gosh Ruby, don't you dare tease him please. He's got a lot of emotional baggage when it comes to sex and I've worked very hard to finally reach this stage with him."

"Aww Belle."

"Rubes I'm serious."

"You've got my word BlueBelle. But only if you spill the finer details."

"Ruby!"

"Come on, give little Ruby something to inappropriately dream about tonight."

"Rubes..."

"Are we talking multiple orgasms, six inch penis, magical fucking tongue. Come on Belle, this so rarely happens for you, I know it was special, that he's special. I just, you're my best friend." Ruby finished weakly and Belle huffed out a sigh.
"Yes. I'll leave the second one to your imagination, and Fuck yes." Belle replied vaguely, and rather than appeasing Ruby it only sent her down a deeper spiral.

"Go Gold! Like how many? Two, three, four, shit can you even remember? I can't believe it, Gold likes eating pussy?"

"Lets just say that I'm very thoroughly fucked Ruby, and I plan on doing it again, very soon."

"Come here." Ruby said hugging Belle, like they were high-schoolers and she had just lost her virginity. Then again, it had been a while for Belle. And Ruby was very aware that her best friend only sought some kind of sexual connection with a partner whom she really saw something with. Ruby couldn't recall a time in their entire friendship that Belle had ever been so attracted to any of the guys she dated. There was really something special between Gold and Belle. Even Ruby could see it.

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Reagan pulled up to Game of Thrones precisely at seven on Monday morning. Just like usual, Belle was waiting with coffee cups in hand and a bag from Granny's diner. Reagan got out like usual and opened the door for Belle, who placed a kiss to his cheek before entering the car.

"Good morning." Reagan said upon his return to the Cadillac.

"It is a good morning isn't it?" Belle replied peacefully before placing the coffee's in the cup holders.

"Someone's in a good mood." Reagan said as he started the car and they began their journey to work.

"Well, I had a wonderful weekend."

"Did you now?" He scoffed.

"Mhmm." Belle said, pressing her lips close together and then letting the tip of her tongue dart out to moisten her lips.

"Thank you Belle." Reagan said softly, breaking the mutual pause in the conversation.

"For what?"

"For being patient, and understanding. You've taken so much time, for a man who doesn't deserve a single ounce of your affections, yet you're here."

"I'm not going anywhere." Belle said as she leaned over the car and rested her head onto Reagan's shoulder, their bodies relaxing, and soon Reagan brought his head to rest upon hers as they slowly drove away. Reagan wanted to say it. Right then, in that moment. To tell her that he loved her. But if he told her, everything would become so real, and it would only hurt that much more when she left him. Instead he turned slightly and placed a soft kiss to the top of Belle's head. Belle sighed at his delicate touch. She wanted to say it. Right then, in that moment. To tell him that she loved him. But it was too soon for him. Reagan might not be ready. He didn't believe anybody capable of loving him, and Belle worried that once she told him, he'd push her away. Instead, she leaned into his touch as he rounded the final corner and pulled into the staff parking lot of the school. This could be enough, until he was ready.

They walked arm in arm towards the office, retrieving the library key as per usual before entering Belle's workspace. The library was clean and perfectly organized, just like Belle had kept it. She
took great care of the things that mattered to her, and it made Reagan smile that she loved what she did so much...even if she was 'just' a librarian. He chuckled at the memory of their quarrelling past and Belle smiled at him, as if she had similar thoughts streaming through her mind as well.

"I thought you weren't going to be making morning purchases from Granny's anymore." Reagan said charmingly as Belle took out two lemon Danishes and placed them at the table closest to the circulation desk, their usual spot.

"It was a gift from Ruby." Belle said, a blush crossing over her face that made Reagan highly suspicious of the two dubious young ladies.

"And why is Ruby giving you Danishes as a gift?"

"Actually, they're for you."

"Excuse me?"

"Ruby wanted to give the Danishes to you."

"That's even more absurd, why on earth would Miss. Lucas want to give me a breakfast pastry?"

"She said something about a reward for taking good care of me." Belle mumbled as she hid her face behind her coffee cup.

"Belle...?" His tone threatening, as he raised one brow, his lip twitching.

"She's my best friend Reagan." Belle said in her defence.

"That doesn't mean you can bloody well gossip to her about our sex life. That girl doesn't have a non-curious bone in her body, and you know her affinity for spreading gossip!" He yelled, the terrifying power he possessed returning to him.

"Ruby's not like that Reagan. She would never tell, not this, not if I asked her." Belle said getting up to face the beast, putting the palms of her hands to his silk dress shirt and smoothing over his chest. "Besides, all I told her was that there were multiple orgasms involved, I left the size of your penis up to her imagination, and I might have said that you have a magical tongue. Granted, knowing Ruby, I'll probably regret that last one, because she will tease you for it."

"Magical?"

"Yup."

"That's not so bad." He said, slightly jaded by the compliment, but allowing it to very easily add to his ego.

"It's actually quite good." Belle countered as she wrapped her arms around Reagan's neck.

"Oh stop it you!" He scolded with a kiss to her cheek before Belle retreated to the table and handed Reagan a Danish.

"She likes you, you know. Ruby I mean." Belle said as she sat on top of the table and crossed her legs.

"It's already a miracle I have one beautiful twenty-five year old woman claiming to like me. I highly doubt there's two."
"It's true. Gave you her approval and everything." Belle paused. "And you know who else likes you?"

"Careful now Belle, I can't go making too many friends in one day. Storybrooke will think I'm working up some evil plan." He said humorously and Belle laughed until she composed herself, eager to see Reagan's reaction upon the name she was about to share with him.

"It's Papa." She said, a certain amount of disbelief in her own voice as well.

"What?"

"Papa. He likes you."

"Moe. French. No he does not. He didn't like me as a landlord and pawnbroker! He sure as hell doesn't like me as the old pervert fucking his daughter."

"Why are you so cruel to yourself? He really does! He actually gave me some advice..."

"What, to dump my crippled ass and run before you get in to deep, develop feelings for Storybrooke's beast." Reagan said, gnarling his teeth and standing to his feet in front of Belle. She was a little intimidated at first, but kept her ground.

"He said I should ask you to be my boyfriend."

"What--?" He stopped mid sentence, processing Belle's statement.

"Well, when I think about my future, I think about you Reagan Gold." She paused, Reagan still in a state of shock and unable to continue a conversation with Belle, so she continued. "And Papa said that I should ask you to move forward with our relationship, if you're ready; I mean if you even want...a commitment?" She finished weakly, looking up at Reagan and hoping his anger had subsided.

His mouth was agape, a look of shock eminent in the lines on his forehead.

"Why?" Was all he mustered, his voice barley a whisper and any hint of his previous anger was clearly gone.

"What?" She asked for clarification, completely confused by Reagan's confusion.

"Why would you want me Belle?" His voice cracking, on the verge of tears.

"Because, you're everything to me Reagan Gold. And you can't see how much you mean to me, but I would really, really, love the opportunity to show you." She said, her blue eyes sparking up at him earnestly.

"Oh Belle." He whimpered, cupping her face and leaning in to kiss her softly. His cheeks were wet, but they weren't tears of sadness. Belle spread her legs apart, wrapping them around the small of Reagan's back as he pushed closer to the table, leaning over Belle and deepening the kiss. Belle moaned as their tongues touched and they gave in to one another.

One of Reagan's hands rested at the small of Belle's back, the other at the base of her neck, supporting her head as he directed their kiss. Their tender moment turned into hunger. A tightness in the pit of Belle's stomach twisting around, the feeling so intensified now that she actually knew what her and Reagan were capable of together. Belle let out a soft moan as Reagan moved to Belle's neck, nipping at her skin and no doubt leaving fresh bite marks. She grabbed onto the lapels of his jacket.
for dear life, as he lowered her further to the table, her back laying flush with the wooden surface, Reagan's body hovered over her awkwardly. He moved his hands along her neck, his fingertips ghosting over her clothed breasts and stomach, until they stilled at her skirt. Reagan flipped the material up, resting it on Belle's stomach so he could venture lower, unhindered.

"Ehemm." A dry cynical voice cleared their throat from the doorway of the library and both Reagan and Belle stiffened, standing up, and sitting up straight in order to turn their attention to the intruding voice. "I seem to recall that libraries are not typically a place for sexual intercourse, least of all a school library, between co-workers, only thirty minutes before children are scheduled to arrive." Regina Mills spat coldly towards Reagan and Belle.

Belle was too embarrassed to stand up for themselves. In addition, Regina was absolutely right. Co-workers weren't allowed to date unless approved by human resources. And the fact that they were about to have some form of sex before they both knew people would be arriving was just careless on both their parts.

"Perhaps the two of you best come to an understanding about this relationship." Regina said, emphasising the word relationship. "After all I would hate to have to fire you Mr. Gold." Regina said, finishing off with a little smirk. "I just came to drop buy the budget expenditures Miss. French. I'll leave them on the desk, oh and I'll send the janitor around to clean up that table for you." She said gesturing to the one Belle was still seated on, Reagan still standing between her legs. Regina flopped the package of paper on the circulation desk and then surprisingly retreated from the library without much more of a fuss.

"That was close." Belle said as she flipped back her skirt and arranged her hair.

"It was also too easy. Why did she just leave like that?" Reagan said, his mind running a thousand different scenarios of Regina's nefarious plans.

"Not everything she does has to be some evil scheme Reagan. Just like you're such a different man then everyone thinks. Maybe Regina is different too?" Belle offered as she hopped down from the table.

"I will never comprehend how you manage to see the good in everyone. Even such a monster like me." He said before making sure the coast was clear and placing a chaste kiss to her lips.

"You're not a monster. And even if you think you are, you never answered my question." She raised her brow and he hesitated. "Will you be MY monster?" She emphasised playfully, hoping to make this as easy as possible for him.

"I've always been yours Belle." He whispered into her ear and she smiled widely.

"Good." She placed a quick kiss to his cheek. "Do you think, that maybe, we could sign the H.R. forms then?" She asked hesitantly.

"You're sure?" He questioned, knowing that not only would this be official between them, but it would also be known between work, and the town.

"Mhhmm." Belle said confidently, looking up at Reagan from behind her thick lashes, those innocent, and maybe even loving blue eyes staring back at him.

"Alright, but if you're going to be my girlfriend you should know, this beast likes to bite." He said with a snarl before playfully biting onto Belle's neck, causing her to squeal and giggle in surprise.

"Reagan! Reagan!" Belle squealed as his teasing turned more into tickling. "That's enough Reagan
the students will be getting here soon.” She said sensibly and Reagan's actions regretfully ceased but Belle allowed him to keep her wrapped up in his arms.

"Shit Belle. I'm going to fuck this up." He said, resting his forehead against hers, comfortable with displaying this vulnerable side of himself with her.

"What makes you say that sweetheart?"

"I haven't had a girlfriend in, god, thirty some years." He said in disbelief, and embarrassment. He hadn't had an actual relationship since Milah, all his other relationships were much more casual in nature. No one was ever capable of seeing Reagan the way Belle did.

"I have faith that you'll make an excellent boyfriend. You're charming, caring, and a perfect gentleman. Not to mention other things I quite enjoyed!"

"Miss. French! I don't think that's entirely appropriate conversation for the work place!" He scolded her in his 'teacher voice' and god if it didn't make Belle wet in an instant.

"We better..." Belle said, separating herself from his embrace as they were both clearly getting too heated to continue further.

"Right." He said clearing his throat.

"How about this Thursday? On Halloween. I can talk to Mary Margaret and she can get it all set up for then?" Belle asked, turning her head to the hallway and seeing the first activity of student's arriving; some of which would probably want to use the library early.

"Halloween, this Thursday. Alright, I've got prep period three."

"It's a date." Belle said, and Reagan actually rolled his eyes at that.

"Our first date as boyfriend and girlfriend is not going to be the signing of our relationship papers for human resources." He chided and Belle had no choice but to agree with his wisdom.

"Alright, alright. It was only a figure of speech."

"I know, I was just teasing!" He said wickedly, before looking at Belle, who he could tell was thinking about something. "What are you thinking luv?"

"I was just wondering what you were doing for Halloween?"

"What I'm doing for Halloween? Absolutely nothing! Why on earth would--"

"Alright then, you're coming over to my house tonight to see my costume. I've got a wonderful idea and we're going to match on Thursday." She said confidently.

"If you think for one second that I'm coming to work dressed up--" Reagan began to fight back, but Belle quickly cut him off.

"Are you telling me the first thing your girlfriend asks you to do you're already going to say no to?" She said in mock hurt.

"Now that's not playing fair my dear." He said raising his brow and reaching for her waist, but Belle placed her hand against Reagan's chest, preventing him from coming any closer to her.

"When have we ever played fair?" She whispered sensually.
"Ohhho!" He said, his lips forming into a pretty o as his eyebrows rose, creating a devilishly sexy look on his face. "Alright. But I'm not agreeing to any costume without knowing what it is."

"Don't worry. I think you'll be pleased when you see my costume and I share my idea."

"How pleased?" He said with a villainous growl.

"Tell you what. If we hand out candy at your house on Halloween, I'll show you how pleased you'll be." Belle said, letting her hand that had stilled Reagan's movements previously tuck itself beneath his suit jacket.

"I'm not making any deals until I see what this costume nonsense is about."

"Alright. That seems fair." Belle said as she leaned in to kiss him but was abruptly startled by a nock on the library door. It was Henry Mills, first as usual and always eager to spend his free time in the library.

"I better go." Reagan said, winking to his girlfriend before limping towards the library door.

"Good morning Henry." He said as he opened the door and let the young lad in.

"Morning Mr. Gold, Miss. French." Henry said politely.

"Morning Henry, and how can I help you this morning?" Belle said warmly, before sending a final secret smile to her boyfriend.
Happy Halloween

Chapter Notes

They match. Their Halloween costumes match. It's so fully. And things become official. And there's even a little smut.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“We all wear masks, and the time comes when we cannot remove them without removing some of our own skin.”
— André Berthiaume

Reagan waited outside the library for Belle to finish up with the few remaining students; the Zimmerman twins had apparently both misplaced the books that they had taken out last week. Belle knew that their father could never afford such a silly side expenditure so she had put the twins to work shelving the remaining books at the end of the day. When the twins had finished up, Belle was all his.

Belle locked up the library and they headed to the office to return the library key. Mary Margaret was just leaving herself, sending a playful wink to both Reagan and Belle before exiting the office and heading to the main foyer. Even Regina, who was still riffling through papers in her glass encased office, merely sent a raised eyebrow in their direction. Fortunately, the two managed to leave the property while still avoiding any major conflicts or comments on the soon to be declared partnership.

The drive to Belle's apartment was surprisingly filled with Reagan talking. He had an excellent argument with Wendy Darling today about the role of Ophelia in Hamlet. He had even said something about Wendy reminding him a little bit of Belle at that age; except Wendy's head was much farther up in the clouds, whereas Belle was grounded in solid intellectual thought. And instead of tearing apart Wendy's interpretation of Ophelia, like he would have eagerly done in the past, he levelled with her, and it created a very interesting discussion that the whole class benefited from. Had Belle not come storming into Reagan's life with her bright eyes, sweet smile, and loving heart, he would have never made such an effort with his students. Belle was allowing him to bring out his real self, and to peel away the mask he had been using for so many years. And instead of it backfiring and causing him pain, like showcasing his real self had usually done in the past, this time it brought him joy and a learning opportunity about his teaching and his students. And it was all thanks to the little auburn haired, blue eyed librarian.

Reagan parked his Cadillac in front of the flower shop. Belle eagerly darted out of his car, practically running to Reagan's side of the car and practically dragging him into the flower shop.

"Belle, Belle, my leg, luv. I can't quite keep up with you." He said, wincing, from the quick step up from the curb.

"Oh Reagan I'm so dense. I'm sorry," Belle said, as she let go of Reagan's hand and slowed her pace drastically. She looked awfully sorry, and Reagan hated to see her frown. So he reached his hand out again, gently rubbing at Belle's knuckles before she turned her hand, taking his within her own and smiling like a child who just got a present. Reagan rubbed his thumb along Belle's skin as they walked, much more slowly, to the staircase, and climbed, one step at a time, Reagan's cane thumping with the sound of their footsteps.
They came to the apartment door, Belle turning the handle of the unlocked door and opening it easily.

"Thanks for fixing that by the way." She referred to their front door. "Dove is a real sweetheart." Belle said as the couple, because that's what they were now, entered the French's apartment.

"Yes, Dove has always been very loyal. He appreciates the extra work these days; him and his wife have a baby on the way." Reagan said as he took Belle's coat for her and hung it on the spot he remembered was hers from his last visit to their apartment. Belle in turn took Reagan's coat for him and grabbed his hand again, hoping to lead him to her bedroom but was cut short by Moe, who was laying as usual on the couch.

"Gold." Moe greeted subtly.

"Good afternoon Mr. French." He said politely, genuinely politely, and it surprised Reagan.

"Papa, Reagan's just going to stay over for a while, I'm showing him my costume for Thursday. Do you mind?" Belle asked, not really seeking her father's permission, but being courteous enough to let him know.

"Oh. That's fine dear." Moe mumbled. "Just watch that cane on the hardwoods!"

"It's my property." Reagan scoffed under his breath and Belle just rolled her eyes at him as they entered her small bedroom, Belle closing the door behind her. Belle pushed Reagan down to take a seat on her bed, taking his cane and tossing it on the mattress as well.

"Alright. I'm going to show you my costume. I've made it myself so be nice. And then I'm going to tell you my idea for your costume."

"Belle I haven't dressed up since I was, maybe nine?" He huffed, the sarcasm evident in the back of his throat.

"Well that's about to change. Teachers are encouraged to dress up, and that's exactly what we're going to do."

Reagan sighed, as if to say 'there's no way in hell you're getting me in a costume'. But then Belle took a step back, pulling down her skirt, and stepping out of the material that had pooled on the floor. Suddenly, Reagan became much more interested in the conversation, but more importantly the direction Belle's little idea was taking her. Belle proceeded to take off her nylons, bending to the floor to pick up both garments and toss them on the bed. Reagan's eyes followed the clothing before looking back onto Belle. Her legs bare and shapely, her panties tiny and black. Reagan pulled at the collar of his shirt, loosening his tie as he watched Belle's hands venture to the hem of her white blouse, pulling the soft cotton over her head and tossing the shirt into Reagan's lap. Her bra and panties were miss-matched, the small pair of black lacy panties contrasting with the silky white bra. Reagan's cock was also becoming very interested in Belle's idea, his boxers shorts suddenly feeling very restricting.

Belle sent him a sinful smile before opening up her closet door and pulling out a very yellow dress. The dress went just passed her knee and he could see she had sewn in mountains of crinoline, as well as embroidered the gown. It was very clear that his little Belle was indeed hoping to be Belle, from Beauty and the Beast, for Halloween. He wondered in the back of his mind how many times exactly she had chosen to be said princess for Halloween as a small girl.

Reagan was slightly saddened to see Belle stepping into the gown and bringing it up her body, but
Reagan was also partly glad; Moe was still in the apartment and the last thing Reagan needed was an inappropriately timed erection. Belle turned around, her silky back exposed, holding her hair up over her neck.

"Can you zip me up?" She asked, and Reagan stood from the bed, limping without his cane towards Belle. He reached to the small of Belle's back, one hand holding the material of the dress and the other grabbing the crisp zipper. He pulled up the zipper, the teeth sliding together until it reached the top of the track, Reagan doing the little clip at the top for added measure. Belle let her hair down, smoothed out the dress and turned to face Reagan.

"You did an excellent job. I didn't know you could sew."

"Thank you." Belle blushed, but her slight shade of pink would soon turn to a red shade of irritation.

"But your hem works a little off." Reagan suggested absent-mindedly.

"And you would know this how?" Belle questioned, and Reagan suddenly realised how odd his observation sounded without any explanation.

"A lifetime ago, back in Glasgow, I apprenticed with a tailor. I can spin, sew, hem, embroider, you name it." He said a little embarrassed, and Belle knew he wasn't fond of mentioning the past. But it seemed like these were memories of a happy time, or at least a not completely horrible time.

"That's remarkable." Belle said, seeking to encourage a skill she could tell Reagan was secretly proud of but didn't wish to discuss for fear of embarrassment or emasculation.

"It's nothing really. Besides, it's just me being picky, you look remarkable Belle. Absolutely beautiful." He said dismissively, but Belle knew that one day she would ask him to put those skills to use for her, perhaps they could make her a dress together. Belle knew that Reagan would take a great amount of pride in making something for Belle, it was a win, win. Belle stored the idea in the back of her mind before continuing.

"Thank you." She said blushing slightly. "You don't think it's too silly, me being Belle and all?" She asked, genuinely self conscious and that was something he didn't usually see in her.

"I think the students will appreciate that you dressed up. You're so good with them." He said with a rare tone of admiration in his voice.

"Now think how much more they will appreciate it when I've gotten you to dress up." Belle countered, her face bright and confident once again.

"Now Belle I--"

"Please. I'm telling you, all you need is a navy suit. You have so many already. You must at least have a navy suit, and a yellow tie. You'll fit right in standing next to me. And you really can be the beast for once." Belle pleaded, sending him adoring looks from her soft blue eyes. And how in the hell could he be expected to say no to her.

"I'd just have to wear a navy suit and yellow tie?"

Belle nodded. "That would be enough for me."

Reagan puffed out an ever deflated sigh. "Oh fuck. I swear Belle--"

"So you'll do it? You'll do it?" She asked prematurely bouncing up and down with excitement.
"Stop being so adorable would you! I can't compete with that!" And Belle smiled from ear to ear. "I may have a navy suit in the back of my closet," And Belle squealed immediately. Wrapping her arms around Reagan's neck and hugging him tightly. "This is ridiculous. I'm going to regret this."

"Oh hush." Belle said before reaching up to kiss Reagan, pacifying his every concern with a single tender brush of her lips against his.

Belle couldn't wait to shock the entire school when they saw them together arm in arm, the beauty and her beast.

***

No one had seen Reagan and Belle enter the school that Halloween morning. They arrived early and ate together in the library. Belle spent half the time thanking Reagan for being a good sport about all the Halloween and costume business. And she couldn't seem to keep her hands off him, running her fingers through his hair, or adjusting his tie. Reagan could get used to following Belle's desires if it meant she had her hands all over him, and was singing his praises.

But when it came time for the school day to start, they parted ways. But that didn't prevent the gossip from starting. Students who had Mr. Gold throughout first and second period noted the unusual change in his suit color, navy and yellow, very atypical for him, but when paired with Miss. French's interpretation of Belle, one might think the two teachers were together.

"Like together, together." Wendy whispered to Grace who sat across from her at one of the tables in the library.

"You're crazy Wendy. They can't be together, together. It's Mr. Gold! Who would want to date him? Least of all Miss. French, she's so nice, and sweet, and loves to read; and he's just...well, mean, not to mention old! And Miss. French is so pretty!"

"So! What does that have to do with anything! Mr. Gold likes to read too, and he can be sweet when he wants to."

"You're forgetting the mean bit." Grace astutely pointed out.

"Well maybe he's not mean to her."

Henry, who had snuck over from Mr. Doc's grade seven class, who were supposed to be reading in the book nook, came over to talk to his ninth grade friends Wendy and Grace. Henry didn't have very many friends his own age, but the girls were nice enough to always include him when he asked, even if the rest of the secondary school found him strange. Henry was wearing a prince charming costume, Grace a home made mad hatter outfit, and Wendy was in an ordinary dress. Mr. Darling had said something to his daughter about growing up and being too old for silly childish things like Halloween costumes.

"They did come dressed up as Beauty and the Beast." Henry pointed out, and the two girls turned in his direction.

"See!" Wendy nearly yelled, remembering they were in the library last second and lowering her voice. "Besides, isn't your dad friends with Mr. Gold? Your dad is lots of fun, if he likes Gold, why shouldn't Miss. French?"

"Have you seen my dad? He's...eccentric as is. It's no wonder his choice in friends would be just as weird."
"Ehmm." A soft voice cleared her throat beside them. "Henry, shouldn't you be with Mr. Doc?"

"Sorry Miss. French." Henry said, disappointed in himself for being caught breaking the rules.

"It's alright Henry, the bells going to ring soon. If you want to stay here and read quietly until then I won't tell anyone."

"Thanks Miss. French!" Henry said, picking up his book and pretending to refocus his attention.

The school bell rang moments later, the majority of the students racing out of the library for lunch. Belle waited at the circulation desk for the on call teacher who watched the library during Belle's lunch. Mr. Booth arrived moments later, and exchanged pleasantries with Miss. French before she headed towards the library door.

That's when they saw it. Mr. Gold, had his arm outstretched, waiting for Miss. French who placed her arm within his own and they walked off, down the hallway together. Wendy and Grace's mouths were agape, whereas Henry had a tell tale 'I told you so' grin beaming from ear to ear.

Mr. Gold and Miss. French were most absolutely, one-hundred percent, together-together.

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Mary Margaret had everything arranged. She had sent out a request to the human resources department, and as representative at the school she could conduct the signing herself. The school board required any co-workers to declare a relationship in case any incidents, whether fights or favouritism, occurred at the work place. It was the unions way of covering employee's asses, and it still allowed for couples to work together. Mary Margaret and David had previously been through the process when they filed the paper work together, so Mary Margaret had assured Belle it was quite a simple task.

Students and staff alike stared as Reagan and Belle walked into the office. Reagan pulled out Belle's chair for her and then sat down in the adjacent chair in front of Mary Margaret's desk. Mary Margaret starred at the both of them smiling before Reagan cleared his throat, hinting at how uncomfortable he was.

"Alright." Mary Margaret said as she pushed a package of paper towards Reagan and Belle. "So there are five sections you have to sign. The first declares that you--" She pointed to Reagan, "--Reagan Gold are in an exclusive relationship with Belle French." Mary Margaret turned her gaze to Belle, before indicating the blank lines at the bottom of the page for their signatures.

"Just a moment." Reagan stopped Mary Margaret from continuing as he picked up the package and began to read. Belle leaned over to Reagan's shoulder and he tilted the paper so that she could read with him. Mary Margaret was confused as to why they were reading it. She had just begun explaining it in laymen's terms so they really didn't need to read the contract. "Seems fairly straight forward." Reagan mussed to Belle who nodded her head. Reagan pulled out a sleek black fountain pen and signed his name at the bottom of the first page before passing the pen to Belle, who signed her own name.

"Alright section two; this states that you understand the rules and restrictions..." But Mary Margaret's voice dwindled when she realized that both Reagan and Belle were once again reading the contract rather then listening to her explanation. She looked at them with a raised brow as they each finished the expectations and shared a comment or two with each other.

"I never sign a contract without reading it first." Reagan explained to satisfy Mary Margaret's
"Well then, I'm going to go warm my lunch up while you to, you know..." Mary Margaret said, grabbing her lunch and going to join Will and Regina who were standing in the back of the office staring at Reagan and Belle filling out the forms and talking softly.

"This is weird, isn't it?" Will said, chewing loudly on a piece of jerky, which made Regina roll her eyes.

"They're definitely an unusual pair. But I think it's sweet." Mary Margaret offered. "I can't believe she got him to dress up; even if it's just an off coloured suit."

"Tell me about it!" Will confirmed.

"Oh enough you two. They're not some show for your entertainment. Leave them be. And why does it have to be so difficult to believe that Mr. Gold could find someone. They're actually quite similar!" Regina said defensively, her arms crossed and her eyebrow raised as she took in Reagan and Belle, it took great effort to hide the small smile at the corner of her mouth.

Both Will and Mary Margaret had absolutely no idea how to respond to Regina so Will retreated to his office and Mary Margaret went to warm up her lunch before returning to Reagan and Belle.

"All finished?" She asked checking over the papers for all the appropriate signatures. "All right, everything looks good! That's it. I'll just scan these and email them out."

"That was easy." Belle said to Reagan in an 'I told you so' voice that had Mary Margaret feeling like she was intruding on a private moment.

"Yup all finished!" Mary Margaret said as she safely filed away the paper work.

"Alright then, back to work everybody!" Regina said grumpily, also sending an intimidating glare to the students who had lined themselves up against the office windows to catch a glimpse of Mr. Gold and Miss. French.

Belle wanted nothing more then to kiss Reagan right then and there, but that would already be breaking clause two of the contract they just signed. Instead she grabbed his hand underneath the table and gave it a playful squeeze before they stood to leave the office and return to their daily routine. She could always reward him later. After all he did agree to let her hand out candy at his house tonight.

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"I can't believe you convinced me to hand out candy." Reagan said as he watched Belle set up two bowls of candy, one filled with lollipops, the other filled with full sized chocolate bars.

"Well you're not handing the candy out, I am." She said, with a witty grin before kissing his cheek.

Reagan and Belle spent the afternoon together cuddling on the sofa, taking tea, and talking softly. They later cooked spaghetti together, making a disastrous mess in Reagan's gourmet kitchen, before retiring to the sitting room to read separate books but remain in each others arms. Reagan sat comfortably on the sofa, and Belle's head rested in his lap as she read lying down. It wasn't until the sun began to set and it became difficult to concentrate on the words on the page in front of her that Belle got up to put the porch light on.

"You know, the kids will probably be too afraid to even come up to your house. And you don't even
have any scary decorations up." Belle mocked and Reagan brought a hand up to his chest in hurt jest.

"You wound me Belle." He said before grasping her around the waist unexpectedly and bringing her body close to his. Belle arched her back to stay away from him, squirming as he arched with her until Reagan was successful and captured Belle's lips. Her playful resistance soon ended, feeling soft warm lips on her own, the trace of a wet, hot tongue against her lips before she let it slide into her own. They must have simply kissed for a solid two minutes before Regan felt a heavi ness in his balls, his cock wanting to take this kiss further. He lead them towards the hallway wall, the small of Belle's back bumping against the chair-rail; she bit her discomfort into Reagan's lips but he pressed on. His hands starting to wander and Belle gave in, her fingers clenching into his silky silver hair.

They were interrupted by the ominous chimes of the doorbell, the shadow of children at the doorstep, followed by an uncertain 'trick or treat'. Reagan's hair was mussed, and his face was an adorable picture of cluelessness. Belle smiled to him before opening the door to the smiling faces of Henry and Grace.

"Happy Halloween you two!" Belle said enthusiastically as she reached behind her, grabbing four full sized candy pars and four lollipops; she suspected it was a little generous but she also realized the chance of many children going to Gold's house was slim. Forget the fact that the kids would be afraid, but the parents might be worried he'd try to poison the children of Storybrooke, or something as ludicrous as that.

"Miss. French? What are you doing giving candy out at Mr. Gold's house?" Grace asked, her father who was standing at the end of the driveway gave a curt wave to Reagan who nodded in kind.

"I thought it would be good fun to hand out candy, and I can't do it from the flower shop. Mr. Gold has been kind enough to allow me to borrow his house." Belle said, looking down the long driveway to see Graces father, as well as Regina Mills, and...Emma Swan. Belle couldn't fathom why Emma was taking Henry trick or treating with Regina. Yes she was aware that Regina was a sort of step mother to Emma and Mary Margaret, but as far as Belle knew she never really played the roll. Emma nodded towards Belle when they made eye contact before Regina put an end to the encounter.

"Come on Henry! We better get moving if you want to get any more candy."

"Thanks Miss. French, thanks Mr. Gold!" Henry and Grace both said in their own time before Henry added, "Your costumes look great by the way!" and the two ran down the driveway to the next house.

Belle closed the door behind them and turned to Reagan.

"Now wasn't that fun!" She chirped.

"You do realize those were the only two kids brave enough or rather nosey enough to come up here," Reagan said before retreating to the sitting room and adding, "You might as well come and relax while you wait!"

But Belle rolled her eyes at his stubborn attitude, not to mention lack of faith in the youth of Storybrooke, so instead Belle brought a chair and her book to the front hallway where she eagerly awaited the arrival of young trick or treaters.

Much to Reagan Gold's surprise, the children of Storybrooke were much less fearful of him and his house once they had heard from Henry and Grace that Mr. Gold, or rather Belle was giving out full sized candy bars. The kids came in large numbers, safer that way, Reagan thought in the back of his
mind. But the numbers were so large that Belle couldn't keep up. Reagan found himself handing Belle the chocolate bars and lollipops as she talked away courteously to the kids, complimenting their costumes. Much to Reagan's surprise he was enjoying himself.

It all reminded Reagan very much of his time with Bae. Bae had loved Halloween, until he claimed to be too old to go out with his Papa and wanted to go with his friends. But then, when Bae left, holidays lost their meaning. Yet for the first time in a long time, Reagan found himself smiling back on the fond memories, rather then feeling the guilt and pain and letting them twist at his guts until he crumbled. Belle made everything better. Perhaps, with Belle, holidays might regain their meaning.

By nine o'clock they had finally run out of candy. Belle flipped off the porch light and put away the bowls she had borrowed, as well as the chair. She turned to the sitting room to find Reagan, who looked quite exhausted, sitting lazily on the sofa. He had already taken his tie, suit jacket, and waistcoat off. His leg must be killing him from standing in the foyer all evening.

Belle walked over to him with a soft smile on her face. She gently sat next to him on the sofa, leaning into his body and reaching one hand up to rest on his chest while her head leaned on his shoulder. Reagan let out a comfortable sigh as he gave into her touch, their bodies moulding closer together as he gently leaned his head against hers.

"Thank you Reagan, I had a lot of fun." Belle said quietly.

"Evidently I would do anything for you so it shouldn't be a surprise that I stooped so low as this." He joked and Belle just rolled her eyes.

"Oh stop it you had fun!"

"I did." He said with a small nod that Belle could feel against her own head. She snuggled closer into him as a reward, wrapping her arms around him the best she could in a hug.

"Although." Belle started. "I am rather upset there aren't any lollipops left, I'll have nothing to suck on." She said innocently, making sure she turned her head to look up at Reagan.

Her teasing did not have the desired effect, instead of unzipping his pants like she had hopped, he burst out laughing, and didn't stop.

"That was very subtle Miss. French!" His eyebrows raised as he mocked her kindly.

Belle narrowed her eyes.

"I was serious Reagan. You've been so kind about all this. I promised to show you how grateful I was." Belle's hand moved to Reagan's thigh, his body tensing as he held his breath, hoping she would be bold enough to continue. Now this was working much better. "Please." She was begging now, and that tone on her voice made Reagan's eyes flutter shut as his head fell back. Belle's hand ventured further up his thighs, unzipping his dress pants as she leaned into Reagan's neck, placing sloppy wet kisses along his skin before moving up to his ear. "Please, I want your cock in my mouth." His hips shunt forward as she moved to the band of his boxers, reaching in and pulling out his half hard cock. Belle's lips moved to kiss the corner of Reagan's mouth and he blindly kissed her as she whispered against his lips, "But this time, I want you to cum down my throat." Reagan groaned, god Belle could talk dirty when she really, really wanted to. Such filth coming from that sweet mouth only made him sinfully think of how good it was having that pretty little mouth wrapped around his cock. It didn't take many tugs at his flesh before he was at full hardness. Belle smiled victoriously as she stroked his hard cock, and began moving her knees to the floor.
"Can we--" Belle let go of Reagan's cock and gestured to his pants. Reagan stood slightly, his cock heavy and bobbing obscenely as he moved. Reagan winced from the pain in his leg as he pulled down his trousers and boxers before sitting bare arsed on the sofa. Belle's hand wrapped tightly around the base of his cock and Reagan scooted forward to the edge of the sofa. Belle's tongue darted out, her mouth watering in anticipation. She placed a kiss to the head of Reagan's cock before pressing the flat of her tongue to his slit. The pressure was intoxicating and before Reagan knew it he was wrapped within Belle's heat and wetness, her tongue moving over his shaft while her mouth bobbed over his flesh. Belle realised him quickly though, her tongue leaving a scorching trail across his member until she reached his balls. She took the soft plump flesh within her mouth, rolling her tongue around while simultaneously pumping Reagan's cock. He was slick and wet, covered in her saliva and his pre-cum dripping over her fingers as she worked him. Reagan was panting above her, his tired body easily succumbing to the sensations. Belle released Reagan's balls with an obscene pop and instead brought her hand up to cradle them as she returned her mouth to his cock; sucking tightly around the tip before moving along the shaft once again. This time she hollowed her cheeks with each thrust, his cock slipping deeper and deeper into her throat as Reagan restrained himself from thrusting into the wet heat. Belle hummed around his dick, her jaw aching as she tried to take him deeper. When his dickhead brushed against the back of her throat Belle let out a groan, and the vibrations became too much for Reagan. He grabbed tightly in her hair as he carefully fucked her mouth, directing Belle's lips over his flesh. Belle's hands pumped the remainder of his shaft.

"Belle, Belle, I can't--" He mumbled his voice a rough whisper, and Belle sent him a hungry look.

Reagan's hips bucked off the sofa as his cock pulsed wet cum into Belle's mouth. She closed her lips around his cock, trying to swallow it all down, and god if that wasn't a hot sight. His cock twitched, tired and spent as Belle swallowed around him, opening her mouth and releasing his softening cock as she tried to regain her breath. Some of Reagan's cum was dribble out of Belle's mouth as she swallowed once more, her tongue cleaning out her mouth and drinking it all down.

Reagan brought his thumb to Belle's chin, wiping off the cum and running it across Belle's lower lip. Belle licked it up sinfully, making sure to capture Reagan's thumb in the process and sucking it into her mouth. And god Reagan wanted to kiss her right now. He pulled Belle up into his lap, pressing his lips down upon hers fiercely, tasting his own hot musk and spice on her lips and tongue and drinking down the taste of her sweet lips.

"I suppose I owe you three orgasms now?" He said with a chuckle as their lips parted.

"No, that one was a gift." Belle said before bringing the back of her hand up to her mouth and wiping away the excess saliva.

"You're amazing Belle." He said reverently before simply hugging her.

"I know." Belle said into his shoulder as she closed her eyes.

Reagan was definitely looking forward to the next holiday they could share together.

Chapter End Notes

I was never really specific with what type of school Storybrooke Secondary was, but since Storybrooke is a small town I figured it could be a grade 7-12 (for population sake)
Caught By The Librarian

Chapter Notes

So I've recently suffered a loss in my family, as well some other complicated family stuff. As a result, I'm going to take a bit of a break from writing, I hope you can understand. So the next update will be three weeks from now on September 1st. Also this chapter is not beta edited, I apologize.

Happy Reading xx

PS: Enjoy the angry, literary, librarian porn!

“Flirting is a woman’s trade, one must keep in practice.” — Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre

Belle was incredibly surprised to find out that Mr. Gold had booked his fifth period class in the library that Friday. Belle wasn't sure how she had let that detail pass her when she checked the schedule every day; but with last weekend, and Halloween, Belle had been quite distracted.

Belle blushed as she re-shelved a handful of books, wanting to make sure the library was in impeccable order; she secretly hoped it would reach the high standards her boyfriend set for himself. When she finished with the books she started pushing in all of the chairs, the ones around the worktables, as well as the chairs by the computers along the back wall.

When the bell finally rang Belle briskly walked towards the circulation desk, sat upon her stool and picked up the book she had been reading. She pretended to read it's pages as she inconspicuously waited for the teachers arrival.

"Goodbye Miss. French." Several students muttered to her on their way out of the library and most likely heading to their last period classes.

After five minutes of waiting Belle grew anxious, standing up to pace back and forth; she got a strange look from Jill Bucket who remained in the library reading a battered copy of A Tale of Two Cities in the lounge section of the library.

Belle walked towards the second side door of the library, it remained locked but the door had a window that could see into the hallway that lead towards Mr. Gold's classroom. Belle peaked through the glass and rapidly moved away with a small yelp as she saw Mr. Gold and his class leave their room. She ran towards her stool and picked up the book again, determined to remain as subtle as she could. Jill simply burst out laughing at the whole encounter, forcing Belle to send a scowl her way and a very librarian 'shhhh' before threatening to tell Mr. Humbert she was skipping his class again in favour of reading; that shut Jill up quickly.

The library door opened, and with it came a pack of ninth graders, most of which probably hadn't stepped foot into the library yet and were slightly excited at the prospect of books. Belle pretended to be engrossed in her novel as the fifteen or so students took seats at the work tables in front of her. Mr. Gold was last to enter, having held the door for his students and told them to take a seat at the
work tables and get out their notebooks. After closing the door he spotted Belle, who quickly averted
her gaze back to her book, he chuckled at her adorable nature before walking to the circulation desk.

His voice was low, merely a hushed whisper as he leaned into the desk. "Don't act like you didn't
check the schedule dearie." He said wickedly before adding insult to injury, "Besides I could have
sworn that was you spying on me in the window over there."

"I haven't any idea what you're talking about Mr. Gold." Belle said rather professionally.

"Your books upside-down dearie." He said, taking the book and turning it round for her before
turning on his feet and heading towards the front of the tables and waited for his students chatter to
die down before continuing. "Alright everybody, as you know we're picking our books for your
Independent Study Projects which will be due at the end of term. You know the expectations, you
know the assignment, and you know how I'll be grading it; keep that in mind when making your
novel selection."

"Yeah you gotta pick a book he likes if you want a good grade." Adam mumbled to his trouble
making partner in crime Eddy.

Mr. Gold walked over to the boys who in their stifled laughter thought they had gotten away with the
remark. Gold abruptly tapped the gold handle of his cane onto the desk, between where the two boys
were sitting. They both jumped with a start before Mr. Gold leaned down, his teeth in a wicked
gnarl, "Now I wouldn't recommend doing that if you plan on passing, let alone having any academic
future." The remainder of the class laughed at the duo's misfortune before allowing Mr. Gold to
continue, "I will remind you of the restrictions in place for your book selection; one, the novel must
be a minimum of two hundred pages; two, it must be a fictional novel, no non-fiction, biographies, or
any of those graphic novels; three, it must not be a translation, we are reading real English words
from actual English writers not modern translators; four, no two people may choose the same book,
and finally there are no restrictions as to the publication date of your book. Now, I'm sure Miss.
French will be readily available to help you with your selections. I'm guessing between both her and
myself we have read a great number of the books in this library. Final reminder, your novel must be
approved by me before you are free to use it for your final project. Are we clear?"

"Yes Mr. Gold." Majority of the class muttered while others nodded their heads.

"Alright, go look you lot." And almost as quickly as he finished the grade nines stood up and raced
over to the fictional novel section of the library. "Be kind to Miss. French's library everyone; make
sure to return all books to the proper places in which you found them." Mr. Gold said with a final
shout towards his students.

"You know Mr. Gold you're not supposed to shout in the library." Belle smirked.

"I wouldn't want to be punished by the librarian." He said with a wink before the two of them
walked together to the fictional novel section to answer the questions of young learners.

Most of the students went to Belle, asking if she had read the book, if it was interesting, if there were
zombies or vampires in it. Within the first thirty minuets of the period Mr. Gold had already approved
a selection of *The Outsiders, Oliver Twist, A Clockwork Orange, Frankenstein, The Kite Runner,*
and *To Kill A Mockingbird.* His rejection list on the other hand was increasingly longer. Then again
Belle didn't blame his constant rejection of any book that possessed a vampire in it.

"Can I do *Sense and Sensibility* Mr. Gold?" Mary asked, holding up the book to Mr. Gold as if he'd
never heard of it before.
"No. Let's try and find something better then Jane Austen, Miss. Contrary."

"Excuse me?" Belle blurted out, her jaw slacked and mouth open as she stared at Mr. Gold in utter horror.

"Yes Miss. French?" He said raising a brow to her and asserting his authority in the room. It sent an aggravating chill down Belle's spine. He had no right to play the teacher card with her, not any more, especially not while he was in her library.

"Better then Jane Austen...better then Jane Austen!" She repeated the second time a little louder. "She is one of the greatest female novelists of her time."

"Exactly Miss. French, of her time, there are certainly better things one can read now--" But he was quickly cut off by Belle.

"Jane Austen portrays a beautiful examination of women, culture, and society in eighteenth century England. Her characters are true and honest and she teaches us about love and conflict and morality...why Lizzie Bennet is perhaps one of the most complex, well spoken, and best representations of a female in any historical literature--" It was Reagan's turn to cut Belle off, the two moving closer to one another as their volume increased. Belle's face was flushed with anger and adrenaline and Reagan's snarl was as vicious as ever. The student's watched in horror, and absolute intrigue; no one, not even Principle Mills would stand up to Mr. Gold like this.

"Surely you cant tell me that Austen is a better author then Bronte. At least Bronte crafts complex plots, with mystery and intrigue while questioning societal norms."

"I presume you're referring to Jane Eyre, one of my favourites by the way so please don't think my argument flawed with a biased against the novel; yes she has a complex plot, if you presume complex to be that of a girl falling in love, in simplest terms I implore you Mr. Gold; yes there is a great deal of mystery to Mr. Rochester, his wife, and the manor; and yes it culminates in a thrilling fire in which Jane overcomes traditional principles of beauty and gains the love she had always sought. Now tell me Mr. Gold--" Belle paused to take in a large breath while Reagan hid his smile; god he loved it when she got angry and fought for her opinions; it was just like when she was in school except now she knew how to articulate a proper fight. "--what does Jane Eyre have that say, Mansfield Park does not?" Mr. Gold was silent as he contemplated her counter argument and there was a small 'oooo' from his students. "Well I'd be only too happy to tell you. Mansfield Park has an exceptional plot, quite similar to that of Bronte's however Austen came first, it also contains mystery surrounding the Bertram's, in addition it makes several comments about slavery, and favours the unconventional love story. Now please Mr. Gold, I encourage you to--" But before Belle could continue any further Reagan had grabbed her by the wrist and was pulling her out of the library. The student's gasped in shock as the angry beast took the sweet little library through the front doors of the library. The students ran after them lining their faces along the window to catch a glimpse of Mr. Gold no doubt preparing to eat Miss. French alive. But they were no where in sight.

Reagan had pushed Belle back against the hallway wall, just to the side of the library door where none of the student's could see, his cane clattering to the floor as he did so. The wall was rough on Belle's back as Reagan continued to push her against it, raising her hands above her head and glaring at her with a very hungry look. Belle should be frightened by the unpredictable man who hated to lose, but instead she was turned on, an unmistakable wetness forming in her panties.

No sooner then Reagan had pulled them to the side were his lips on Belle's, kissing her fiercely and dominantly as she made little noises into his mouth. This was risky as hell; making out with the school librarian in the middle of the hallway as she made her little moans of pleasure. But they needed it. Reagan wanted nothing more then to push aside her skirt and thrust into her heat. The
blood was rushing to his cock as he thought about Belle and her angry little face and her fierce arguments, god it was turning him on.

Belle struggled against his grip, wanting to run her fingers through his hair, but he kept a firm grip on her wrists as his tongue ravished her mouth. Belle brought her right leg up and wrapped it around Reagan's hip. He took the opportunity to thrust against Belle's body his half hard cock wanting the friction as he thickened in his pants.

"Reagan." Belle whispered, but her tone wasn't drowsy with lust, it was serious. "You can't actually tell me you think Austen is a poor author?" She mumbled as he trailed his tongue down her neck, while his hands let go of her wrists in favour of her breasts. Belle took the opportunity to wrap her arms around his shoulders for support as he continued to thrust up against her. Reagan chuckled against Belle's neck, sending vibrations down her body and causing gooseflesh to raise across her neck and collar bone. Even in her pleasure Belle couldn't bare it to see one of her favourite authors shunned so crudely.

Reagan paused his ministrations in order to make eye contact with Belle. "Of course not Belle. *Pride and Prejudice* is actually one of my favourite novels; there's a certain something about that stubborn Lizzie Bennet that I quite adore. It's just, Mary is an exceptional student, she needs a greater challenge then *Sense and Sensibility*.

"Oh." Belle said dumbfounded. "Then why didn't you just tell her that?"

"Because I'm a cruel man?" He offered with a weak smile that Belle responded to by raising her brow, the sarcasm oozing off her facial expression. "Alright, luv I see your point. I don't always need to be such of an arse."

Belle giggled, kissing Reagan once more before pushing out of his embrace.

"You need to cool down, Mr. Gold." Belle said glaring at his crotch which Reagan self consciously and indecently adjusted. Belle bent down and picked his cane up for him, offering it to him with a satisfied smile. "Alright, lets make this look good, your student's came to see a fight Mr. Gold." Belle said playfully before moving into view of the library window, Reagan following her with a threatening glare. Belle made sure to speak loud enough so the students could hear but the nearby classrooms wouldn't be disturbed.

"In conclusion, Mr. Gold, both Bronte and Austen are outstanding representations of English authors, whom both write in English; in addition, they are both fictional novels, and over two hundred pages; therefore they fill all your requirements for novel selection and there is no reason for your rejection of *Sense and Sensibilities* other then personal dislike of a book and or author; and we wouldn't want your bias to slip through like that; what kind of example is that setting for your students?"

Mr. Gold let out a dry laugh, and it's quite eerie to the students who have never heard the man laugh before. "I'll have you know Miss. French I quite appreciate both Bronte and Austen. In fact I even prefer them to the more generally acclaimed Dickens, and no lets not get into a discussion about the sexes because I have a feeling you'd win that battle just as well."

"Win?" Belle said rather alarmed. Mr. Gold looked towards the library window causing the on looking students to gasp in fear as they ran back to the book shelves. Mr. Gold entered the library, limping heavily as he returned to his students, followed by an unusually calm Miss. French. Within the next five seconds he had about eight students yelling at him requesting either *Jane Eyre*, *Mansfield Park* or *Pride and Prejudice*; surely if the books could get Mr. Gold and Miss. French to argue like that they would be entertaining reads.
By the time the final bell rang all of Mr. Gold's students had selected and checked out their novels. Since it was Friday the library was very quickly vacant, majority of the students wanting to get home to start their weekends.

"I very much enjoyed our little argument Miss. French." Reagan said, standing behind Belle who was re-arranging the shelved books; even though Mr. Gold had reminded his student's they still managed to put several books back in the wrong places, and Belle preferred her library to be perfectly alphabetized. Reagan wrapped his arms around Belle's waist, crossing them in front of her stomach as he leaned down, resting his chin on her shoulder for an unusual hug. Belle giggled as he spoke, his hair tickling against the side of her face before he kissed the skin behind her ear.

"I enjoyed our argument as well Mr. Gold." Belle said, shelving her last book before Reagan unexpectedly turned her around in his arms. He leaned into her, leaving one hand on her waist while the other went to grip at the nearby self.

"But I'll remind you, not to make me look like a fool in front of my students again, Miss. French. Or there will be consequences." He said, his teeth gnashing together as he breathed against her neck, his left hand moving from her waist down to her thigh. He roughly pulled up the edge of Belle's skirt, his hands fighting against her nylons before he finally dipped beneath her panties. Belle gasped, feeling his fingers plunder through the fabric until they could trace amongst the wetness that had been pooling since their argument.

"Consequences?" She panted out as he plunged the tip of his finger into her pussy and teased the rim of her opening. He couldn't thrust very deep at the angle but was able to crook inside her channel nonetheless.

"Consequences dearie--" He paused his tongue licked the shell of her ear and Belle's head fell back, hitting the metal edge of the shelf. "--for making me hard." He wedged Belle against the shelves and his body, his half hard cock bumping into her stomach. Belle reached down, cupping him through the fabric of his pants and he shunted his hips towards her touch. She cupped his balls through the fabric, feeling their weight as his member thickened with her every touch.

"Reagan we're in the school." Belle said, a moment of reality seeping through what could only be one of her sexual fantasies.

"You should have thought of that before you put your hands all over my cock." He was right, Belle's teasing touches had brought him to full hardness.

Belle unzipped Reagan's pants, reaching her hand into his boxers and wrapping around his flesh, he was hot and thick, and he'd been wanting to cum inside her since the moment she started arguing against him. Belle tugged at his flesh, the skin pliable as his tip began to weep with anticipation.

"We'll be quick." He muttered against her ear as he withdrew his fingers, slick with her juices, in favour of rubbing against her clit.

"Please!" Belle wined as he worried the little bud, sensitive and craving the touch as her channel pumped, feeling the loss of his fingers and desperately craving something else. "Fuck Reagan. Please." She begged.

"Are you sure Belle?" He asked once more before she nodded her ascent, her bottom lip between her teeth.

Reagan removed his hand from Belle's pussy and instead pulled open his belt buckle, unbuttoned his pants, and pulled his cock over the waits band of his boxers. He then hiked up her skirts with no
regard for the garment of clothing before ripping open her nylons and awkwardly pulling down her panties. Belle was about to protest in anger until Reagan grabbed the back of her thigh and lifted up her right leg up to his hip, causing the tip of his cock to bump against the inside of her thigh. Belle shunted her hips, hoping to direct him towards her centre as he took his right hand and lined them up. Reagan didn't take any time to tease her, instead he was pushing into her cunt with one swift smacking motion. He grabbed at the shelf with his free hand, gritting his teeth as she clenched around him, trying to keep control of himself as her warm juices seeped into every ridge of his hard cock. Reagan pulled out with his hips before pushing back in, causing the two to moan out in satisfaction. Reagan lifted Belle higher until she was standing on her tip toes, adjusting themselves until they found an angle where he could easily slip into her. His next thrusts were harder and deeper, causing the book shelf to wobble as he fucked Belle against it.

Belle reached her hand down to her clit, which she had a difficult time finding with all the clothing in the way. She rubbed at the bud unceremoniously, desperately wanting to topple off the end of that peak and ride out her high as he used her body to find his own pleasure. She locked eye contact with Reagan knowing they were both close. She leaned her forehead against his own as his cock slipped in and out of her pussy.

"I knew I would win." Belle whispered wickedly and with that Reagan was cuming unexpectedly. Her wicked comment, heavy accent, and new found confidence had him gushing inside her, thick robes of cum spilling into Belle's fluttering channel. Reagan's unforeseen orgasm had sent Belle spiraling down her own orgasm, her channel clenching around his softening cock as his seed filled her.

"Fuck." Reagan exhaled weekly before slipping from within Belle, her centre still rocking from the orgasm as she stroked herself through the rush, disappointed that he had left so quickly. But Reagan himself was barely able to stand, his orgasm hitting him so hard. Reagan pulled out his pocket square and wiped of his cock before tucking the soft flesh within his underwear and doing up his pants. He reached for his cane which he had rested against the adjacent shelf before limping towards his quivering beauty. He reached his pocket square between her legs and wiped of her thighs before cleaning her sex and collecting the dripping fluids from her body. Belle took a moment to catch her breath, wherein Reagan kissed her forehead. "Okay?" He asked, before pulling down her skirt and fiddling with her hair.

"You owe me a pair of nylons." Was all she said, her brow raised with her scornful glare, as she bent down to pull up her panties and take off her ripped up nylons.

Reagan chuckled in reply, "And you're probably going to get me fired one day."

"Fair enough." Belle giggled, a smile brimming on her face.

"Come on luv, let's get you home." Reagan said as he placed his hand on the small of Belle's back.

"Reagan?" Belle asked as he helped her put on her coat.

"Yes sweetheart?"

"What are you going to do with your pocket handkerchief?" Belle asked indicating towards the soiled cloth she knew Reagan had placed in the inside pocket of his suit jacket.

"Oh I plan on using it later." He said with a mischievous wink before the satisfied duo left the locked library behind them.
All My Love

Chapter Notes

So I've been doing a lot better recently! I'm staring to get back into the writing mood and getting caught up on my schedule. *happy dance* The next update will still be three weeks away, so September 22nd. But after that we will return to our regular bi-weekly postings! *cheers*

This is a particular good chapter in my opinion. Reagan and Belle take a big leap forward in their relationship!

Happy Reading Everybody!! xx

"Sometimes it takes a good fall to really know where you stand." — Hayley Williams

Belle's phone began to vibrate on top of the kitchen counter, signalling the incoming text message from Ruby. Her vivacious friend had been bothering her all week, hoping to gain insight into the more detailed and personal aspects of Belle's relationship with Reagan. Belle let out a sigh as her dirt covered hands reached over to her cell phone, she had been potting hydrangea's all day, even though Saturday was her only day off, she knew her father could use the assistance. Belle wiped her hands clean on her lilac coloured apron before picking up her cell phone.

Ruby: "You know you can't ignore me all day."

Ruby: "I'll come over there myself if I have to!"

Ruby: "Better yet I'll report you missing to Sherriff Graham and send him over just to make sure you're alive!"

Belle bit down on the corner of her lip as she thought of her reply.

Belle: "Here, I'm alive, and I'm not completely ignoring you."

Just as Belle set her phone down and reached out for a new ceramic pot her phone began buzzing angrily. The only way to appease a girl like Ruby was to give her exactly what she wanted. Fortunately for Belle, she was good with words, and could often give Ruby everything she wanted to hear without telling her too much of the actual truth. Belle wouldn't call it lying; she would never to lie to Ruby. Truethfully Belle tried never to lie too much on principle, but that was beside the point.

Ruby: "Come on Belle you can't date the most infamous man in town and not expect your best friend to want all the juicy gossip of your carnal adventures. Hell I'd even settle for your ordinary adventures. What does a person even do with Gold in their spare time? Don't tell me you two just sit and read all day!"

Belle rolled her eyes.
Belle: "Sometimes we read together! We like reading Ruby. We haven't really spent much 'spare
time' together. It's mostly work, dinner, we're working on publishing his book together, and well, sex.
We talk sometimes, about important things. It takes a while to get to know him, and I'm still
learning."

Ruby: "Now I noticed you mentioned sex... ;)

Belle: "Ruby!!!!"

Ruby: "Fine, fine. But, now that you finally have a man in your life a girl's night is a must! You
should totally invite Gold to come out with us!!"

Belle: "Yeah, because Reagan would love to go out with a bunch of girls half his age and gossip
about men. You wouldn't even catch him inviting you lot over to his house."

Belle typed out sarcastically, assuming that was going to shut down any and all of Ruby's inquiry,
but she quickly found her phone chirping once again. Ruby had ridiculously fast thumbs.

Ruby: "OMG! That's a great idea Belle! We could have girls night at Gold's mansion! Oooo maybe
he would even let you have a slumber party! We could invite Emma and Mary Margaret! They are
totally gonna flip out! No one's ever been inside Gold's house before, especially not as a guest."

Belle: "NO, NO, NO!"

Belle replied as quickly as she could before Ruby could get too carried away.

Belle: "No Ruby that is NOT what I meant!"

Ruby: "It's absolutely perfect. I've got to text Emma and M right away! They will not believe this!"

Belle: "Oh Ruby! Why do you always have to go looking for trouble!"

Ruby: "Because troubles fun hunny. And you can't say you don't like a bit of trouble, you are seeing
Gold after all!"

Belle grunted as her head fell forwards and her forehead pressed into the palms of her hands, cradling
herself in defeat, until she realised her hands were still slightly dirty and it was no doubt smeared
onto her forehead as well.

Ruby: "I was right! They totally didn't believe it! But the girls are down! *squeals* This is actually
happening! We are going to have a girl's night at Mr. FUCKING GOLDS!"

Belle read the message and let out a small whimper. She was absolutely fucked. She picked up her
phone and scrolled through her contacts before opening up her messages with Reagan.

Belle: "Hey, I've got some bad news."

She typed out at least eight dozen times, trying to find the most positive way to break the news that
would no doubt give her boyfriend a heart attack, or a panic attack at the very least.

Reagan: "What is it luv? Is everything alright?"

Belle: "You, and your house, have just become the next host of girl's night with Emma and Mary
Margret, courtesy of Ruby herself."

Reagan: "I don't mean to be ignorant Belle, but what does that even mean?"
Belle: "It means, you, and me, and Emma, Mary Margaret, and Ruby. In your house. With wine. And gossip. I'm. SO. SORRY."

Reagan: "You're joking right?"

Belle: "Well I'm not laughing right now."

Reagan: "Fuck."

It was settled. Ruby had invited her and the others to a girl's night. At Mr. Gold's house. For Thursday.

***

"A girl's night? What the actual fuck Belle?" Reagan said as he opened the large front door of his house and allowed the small librarian to enter into the foyer. It was Sunday morning, and Belle had arrived on time and prepared to work on Reagan's book.

She had expected to receive an earful from him upon entering his house, but she didn't quite expect to receive it the moment he opened the door.

"I'm so sorry Reagan. Ruby just invited herself, and she asked all the girls. I couldn't, I tried. Really I did." Belle pleaded and sent him an unsure smile.

"I know darling. Miss Lucas indeed has a mind of her own and you no doubt tried to sway her."

"Because this is going to be just as uncomfortable for me, I promise." Belle said as he took her coat from her and she slipped her shoes off before they began walking up the small landing to the main living space.

"Just what exactly is a girl's night at my house going to entail. But more importantly, I don't have to be here right? You're just going to gossip about me while you're in my house?" He asked as he rounded the counter, the kettle already brewing in preparation for Belle's arrival. Belle followed him into the kitchen area, and rested her hands on the breakfast bar, leaning against the cool marble.

"Actually..."

"Belle?" He scolded, his eyebrows rising as his voice became stern. "There's no need to stall." He pulled their cups out of the cabinet and began pouring the hot water and setting the tea.

"Well to answer your first question, a girl's night involves--"

"Belle that's stalling. I know you luv, you're trying to avoid the biggest negative of the situation by explaining the slightly less awful negatives."

"Alright, yes, okay. The thing is..." She bit down on her bottom lip. "You do have to be here. In your house I mean, while all the girls are...also here."

"Excuse me?" He said looking up at Belle and away from the teacup as he poured the hot liquid. It began to overflow over the rim of the cup and Belle reached out for some nearby paper towels as Reagan let out a curse before returning the kettle to the recently turned off stovetop.
"We're not just using your house, Ruby's decided that your sorta the main entertainment for the evening." Belle said casually as she wiped up the rest of the spilt liquid.

"Belle!" Reagan said sternly, his eyes widening as he realized what his plans for Thursday night would entail. He was most terrified about the fact that he would be at the mercy of Ruby Lucas's curious and vivid imagination.

"I know! Oh Reagan I'm so sorry. I'll tell Ruby and the girls it has to be a no. She'll probably give me the silent treatment for a day before she wants to know about the next juicy details of my love life." Belle said dismissively, and she did not at all expect what was about to come out of Reagan's mouth.

"No Belle, Ruby is right."

"Wait, what? Did you, Reagan Gold, the ruthless and sometimes scary pawnbroker just say that Ruby Lucas was right? Now that's something she'll want to hear for herself."

"Really Belle. I'm very serious about how I feel about you. It's only right I should get to know your friends, your family."

"Really?" She said, and she couldn't help but let the unexpected smile sweep across her face.

"Absolutely." He said smiling back, before they both walked around the breakfast bar in order to embrace one another; Reagan's hands came to Belle's waist and she wrapped her hands around his neck as she stood on her tip toes in order to kiss him properly.

Reagan's hands soon trailed up Belle's white blouse, until his thumbs were rubbing along the underside of her breasts, she was wearing a simple laced bra, Reagan could tell from the way Belle's breasts felt heavy against his thumbs. His cock twitched with the information and his hands went strait to cupping their full weight as Belle's tongue thrust into his mouth and playfully sucked at his lips.

"I almost forgot." Reagan said as Belle sucked back his lip on their parting, not ready to give up his delicious mouth. "I have a present for you." He said against her lips and adorned her with little butterfly kisses.

"That better not be your idea of a pick up line." Belle said, looking up at him making fun of his usually quite competent romantic skills, except when he was nervous, he was an absolute train wreck then. Fortunately, Reagan actually snorted at her comment, and let her join in the easy chuckle.

"No I mean, I have an actual present for you." He said as he parted from their embrace and walked out of the foyer and into the hallway. Belle heard a cupboard opening and closing as she remained standing in the kitchen.

"That's not to say you aren't a present. Because you do have quite the package." Belle joked back cleverly as Reagan returned into the kitchen with a medium sized box in his hands. He laughed at her comment, but mostly smiled, choosing to take it as a compliment that could boost his confidence.

"You really did get me a present?" Belle said as he placed the box on the breakfast bar. It was gift wrapped in simple light blue paper with white flowers on it, a beautiful white ribbon and bow tied around the box.

"Yes, I got you a gift." He smiled and nodded his head towards the package, identifying that Belle could open it up right now.
"You didn't have to get me anything Reagan. You don't need to buy my affections, you know that right?"

"Yes, I am well aware that you are not the type of woman to be bought over, and that's not what I'm doing. I saw these, I knew you needed them, and would never get them yourself. I also want to take care of you, and possibly spoil you sometimes. I'm a wealthy man Belle, let me share it, if I simply want to surprise you with something nice, let me."

Belle shook her head slightly before letting the smile escape her lips.

"That's what I thought." He chuckled as her hands went to the bow and ribbon, un-looping it before setting to the wrapping paper. Once removed and placed in the garbage can Belle returned to the large box on the counter, she opened up the lid, revealing a dark chocolate pair of warm and fuzzy winter boots!

"Reagan!" She said happily and with a knowing smile, she would have indeed neglected to buy herself a pair of appropriate winter footwear. "These are gorgeous." She said, picking up the soft boots and immediately trying them on. They fit, Reagan having no doubt been smart enough to check the sizes of her shoes before making the expensive purchase. "Thank you so much Reagan! This is such a thoughtful gift." Belle said, leaning up to kiss his cheek before she twirled around, putting on a little show in her new boots.

"I'm thrilled you love them. But now I believe it is time for us to get to work?"

"Right." She said with a nod, taking off her warm boots and placing them in the box before they both took their cups of tea and began heading to his library. They had switched from working in the living room to the library about a week ago; they had so many materials and drafts now, it seemed smarter to leave everything out in the library rather than having to keep putting it away in the living room. In addition, having shelves and shelves of fairytales and literature nearby was much more convenient for research and brainstorming purposes. The only problem was Reagan would occasionally, or rather, all the time, catch Belle reading on the job.

Reagan's library was two stories tall, equipped with a reading nook, and old fashioned ladder on a track and wheels. It was by far the nicest, and most organized personal library Belle had ever seen. Reagan even had a nicer library than that of the school, and the Storybrooke Public Library. You could probably combine the collection in the two and it still wouldn't compare to the classics, fairy tales, poetry, and first editions Reagan had stocked amongst his shelves. Belle nearly fainted the first time she saw it, after giving him a proper scolding for keeping such a wonderful library a secret from her.

"What do we have on the Wicked Witch of the West?" Reagan asked from a table in the centre of the library, countless books and papers all piled around his lap top.

"Give me a second, we're working on the Queen of Hearts connection right? I remember reading that somewhere." Belle said before rolling the ladder along its track. "Ah ha!" She exclaimed before climbing up the ladder to go and retrieve the book in question. "Got it!" She said as she pulled the book out dramatically before flipping through the pages to find the quote she had specifically remembered reading. "And although a cruel woman, the Queen of Hearts was once a mother...One daughter was destined to be raised in royalty, the other in poverty." Belle paused. "Hmmm, well that's not exactly what we were looking for." Belle said biting down on her bottom lip.

"No, it's even better!" Reagan suddenly shouted. "One raised in royalty, the other in poverty. It's the Evil Queen Belle! She could very likely be argued as one of the Queen of Hearts daughters."
"That's amazing!" Belle said with a beaming smile, and nearly jumping off the ladder with excitement. The sudden action caused her to lose her balance on the ladder, and before she knew it Belle was falling to the ground, rows of books blurring past her as she let out a gasp of air in surprise. Just as Belle thought she was about to land on the ground, no doubt breaking one bone or another, the wind was taken out of her as she landed in the plaint waiting arms of Reagan Gold. Reagan had one arm underneath Belle's knees, and the other wrapped around her back, his hand just underneath her breast.

"Thank you." Was all Belle could manage to say as she got her breathing under control and Reagan simply nodded as he looked into her clear blue eyes before gently settling her down.

"It's no matter." He said uncomfortable, wincing as his leg adjusted to the change in weight.

"Oh Reagan, your leg!" Belle said with concern as she helped him to limp over to the bay window by the sitting area.

"It's really not that bad Belle, I swear."

"You're not just being brave for me are you?" She asked with a matronly raise of her brow.

"Honestly, it just needs the rest."

"Thank you for saving me." Belle said before leaning over to kiss Reagan's cheek.

"Well you wouldn't have needed saving if you weren't so clumsy."

"Hey!" Belle said defensively as she playfully swatted at her boyfriend.

"I'm not clumsy, I'm just... gracefully challenged."

"Oh really?"

"But it's okay, because I'll always have you here to save me, or at the very least make fun of me for it."

"You got that right." Reagan said with a smile before he and Belle sat down at the window seat so that he could rest his leg.

Upon their arrival to the corner, brightly lit by the mid-afternoon sun Belle leaned up to capture Reagan's lips. Caught off guard by her fierce and sudden demonstration of affection he fell back slightly, and allowed Belle's body to topple them over until they were lying on the window seat. His hands went to her hair as they lay side by side and kissed one another. Belle might have thought she was dreaming; kissing Reagan Gold while surrounded by books. It was definitely the ideal romantic location in her opinion.

They parted on the breath, both sitting up properly but remaining in one another's arms; Reagan wrapped his arm around Belle's shoulder and she wrapped hers around his middle, snuggling into his arm and against his chest.

"I'm beginning to think this was just a ploy to distract us from working." Reagan said, looking down upon the beauty in his arms. Belle did in fact look a little weary, perhaps her fall had given her enough excitement for one day.

"Perhaps it was." She replied, looking up at him with a positively devilishly grin on her feminine face. "Perhaps, I just wanted the excuse to kiss you senseless and rest in your arms."
"Well, my dear, it appears your plan has worked." He replied and Belle could no longer hold the wicked grin, and instead her sweet and innocent smile burst through, her eyes glistening up at him, she was happy in his arms. "I almost forgot!" Reagan exclaimed, lifting Belle from his arms slightly so that he could get up. Belle was sorry for the loss of his body against hers, but her intrigue soon out won her forlorn as she watched him limp towards a locked cabinet drawer at one of the built in bookcases. He brought out a small golden key from the chest pocket in his waistcoat and retrieved some papers from within the cabinet. Holding them carefully with his left hand he picked up his cane with his right and limped back towards Belle.

"What is it?" She asked curiously, her bum nearly rising off the cushioned seat as she leaned forward to catch a glimpse of the writing on the paper he had brought her. It must have been important or perhaps valuable because he had it kept safely in a plastic sleeve.

"This is the dedication to our book, and the cover, and the publishing rights." He said casually, pulling out the paper from the open slit at the top of the sleeve and indicating the multiple pages by easing his thumb over the top corner. Reagan handed the paper over to Belle, not a dent or a crease was present anywhere on the crisp white paper.

Belles eyes read over the words of Reagan's carefully phrased dedication;

For my son,

who taught me that you're never to old for fairy tales.

I'm sorry my boy.

And for my Belle,

who keeps me believing in them.

All my love.

Belle's eyes began to water and she tried to conceal the emotion growing within her heart. Love. Whether or not it was directed at her, she felt it. The unstoppable smile soon began to rise on her flushed cheeks.

"It's beautiful." She said as a few tears slipped past her defences.

"I couldn't do it without you Belle." He brought his hand to her cheek to stop the trail of tears. "Any of it." He added, indicating the much broader implications that sweet Belle had had on Reagan's bitter secluded life. "Flip to the back." And Belle did so. Coming to the third and final page to see the publishing rights, and that her name was included in the creation of the book.

"Reagan, you didn't have to--"

"But I wanted to. This is as much yours as it is mine." They smiled at one another before sharing a quick kiss. "I'd like to share everything with you Belle, not just my past, but my life, my things,
anything, and it could be yours."

"I think I'd settle for you."

"Really, even in this room full of books you'd pick the old beast." He teased her, as he flamboyantly
gestured around the room and then to himself, making Belle giggle.

"Yes, even in a room full of books, I'd pick you Mr. Gold."
Sorry this one is a few hours late; school is really kicking my ass this year.

I probably hate myself for doing this more than you guys will, but I've decided that the updates are going to go back to every three weeks. I'm having a hard time managing my stress, so if any of you know what that's like....

Love you all, don't hate me, happy reading! xx

Enjoy Girls night WITH Gold

"You have to jump into disaster with both feet." -- Chuck Palahniuk, Invisible Monsters

"This is going to be a disaster." Reagan said monotonously as he watched Belle run around the kitchen making sure everything was in order.

"Where's the extra wine? I know I already got the bottle out. Did I put it in the wine rack?" She spoke frantically as she looked around the kitchen for the extra bottle of wine she had brought up from Reagan's wine cellar.

"This is going to be a fucking disaster!" Reagan said louder this time and with a little more emphasis.

"I know I went downstairs to get another bottle, but then I went into the living room to put out the cheese and vegetables...so where did I put the wine!" Belle said absent mindedly to herself but Reagan continued his train of thought even if Belle wasn't really listening.

"It's going to end poorly, your friends are just going to make fun of me, and I'll probably yell at them, and then they'll hate me. Well more than they probably already do."

"I set the wine on the counter didn't I? Because I had to get out the serving plate for the cheese." Belle went over to the cupboard where the serving plate was kept and checked it to see if she had left the wine bottle in the cupboard by accident.

"It's not that I'm looking for your friends validation. I couldn't give two magic beans if Ms. Nolan or Lucas liked me. Ms. Swan on the other hand, I consider her approval somewhat of a challenge, and she would make an interesting alley in other arrangements." He added nonchalantly while Belle continued to retrace her steps.

"Then I went for the vegetables, which I already prepared last night and put in the fridge." Belle turned around towards the stainless steal fridge and opened the door. "Ah ha!" She exclaimed as she reached into the fridge for the extra bottle of wine. "I can't believe I left it in there." She said with a silly shake to her head before putting the extra bottle of wine in its rightful place in the wine rack.

"It's just that...Belle, I'm nervous." Reagan finally concluded, the both of them finished with their apparent, and very separate, conversations.
"Oh Reagan!" Belle said, truthfully only catching the tail end of his speech, but that's all she really needed to know in order to provide him with the comfort he needed. "There's nothing to worry about. I never do most of the talking at these things anyways. Ruby can practically hold a conversation with herself, Emma is here for the wine, and probably to see your house, and Mary Margaret is happy to spend time with friends and get a few moments away from baby Neal. You just have to be yourself. You're brilliant, and I know they'll like you, almost as much as I do." She said moving closer to him and adjusting his tie before holding onto the lapels of his suit jacket and sneaking in for a sultry kiss. But their embrace was interrupted by the ominous sound of Reagan's door bell. The two jumped back from one another, as if nervous to be seen together so intimately.

"This is going to be a disaster." Reagan said once more as the two made their way down the landing and to the front door.

Belle opened up the door with a smile on her face, and a grumpy Reagan Gold on her arm. At the doorstep stood, Emma Swan, Mary Margaret, and Ruby Lucas, in that order. Apparently the girls had found it wiser to all arrive at the same time, perhaps for moral support in their endeavour to feed their curiosity about the couple and the mystery man that was Mr. Gold.

"I brought wine!" Said Ruby, her characteristic red lips parting to reveal her large grin.

"I brought apple pie." Mary Margaret said with a curt nod to Belle.

"Don't look at me, I didn't bring anything." Emma said with a contorted face as everyone seemed to look at her for her contribution. Reagan let out a dry scoff at Emma's comment and suddenly all the women turned in his direction, as if noticing his presence for the first time.

"Please ladies, why don't you come in." Reagan said politely, as Belle took the wine and pie from her friends and headed towards the kitchen. Reagan offered his assistance, by taking Miss. Lucas and Ms. Nolan's coat's and hanging them up for them. Ms. Swan on the other hand shrugged when he tried to help her and took it off on her own before hanging it up with a determined crease to her brow. "Why don't you follow me into the sitting room. Belle's already put everything out." Reagan gestured to his right, the ladies left, as they followed him through the archway into the formal sitting area. The women sat down on the ornate Victorian sofa and Reagan sat across from them in the matching armchair, the coffee table filled with Belle's earlier preparations providing a safe barrier between them.

The company of four sat in silence, the occasional crossing of a leg, and rustle of fabric, or click of a cell phone providing the soundtrack for the evening. Until Belle arrived with the wine glasses and an open bottle of one of Reagan's favourite vintages.

"This is one of Reagan's favourites. Now it's way better then anything we have every pooled our money to purchase before ladies, so enjoy it while it lasts, because after this its the crap from the pharmacy Ruby brought." Belle said with a chuckle as she set the glasses and bottle onto the coffee table.

"Hey the wine I bought is not crap. Besides once we're already drunk off the good stuff we wont even notice what the pharmacy wine tastes like."

A round of small laughter traveled through the room, until each girl realized she was laughing and uncomfortably turned to Gold who was sitting crossed leg in his arm chair, his hand resting on his chin.

"I do hope you'll at least taste the wine before swallowing your glasses whole." Reagan said, not intending to sound rude, but of course he did.
"Relax Mr. Gold, I'll be sure to appreciate how much the bottle probably cost you as I'm chugging it down like the alcoholic I am." Emma said ruefully, always the first to defend her friends in any situation. But Gold wasn't about to back down, he could play Ms. Swans game, and he could easily win it.

"Addiction is no joke Ms. Swan. You shouldn't speak of it so...lightly." His accent adding a chilling emphasis to his statement.

Belle sent him a nervous look, wondering where in the hell this was going. He was not acting like himself, in fact he was acting like the cold monster everyone thought him to be. Belle knew something had pinched a nerve, things were getting too personal and Reagan was deflecting. But Belle couldn't really sit by his side, and touch him tenderly as she reminded him to let her in, be honest and open, she couldn't do that with her friends here. It was to personal, and it might embarrass Reagan.

"You're right." Emma said and Reagan quirked his lip before he realized she wasn't finished. "Do you have a little problem with alcohol Mr. Gold?" Emma teased, her confrontational tone setting Reagan's teeth on edge.

"No my father did actually. Alcoholic. Abandoned me when I was wee lad for money, drink, and women. Left me to my Aunt and her partner. So no, I, do not, have an alcohol problem Ms. Swan."

Everyone just stared at him. Not stares of judgment like he feared, but stares of unease. They had been here for ten minutes and he'd already fucked it up. He hadn't even told that to Belle yet, why on earth did he think now was an appropriate time. Fuck.

"I'm sorry. I kind of know what that's like. Parents can be shit, and their shit always seems to fuck us up somehow. You know?" Emma said, offering him an olive branch which Reagan accepted with his reply.

"It appears we have more in common then you expected Ms. Swan."

Belle let out a sigh of relief; they had managed to avoid disaster and a probable fight. With uneasy hands she began to pour the wine into the glasses and allowed each woman to pick up her glass once it was full before she poured one for Reagan and herself and went to sit on the arm of his chair as she handed him his glass. Reagan accepted with a smile before he returned his attention back to the women as Emma spoke.

"Call me Emma. If you're going to be dating one of my friends you've got to get over the last name thing, It's super old fashioned."

"Well, I'm an old fashioned man...Emma." He said her name with emphasis, allowing the m's to roll off his lips.

"When you say old fashioned." Ruby interrupted, "Does that mean you're not going to pop the cherry with Belle till the wedding night?" Ruby said with a knowing grin. She was well aware the relationship had been consummated, but it was worth bringing it up for the chance to see Mr. Gold blush.

"Ruby!" Belle practically squealed, apparently doing enough blushing for both herself and Reagan. It had taken her friend all of fifteen minutes before she was already on the topic of sex.

"I'm certainly not that old fashioned Miss...Ruby." Reagan said with a small cocky quirk to his lip as his eyes simultaneously quickly looked over the beauty nearly seated on his lap.
"I knew it! I told you all they fucked!" Ruby yelled in front of everyone, specifically turning to her friends seated beside her. "Our little Belle got in the pants of Mr. Gold!" Ruby exclaimed with a smile, causing Belle to go an even deeper shade of crimson, while the other girls began to smile, and perhaps laugh a little under their breath.

"Let's just say that I believe chivalry should not be dead, and talking about the intimate relations between a man and a woman, is not very proper." Reagan said, coming to the aid of the incredibly embarrassed Belle. When secretly Reagan was quite proud that he had managed to treat Belle well enough that she would sleep with him, let alone choose to be his girlfriend.

"We can talk about me and Graham if you all want? Because I would be happy to enlighten you on the kinds of sex we get into! Thanks for dumping him again Emma." Ruby said and their was a communal eye roll amongst the women and a small eyebrow raise from Reagan.

"So this is what a girls night is? You drink wine and gossip about the sex you've had recently?" Reagan questioned bluntly, clearly not understanding the appeal, and only adding to the mystery of the female species.

"That's Ruby's idea of a girls night." The girls, excluding Ruby, said in unison, causing Ruby to gasp in mock surprise before they all began laughing again.

It made Reagan feel very warm inside, realizing that Belle had such good friends to take care of her.

"Speaking of wine." Mary Margaret began, "After having a sip of this," She titled her wine glass, "I'm absolutely terrified to know how much it set you back Reagan...wait can I...is that weird...what do we call--" But Reagan interrupted Mary Margaret before she could make an even bigger a fool of herself.

"Reagan is fine I suppose." He shifted uncomfortably in his chair. "I don't usually get on a first name basis with many people. Anyways, to answer your inquiry, lets just say your teachers salary could never afford this particular vintage."

"If you're so well off Gold why do you still teach?" Emma interpreted. "Because from what I hear its not for the kids; unless you believe being a hard ass is the only way they can reach their full potential or some bullshit like that."

"I...I've never even thought about that." Reagan said looking at Emma thoughtfully, even though her comment was rather abrasive, but he expected that from her. "I got into teaching as a way to support...my son." Reagan said as he carefully set his wine glass onto the end table beside his chair.

There was a communal gasp as silence fell across the room. Mary Margaret was the only one old enough and living in Storybrooke long enough to ever remember Mr. Gold having a child. But the information, even now, seemed new to her. Mr. Gold had been alone for so long that everyone just assumed that he always had been.

"So I suppose I just kept going, even with the properties I own. I never used to be so bitter though. Firm and intimidating sure, but now I can just be--"

"An ass." Ruby concluded for him with a healthy mouthful of wine and Reagan scoffed in response. "You know I'm still really bitter about that C you gave me in grade twelve English. Granny wouldn't let me go out on dates for like two weeks when that report came through."

"Well maybe I wouldn't have given you a C if you had actually read any of the fucking books I assigned to you." Reagan spit back dramatically and he and Ruby were soon going at it, much to the
delight of the bystanders in the room.

"But those books were boring, and who has time to read when I'm working at Granny's."

"Or out with boys you mean."

"Excuse me?" Ruby threatened, getting slightly defensive.

"Ruby Lucas, you are not as clever as you think. Skipping the final test so you could make out with Peter under the bleachers. My classroom looks out onto the field, you gave the whole class a godamn show."

"We didn't!" Ruby gasped, horrified.

"Absolutely not, but Belle's told me about that famous absence in recent times." He said quickly with a sharp grin, knowing he had gotten one over on Ruby.

"You little shit!" Ruby stood up and moved to slap Reagan on the back of his head. The small ache in his neck was worth seeing Ruby loose her calm, but hearing Belle's sweet little laugh at the events was the real prize.

"Wait a minute? You were Ruby and Belle's teacher?" Emma questioned.

"He was." Belle replied.

"Doesn't that get weird. Do you guys ever talk about...wait a minute did you guys, back then I mean?" Emma questioned, her eyes widening with the prospect. Mary Margaret look a little nervous awaiting the answer, while Ruby didn't look worried at all; if something like that had happened to Belle in high school Ruby would have certainly been the first person to learn about it.

"No!" Belle replied quickly.

"Absolutely not." Reagan said over Belle's rejection.

Emma raised her brow as if to question their behaviour and ask again.

"Absolutely not Emma. I was not, and am still not like that. And Reagan would never sleep with a...current student." She added for a little bit of humour, it worked and the mood was lifted with a slight chuckle from the group and Reagan playfully tickling at Belle's sides for her cheeky remark.

"I suppose we haven't really talked about those days." Reagan said looking up at Belle, and wondering slightly why they hadn't.

"We're different people now, both of us. I wouldn't have been half as interesting company back then, at least I hope I'm interesting company now."

"Belle also wouldn't have been half as good of a shag back then, all innocent and inexperienced." Ruby blurted out, her loose lips always getting them into trouble.

"Ruby!" Mary Margaret said shocked as Belle buried her face in her hands, Ruby never failing to make an evening interesting, and embarrassing.

"I'm sorry. Guess I'm already getting a little tipsy. My self control is the first thing to go and then my mouth just gets going, and going, and going and, going--"

"Ruby we know!" The girls shouted to get their friends attention and cease her meaningless
rambling. It was rather amusing and Reagan found himself laughing at the situation.

"Well since this is your house, I suggest Gold gets the pie." Emma said, successfully making Reagan's laughing cease immediately.

But he did as Emma suggested, and he even did it with a thin smile on his face as he limped towards the kitchen. He brought the pie out, as well as the second bottle of wine for Ruby, on a tray stacked with plates and utensils. He let the women serve themselves a slice as he went to sit back in his chair.

"So you two are pretty serious then?" Mary Margaret asked quietly and delicately, wanting to learn more about the couple in an appropriate manner and without being too pushy.

"Um, I suppose so? I mean we're an exclusive couple." Belle said while Reagan wiped a piece of crumb from the corner of her mouth.

"When's the wedding?" Emma joked.

"Ohhh! we haven't had one in Storybrooke since Mary's." Ruby shot up like a lightning bolt. "This one would be particularly interesting. I bet the whole town would show up just because they wouldn't believe it."

"What's your dad think of all this Belle?" Emma questioned genuinely.

"At first it was a little rough, he threatened Reagan with a baseball bat; granted he did find us in a rather compromising position, and there was the whole thing about that deal. But um, now he's good with us." Reagan and Belle shared a small smile at the memories of their rather unusual courtship.

"So you've been talking about the future?" Mary Margaret asked with a knowing smile that Belle tried not to share with her.

"Are you guys planning on having any babies. Because I've always wanted to be auntie Ruby. And Belle would make a great mom! Oh wait are you too old for that?" Ruby asked indelicately.

"Would you do it again?" Mary Margaret asked.

"How come no one knew you had a son? Where is he?" Emma added to the rapid fire questions.

"Um...um..." Reagan struggled to come up with the answers. Belle could see that he was becoming very uncomfortable and she hated seeing him pressured like that.

"Alright that's enough!" She said standing up. "He's had enough. Reagan's not some zoo animal okay. I agreed to this girls night because Ruby made me. We're not some show. We're real people and we're happy with each other. Can't that be enough?"

"I'm sorry Belle." Ruby said, she always got carried away and more times than not Belle would pay the price.

"I really wanted tonight to go well, you were so insistent and excited. So I agreed to this. Even though I knew Reagan would hate it. Having you come to his home, see us. It's hard for him to be himself when he has an audience of people judging him. And it's not fair to him."

"Shit Belle, I'm a horrible friend aren't I?" Ruby said quietly, standing up to go stand by her friend who had confronted her. "It's just you've gotten this job, and this amazing guy who's totally fallen for you and definitely here to stay...and I feel like you've grown up so much and I'm still in the exact same place I was when we graduated high school."
"But Ruby you don't have to be! Granny's offered to let you manage and do the books. Take the opportunity, learn how to run the dinner on your own. Get serious with Graham! Stop acting like every guy is just for fun and eventually going to leave you. Graham is not like that. If you give him a try, maybe he'd want a chance too?"

"Belle." Ruby said before lunging forward to hug her friend. "You know me so well, and you've definitely always known what's best for me. This is why you got the A in grade twelve English and I got the C!"

"It's not the only reason." Reagan said with a chuckle that Ruby and Belle shared.

"Well, this has certainly been an interesting evening." Emma said as she stood up from the sofa. "But I think we've over stayed our welcome girls."

"You're right Emma. I'll call David and tell him we're ready to be picked up." Mary Margaret said as she went into the front foyer to phone her husband.

Emma, Ruby, Belle, and Reagan filled into the foyer moments later. Reagan helped the girls into their coats while Belle wrapped up the leftover pie for Mary Margaret and gave the remainder of the wine in a to-go mug for Ruby, who would no doubt be happy to drink it at a later time.

Belle gave each of her friends a hug, lingering a little longer with Ruby who needed the extra reassurance. Belle had always been the one to take care of them in the relationship. And Belle would help Ruby with the next step, it was time for her to grow up a little. When David's van rolled up to the drive way the girls piled into the car and Belle shut the front door behind her before sending a final wave.

Silence.

Finally.

"Okay, I will admit, It wasn't a complete disaster." Reagan said, moving to where Belle was standing, her back leaning against the door. He stepped closer his body pinning her against the door as he brought one hand to her waist and the other to her cheek.

"I'm so sorry Reagan."

"Hey, stop apologizing luv. It's out of your hands. Besides I even managed to have a laugh or two."

"Really?" She asked her blue eyes shining up at him.

"Really." He said before leaning down to capture her lips in a long, and overdue kiss.

"Come on." Belle said as she grabbed Reagan's hand and started moving towards the staircase.

"And where are we going?"

"You're going to fuck me senseless, and then were going to cuddle. I could use some cuddles." She said with a coy smile.

"Whatever you want my darling Belle."

He countered her smile as they disappeared up the dark staircase.
How Do You Feel About Lasagne?

Chapter Summary

I'm dumb and forgot to send this to my beta, all mistakes are my own

"The best lasagne has got lots of meat to it; substance. And lots of different cheeses. It needs layers in order to be interesting." -- Taylor

Reagan's hand tightened around Belle's slick waist as he lined them up, her body pinned at the corner of the cool tiles as the water came pouring over her boyfriends skin, his hair dripping over his face. The blunt head of his cock, bumped against her folds as he struggled to keep his footing on the slippery bath mat. Belle spread her legs, one staying firmly on the ground while she brought the other up against the shower door, providing the extra leverage Reagan would need to fuck her. One of her hands was firmly gripping the shower railing, on the opposite wall as her elevated foot, while the other was draped over Reagan's solid shoulder, her palm gripping at his warm and lean back. Reagan leaned forward, kissing Belle in the onslaught of rain as he gave his cock a few lauded pumps before thrusting against her slick folds. The moment Belle's tongue entered his mouth he surged forward, pushing his cock deep into Belle's contracting centre. Reagan's grip on her waist tightened as he pumped her hard and fast, their tempo already fierce and desperate. Neither of them would be able to last very long in this position, let alone with all the water and heat dripping over their bodies.

Belle whined as she pushed her body higher, allowing Reagan to slip into her deeper, his cock hitting places that sent jolts of pleasure infused pain throughout her body. She bit down on her lip, hoping to stifle the scream as the pounding pressure mounted. Reagan was already becoming weak in the knees as his hips snapped forward, thrusting into her rapidly.

Belle's hand clenched on Reagan's back, her nails breaking skin as his thrusts became the only thing she could feel. She cried as he worked her up, matching his thrusts with bites along her collarbone and neck. Her channel wrapped around him tightly, pumping him as her whole body tightened with orgasm and then went limp in the afterglow, forcing Reagan to support more of her weight. Belle was breathing a continuous sigh of relief as Reagan pumped in and out of her, chasing after his own orgasm. Belle's whole body felt the tingling sensations of his every thrust, keeping the pleasure of her orgasm alive with each snap of his hips.

Reagan began gritting his teeth, unable to hold off on the release any longer. With a weak mumble of 'Belle' he was cumming inside her, his hot seed flooding her cunt and filling her completely. He continued to thrust as he spilt himself, his cum dripping out from her cunt and mingling with the water as it trickled down Belle's leg.

They let out a simultaneous breath the moment Reagan's hips stopped shunting and they could both plant their feet on the shower floor, barely able to support their weight in their post sex state. Reagan placed a kiss to Belle's forehead before slipping from within her and grabbing the bottle of shampoo.

"Now let's see about, actually getting you clean." Reagan joked, and Belle happily turned around so that he could lather her hair with the lavender scented shampoo he had bought for his place, just so they could share more showers in the future.
After they were thoroughly clean, Belle was the first dressed and ready for work, she was usually always ready before Mr. Impeccable Suits Gold. So Belle went downstairs to prepare a simple breakfast of toast and coffee. Just as she was applying a thick layer of raspberry jam to Reagan’s extra toasted toast her phone began ringing. It was her father. He had been calling her a lot lately, and since she had ignored his phone call last night and sent him a text instead she figured she better answer him now. He was probably just worried after all.

"Hello Papa." Belle said, pressing her cell phone to her ear as she resumed spreading the jam onto Reagan’s toast.

"BlueBelle! I was worried about you. I know you texted me but I was expecting a phone call."

"I know Papa I’m sorry. I just stayed over at Reagan’s, we all had a few drinks so it was just safer this way."

"I’m pleased you made a safe decision Belle, but you know you don’t have to lie to your Papa. You’ve been spending a lot of nights at Reagan’s lately. I wouldn’t be offended if you just told me you liked it over there more.” Moe said sullen, his childish pouting evident even through the phone.

"Oh Papa, now you know that’s not true. Yes I’ve been spending a lot of time over at Reagan’s, but that doesn’t mean I don’t love spending time with you Papa."

"Perhaps, but It’s made me realize that I’m going to lose you one day Belle." Moe said, his big deep voice cracking slightly with the emotion he felt for his only child.

"Papa, you’ll never lose me. I’ll always be your little BlueBelle, you know that.” Belle said with a smile as she poured Reagan’s coffee into a stainless steal travel mug.

"Thank you Belle, I needed to here that."

"Of course Papa." Belle said with a small laugh as she moved to butter her own toast.

"Does this mean you’re coming home this weekend?” Moe asked hopefully.

"Well actually Reagan was planning on taking me to a book sale in Boston, but I suppose we could--” Belle said disappointed as her father cut her off; she was really excited about the vintage book sale but they could always go another time.

"Good because I want to make dinner for the two of you. Invite him over to our place for a change.” Moe said insistenty, not realising the folly in his suggestion until Belle brought it up.

"You mean, you want me to make dinner for the three of us, in our apartment.” Belle said and the line went silent with a knowing sigh of acquiescence from her father.

"Well yes. But I, I can help!” Moe added hoping it was an enticing enough adage to his offer.

"On one condition,” Belle started, "Reagan can stay the night at our place."

"He can what?” Her father replied dryly.

"Can Reagan stay the night at our apartment?"

"Fuck.” Moe muttered under his breath, this was not where he had expected the phone call to be heading. "Fine, alright, but he’s staying on the couch!” Moe shouted unnecessarily.

"Dad his leg."
"Right. Oh." Moe paused in thought, contemplating his options. Belle could practically hear the gears turning in her father's head until he finally came to a conclusion. "No funny business! Do you understand me?"

"Of course Papa." Belle said with a little laugh.

"Fine then, I suppose he can spend the night." Moe said begrudgingly.

"Thank you Papa. I'm sure we're both looking forward to spending the evening with you."

After saying their goodbyes Belle hung up and placed her phone on the counter before going to pour herself a cup of coffee. Belle heard the familiar tapping against the hardwood as Reagan, finally dressed and groomed, made his way down the stairs and into the kitchen.

"How do you feel about lasagne?" Belle asked nonchalantly, and it threw Reagan; it wasn't necessarily a normal topic of conversation, especially not for six forty five in the morning.

"You know very well that I'm not particularly fond of it." He said apprehensively as he reached around her for the pieces of toast she had so kindly prepared for him.

"Not Granny's frozen Lasagne--"

"You forgot over priced." He interrupted after taking an enticing bite of his toast, and Belle rolled her eyes at his comment.

"I mean my lasagne. I mean I know you've never had it but how would you feel about trying it?"

"I'm sure your lasagne is much more edible then the cardboard Granny produces." He said with an arrogant smirk.

"Good because we're having it tonight." She said confidently and definitively.

"We are?"

"Yes, six o'clock sharp."

"I see, so now you're inviting yourself over to my house are you?" Reagan said with a chuckle before standing behind Belle and wrapping his arms about her waist while simultaneously pulling her body closer to his. She laughed with him as he moved her hair from her neck and began to trail kisses along the newly exposed flesh.

"Actually, my father invited you to our apartment...for the night." Belle said, waiting for Reagan's reaction and when his kisses on her neck ceased she knew he had comprehended what she just said.

"What do you mean for the night?" He asked, turning her around in his arms so that they could face one another for the conversation.

"I mean, you're spending the night at our apartment, with me."

"Belle?" He questioned, not really believing, or perhaps understanding Belle's proposition.

"Well I mean only if you want to. If you don't want to of course you--"

"You're kidding right. You think I would pass up the opportunity to get to sleep in the arms of the most remarkable woman on this earth." He said with a handsome smile.
"Oh stop it." Belle said with a roll to her eyes while turning around to eat her toast in an effort to conceal her blush.

"So you, me, and your father?" Reagan asked in clarification.

"Yes."

"Under one roof?"

"You've got it."

"And we're still sharing...your bed."

"It was one of my conditions upon accepting my father's proposal."

"You negotiated! I'm impressed! Perhaps some of my wicked ways are rubbing off on your beautiful soul." He said teasingly, going in for one more kiss before it was time for them to leave for work.

"Only a little." Belle whispered before placing the final kiss to the tip of Reagan's crooked nose.

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After Reagan had dropped Belle off at her apartment she went straight upstairs to start preparing dinner. Reagan would be back in a little over two hours with dessert and an overnight bag so she had to prepare everything according to plan.

Much to Belle's surprise as she entered the apartment she noted the bag full of grocery's she had asked her father to pick up as well as the man himself, waiting in the kitchen.

"I said I would help you, so put me to work and I'll try not to burn anything." Moe said quickly as he read the funny expression on Belle's face. Truthfully, Belle hadn't expected Moe to even do the grocery shopping she had given him in order to make tonight's meal possible; Belle expected that she would have to take a walk to the store as well as prepare the meal on her own, and on top of all that clean the house for Reagan's visit, and finally get dressed herself. But there stood her Papa, clean shaven and ready to work. Belle was absolutely flabbergasted.

"Alright. You can start by washing the tomatoes please, I'm just going to change into something a little more kitchen appropriate." Belle said as she walked across the living space, before retreating into her bedroom.

She returned moments later in a grey t-shirt and black yoga pants to find that her father had gotten out all the ingredients and cook wear that she would need for the lasagne.

"You know this was your mother's recipe, we used to make it together, back in the good days. I guess it's kinda like riding a bike." Moe offered an explanation as he began opening a tin of sauce.

It turned out putting the lasagne together with two people took infinitely shorter, and was even a little more fun. Belle's father had never been this pleasant when he was drinking. It often made Belle regret that her mother's last days were spent with the man consumed by alcohol, rather than her sweet hearted Papa. But after her mother's death that man had barely existed at all.

By five o'clock the lasagne was in the oven and would be ready shortly after Reagan arrived.

"Why don't you go take a rest and get ready BlueBelle. I'll watch it and call you if it needs anything."
"Thank you Papa." Belle said as she took off her apron and leaned up to kiss her Papa's cheek.

Belle flopped down on her bed and took a minute to collect her thoughts. Her room was already clean and so she didn't have to worry about that. But she took the time to change her bed sheets and found some extra pillows in the hall closet for Reagan. She decided on a casual navy dress with a sweetheart neckline; this certainly wasn't a fancy dinner, and even though she expected Reagan to arrive in a suit she didn't feel the need to dress up.

Belle decided to clean the bathroom before touching up her make-up and checking on the lasagne. She settled down on the sofa with her latest book while her father watched television, waiting for the arrival of their guest.

Reagan arrived at six o'clock precisely, knocking on the flat door, even though he had seen Belle waving at him from the upper level window the moment she saw his headlights pull up to the curb.

"Good evening." Reagan greeted as Belle opened up the door. She surprised him with a quick kiss before taking his jacket and suit jacket; which she was pleased to see he hadn't changed just for the occasion of dinner with her father. Reagan brought with him lemon tarts from Granny's. He decided to forgot the bottle of wine, thinking of Belle's father and instead brought some ice tea for Belle. Belle lead Reagan straight to her bedroom so he could leave his bag there and also so that she could kiss him properly, without her father watching.

Belle pushed Reagan back against the door the moment he had it closed behind them. Her lips were on him immediately and her tongue quickly sought entrance inside his mouth. Reagan gasped, letting Belle in, as well as dropping his bag onto the floor so that his hands could come up to her waist.

"Is everything okay in there?" Moe yelled from outside the door, hearing Reagan's back dropping and assuming something might have been going on. "I heard a noise are you alright?"

Belle let out a grunt of frustration as her lips parted from Reagan's, an utter dazed look plastered across his face. "Of course Papa. It was just Reagan's bag." Belle said on a sigh as she leaned back onto her flat feet and backed away from Reagan. "Sorry about that, I may have gotten a little over excited." Belle said with a small blush.

"Please, don't be sorry." Reagan said, his voice slightly higher then usual. They both adjusted their hair before stepping out of Belle's room and bringing the dessert and tea to the kitchen.

"Papa helped me make the lasagne, so if it's not up to your standards we can blame him." Belle said jokingly as she opened a cupboard to grab some cups and set the table. Reagan joined along with her, laying out the cutlery she handed him. Reagan, and even Belle, were both looking for things to do in order to avoid joining Moe in the living room while they waited for the lasagne. But after refilling the vase of water on the kitchen table three times, Belle was really running out of excuses. So the pair walked arm in arm towards the living room and sat beside one another on the sofa, while Moe lay back in a lazy boy.

"So Reagan, how's work?" Moe asked, not even looking away from the television.

"Report cards are due soon so that can always be a busy time. And you, how's the flower business."

"I'll make next months rent if that's what you're worried about Gold."

"Papa--" Belle threatened.

"That's not what I was worried about Moe. Besides if Belle ever ran into any money trouble I would happily provide her with some assistance."
"You know I would never ask that of you Reagan." Belle said looking at her boyfriend.

"I know darling." He said as he gently patted his hand over the pair of their joint hands resting on his knee.

Moe smiled uncomfortably, not knowing what to say to the pair. At least they appeared happy. He couldn't fathom why his little girl was so pleased, especially with a monster like Gold. But Moe would bite his tongue until it bled if it meant his little Belle's happiness.

Things just got even more uncomfortable when Belle left to get the lasagne out of the oven and compile the final touches while the dish cooled. Moe sat there staring at Reagan, and Reagan sat their staring at Moe in turn.

"Alright boys it's ready." Belle said from the kitchen as she set down the lasagne pan and took her seat at the kitchen table. Moe and Reagan got up to join her at the table for what was hopefully a quiet and peaceful meal.

They spent the first part of their meal talking about the book Reagan had been writing, and why he was always keeping Belle so busy on Sunday's. As sour as Moe was that he got to see his daughter less, he was happy that she was being taken care of and making a little extra money. After that topic had passed, Moe was particularly interested in talking about the evening Reagan had spent with all of Belle's friends. Reluctant at first, Reagan was happy to indulge Moe's curiosity, even if it was at his own personal expense. Fortunately, Belle took up the remainder of the conversation discussing the plot twist in her latest book.

After Moe's second serving of lasagne Belle served up the lemon tarts, savouring the secret tangy treat her and her boyfriend were so fond of. After that her father retreated to the living room while Reagan helped Belle with the dishes.

"I'll be right back, I've just got to go to the bathroom." Belle said to Reagan as he handed her the last dish to dry. She gestured for him to go and sit with her father, hoping that he might say something nice to her father while she went off to the bathroom.

Reagan reluctantly moved to the living room and sat on the side of the sofa next to Moe sitting in the lazy boy. For a moment they were silent until Moe looked around the room, muted the television and sent a very serious look to Reagan that he was not expecting from the gentle walrus.

"Now you listen here Mr. Gold. You might have more money and more power then me, but I'm the man of this house and Belle's father. Do you understand?" Moe said sternly.

"Of course." Reagan complied, a little unsure as to why he was being confronted.

"Now there better be no funny business tonight! Belle might have convinced me to let you stay over with her, but that sure as fuck doesn't mean you can get away with whatever you want." Reagan looked at Moe, quite speechless. "Keep it in your fucking pants Gold." Moe stated plainly so as their was no confusion with Moe's expectations about Reagan staying in his home.

"Of course Moe. I wouldn't dream of it." Reagan said uncomfortably. He sat still until Belle returned from the bathroom and came to sit with him. They watched wheel of fortune like usual before Belle suggested she and Reagan go for a walk. They needed to get out of there for a while.

Especially if Reagan Gold was going to survive the night.
Breaking The Rules

Chapter Notes

As some of you know I'm doing Nanowrimo this month, and school has been piling up on me. As a result this story is going to go on a brief hiatus (the month of November) until my life gets a little less hectic and I regain my writing time. I hope you can understand. Happy Reading! xx

"Know the rules well, so you can break them effectively." -- Dalai Lama

They ended up walking to Granny's. Even though it wouldn't be open this late, Belle suspected that after a quick text to Ruby she would no doubt let them in; especially once Ruby found out that Belle would be bringing Mr. Gold with her. Ruby would take any chance she could get to learn more about the unique couple.

The night air was crisp, a strong breeze blowing in from the harbour as Belle's heels clicked in compliment to the tapping of Reagan's cane, the buzzing street lamps lighting their way on the damp pavement. Belle's arm was within Reagan's as they leisurely enjoyed the peace and quiet of one another's company as they walked towards their destination.

"Thank you Belle, I really needed some fresh air." Reagan said gratefully as they rounded onto Mainstreet and the Granny's Diner sign was in sight.

"It's not completely awful is it?" Belle asked, slightly hoping that getting along with her father wasn't too agonizing for Reagan. After all, if she hoped to have a future with Reagan, and she did, her father would have to be a part of their life together. Belle knew it was too much to ask the men in her life to get along for her best interest, but she at least hoped they could pretend, and possibly one day they might forget they were ever pretending. Now that was wishful thinking!

"I'm sure I can survive one night. Even in your tiny apartment." He scoffed, adding humour to his discomfort so as not to worry Belle too much. He knew how much this meant to her.

Thankfully, Ruby was waiting for them in her plaid red boxer shorts and a red tank top, she had clearly planned a comfortable night in for herself no doubt painting her toenails and doing a facial. Ruby smiled, a grin like a wolf, as she watched the couple climb up the steps and walk past her into the diner.

"Thank you Miss Lucas." Reagan said as she held the door open for them and closed it behind them.

Reagan hung Belle's coat up before doing the same with his own. Meanwhile Belle scooted into their favourite booth with a smile on her face.

"Tea?" Ruby asked as she walked behind the counter and pulled out three teacups.

"Absolutely!" Belle said eagerly. "Ruby, you know you don't actually have to serve us though." Belle added with a second thought, not wanting her friend to think she expected to be waited on.
"It's no problem Belle, I'm banking on Mr. rich boyfriend over here to leave me a generous tip."
Ruby said with a playful wink in Reagan's direction. Reagan hid a smile at that, knowing full well
that he would in fact be leaving Ruby a little bonus for sneaking them into the diner.

"I noticed that you're preparing three cups Miss Lucas." Reagan began as he walked towards the
counter to better face Ruby. "I must warrant you that your tip will be more substantial if you were to
leave Miss French and myself alone."

"Don't you worry pop's I don't plan on staying to watch your secret little make-out session, that's
way to high school for me."

Reagan snickered at that, recalling a time he had caught Miss Lucas tonguing a fellow student next to
his office. "I'm well aware." He admitted, causing a nervous blush to creep over Ruby's cheeks. Did
Mr. Gold, the fucking Mr. Gold, just make Ruby blush?

Reagan continued his walk towards the booth before sitting down across from Belle and tucking his
cane in beside him. When the tea was ready, Ruby brought over their cups with the same fake smile
she used when waitressing throughout the day, the absurdity of it almost made Belle want to laugh.

"Two cups of tea. I'll just be on my way now." Ruby said inconspicuously, even though Belle knew
she would probably take up a position hiding around the corner and hoping to hear bits of their
conversation, or lack thereof if Ruby had things her way.

Belle blew gently on the warm cup of tea in her hands before engaging Reagan into a discussion
about Oedipus Tyrannous, something that Belle knew would bore Ruby to sleep and force her to
return upstairs. And sure enough moments later they heard footsteps on the stairs and shared a little
chuckle together before Belle moved into Reagan's side of the booth, fully set on following Ruby's
advice and using the next thirty minutes to make-out with her boyfriend like a couple of randy
teenagers.

"You know, it's hard not to kiss you properly when my dad's around." Belle admitted as she sent one
hand up to rub teasingly at the nape of Reagan's neck while the other braced itself on his thigh.

"You've kissed me in front of your father before." Reagan countered, ready to play in her game of
seduction.

But her next moved surprised him as she stood on her knees, the cushion off the booth sinking with
her weight as she lifted her leg and straddled Reagan's hips, her back braced between the table, and
her breasts plastered to his chest, she was close, so close he could feel her breath against his skin.
God she wasn't playing fair.

"I can kiss you like this." Belle said before peppering a kiss to Reagan's forehead, his cheeks, and his
eyelids before placing a final teasing kiss to the corner of his mouth as she spoke, "But I can't kiss
you like this," And her lips were on his, her tongue immediately sweeping across the seam of his lips
in search of entry.

Reagan groaned as he easily let her in, his hands tracing over her back as she took ownership of the
kiss. They made out for ages, feeling skin against skin, lips and tongue, and breath in time with
breath. Together, in each other's arms, yet they still seemed afraid to admit it; the love that was
burning in both of their chests. Life had been cruel to both of them when it came to love.

"We should get going." Belle said regretfully as she nudged Reagan's nose with her own. "My
Papa's probably worried why we've been gone so long."
"You're probably right." Reagan said as Belle hopped off his lap and he stretched out his stiff leg before she helped him out of the booth.

"Ruby, we're leaving." Belle said audibly, knowing that her friend had snuck back down the stairs to watch the show.

"You guy's were sucking face for like ten minutes straight, you realize that." Ruby said as she emerged from around the corner, leaning in the doorway of the kitchen that lead to the serving counter. "You owe me Belle, you too Gold! Seriously I'm expecting a twenty for my next tip."

"I wouldn't expect anything less." Reagan said as he offered Belle's coat to her before putting on his own.

"Goodnight Rubes."

"Night Belles." Ruby countered as she watched her best friend and the most infamous man in Storybrooke walk out of the diner arm in arm and into the cover of the night.

By the time they got back to Belle's apartment it was late enough that they could retreat to spend the rest of the evening in her bedroom while Moe watched television in the living room. Reagan was first in the bathroom, wanting to brush his teeth and take care of his personal hygiene before getting into his night clothes; Reagan really didn't want to risk the chance of Moe seeing him like that, even if his silk pyjamas were nicer then any of the regular everyday clothes Moe owned. Reagan returned to the bedroom to find Belle not yet changed. Instead she left him in her room, alone, so that she could take her turn in the bathroom.

Reagan looked around a little, mostly reading the titles of all the books in her collection, and looking at the few photographs of her and Ruby. He noticed one of a very young Belle, about nine or ten with a smiling woman with auburn curls and warm brown eyes; Belle's mother. He saw the resemblance immediately. He nearly dropped the picture frame when Belle opened her bedroom door to join him once again.

"Snooping are we?" She said jokingly but Reagan smiled nervously nonetheless.

"I was just looking-- You look very much like her, your mother." Reagan stumbled through the sentence as he watched the sad smile roll over Belle's face.

"My dad tells me that all the time. It's just different, hearing it now, from someone who's never met her."

"The ones we've lost never stop loving us Belle." He said tenderly and it made Belle's heart flutter, knowing that Reagan too had lost people, but refused to believe that they would still love him. God that man was a mystery.

After letting her thoughts pass through her head Belle moved towards her closet to pull out a satin nightgown. It was dusty pink and had a lace trim along the top. Belle began undressing in front of Reagan, and god that was not playing fair. How was he supposed to 'keep it in his pants' when Belle was so willingly getting out of hers! Reagan gulped as he watched her unhook her bra, letting her breasts fall free as his eyes focused on her puckered nipples. Belle pulled the fabric over her head, covering her breasts much too quickly and letting the soft material fall over her hips. She then lifted the edges slightly, her hands hooking into the band of her panties, she waited, as if decided whether or not to remove them, Reagan simply nodded his head like a fool as he watched her tease him. Belle pulled the panties over her hips and stepped out of them with a smile. She tossed the panties into her laundry hamper and then stood before Reagan, biting her lip and waiting for his approval over her
new garment of clothing.

"Ruby got it for me a few days ago. I thought it might be to short--"

"No it's, oh god." Reagan said moving forward to grab Belle and bring her closer to him. He kissed along her neck and collar bone, peppering her in soft touches and caresses. He was already half hard just from seeing her change into the little nightgown. God he really wanted to fuck her while she wore it. Reagan picked Belle up, her legs wrapping around his waist as they kissed. He successfully laid her down on the bed while avoiding any kind of injury to his leg as he made his way over top of her. "Belle, we can't do this with your father here."

"I know." She whispered as his hand trailed over her covered breast, the fabric so soft as he caressed her body. "Don't stop." She begged as Reagan's hand had stilled over her abdomen while his teeth worked angry red marks into the skin at her neck.

"Try and stop me." He whispered before moving down her body and taking her satin covered breast within his mouth. Belle wreathed at his touch, his hand bunching up the satin night gown, exposing her creamy sex. His hand rubbed over her mound, gently cupping her as he worked her nipple. He released her breasts, leaving a wet stain on the satin, heightening Belle's pleasure as the cold air came into contact with the damp fabric on her nipple. Frustrated with the gown, Reagan used his teeth to pull the straps off one of Belle's shoulders until he could successfully get her breasts in his mouth, cool soft skin, in contact with his warm and wet tongue. Belle cried out at the achievement, and began rocking her hips against Reagan's hand. "Fuck yourself darling." He whispered against her chest, briefly looking up at her with deep brown eyes, filled with lust. Belle whined at the dirty talk, shunting her hips against his unmoving hand. The action awarded her a little help from Reagan, who centered the heal of his palm against her clit. Belle rocked back and forth against him, quickly thrusting her body as he bit down on her breasts. Belle brought one hand up to cover her mouth, knowing she would scream from the frustration alone if she couldn't get herself to cum. Her other hand was clamped down on the bed sheets, providing leverage as well as an anchoring point since she was dizzy on lust.

Reagan's middle finger remained at her opening, barley teasing the ring of muscles, dipping into the wetness, and spreading it about her cunt. Belle continued to thrust, hoping that his finger would slip inside her.

"Please, Reagan, please." She whispered, nearly in tears with frustration.

"Work for it." He growled, palming himself through his pants so as to alleviate some of the pressure there.

Belle licked her lips before lying down flat on the mattress in order to give herself a rest. It didn't help that Reagan was still teasing her breasts and applying pressure to her clit. But when he started to rub small circles over Belle's clit with the palm of his hand the pressure was mounting within her body again and she needed to cum. Belle raised her hips again, countering his movements as she thrust up and down. Taking pity on her, Reagan allowed his middle finger to slip inside her soaked cunt, taking him in all the way. Belle almost cried in satisfaction as she fucked herself on his finger.

"Good girl." Regan cooed into her ear as Belle stared back at him, working for her orgasm. Reagan added a second finger and Belle increased her pace, biting down on her fingers so that she wouldn't squeal. Reagan began pumping himself through his trousers as he watched Belle's face, contorted in pleasure and denial. "Come on Belle." Reagan grunted, a third finger easily slipping into her weeping pussy. Belle let out a string of soft cries as she became dizzy with pleasure. The orgasm having built up for so long that it was so much more intense when she began to topple over the edge. Just as she was about to scream out Reagan concealed her moans with a kiss, her pussy clamping
down around his fingers. Before Reagan knew it, he was cumming in his pants from watching Belle earn her pleasure.

She flopped down on the mattress, out of breath but greatly satisfied. "Holy fuck." Belle said when she finally opened her eyes and was able to see clearly again. "I'm definitely going to wear that night dress again." She said hoarsely and made Reagan smile that crooked little grin. "Did you?" She asked, inquiring into Reagan's current state.

"Oh I did." He said, not even able to fathom how a display like that would not have him cumming in an instant.

"Good." Belle said hazily as she moved to snuggle up against him.

"Good." He agreed, and their breathing settled into a rhythm as they fell asleep in one another's arms.

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Reagan awoke the next morning with Belle pressed close to his body. Her leg was draped over his waist, her feet entwined with his own as she ironically provided the big spoon. Reagan shifted in the bed, causing Belle to grunt cutely as she flopped over in the bed sheets to gain a new comfortable position without her bed mate. Reagan moved to the edge of the bed and stretched out his bad leg, rubbing the muscles of his bare thigh to gain feeling in the numb limb. He brought his hand to his face, brushing the hair that had fallen in his eyes during the night and pinched the bridge of his nose as he cleared his head and his eyes adjusted to the morning light shining through the window.

He stood, reaching out for his cane that was propped on the small night side table covered in a pile of books. He dressed in the corner of her room, regretting that he hadn't hung his suit up in her closet the night before, it had a few creases that made him wince in discomfort. His suit was like his armour, and he was about to go meet with Moe French with less then ideal defences.

Reagan could hear Moe mucking about in the kitchen as some pots and pans were gently clanking about. Reagan stopped off in the bathroom to address his hair, it was slightly messy and he knew that would turn Belle on. So he ruffled it about before washing his hands, face, and brushing his teeth. On his way out of the bathroom he saw Moe's back, still dressed in his pyjamas as he was trying to figure out the kettle.

"I didn't think you'd be up this early." Reagan said as he reached into a cupboard and pulled out the tea bags for Moe.

"Well, I couldn't really sleep last night; knowing you were in her bed and I practically invited you to do so."

"Listen Moe..." Reagan panicked slightly.

"I was actually just attempting to make breakfast for the both of you, but then I remembered that I can't cook.

"Tea will be fine Moe." Reagan said and Moe took the box of tea bags from his hand and set to preparing them tea.

Reagan sat down uncomfortably at the small kitchen table; he couldn't wait to get out of here. He could leave early in the morning, coming up with an excuse about grading papers. Besides he would be seeing Belle tomorrow anyways for their deal o help him with his book.

"You know Gold, I'm surprised by you." Moe said as he turned around to face the wealthier man.
"What's that Moe?"

"I'm surprised you didn't keep your word." He said with a dark stare, his bushy eyebrows furrowing as he glared at Reagan. Reagan's Adams apple bobbed as he swallowed hard. Moe's threats were usually empty, induced by a drunken stupor. But sober, sober Moe French could be absolutely terrifying. "I don't appreciate it when my wishes aren't kept." He leant his palms against the kitchen table as he bridged the gap towards himself and Gold. "Just because you think you're more powerful here, you're not. She's my little girl. And I have all the power." He emphasised his point by thrusting his bulbous finger at Reagan's chest.

"I understand Moe, and I don't intend to hurt her, or take her from those she loves." Reagan paused before boldly continuing, "But I do intend to fill her life with pleasure, in any way that I can. Her happiness is all that I seek."

"You're sick, you know that Gold!" Moe sputtered in anger.

"Hey what's going on here?" Belle asked as she emerged from her bedroom, still dressed in her nightgown.

"What the hell is that Belle?"

"Ruby got it for me." She said looking down at her nightgown before reaching to the back of her bedroom door for her yellow bathrobe and wrapping it around her body.

"Belle, I, I better be going." Reagan said as he stood up from his seat at the kitchen table and walked towards her.

"But it's so early." She said as she placed her hands on his chest to still him from entering her room and taking his overnight bag.

"I'll see you tomorrow Belle. I had a wonderful time, thank you for the hospitality." He said in Moe's direction before sneaking into Belle's room to grab his bag.

Reagan walked across the apartment quickly, stopping to give Belle a kiss on the cheek before he quickly fled the apartment to the safety of his Cadillac.

"What did you do Papa?" Belle pleaded towards the man who was half sulking, half satisfied that Reagan had fled.

"I suppose I could ask you the same question. No funny business Belle!"

"Shit." She said under her breath as a rush of embarrassment coursed through her body. "Papa. I'm a grown woman, and, and...I'm in love." She said brightly, the relief and confidence waving over her body as she sounded her feelings out loud for the first time.

"In love? Belle, really?"

"I'm in love with Reagan Gold." She smiled, pleased she could admit it out loud. Whereas Moe deflated.

"Well then, I suppose I'm happy for you BlueBelle." Moe said through gritted teeth, there was no way escaping it anymore.

Reagan Gold was one day going to become a part of their family.
With that beautiful ending to OUAT I thought it was a perfect time to return to this fic and post a chapter. I’m not ready to return to an update schedule yet, but I have started writing this fic again. I’m going on vacation for three weeks in June and I’m going to the Paris con, can’t believe I’m going to meet Bobby and Emilie!!! Thanks for the patience, hope you're still enjoying this story!

Happy Reading Everybody! xx

“Man may have discovered fire, but women discovered how to play with it.”
— Candace Bushnell, Sex and the City

Ever since Reagan’s overnight visit Moe had been adjusting to the idea of his daughter and her boyfriend. He certainly would never be happy with her choice, but he loved his BlueBelle and he could definitely make an effort for her. After all he owed her; Belle had taken care of his drunk ass many times. And even now she was working in order to pay off his debt. He owed everything to her, and it was time he started returning the favour. He’d bitten his tongue when she left Sunday morning to help Gold with that silly book, and he’d bitten his tongue again when Gold came to pick her up for work on Monday. From Tuesday on, surprisingly, Moe felt friendly enough to extend a wave from his place on the second floor window, which Reagan would return with a curt nod. Overall, things were running reasonably smooth between the French and Gold households.

Belle stood up from the stool at the circulation desk, positioned in front of the desktop computer. She took the opportunity to stretch out her legs and her back, twisting at the waist to loosen her tight muscles. She had been sitting at the desk updating her catalogue all day; schools got busy in November and students were taking out books to finish up on all their assignments. Even Belle was stressed with the influx of work, she could only imagine the pressure Reagan was putting himself under.

They had both agreed to stay late today in order to catch up on their workload. And thus, Belle was sitting in the library at half past four cataloguing books. Belle’s idle mind began to wander towards Reagan, as it so often found itself doing as of late. Reagan was probably sitting in his classroom right now, grading papers with a stern look and a bright red pen. Belle bit her bottom lip as she contemplated her next decision.

Her heels clicked on the ceramic tile as she walked down the hallway towards Reagan's classroom. He still occupied the same room that he taught in when she was a student. The door was open a sliver and so Belle pushed it open quietly, attempting not to disturb him, even though that was exactly what she was doing. Reagan’s head shot towards the door, startled to see someone at the school so late, the teachers in Storybrooke didn’t tend to stick around after hours. His hair fell in front of his eyes at the sudden movement and it sent a shiver down Belle’s spine; she had made the right decision.
Reagan smiled up at her as soon as he recognized her smiling face. "Belle." His face brightened immediately, pleasantly surprised by the identity of his visitor.

"Mr. Gold." She said as she leant her back against his door, until it was closed behind her. He eyed her curiously as she bit her bottom lip shyly and then timidly walked towards the desks. He watched her from his desk - at the back left corner across from the door - as she went to the front row, the desk on the right, farthest from the door, facing the blackboard: her desk. Belle sat down in the desk, brushing her skirt down as she sat in her heels. Belle let out a sigh as a smile formed across her face again.

"May I help you Miss. French?" He asked in good humour.

"I've come to collect something from you." She said confidently as she watched Reagan rise from his chair, pick up his cane, and began walking towards the front of the classroom.

"From me? And what could I possibly have that you need?" He said with a cocky raise to his brow as he neared her desk, looking down upon her like he often had before. The small and fierce brunette.

"You owe me two orgasms Mr. Gold." She said bluntly and it caught Reagan off guard, his Adam's apple bobbing as he tried to swallow the unexpected lump in his throat.

"I beg your pardon?" He choked out.

"You owe me two orgasms, and I'm here to collect." She added seductively, very determined to get what she wanted out of this visit.

"Belle? Here? Right now?" He stuttered, barely believing that she was suggesting something as risky as having sex on school grounds, in his classroom no less.

"I've always had a bit of a student teacher fantasy you know." She said with a raise of her brow as she stood from her chair to look directly into his dark brown eyes. Belle moved around the front of her desk and sat down on the edge, looking up at Reagan under her thick lashes, her eyes blue and mischievous with lust. She brought her hands up to the lapels of his jacket and leant in close. "I've..." She paused suddenly feeling a little self conscious. "I've fantasized about you taking me over my desk."

And Reagan's heart nearly stopped as he felt his cock twitch earnestly. "Now? Or...or before?" He asked curiously, wondering if she'd fantasized about this since high school or if it was just recently. He stared down at her lips in anticipation.

"Both." She offered truthfully and Reagan bent down in a rush to capture her lips in a hungry kiss, his cane clattering to the floor. Belle arched her body into his as he pushed her against the desk, grabbing the back of her thighs and lifting her onto the small desk completely. Belle spread her legs immediately, giving Reagan space to nestle between her legs and bringing their bodies as close together as possible. He was already hard and rutting against her centre, thrusting against the warmth of her core. He could only imagine how wet she was; she was probably imagining the encounter while she sat in her library cataloguing books.

"Would you like my fingers or my tongue?" Reagan huffed, destined to please Belle perfectly. If they were going to break all the rules and fuck at school, he might as well make it something she won't be able to forget.

"Your mouth!" Belle said as she smiled against his lips.
Reagan kissed along her neck, working his way down as he opened the buttons of her blouse, eager to expose her breasts and kiss along the flesh. He briefly took her covered nipple into his mouth and nibbled onto her hardening peak. But his laving tongue was gone as soon as it arrived, causing Belle to whine in frustration as he moved towards her stomach. His tongue darted out, licking the tender skin of her stomach as he gently suckled the skin into his mouth. He hummed in pleasure, sending the vibrations straight to Belle’s excited pussy.

He paused at her navel, taking extra time to dip into the little hole, Belle squirmed and giggled at the unexpected invasion. "Ticklish." She offered in explanation and Reagan made a mental note of the information. He placed a kiss to her stomach before lifting up her skirt and then roughly pulling her black lace panties off, causing Belle to teeter on the small desk as he pulled the small fabric from her hips. He obscenely smelt the pair of panties before pocketing them into his suit jacket and kneeling to his feet before her desk.

It was going to kill his leg later, and he knew it, but the prospect of ravishing her on the very desk that she used to sit at as a student left his mind a little distracted. He undid his belt and unzipped his trousers, his cock was aching and he needed to provide himself with some space before he went insane with want.

Belle scooted forwards towards the edge of the desk as Reagan hooked his arms around her thighs. He looked up at her before settling his gaze on her pussy. He could see her arousal already building up at her opening.

"Why Miss. French, it appears as if your pussy is going to leak all over my table.” He said sinfully, enjoying the small blush that crept over Belle’s face. He was determined to see that colour on her pussy by the time he was making her cum.

"Oh god.” Belle said lightly in embarrassment, but she couldn’t deny how much this game turned her on.

Reagan reached forward and spread apart her lips, watching the glistening liquid as it trickled down her soft skin, the cool air tingling her pussy in its wake.

“Oh god, please Reagan!” She began begging, trying to stop the pumping in her channel, at this rate she might be able to make herself cum on desire alone.

“Not yet sweetheart, I want to see you drip.” He said obscenely as he blew cold air against Belle’s spread lips, her juice now trickling down her cheeks and heading for her ass. Belle squirmed in mortification, she could feel it dripping down her body and he hadn’t even done anything to her yet! “Play with your breasts sweetheart.” He instructed, as his fingers began to move so slightly against her lips, the sensation maddening.

“No I’m too close!” Belle rejected.

“Then cum.” Reagan offered with a wicked smile, knowing full well she would need more than this alone.

“No Gods! Please I need something! Anything!”

“Keep begging Miss French.”

“Please Mr. Gold. You're such a good teacher! Will you make me cum? Please?”

“Touch your breasts.” He said again and this time Belle did it. She brought her hands to her breasts, her bra still damp where he had sucked on her nipple. She remembered the sensation as she needed
her flesh, her nipples tingling and sending jolts of electricity throughout her entire body. Belle began to cry out in frustration, she was so goddamn close. She didn’t think she had ever wanted something so badly in her life. “Good girl.” Reagan said as he watched her arousal finally drip onto the table. It was incredibly erotic, to see her open and dripping all over the place just out of desire for him. “Oh my Miss. French, it appears as if you’ve leaked all over my school table. What a naughty girl you are. How do you think you should be punished?” He asked, knowing if he didn’t taste her soon he might feel as anguished as Belle looked.

“Make me cum until I’ve learnt my lesson.”

“With pleasure.” He snarled before dragging his tongue from her bum up to her pussy, eating her juices as he went. He dipped his tongue into her opening, the muscles already pumping and spasming before assaulting her clit. Belle cried out, the orgasm already racing through her body as he sucked on her clit, spitting it out to flick rapidly at the swollen bud before biting down on it and sucking again.

Belle was practically screaming, pinching her nipples and curling her toes as her body went rigid through her climax. Her juices dripped out further and Reagan continued to drink down her pleasure, lapping at her folds. He brought his thumb to brush over Belle’s clit, causing her to jerk again before her body began to relax. He was already building her up to the next stream of pleasure, unyielding in his onslaught of her soaked cunt.

He brought his index finger to her opening, she was so unbelievably wet Reagan didn't even have to tease her. He thrust two fingers deep into her pussy.

“Yes!” Belle cried out, desperate to feel anything inside her as his tongue continued to flutter over her clit. He pumped his fingers in and out quickly, her pussy sloshing loudly even when he added a third finger. Belle’s eyes rolled in the back of her head, she wanted his cock so badly, his fingers were doing such an excellent job of teasing her.

“Come on Belle.” He whispered to her cunt, curling his fingers within her and working her rapidly. His face was smeared with her essence as he devoured her, his precision was slipping away as he himself became more desperate, rubbing against the leg of the table as he struggled to pump his fingers inside her.

As he bit down on her clit his fingers were met with a gush of liquid. Reagan pulled them out through Belle’s sobbing as he replaced them with his tongue, eating her out ferociously, his tongue in her pussy, on her clit, in her ass, everywhere.

“Please!” Belle whispered as he lapped at her cunt, drunk on her pleasure. “I want you to cum in me Mr. Gold.” Reagan was absolutely lost with desire. He stood up from his position and leaned over Belle, smashing their faces against one another in a sloppy kiss. She could taste herself on him everywhere and she was intoxicated.

Reagan pushed down the band of his boxers and pulled out his cock. He didn’t waste any time teasing Belle like he normally might have; he wanted her too badly right now for that. He thrust into her in one swift motion, her pussy sodden with pleasure but her channel tight with the multiple orgasms. Reagan winced as he felt her contract around him, pulling out and smashing back in as rapidly as he could. He grabbed Belle’s hips roughly, pulling her to the edge of the desk and closer to him, his balls right up against her ass as he began shallow and hard thrusts. Belle cried out as Reagan huffed in exasperation, her desk shrieking against the tile floor as his deep thrusts pounded into Belle. His hair fell in front of his face as he leaned over Belle, her breasts pressing against his suit as they kissed. He rocked into her, pressing against her clit with each thrust.
“Fuck Belle, I can’t last.” Reagan breathed, worried he wouldn’t be able to get Belle off before he erupted.

“Harder.” Belle suggested as she snacked a hand between their bodies. Her fingers began encircling her clt. When Reagan’s fingers dug into the skin on her hips she pushed on her clt harder, the sharp pain heightening her pleasure. He pulled out of her completely, switching to long strokes as he pushed into her quaking pussy while pulling her hips towards his cock. He fucked her as hard as he could, sweat dripping down his brow, his calfs shaking as he fought off his release as long as he could. Belle began rubbing her clt frantically, her pussy so wet from before her fingers were sliding all over her cunt, increasing the pleasure when she happened to roughly brush against her clt. She pinched her clt between her fingers, crying out as the stream of pleasure began within her clt. Belle continued to swear as she rode out the climax, her body numbing with pleasure, her mind nearly senseless as Reagan continued to fuck through the ripples.

Reagan cursed when he finally let go, the tingling starting in the back of his spine as his balls tightened, his cock pulsing rapidly inside Belle’s cunt as the orgasm ripped through him. His legs were practically numb as he leaned down against her body, resting their weight on the desk table as they panted rapidly, lost for breath.

“Holy fuck!” Belle said with a satisfied smile, her pussy exhausted with the onslaught and her body numb with orgasm.

Reagan pulled out, tucking his spent cock back into his boxers, zipping up his pants, and buckling his belt. Reagan knelt down - or rather ungracefully fell - to the floor, leaning against the wall, completely exhausted. He stared at Belle’s pussy, smiling smugly when he took in the red blush on her lips. He watched as his seed dripped out of her opening, trickling over her skin, and pooling on the table. Belle’s head was still tilted back in ecstasy, her elbows propped up on the back of the table.

“That was unbelievable!” Belle said as she brought her head up, sending an exhausted smile to Reagan. “Are you alright?” She asked concerned, noting his position against the floor.

“Never better.” He said with a quirk at the corner of his lips.

Belle sat up, feeling a little light headed as she moved. She cringed as she felt the liquids streaming from her pussy smear against the table. She stood up, adjusting her skirt and feeling intensely awkward with her wet pussy and lack of underwear.

“May I please have my underwear Mr. Gold?” She flirted as she walked towards him.

“No.” He raised his brow, wickedly pleased with himself.

“Please Reagan?” Belle said, breaking character before continuing, “My pussy is so soaked I need something to stop the dripping.”

Reagan licked his lips, thinking. “Would you like me to lick you dry?”

Belle opened her mouth shocked slightly. “I’m too tired for another orgasm.”

“I’ll avoid your clt. Let me lick you dry sweetheart?” And Belle couldn’t say no to an offer like that.

Belle stepped forward, bracing her hands against the blackboard as she spread her legs. Reagan reached up, tucking Belle's skirt into the waistband and grabbing her hips. He directed her core towards his lips as she stepped over his legs, straddling his face. She sighed lightly as his tongue brushed against her folds. He was gentle as he licked at her, ducking his head to even lick her thighs. He winced at the taste of himself mixed with her, but continued to lick her dry out of reverence.
Soon her thighs were shaking, her exhaustion overcoming her. When Reagan finished he pressed a kiss to her curls and Belle stepped back, moving to sit beside him as she slouched against the wall.

“Thank you.” She whispered before leaning against Reagan’s shoulder. Reagan smiled and placed a kiss to her temple before reaching in his suit jacket and pulling out her panties. “Thank you!” She said with a bright smile, and he was slightly affronted that she was happier he had returned her underwear then when he had licked her juice and his seed from her swollen pussy. Belle leaned forward and kissed Reagan on the lips. “Now we’re even.” She said with a gleeful smile and kissed his cheek again. Reagan chuckled as he took her within her arms.

“Did you really fantasize about that when you were in school?” He asked her, the answer highly relevant to his ego.

“I did.” She flushed at her own audacity. “You were sexy even then.”

“Well it’s a good thing we didn’t because I’d certainly have been fired by now.” And surprisingly Belle laughed at that, which caused even Reagan to chuckle. “Your desk is still a mess though.” And Belle stared over to the puddle on her former school desk. “That is so embarrassing.”

“No, it’s sexy.” He said as he cupped her face and kissed her sweetly.

“Come on.” Belle said as she stood up and offered Reagan a hand. He grabbed her hand and the two struggled as she pulled him to his feet, his leg kinking in unimaginable ways. Belle picked up his cane and handed it to her former teacher. “Are you okay?”

“It was worth it. Now we’re even.” He said with a tilt of his head and Belle rolled her eyes at him playfully.

“You go pack up your papers and I’ll get something from the janitor's closet to clean up this mess and then we’ll head out. How does dinner at Granny’s sound?”

“It sounds remarkable.” He said before kissing her lips chastely.

He couldn't believe his luck.
“My world is a million shattered pieces put together, glued by my tears, where each piece is nothing but a reflection of you.”
— Sanhita Baruah

Belle had been working on a surprise. She had been planning it for nearly a month, and it would all come to fruition at Reagan’s birthday. He was turning forty-eight. She could hardly believe it. Now that Belle was in his life she wanted to make a big fuss over his birthday. Belle suspected that he had never had another person throw him a party before. Most likely it was his own doing, due to his reclusive nature. But Belle knew how lonely he had been, and that loneliness always seemed to intensify whenever one was alone on their birthday. But this birthday was going to be different. She had managed the impossible, and she couldn’t wait to see the outcome of her labours.

Belle had invited all of her friends, and all their co-workers. In all the time that she had known Reagan she hadn’t learned of any outside friends that he might have had, except possibly for Granny - who Belle invited out of courtesy - knowing that the two didn’t really get along. Belle thought it best not to invite her father, she knew he didn’t need a reminder of Reagan’s age. But what Belle was most excited for was the special guest she had invited.

“Belle is this really necessary?” Reagan complained like a child as he adjusted his tie in the foyer mirror of his salmon pink Victorian.

“Yes Reagan, it’s your birthday. And I wish to celebrate it, so it’s necessary.” She shouted as she moved between kitchen and sitting room, placing horderves throughout the house.

“But what about what I want?”

Belle halted in the hall, her heels clacking to a stop as she raised one hand to her waist. “Do you, or do you not want hot birthday sex later tonight?”

Reagan’s face winced, she knew he would be looking forward to the prospect of that. But now that he had Bele in his life, truthfully the only thing he wanted for his birthday was a quiet dinner and drink with her by the fire, and a long night with her in his arms. He had never expected Belle to throw him a goddamn party and invite half of the town!

“You know I do Belle.” He finally responded, moving closer to her hand and grabbing her around the waist as he pulled her towards him in a hug.

“I know you don’t like this, but you're special to me, and I just want you to have a special day.”
“You are to kind my sweet Belle.” He leaned forward and kissed her chastely, pleased with the smile it brought to Belle’s face.

“Besides I think you are going to be pleasantly surprised by what I have planned!”

“If you made some special lemon meringue then I’m sure I absolutely will!” He said with a wink and Belle began laughing in his arms before she continued to prepare the house, while Reagan brought out selections of alcohol.

Mary Margaret, David, and baby Neal were the first to arrive. Followed by Regina, Henry, and Emma. Ruby came over with Granny, and Graham, much to Granny’s protest. Jefferson brought Grace, and Will brought his soon to be wife Anna - the wedding was coming up soon and the town was very much excited. Other faculty members trickled in, and they found easy conversations within their own niche groups.

Belle was a busy bee, perfecting her hosting skills. While Reagan, who was socializing more than Belle had expected, was greatly enjoying talking about his house and showing off the many curiosities in his collection. He even brought up the book he and Belle had been working on.

Some of the guests, like Dr. Whale, had gotten drunk very early on - the fact that Reagan and Belle had graciously provided very fine alcohol was a key motivating factor. But overall, Belle was very pleased that everyone appeared to be having a good time, even if they were in the home of Storybrooke’s most hated man, celebrating his birthday no less. Reagan had come a long way in the past few months, and Belle was very proud of him. And as she stared at him in his fine black suit, a rich navy blue shirt underneath, Belle decided that she was going to reward him greatly later tonight. That is if the surprise she had planned didn't take him away from her.

Belle was nervous though, there was no denying it. Ruby noted her fidgeting, her refusal to drink any wine to calm her apparent nerves, and her constant stare towards the grandfather clock.

“Bells? What’s going on? You're as white as a sheet.” The taller girl gently placed her hand on Belle’s arm, grounding Belle within her surroundings and easing her back into the sanity of her own mind.

“I’ve got a surprise planned Rubes. Something big. I’m just waiting for the appropriate time.” Ruby looked at her best friend, concerned by the odd behaviour. Belle expanded at a ramble, “I’m just worried it’s not going to go over well. Reagan’s not expecting it you see. And I’m not exactly sure now is the right time, doing it in front of everyone. But, but part of me thinks having outside people here will ease the shock.”

“Belle...you aren’t pregnant are you?”

But before Belle could answer Ruby the doorbell chimed. Belle let out an audible gasp, looking around the room before heading to the front door, leaving Ruby standing in the sitting room feeling absolutely petrified, and possibly excited for her friend.

Belle looked around the foyer, making sure none of the guests were in sight before she looked through the stained glass window, hoping to catch a glimpse of the visitor. She bit down on her bottom lip before opening up the door and stepping outside onto the landing.

“Hey, I’m looking for Belle?” The stranger in a light blue cotton dress shirt and grey jacket asked. He had short brown hair, brown eyes, slightly tanned skin, and a smile that Belle recognized immediately.
“You must be Baeden?”

“Yeah how did you-”

“I’m Belle.” She said with a smile she couldn’t contain and presumptuously reached out and pulled him into a tight hug, standing on her tiptoes to accommodate him.

Completely caught off guard, Baeden stood there, not sure of what to do with his arms until he realized who this small brunette was. She was Belle. *But she couldn’t be the woman who had contacted him?* That woman was dating his father, who had apparently wanted to mend things between them.

“I’m so thrilled you decided to come Baeden.” Bell said as she parted their hug. “It was very big of you to come and mend things. You seem like a fine man.”

“Yeah, no thanks to my father.” He stuffed his hands into his pocket, looking the woman up and down. She was very pretty. She wore outrageously high shoes, no doubt to make up for her lack of stature, and a frilly white dress with blue flowers on it. This woman looked more like a college student then someone his father should be seeing. Baeden would admit, when he had first heard from the woman he was glad that his father had found someone who treated him well, god knows his mother was awful to his father, but that didn’t excuse what his father had done to her in revenge. And it certainly didn’t excuse the fact that his own father had lied to him for years in an effort to hide his heinous act.

“Well, I really appreciate you coming. I’m just warning you, there's quite a few people over, if you’d like this to be more private-“

“No, it’s good that there's a crowd, there'll be more witness.” Baeden joked and Belle frowned a bit. Perhaps this was shaping up to be a disaster. She hadn’t yet told Baeden that his father didn’t really know he was coming. Suddenly, her stomach lurched. “So you’re Belle?”

“Yes.”

“And you’re dating my dad?” He looked like this was all a big joke.

“I am.” Belle said with a smile that characterized her sincerity and feelings towards Reagan.

“How old are you?” He asked rudely. He wasn’t entirely sure he still wanted to be here so he wasn’t going to beat around the bush to protect anyone's feelings.

“Excuse me?” Belle crossed her arms defensively, not sure why any of this had to be relevant. *Why was age the only thing anybody ever cared about?* Not how much she cared for him, and loved him. Although she had never told him, she knew it. She was in love with Reagan.

“It’s just, you look like you could still be in high school.”

“I'm twenty-five, not that it matters.”

Baeden sent her a perturbed look. “It does matter. You realize I’m thirty years old! I’m older than you, I bet he didn’t tell you that? You don’t know what you're in for Belle, besides you're probably just distracted by his money, he lies, and he’ll use you.”

Belle was affronted now, and whether he was Reagan’s son or not she was going to let him have a piece of her mind. “Actually, he did tell me. He had you when he was very young, thought he was in love. And I know you and he have had it rough, and I know you're both aching and dying to forgive
one another so you can be a family again. Don’t you remember when it was the two of you and things were good? Maybe you're both ready to fix this?”

“You really think he’s ready?” Baeden asked, part of him wanting to try, and part of him wanting to enter the house - his old house - and tear his father apart for abandoning him.

“I do.” Belle said, and she offered Baeden her hand in a symbol of peace. He shook her hand before Belle opened the door and lead him through the hallway and into the sitting room.

Baeden stared out at the many strange faces, all passing in a blur.

“Everyone can I have your attention please?” Belle said quietly, but she didn’t need to repeat herself for all the attention in the room had turned towards her and the stranger.

“Bae?” The soft and cracked voice of Reagan Gold could be heard next to the fireplace.

“Papa.” Baeden said, looking down at the ground and not having the courage to look his father in the face. “I don’t go by Bae, it’s Baeden. I’ve told you that before.”

Reagan’s face blanched. “What the hell are you doing here?”

Belle began to panic, Reagan was unprepared for this, and when things came at him by surprise he went to his default emotion, anger.

“I asked him to come Reagan.” Belle offered the explanation less quietly now, looping her arm around Baeden’s in an attempt at solidarity. Reagan only glanced at the action, wanting nothing more than to pull his son away from the beautiful woman that was his.

“You aren’t wanted here Bae.” Reagan spat, as the party guests stared on in discomfort and anticipation.

“Yes I damn well am! Your girlfriend invited me! She said you were ready to apologize, to fix things between us!” He yelled at his father, getting years of anger out of his system.

“I said no such thing! You’re the one who left Bae! Everything I did was for us! Don’t pretend like your mother deserved any better! She left us, abandoned you!” Reagan yelled, picking his cane up as he pointed an accusatory finger at his son. The space between them seemed to expand, as if they were the only two in the room.

“But you lied about it!” Baeden tried to take a step forwards, but Belle’s unexpected grip on his arm seemed to ground him in place. “For years! And you never came looking for me! You abandoned me, just like she did!”

“I did not! I tried to stay in contact! Begged you to come back!”

“But I didn’t want to come back!” He bellowed, the truth of his father's inability to understand his own son echoing throughout the room.

Every decision Reagan had ever made had felt like it was about Bae. But now that he thought about it, maybe it was just about himself.

“You're the one who stopped talking to me when you turned eighteen.” Reagan’s voice was softer now, yelling seemed pointless when there was already so much hate in their words.

“Because you wouldn’t admit to your mistakes. You couldn’t see them. I can’t believe I bothered
coming. Belle made it sound like you were ready for this.” Baeden made a motion to move, and Belle let go of him as he began to turn around.

“How could you do this Belle!” Reagan roared, and everyone at the party stared. Belle shuddered as Reagan walked towards her, his limp ignored as the adrenaline pumped through him. He towered over her, and Belle had never thought that Reagan was the type of man capable of hurting a woman, but in this moment, as he beared down on her, she felt terrified by the beast within him.

“Don’t you dare take this out on her!” Baeden turned around sharply, pushing his father’s shoulders slightly, it was their first physical contact in nearly fifteen years.

“I would never.” Reagan shook his head, disgusted by what he had just done and looking pleadingly over at Belle who had tears in her eyes.

“She was just trying to help you! And you’ve taken this poor girl and twisted her into thinking you’re something you’re not. She’s twenty-five dad! It’s sick and disgusting and you should be ashamed. I can’t even believe that I thought you might be different now!”

“Bae, I’m sorry!” But Reagan continued to look at Belle, “Oh Belle. What have I done?” He kept mumbling over and over again.

“That’s the thing Papa. You aren’t sorry. You never are sorry. I only wanted your apology when it was sincere.”

“Baeden don’t go!” Reagan pleaded, regretting every decision he had made since his son walked through the front door.

“It’s too late Papa.” Baeden said before turning around. He stopped in his tracks suddenly.

Standing before him was the shocked face of a slim woman with blond hair. Beside her was a boy, holding a large brown book.

“Baeden?” She asked quietly.

“Emma?” His voice was choked in his throat as he stared at the only girl he had ever loved. He left her. Just like everyone in his life had abandoned him. He had abandoned her. He abandoned them. He couldn’t help but look towards the boy beside her. He had to be at least ten. Baeden swallowed the lump in his throat. “What are you doing here Emma?”

“What are you doing here?” Regina had moved forward from the shadows and placed her hand lightly on Emma’s shoulder, a reassuring touch that would go unnoticed by most.

“Well it’s my dad’s birthday. Thought I’d drop by.” He said jokingly. They had already put on a big enough show, they might as well make a bigger spectacle of things.

“I live here now. With my sister.” She looked towards Mary Margaret and her husband, who was cradling baby Neal through all the yelling.

“And your son?” Baeden questioned looking right towards Henry, and everyone’s face twisted into one of confusion. Everyone except Emma Swan, Baeden Gold, and Regina Mills. “You told me you weren’t going to keep it Emma?”

“Shut up.” She said warningly, but by now everyone had connected the dots.

“I left because you said you didn’t want it! You said you wanted a better life than me!”
“Shut up Baeden!” She was yelling now.

“I abandoned you Emma! Because you asked me to! Is he mine?” But Emma didn’t answer, she was putting all her energy into containing herself. “Kid how old are you?”

“Don’t answer him Henry.” Regina spoke up.

“How old are you kid!” Baeden persisted.

“I’m twelve!” Henry yelled back at the man, one of the few spectators who hadn’t realized what was going on.

“He’s twelve Emma!”

“Alright! He’s your son! What do you want me to say? I never thought I’d see you again!”

“What?” Henry asked confused. He knew Regina had adopted him as a baby, and he knew that Regina was Snow’s and Emma’s step mother. Henry had not known that Emma was his birth mother. And this stranger before them, Gold’s son, was his father? Henry ran out of the house, followed by Regina.

“He didn’t know.” Emma said to Baeden.

He began to understand, Regina must have offered to take care of the baby for Emma. This way Emma could still be a part of his life, but he would have a better life, a life their son deserved. Emma ran out of the room, following after Regina. The family was in much need of a talk. Mary Margaret, baby Neal, and David ran out of the house soon after, Mary Margaret hadn’t even known the secret.

“I have a grandson?” Gold questioned softly, more or less to himself.

“And I have a son.” Baeden said sadly before exiting from the salmon pink Victorian himself.

The other guests, all feeling rather uncomfortable took their leave in a rather rushed fashion, a few awkwardly saying happy birthday on their way out and talking a bottle of wine of two to go.

Reagan began picking up glasses and teacups, throwing them at the walls in a fit of rage.

“Reagan, stop this please!” Belle pleaded, tears running down her cheek. She still hadn’t moved from the place she stood when he had yelled at her.

Reagan stopped. Catching his breath as he sank to the floor, resting against the wall, tears were now falling down his cheek as he buried his face within his hands. “I was never honest with you Belle.”

Belle slowly walked over, frightened Reagan might do something unexpected. He remained there, sobbing and so she slowly sank down to her knees in front of him, her nose running and her cheeks red.

“It’s my fault Baeden left. When his mother and her lover, Killian, were in that accident, she hadn’t died right away. She was on life support. The doctors didn’t think she stood much chance, but there was some sign of brain activity. I was still her emergency contact. She hadn’t changed it yet. It was my decision. I had all the power in my hands, and I could get my revenge! I was blinded by hatred. I didn’t hesitate, I told the doctors to pull the plug, I watched as her heartbeat and her lungs gave their last breath. I never told Baeden the truth. I just told him that she had died. But I did it. I killed her!”

He started to sob again and Belle covered his hand within her own.
“No, Reagan, don’t think like that. Don’t let your feelings cloud the gravity of the situation.”

“Baeden said he should have had a choice. He said he would have wanted to properly say goodbye to her. But I took that away from him! It destroyed our relationship when he found out. He was about fifteen. And in only a year we began to hate each other. He hated the lying and the power, I became so attached to it then. I became cold, I had to stop myself from feeling. I never wanted to be that vulnerable and powerless again.”

“And that’s when Bae left.” Belle finished, connecting the new information to that of which she already knew.

“He was sixteen. When my boy left, part of me died, and I became the monster you see before you.” He looked up at her, an expression of regret on his face.

“You're not a monster.” She said defiantly, like she so always did.

“How could you think that, especially now Belle. I shouted at you in front of everyone, all your friends, our co-workers. I felt the blood thumping through my veins - real anger! I wanted to hurt you.” He whispered the last part, ashamed of himself.

Belle scooched forward earnestly, her eyes shining brightly as she encouraged Reagan to look at her.

“But you didn’t. You realised your mistake and you apologized. I’ll admit, I was frightened, but I forgive you. And I know you will work to never do it again.”

“You have my word.” He interrupted her earnestly.

“Even know, you're telling me the truth because you want me to know. Even though you know it could ruin everything.” Her voice cracked as she finished her sentence and Reagan felt his heart break with the heavy weights that were crushing it.

“I’m so sorry Belle! I’m going to do whatever I can to fix this. To fix us. To fix Bae. Give me the chance Belle, please!” He pleaded, tightening his grip around her hand.

“I’ll be beside you every step of the way.” Belle smiled at Reagan and now his heart exploded with a swell of emotion.

“Oh Belle. My sweet beautiful Belle.” He reached a hand forward and cradled her face, her cheeks damp from the tracks of her tears. “You are everything to me. And after every day I am lucky enough to be with you I find myself falling more and more in love with you.”

“Reagan?” Belle’s heart stopped, her breathing stilling as she waited.

“I love you Belle. More than I have ever felt within my heart before. You bring light into my life, and you’re slowly chasing away the darkness. I owe more to you then I can ever say. So all I can do is tell you that I love you and will endeavor to live up to yours.”

“Oh Reagan, I love you too.” She said with a small cry of joy before lunging forward and wrapping her arms around Reagan’s neck.

They sat there for hours, holding each other, breathing with each other, crying when they had the tears for it. Sometimes they would kiss, or touch lightly. But mostly they just needed to be in one another's arms, in the arms of someone who loved them, no matter what. There was going to be a lot of gossip tomorrow, and they were going to need to present a stronger front than ever if they wanted to survive it.
“How did you find him?” Reagan asked softly some time later as he undid the braid in Belle’s hair and began to rake his fingers through the curls comfortingly.

“He was in New York. Under the name Baeden Spinner. I figured it must be your son because, well Baeden isn’t that common a name, and I remembered that you said Rumplestiltskin was one of his favorite fairy tales that you used to read to him when he was a boy.”

“Thank you Belle.” He kissed the side of her head sweetly and she snuggled into him further.

“But tonight was a disaster.”

“You brought my son to me, and you told me that you love me. I think this has been the best birthday of all my life.” He said it honestly and Belle knew in this moment that this man was worth all the heartache. “How did you convince him to come anyways?”

“I told him that you were different. That you wanted to apologize, that you were ready to be his father again, if he gave you a second chance.”

Reagan smiled. “Well I certainly hope he’ll still give me a second chance after tonight. Although I fear he’s already gained a lot more than he bargained for when entering Storybrooke.”

“That’s right!” Belle exclaimed, shifting up, placing one hand on Reagan’s chest as she looked into his dark brown eyes. “I guess this means Henry is your grandson?”

“Oh god, now I really feel old.” He said with a laugh that Belle easily returned.

“Did you know?” She questioned, assuming Reagan might of had his suspicions.

“I had no clue. He would have been eighteen, right when we stopped talking. I wish he would have come to me for help. I didn’t even know Henry was Emma’s.”

Belle nodded in agreement, it had been a big surprise to find out that Henry was Emma’s son and Regina had clearly adopted the child to keep him in the family. Perhaps Regina really wasn’t as bad as she seemed. It seemed she had made a sincere sacrifice for a family she claimed not to love or desire to be a part of.

“You realize this makes you related to Emma, Mary Margaret, David, and...Regina.” Belle counted off in her head, knowing the last name would drive Reagan crazy.

“Oh fuck!” He spat out and Belle couldn't help but laugh at him. “This is not funny young lady! You realize they could very likely be your family some day too!”

But his threat fell empty, as Belle looked up at him and smiled. That thought was entirely pleasing to her, and frankly it was just as pleasurable to Reagan as well. She leaned forward to silence them with a kiss, in case either of them said something that would no doubt ruin the moment.

“You know, I do have one final surprise that might save this birthday.”

“Oh god, not another surprise, I don’t know if my heart can take it!” He joked, putting his hand over his heart and clutching his chest.

Belle rolled her eyes, “There’s lemon meringue pie in the fridge.” She whispered into his ear.

“Now that is the most pleasant surprise of the evening!” He said with a wink, and the unlikely couple struggled to get up, heading towards the kitchen to enjoy Reagan’s lemon meringue birthday pie.
Belle put a candle in the pie and even sang Happy Birthday to her boyfriend before he blew out the candle.

He smiled as he watched Belle cut them slices, knowing that anything he could have possibly wished for had already come true.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for the patience! I've got a few more surprises coming!
“Every child grows up thinking their father is a hero or villain until they are old enough to realize he is just a man.” --Mark Maish

Belle had spent the night with Reagan, and although they weren’t really in the mood for the hot birthday sex they had originally anticipated, spending the night in each other’s arms was equally as wonderful.

They had laid low for the next few weeks, the gossip flowing through Storybrooke’s small town. It was fueled by Granny who for every patron that bought a coffee at the diner she offered up an exclusive on the events that had happened at Mr. Gold’s forty-eighth birthday party. Based on the rumours they had heard the town was even more surprised to find that Belle and Reagan appeared to be even more united and happier than ever. Ruby had inquired after her friend several times, and Belle told her the whole truth, not wanting to hide or leave anything out. Ruby was very pleased to also find out that her friend was not in fact pregnant, although she did learn about a possible future step son, and grandson. The girls were able to laugh about that, and it made Belle feel like her life was slowly becoming normal again.

That was until her father had got wind of everything that had happened that night.

“Why didn’t you tell me?” Moe French asked, standing in the kitchen just as Belle entered the apartment, about a day after Reagan’s party. “He as a son! A thirty year old son! Belle it’s unnatural.”

“I know he has a son. He was always open about that with me. And I told you he had a son.” Belle took off her shoes and hung up her jacket. “Besides there’s nothing unnatural about it, a man and a women in love are perfectly allowed to lay together-”

“Belle he’s older than you!” Moe interrupted. “You should be dating his son for god’s sake.”

“His son has a child to, wouldn’t you like to say something about that?” Belle added fuel to the fire, walking past her father and getting a glass of water from the kitchen.

“I would!” He blubbered, watching her sip her water casually. “A grandson. Belle you aren’t even old enough to be a mother yourself.”

“And Reagan isn’t really old enough to be a grandfather, to be fair. There's no point in discussing this Papa.” She put her glass in the sink and stepped forward, “We told each other that we love each other for the first time that night. We’re stronger together, and we’re going to work on building our family. Can’t you just be happy for me Papa? I’m in love.” She stood in front of her father, looking up at him with the blue eyes of her mother.

“Belle, this all just too much. It’s too much! The boys have been laughing at me, people are staring at me. I don’t know how you can take it.”

Belle rolled her eyes, worrying about how her papa’s friends treated him wasn’t her problem. And frankly it was none of their business. They had never asked after Belle before.

“You would put up with anything for mother would you not?” She questioned craftily, knowing she
had worked her Papa into a trap.

His eyes softened, thinking about his late wife. “That was a long time ago Belle, but you know I would.”

“Well, that’s me and Reagan. I hope you can get used to it.” She tapped lightly on his breast before attempting to move past him.

“Every time I think this insanity is over and I start to accept it something ridiculous happens again. You have to give me time Belle.”

“I will Papa. And I appreciated it.” She said with an honest smile before retreating to the quiet of her bedroom.

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Surprisingly to everyone in town, Baeden Gold had checked himself into Granny’s and appeared to be staying for a while. It had already been nearly two weeks since the explosion at his father’s birthday. Since then the Swan, Mills, and Charming family had gone through multiple sessions of healing. Overall, everyone was slightly hurt that Emma hadn’t told them about her son. But they understood that she was just a scared eighteen year old. People were even more surprised to find out that Regina had secretly had so much care for the family, even if she had never really loved Mary Margaret’s father, and wasn’t particularly fond of adopting Emma. But now, she appeared to have changed significantly, or perhaps she too just had a side that was difficult to see. Henry had taken all of this rather well. He was thrilled to learn he had a real family, and in some aspects he was truly milking the idea. He had even stopped by Reagan’s house one occasion for a cup of tea, bringing with him his favorite story book. Reagan had shared with his grandson the book he and Belle had been working on, and they left on altogether good terms. Much to the disgust of Regina who hated the thought of being related to, and having to share her son with Gold.

However, Baeden and Emma had their difficulties. Baeden wanted very much to stay and get to know his son. He would have never left them if he had known she kept the baby. Now he hoped to make it up to them. Regina had agreed to supervise visits between him and Henry, but Emma was avoiding him, and the gossips of the town at all costs.

But Baeden hadn’t made a single move towards making amends with his father since he got here. Until now.

Belle sat at Granny’s swirling the tea cup in her hands, embracing the warmth as she waited hesitantly.

“Let me know if you need backup girl.” Ruby said kindly, as she dropped off the cranberry muffin Belle had asked for.

“Thanks Ruby.” Belle said gratefully.

When Ruby left she looked at the faces in the diner, all staring at her. She was used to it by now. She perked up unexpectedly when the door opened, the little bell chirping as Baeden walked in. He looked around, spotting Belle in her usual booth and headed over. He sat down across from her, nervously reciprocating the brunettes smile.
“Thanks for meeting me Belle.”

“It’s a pleasure, really Baeden.” She took a sip of her tea to ease her discomfort at the following moment of silence. “Would you like something?” Belle asked before waiving Ruby over and the taller girl came running.

“That was quick.” Baeden remarked, “Um, yeah a black coffee would be great.”

Ruby sent a look to Belle, and Belle nodded before she left to fetch a cup and pot of coffee. She returned moments later, pouring the hot cup for Baeden.

“Enjoy,” she said, her red lips molding into a wolfish grin that told Baeden she would likely mess him up if he attempted to hurt her friend.

They drank in awkward silence for a moment.

“Listen Belle, I wanted to apologize. I treated you very poorly, and you were just trying to help my dad...and me.”

“I’m glad you see it that way Baeden.”

“Well, Emma and I have been talking and from what I hear he really is different, and you’ve done that for him. So I guess, I wanted to thank you for giving him the effort.”

Belle wasn’t really sure how to respond to that, but she was immensely pleased that he had recognized the difference in his father.

“I’m sorta starting to understand that you two really do...love each other.” He concluded weakly.

“We do Baeden.”

Baeden nodded before taking a breath. He was nervous about taking the next step himself. He wasn’t even sure if Belle would give him a second chance. “Well, basically, I’m here because I wanted to let you know that I think I’m ready to give him a second chance.”

Belle beamed, and suddenly Baeden felt silly for feeling nervous. Belle was probably the queen of second chances, if he knew anything about his father.

“He’s ready to earn your trust, and if he’s lucky enough, your love again.”

“I’m just, not really sure how we’re going to do that Belle?” Baeden expressed his concerns, and Belle was relieved that he wanted to share his insecurities with her. After all she was going to be here for the both of them, happy to help them where they needed it, and not afraid to call them fools when they deserved it.

“Well, you’ll have to start with talking. Maybe you could just tell each other what you’ve been doing in the time that you’ve been separated.” Baeden looked at her, thinking that would just turn into a competition as to whose life had gotten worse since their separation. “Or maybe you could share a challenge, the happiest moment?” Now he looked at her as if she were spouting some idyllic fluff, and he wasn’t wrong. “Alright, I know, Reagan has been working on a book, maybe you can talk about your job, or a hobby, or your interests.” He still looked at her, not thrilled with what she was suggesting. “Oh I don’t know Baeden, I’m trying my best here. I can only do so much, the rest has to come from the two of you.”

“You’re right Belle. I’m sorry. It’s really nice that you're trying to do this for him.”
There was a small moment of silence again, the two of them still unused to each other before Belle broke the moment. “He told me about your mother you know.”

“Really?” Baeden questioned, surprised his father would be truthful about some of the biggest lies of his life.

“That must have been very hard for you not to say goodbye properly.”

“It was.” He said ambiguously.

“But, you have to understand how that was hard for your father?” She had no immediate response from Baeden so she continued. “She was his childhood sweetheart, he thought they were in love, and she left him for another man. She left you.”

“I’m so angry at him, that at times I forget she left us both.” He said solemnly.

“I’m not trying to condone what he did.” And she wasn’t. “But I think you should talk about it, to respectfully understand each other?”

“I think that’s a good place to start.”

Belle smiled, Baeden finally found a place to start re-building the relationship with his father.

“So how long have you been seeing my dad?” Baeden asked, somewhat inconspicuously as he took another sip of his coffee.

“You don’t have to pretend to be interested in that.” Belle said as a small blush crept over her cheeks.

“No really. If I’m going to make a proper attempt at being a part of this family again I’m assuming I’m going to have to get to know you. I get the impression you’re kinda determined to stick around.”

“I am.” She replied with a small laugh, easing the tension between them. “I’ve been seeing him for three months now.”

“Wow, you two seem a lot more serious than that.”

And he was right, they certainly had been moving fairly fast. But Belle knew what they had was real. “I suppose we do. I’ve always been a little impulsive.”

“But my father isn’t, so I’m sure he thinks you’ve been making the right decision. But you shouldn’t let him treat you like he did that night. You seem like a sweet girl Belle-”

Belle winced at the term, but frankly considering he was her elder he sort of had the right to refer to her as such if he wanted. She only hoped the term would drop when he recognized the importance of Belle in his father's life.

“So I’m fairly certain you aren’t after his money. August was telling me you’re a librarian at the school, so you clearly have your own-”

“I’m not after your father's money, I assure you Baeden.” She reached out to touch his hand, and he flinched at first, but became accepting. Belle retreated before it became too awkward again.

“Good. I just don’t want you to let him hurt you. I don’t really know what he’s like with women-”

“You don’t need to worry Baeden. Your father has never physically hurt me. I will admit to being frightened that night, but we took care of it. He’s gotten much better at talking.”
But doubt began to sweep across Baeden’s face, “I’ll be honest with you Belle, he sounds nothing like the man I knew.”

“I’m a little concerned to. The only person he’s ever really opened up to is me. He’s only sort of become tolerable to other people.” And she was surprised by the nostalgic laugh emitted from the shielded man across from her. She smiled. “It might be to your benefit to have me nearby when you two meet. I don’t want to intrude, and I don’t want you to think I’m this nosey trophy girlfriend-”

“No Belle, I think you’re right. I think he trusts you. And if my father is capable of trusting you then you must be something special.”

She blushed at the compliment. “I hope you're not upset but I told him I was meeting you this morning.”

Baeden smiled. “I was kinda expecting that. To be honest I’m surprised he isn’t in the next booth over spying or something.”

It was Belle’s turn to laugh as she spoke. “You wouldn’t believe how difficult it’s been to get him to stop himself from hunting you down, even if it’s just to see you.”

“He really looked for me? All that time?” Baeden’s tone becoming more serious.

“You’re his biggest regret. He didn’t want to give up on you, even if you didn’t know it.”

Baeden wasn’t sure how that made him feel. He had spent all of his adult life feeling lied to and abandoned by his father. He had never spent the time to think that it could be more complicated.

“Belle, I was actually hoping that you could take me to him today?”

“Really?” Belle's brows rose as her mouth opened in shock. She felt slightly rude, staring at him with such a shocked expression, but she hadn’t expected him to be ready so quickly.

“Things haven’t been going that great with Emma. And I’d still like the opportunity to be a part of Henry’s life, that is if Regina will continue to let me.” Belle nodded at that, Regina was certainly going to be a big hurdle for Baeden to overstep. “I know my dad can help me find a place, so I won’t lie I have ulterior motives. But I think if I can ever be a good father to Henry, I’ll have to solve my issues with my own father.”

“Very well said Baeden. If you like, I could give him a call. I’m sure we’d be able to have you over for lunch tomorrow?”

“You’re amazing Belle.” Baeden said gratefully, and the two spent the rest of the morning getting to know one another.

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“But Belle what if he changes his mind?” Reagan asked as he paced the kitchen.

“He isn’t. I told you, he want’s to stay here for Henry, he want’s you to help him find a place, and he want’s to fix things with you.” Belle put out the final utensils on the dining room table before stepping out to the patio where she had the hamburgers on the barbecue.
When the doorbell rang Reagan stuck his head out to the patio, sending a pleading look to Belle.

"Reagan you're a grown man, and this is your house, you are more than capable of answering the door."

"Belle-"

"No." She said finally, adding cheese to the burgers she was cooking.

Reagan crinkled his nose before slowly limping towards the front door. His hand stilled over the smooth metal door handle before slowly opening the heavy wood.

"Hey Papa." Baeden said softly.

"Hey son." Reagan replied nervously, before he opened the door fully allowing his son to enter the old house. Reagan took his son’s coat for him, hanging it in the front closet before leading him into the dining room. “I’m sure everything’s the way you remember it, but if not the bathroom is-”

“Yeah just off to the left.” Baeden finished, as he comfortably took a seat at the dining room table. Reagan looked off into the patio, hoping that Belle would come out soon and save him from making a mess of things. “You know I didn’t come here to see her dad, I came here to see you.” Baeden said with a small laugh.

“Right. Son I’m sorry. I’m just certain I’m going to make a mess of this, and I know I won’t get a third chance so...I wanted to apologize for lying to you, and being to immature to recognize my mistake. I’m sorry I didn’t let you say goodbye to your mother. But I’m not sorry for what I did to her.”

“Papa how could you-”

“I was angry, and I will always be angry with her. I was in love. She didn’t even want you, and I’m fairly certain she didn’t even want me. I was hurt, and I clearly don’t know how to appropriately deal with my emotions. But I will not apologize for her, because I’m glad she was never a part of our lives.”

“It still hurts dad. You realize it hurts a kid when his father talks about his mum like that.”

“I’m sorry I was inconsiderate of you.” Reagan looked down, hiding his face behind the lengths of fine hair. He was starting to understand his mistakes, he just wished Baeden could see it from his perspective as well. “Surely after what happened with you and Emma you can have some semblance of understanding?"

“Don’t bring her into this!” Baeden shouted defensively, and Belle’s head darted into the dining room ready to perform damage control. “I didn’t know about Henry. Emma said she didn’t want the baby and she wanted me gone, she had just been adopted by that family and she wanted to live up to their standards, which I wasn’t.” His voice had calmed down, and for a moment Belle thought he was going to cry. And when she watched Reagan lean forward and take his fully grown son into his arms, she knew that he was. Baeden cried in his Papa’s arms, falling apart and Reagan took it all in, comforting him like a proper father would and whispering all the right things into Baeden’s ear.

They talked easily after that. About their past, about the things they had been up to while they were separated, and they even talked a bit about Belle who was busy platting the hamburgers and bringing them to the table. During their meal - which Belle was complemented profusely on - they even began to talk about their futures.
“I’d really like to stay Papa. Emma said that I can spend time with Henry and even Regina is okay with it.”

“That’s wonderful Baeden.” Belle chimed in before sneaking a large bite of her hamburger, rolling her eyes at Reagan’s sly smile in her direction.

Baeden, was about to smile at Belle but if he was honest he was slightly uncomfortable by the looks his father was sharing with the young lady. “Well, I know you can help me with an apartment Papa.”

“I have just the place for you Baeden. And I’ll only charge you half the rent.” The whole table laughed at that. In that moment Baeden was certain his father had changed; his old Papa would never have halved the rent - for anyone!

“Thanks Papa, and you can call me Bae.”

“Bae?” he questioned, the hint of emotion evident in his voice.

“I mean, I hated it when I was a teenager, but I suppose you can’t help but miss the things you don’t have anymore.”

Belle let out a melancholy smile, thinking about her mother.

“I missed you to Bae.” Reagan simply responded to his son’s statement and the pair had seemed to reach an understanding.

Overall, Belle was very pleased with how the lunch had turned out. As she cleaned up the dishes the two continued to talk, and she knew everything was going to be alright for them.
New Beginnings

Chapter Summary

Bae gets a new apartment, Belle has an idea, and Reagan fucks up....

Chapter Notes

I just wanted to thank you all, I know it's been a while, but starting this fic years ago has given me so much more courage with my writing, and I really wanted to thank those of you who have let me share this story with you. I will forever appreciate you!

Happy reading everybody!

“That’s what people do who love you. They put their arm around you and love you when you’re not so loveable.” – Deb Caletti

“Thanks again for this Papa.” Baeden said as he tossed a heavy cardboard box onto the kitchen table of the small apartment. His father had gotten him a studio apartment in the same complex that Miss Swan rented from Gold. Although Baeden resisted the idea of his father and his father’s younger girlfriend meddling in his love life, he was grateful for the opportunity to be closer to Emma, this way she had less of a chance of avoiding him.

In all fairness, Emma had been adjusting rather well. She got to see Henry more frequently, whether visiting the Mills house, or having Henry and Regina over to her apartment. The gossip was even beginning to die down as the community got used to seeing Regina and Emma with Henry.

The revelation had been quite the scandal. Ironically, it was more alarming to the town that Regina had taken in Henry - and subsequently taken care of Emma all these years - then it was to learn that Emma had been a teen mother. But the biggest surprise of all was the fact that the Mills, Swan, Charming, and Gold family were in fact all related. The gossip fueled the town for weeks, so much so that Belle and Reagan’s unusual affair had lost some traction in the small town of Storybrooke.

“It’s no problem son.” Reagan said as he placed a smaller box next to the one his son had already set down.

Belle came in next, carrying the largest box of all, practically hidden behind the entire thing as she struggled to shove the door open with her hip.

“Belle I told you I’d get that!” Baeden scolded her playfully, the two developing an easy friendship and banter as their relationship developed and Bae spent more time with Belle and his father.

“Nonsense Bae, I’m more than capable of helping.” Belle said, her voice muffled from the effort as Bae walked over to her, taking the box from Belle. Although it was the biggest box it hadn’t been
the heaviest, but it was still practically the size of Belle’s whole body. Baeden took the box from her and placed it on the kitchen table.

Baeden didn’t really have very many belongings. It made Reagan’s heart ache, thinking his son had been struggling to support himself all these years while Reagan had more money than he knew what to do with. He knew his family had never had money before, in fact, it was slightly ironic that he came into his fortune the moment he no longer had anyone to spend it on. Reagan knew he couldn’t make things up to Bae using his money, but that certainly wasn’t going to stop him from trying. All the furniture in the apartment had been purchased by himself and Belle - secretly of course - before his son was scheduled to move in. Reagan had simply told the young man that the apartment came furnished, even down to the appliances and cutlery in the kitchen cabinets.

“Well, I’ll let you know if I need anything.” Baeden said to his father as he began to slowly unpack some of the boxes. “And I’ll have the rent to you on the first of December.”

“Don’t worry about that Bae-”

“Seriously dad, I don’t want to owe you anything, and I don’t need you paying for me. I’m an adult now. You have to understand that, I’ve completely grown up while you were gone.”

Reagan winced, remembering the countless years he had been separated from his son. “You’re right my boy, I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay Papa. This is going to take a lot of getting used to, for all of us.” Bae said, including Belle in the conversation.

“Well, would you look at that, I can’t even get my own father to recognize I’m an adult!” Belle joked, and Reagan rolled his eyes absentmindedly at her father’s refusal to recognize Belle as a grown woman.

“He’s probably just worried for you Belle.” Baeden said with a chuckle, knowing if he was Belle’s father he would be concerned for her choice in boyfriends. Baeden was seriously going to have to get used to the fact that the woman sleeping with his father was younger than him.

“Clearly you haven’t met my father.” Belle said in a well humored manner, before she gasped at the great idea she had, her face lighting up.

“This can’t be good.” Reagan said, recognizing the shameful look on his inquisitive girlfriend’s face.

“What can’t be good?” Bae questioned as he looked towards Belle who took in a deep breath of air before sharing her brilliant idea with the boys.

“We should do a family dinner!” She shouted, nearly jumping up and down with excitement.

“Oh no, Belle. Belle this isn’t a good idea.”

“Belle I’m not so sure-”

Reagan tried to stop her, but there was no stopping Belle when she got an idea, she was a very stubborn little librarian.
“You and I can cook together! We’ve never done that before! And you’re such an excellent cook Reagan,” she added flattery, hoping to make her request sound a little more sweeter to his ears.

“You and I can cook together! We’ve never done that before! And you’re such an excellent cook Reagan,” she added flattery, hoping to make her request sound a little more sweeter to his ears.

“Belle it will be a disaster having your father and my son in the same room. You know he’ll just stare at me all night if he doesn’t make comments about the age gap, my grandson, or the fact that I was a terrible father-”

“You weren't a terrible father Papa.” Baeden said unexpectedly, and both Belle and Reagan turned their heads in his direction. “What! I can’t give my dad a compliment? Are we not at that point? I thought things had been going well?” He was laughing slightly, amused to see the look of shock on his Papa’s face and the endearing smile sweeping over, what he had no doubt to be his future step mother.

“Baeda I hardly think-”

“You were a great father to me for the first fourteen years of my life. You were the only parent I ever had, Mum never was in the picture much. We both did really stupid things, okay, but now I understand you were just trying to do what was best for me. I guess I’m trying to say, that I finally accept your apology, and I’m ready to move forward.”

“Baeden,” Reagan’s voice was weak with emotion as he let go of Belle’s hand and moved towards his son, a fully grown man and father. “I am truly sorry Bae.” Reagan said as he brought his son into a fierce hug and they two men let out their emotions into their embrace.

Belle smiled, as she looked on, the boys getting past their differences and ready to mend the bond between father and son.

“Get in here Belle!” Baeden said, with a bright smile, his hand gesturing toward their hug.

Belle felt honoured that Bae was willing to include her in the moment with his father. So she stepped forward, thankful that she was wearing heels and came anywhere near the two men’s height, and welcomed herself within their hug.

It was slightly awkward when they had parted, everyone realising the intimate moment they had all shared, and the turning point that had just occurred between Reagan and his son.

Surprisingly, Baeden was the first to break the silence, “I think Belle’s idea is great. If you and Belle are serious I’d love to meet her father. Perhaps we can bond over how weird - but good - your relationships is.”

And although Baeden chuckled at his light hearted joke, Reagan, or Belle for that matter couldn’t bring themselves to laugh a long. They didn’t see their relationship as weird, or something to be laughed at. It was really rather simple for Reagan and Belle; they loved each other, and that was all that mattered to them.

Pushing the feelings aside, Belle was pleased that Baeden agreed with her, and she was going to use his acceptance to her advantage. “See Reagan, even your son thinks it would be nice to have thanksgiving dinner as a family!” Belle brought one hand up to her boyfriend's cheek, getting him to focus his attention on her, rather than the distractions around the room and the concerns floating through his head. “You and I can cook a nice meal at your house and we’ll be a family. Reagan, you’ve got the chance to have a family. It’s something both of us have been lacking in recent years, and I think we deserve the chance to embrace it?”

“Believe me Belle, I want you and I to build a family together more than anything, I’m just not sure
if we’re all ready for this?”

Baeden felt slightly uncomfortable as the small brunette comforted his father. They were clearly sharing an intimate moment, regardless of his presence in the room. He shuffled back and forth on his feet, turning his head away slightly when Belle leaned up on her tiptoes to whisper something in his father’s ear.

Belle brushed aside the long strands of hair at Reagan’s ear, her lips ghosting over the shell of his ear, her breath hot as she spoke. “Baeden is giving you the chance to be his father here Reagan, a chance at real proper family, with love.” She backed away slightly looking into his eyes and bringing her arms around his waist. “Remember how much I love you Reagan.”

“With all my heart.” Reagan answered for her, and Belle sent a flicker of a smile in his direction. He leaned down to place a soft kiss on her lips, their tongues barely meeting as they closed their eyes in their embrace.

After they parted Belle looked up at him beneath her dark lashes, “I love you Reagan. Let’s do this for our family? Please?”

“How could I deny you anything my dear Belle.” He said before leaning down to place more chaste nips to her lips. When Belle began to giggle and playfully tease him Baeden cleared his throat, getting the attention of the couple fooling around in his new apartment.

“Sorry Baeden...” Reagan started awkwardly, but couldn’t quite find a way to continue, let alone end the conversation he had just about started.

“I have a feeling I’ll have to get used to that.”

“If it makes you feel any better Baeden,” Belle began, “no one else in Storybrooke has quite gotten used to it yet either.”

“I can imagine.” Baeden’s face flickered into a look of disgust, thinking about his father being so affectionate with a woman. His father had changed in so many ways, and Bae knew that most of it was because of Belle. He only feared that if the couple split up his father would be absolutely ruined, and their father son relationship would no doubt suffer the consequences. Baeden realised that it was his father he should be worried about, not Belle. His Papa was a vulnerable man. It made Bae smile, thinking that there was a women who would allow his Papa to finally be himself again, to be the good father he was to him when he was a small boy. “Since you’re on board for Thanksgiving dinner now Papa, perhaps we could invite a few more guests?” Baeden suggested casually while his father’s concentration was distracted by Belle’s lips trailing along the stubble on his jaw line. But even Belle’s sweet lips couldn't distract Reagan from the panic that was rising up in his body at his son’s suggestion.

“What was that Bae?” Reagan asked, clearing his throat and turning around to face his son, his grip on Belle’s waist slipping so that it snaked around her back and brought her to stand beside him, facing his son.

“I said, since you’re on board for Thanksgiving dinner now, we might as well invite a few more guests.”

“No.” Reagan denied quickly, not even thinking about his son's proposition.

“Come on Reagan.” Belle pulled lightly on his arm, smiling hopefully.

Reagan raised his voice, “I said no! Not again!”
“Papa you didn’t even—”

“No! It’s my home and I’m the one with the power to make decisions here. I’ve already opened it up to Belle’s insolent friends and the insufferable gossip’s of this judgemental town. I will not subject myself to any more unnecessary torment for the pleasure of others.”

Belle looked incredibly hurt as she turned her head to look up at Reagan. His teeth were snarled, and the lines of his face were twisted with distaste. Belle felt the tears begin to form in her eyes, letting his words sink into her heart. Reagan had said he wanted to know Belle’s friends, to know her family, that he was serious about a future with her. Yet he still couldn’t stand them. It made Belle wonder if his feelings for her were really true, or if he was just an excellent liar. Perhaps everything she had every tried to do for him was all a mistake, and he really was just going to hurt her in the end.

Belle let go of Reagan’s waist, bringing her hand to her cheek to stop a trailing tear before her emotions became to noticeable. She crossed between the boys, her heels clanking on the hardwood floors as she raced to the front door of the apartment.

“Belle sweetheart, what’s wrong?” Reagan asked after her, his brow furring as confusion swept over him.

Belle’s heels echoed down the staircase as she raced outside of the apartment, not stopping despite Reagan’s please.

“Nicely done dad.” Baeden scoffed, shaking his head as he was unsurprised by his father's actions, this was more of the man he had known in their last year as a family.

“What did I do?”

Baeden raised his voice, his finger pointing after Belle. “All that girl wants with you is a future, and a chance to feel like she might have a family! I don’t know much about her, but I get the sense she’s got some daddy issues—”

“Don’t you talk about her like that!” Reagan spat at his son.

“So it’s not okay for me to talk about Belle like that, but you can belittle her friends right in front of her. I’m guessing these very friends you find so insolent are probably the closest thing she’s ever had to a family! You’re a goddamn idiot dad!”

“Oh Bae.” Reagan broke down, his lip quivering as the realisation came over him. He had promised himself he would never hurt Belle, and yet it seemed to be the only thing he ever did to her. He was a difficult man to love, and he feared now that he had Belle’s love the harsh reality of being with him was finally going to scare her away. He had fucked it up again, just like he knew he would. He walked over the sofa - the one Belle had picked out for him - and sat down defeated.

Baeden looked at his father sympathetically. He rolled his eyes, “I’ll fix it dad.”

Before Reagan could protest Baeden had walked into the hallway, taking the stairs down two at a time before exiting into the communal parking lot. He found Belle leaning against the hood of the Cadillac, wiping her face with the back of her hand. When Bae walked over to the car, sitting next to Belle she turned her head away from him, hiding the tears.

“He’s an idiot you know.” Bae said, breaking the silence as he slipped his hands into the front pockets of his black jeans.
“Believe me, I know.” Belle said sadly, her accent lilting.

There was an agreement of silence between them as Belle composed herself and Baeden spoke, “Family been pretty shit for you?”

“My mother died when I was thirteen.”

“Guess we got something in common,” Baeden joked and Belle found herself laughing at Baeden’s remark. Bae had a magnificent quality about him. No matter how bleak things seemed his bright smile and wonderful sense of humour was strong enough to make anyone laugh.

“I’ve also got daddy issues too.” Belle countered, making it her turn to receive a chuckle from Bae. “My dad tries, he used to be there for me, but he’s got a bit of an alcohol problem.”

“My grandad too. Glad we never saw much of that bastard.” There was a small moment of silence again.

“I’m sorry about Henry, Bae. It must have been very difficult for you to find out like that.” Belle offered, changing the subject slightly. She realised she had never brought it up with Baeden before; taking care of Reagan and his relationship with his son seemed to be her first priority. Belle hadn’t even considered all that Bae was going through with his dad, his ex-girlfriend, and his new son!

“You have no idea.” Bae brought his hand to his face as he racked his hand through his hair in frustration.

“You’re doing the right thing though, with Emma, and for Henry.” Belle reassured him, gently placing her hand on his shoulder. “You’ll make a great dad.”

Bae smiled at her self consciously, “Really? You think so?”

“I do,” Belle smiled honestly.

There was a beat of silence as Belle’s hand slipped from Bae’s shoulder.

“You know Belle, he’s just going to do it again, disappoint you, hurt you. It’s just who he is.”

“I know.” Belle said regretfully, looking up in surprise as the door to the apartment complex opened and Reagan stepped out hesitantly. He looked over at Belle and his son, shifting the weight between his feet as he awkwardly waited for some sign that it was safe for him to approach.

Instead, Belle leaned up from the hood of the Cadillac, closing the distance between her and Reagan as she walked over to him. She took the step up onto the curb, her lip trembling as she caught his eyes. Her heart clenched and she found herself ready to cry as she reached out to him, wrapping her arms around his middle as she ducked her head against his chest.

“Oh Belle,” Reagan said as he opened up his arms for her, cradling her and squeezing her tightly to his chest, prepared to never let got. His cane dug into the small of her back as his fingers clenched into her blouse. He felt her chest heave against him, her breathing heavy as she clearly was trying to stop herself from crying. But judging by the dampness he felt on his chest she was losing the battle. “I’m so sorry luv.” He tucked her head under his chin, resting his own head against the top of hers, breathing in the sent of her curls as he cherished the moment with her, trying not to allow himself to cry either. He looked over at his son, finally understanding what was at stake here, and what was truly important to him. He didn’t care what the town thought, he didn’t care if they mocked him, if his privacy was taken; he only cared about Belle and his son. The rest were sacrifices he was willing to make, for them, for his family.
And that is why he had to say goodbye Belle.

No matter how much he loved her, no matter how much he wanted to be with her, she deserved so much more. She was young and adventurous and she shouldn’t be tied down to a monster like him. It was time to sacrifice his needs, for her happiness.

“He’s right Belle.” Reagan whispered. “I told you I would fuck this up, and it’s just the beginning.” Belle looked up at him in alarm. It was harder for Reagan to continue with her big blue eyes, glossy with tears, looking up at him, but he persevered; “A life with me is one full of endless disappointments. And despite what you hope, I haven't changed, I’m still broken. You can have a whole life without me, you shouldn’t be tied down to a monster like me, you should leave.”

Belle smiled, surprised by the small laugh that escaped her mouth. She slipped her arms from his body, bringing them up to his shoulder as she looked him in the eye. Her decision was easier to make then she had expected. “Don’t you see, that’s exactly the reason I have to stay.”

“I don’t deserve you Belle.” He whispered against her skin.

“No, you do not.” She chuckled, and seeing her face smile again made Reagan feel like everything was going to be alright.

“I love you more than anything.”

“I love you too.” She reached up and pecked his lips softly, “Even if you are an idiot.”

Reagan smiled, as he feigned mock hurt, “You wound me Miss French!” His playful antics making her smile grow wider. “You on the other hand have always been the brilliant one in this relationship.” Reagan said as he brought a hand to the side of Belle’s face, tucking a curl behind her ear.

“Flattery will not get you out of this Mr. Gold!”

“Can't a man try!”

And Belle hated herself for how easily she was smiling and laughing now. Reagan could certainly be a charmer when he wanted to be, and suddenly Belle began to realise how he and Baeden were much more alike than they perhaps thought.

Reagan finally brought the conversation back to the point that originated it’s destruction in the first place. “Belle, you could invite all of Storybrooke over to my house for all I care, as long as you and Baeden are there, that’s what is important to me.”

Belle smiled, pleased to see that he was brave enough to return to the mistake he had made. Despite what Reagan might think, it was clear that he had been changing since he met Belle. Before their liaison he would have never brought attention to a mistake he had made; he would have crafted the conversation in another direction, unsuspecting of the simpleton he was addressing. But now, Reagan was beginning to recognize when mistakes were made, and the importance of dealing with them.

“How about we just ease you into it?” Belle suggested.

“Come on dad?” Baeden joined in on the conversation he had previously been observing. He marvelled at how easily Belle was prepared to forgive him, and they had found a way to move forward in their relationship. Baeden certainly wished things would be that easy with Emma. Beaden spoke as he walked towards the couple, “We can invite Emma and Henry!”
Reagan smiled at his son, grateful for many things. “I would love to have your family join ours Bae.”

“And Regina!” Belle added unexpectedly, both boys looking at her uncertainty.

“I’m not having that evil women in my home!”

Belle raised her brow, Reagan was already walking on thin ice and now he was just making things worse for himself. “Come on Reagan, she isn’t what she seems. We have to give Regina a chance! She didn’t report us to human resources when she found us dry humping in the library!” - Baeden blushed uncomfortably - “And she’s been your grandson’s mother for twelve years of his life. Her and Henry have always been alone, and just because he has a family now doesn’t mean we should take Regina’s only family away from her. He is all Regina has, and vice versa for most of his life. They are family. We have to give them a chance.”

Reagan simply looked at her smiling, Belle always saw the best in everyone. He knew if Belle had never given him a chance, or rather multiple chances, then he would not have been reunited with his son or holding the woman he loves in his arm. Perhaps Regina deserved the chance as well.

“Very well. But only for you Belle.”

She smiled up at him, leaning forward to kiss him.

Baeden interrupted, “This means we should invite the Charmings too.”

“Oh God,” Reagan winced.

“Come on, it’ll be great dad! I’ll even help you and Belle out with dinner if I have to.”

Everyone was silent for a while as Reagan weighed the decision in his mind. He sighed heavily, “Alright Belle send out the invitations.”

Belle smiled, nearly jumping in Reagan’s arms. Bae too shared a small smile - he hadn’t been to a family dinner in at least fifteen years.

“Text me the details okay Belle?” Baeden asked and Belle nodded. Baeden moved forward, kissing Belle on her cheek before turning to his father, “You need to do better pops, treat her right.”

“Of course son.” Reagan nodded, before slipping his hand into the pocket of his suit jacket, “Here are the keys son.” He handed the apartment keys to his boy, trying not to smile as his son took them from him, a look of excitement on his face. “Oh and Miss Swan finishes her shift at six, it might be a good time to bump into her while getting your mail.”

Baeden laughed, a blush of embarrassment crossing his face, “Thanks dad.” He said before tapping his Papa on the shoulder and retreating into the apartment.

“I’m sorry Belle.” Reagan said again as they walked over the the Cadillac.

“Words only do so much Reagan, but actions speak volumes.”

“I understand Belle.” He said as he opened the passenger side door for her before entering the car himself and sighing heavily.

“It’s going to be alright Reagan.” Belle could sense his stress as he ran the palms of his hands over his thighs, brushing down his suit pants. Belle brought her hand to Reagan’s right, stilling his movements and forcing him to look into her eyes. “This is good Reagan. Baeden is opening up to
you - to me even! He wants to be a family again, and I think we deserve the chance at having a family.”

“But Belle, I’m just going to disappoint him, disappoint you-”

“You don't give yourself enough credit Reagan, you were a good father. You were young, only eighteen, and you walked on a broken foot for that boy, from the very day you found out your son was alive you fought for him. You've always fought for him, just like you fight for us. You are the bravest man I know Reagan Gold.”

“Belle-” Reagan looked as if he was about to cry but Belle cut him off with a kiss to his lips.

“I love you Reagan.”

“Oh my beautiful Belle. You're everything to me.”

Belle smiled as he leaned down to kiss her again. Every kiss felt like magic, no matter how many times he tasted her lips. He felt shocks through his body and an extra beat to his heart.

“Thank you for Thanksgiving. I promise I'll make it up to you.”

“Believe me Belle, if anyone has things to make up it’s me, and I’m going to endeavour to make it up to you.”

“Thank you Reagan.”

“Now, let’s take you home.” Reagan said as he started the car and the two drove off together.
Chapter Summary

Reagan tries to make things up to Belle.

Chapter Notes

This one is particularly sweet if I do say so myself.

“Words can be twisted into any shape. Promises can be made to lull the heart and seduce the soul. In the final analysis, words mean nothing. The wisest man is the silent one. Examine his actions. Judge him by them.”

— Karen Marie Moning

Actions spoke louder than words. And Reagan was definitely taking action in order to make it up to Belle. He had treated her to breakfast at Granny’s every morning before work. He was even bold enough to invite Moe to their breakfast on Wednesday morning.

As much as Reagan didn’t like the man, Moe was Belle’s father, and the connection was important to her. If Reagan was being honest he had even noticed an improvement in Moe; it had been at least a week since the overgrown man had resorted to a trip to the Rabbit Hole. If Moe could make improvements for his daughter, then Reagan could certainly welcome the man into the future he and Belle were hoping to build together.

Not only was he treating his girlfriend to breakfast, but everyday at lunch he would take a short trip to her father's store and return to work with a single flower for Belle to display in her library. On Monday it was a purple hyacinth to show regret and sadness, because Reagan regretted nothing more than hurting Belle. On Tuesday it was a red rose to symbolize his love for her. Wednesday - with the guidance of Moe - he gave her an unusual blue aster, to symbolize her intelligence, beauty, and her ability to drive away evil through her light. On Thursday it was a simple daisy to represent stability and reliability, which Reagan pledged to her from this day forward.

By mid week Mr. Gold’s flower tradition had become gossip throughout the whole school, and by Wednesday many students had shown up just to see which flower Mr. Gold would bring the librarian and how she would react to it. Wednesday had been a particularly good day, the simple flower nearly leaving their librarian in tears of joy.

The grand display of affection had also made its way to staff, leaving Mary Margaret very curious to interrogate Belle.

Everyone was expecting something very large for Friday; it was the last day of the week and Mr.
Gold had told some of his students - who asked in class despite his pleas to stay on topic - that it would be the last day of his romantic gesture towards their little librarian.

The bell above ‘Game of Thrones’ chimed as Reagan limped towards the glass counter, the cumbersome Moe French teetering atop a wooden stool by the cash register.

“Mr. Gold,” Moe said cordially as he stood up, “I see my girl hasn’t forgiven you yet. What’ll it be today?”

“I’ve told you Moe she’s already forgiven me, I’m just continuing to pursue my romantic gesture, and let the flowers speak for me.”

Moe grumbled, as much as he promised he would support Belle’s decision in suitor, when the opportunity arose he certainly rooted for Mr. Gold to mess up - hoping that Belle would finally come to her senses. However, he didn’t want to see Belle get hurt, and he was starting to understand that although Reagan might make some mistakes along the way, and cause his girl to shed a few tears, nothing would hurt her more then if he had left her altogether.

“Alright then Mr. Gold what’ll it be today? It’s the last day of your little plan isn’t it? I bet today’s got to be a special one.”

“It does Moe.” Reagan said as he looked around the shop, hoping to see the flower he wanted growing in one of Moe’s garden pots. “I was hoping you might have a soft pink peony?”

Moe’s face blanched. “I...I do,” he stuttered, disappearing into the back greenhouse and returning moments later with a small, and still blooming light pink peony.

It was perfect.

The crook at the corner of Reagan’s mouth expanded into a smile, his golden tooth glinting with lust as he took in the beautiful flower. “It’s perfect,” he whispered, feeling a twinge of nerves rise up in his lower stomach.

Moe wasn’t the smartest of men, even he knew that, but if there was one thing he knew, it was flowers, and he had gotten the meaning of a peony right away. “Reagan…” Moe began, unceremoniously using Mr. Gold’s given name, “Do you really mean it? I mean to say, was all this part of your plan? Are you really asking her to be your wife?”

Reagan looked up at Moe, his dark brown eyes wavering in front of the larger man for the first time in his life.

The peony symbolized a happy marriage.

“It’s too soon, I know that Moe, but I...I just wanted to find a way to let her know…” He started stumbling on his words as he tried to express his feelings to Moe, “I know I’ve made a mistake, and I know I will continue to make more of them, she has to understand that, but I also want her to understand that I’m still here, I’m still trying, that I’ll never stop fighting for her. I suppose, this flower is a promise, which I hope we can one day achieve.”

The flower shop was silent except for the humming coming from the back of the greenhouse. Moe French looked at Reagan Gold, and for the first time ever he began to think of him as a future son in law. Moe mentally shuddered at the thought.

“I don’t think you need the flowers to speak for yourself Reagan. You did a fine job of expressing your feelings just then.”
Reagan’s eyebrows raised in shock. “I’m not accustomed to it.” He began to defend himself necessarily, feeling slightly awkward from Moe’s reassurance.

“No shit you aren’t.” Moe teased, and Reagan’s tense body relaxed, things were shifting back to normal. “If anyone could make you remember you had a heart it’s my Belle. Just promise me one thing,” Moe began to add as he wrapped a ribbon around the potted flower - it was the only one in a pot Reagan had purchased, as the flower was still growing. “Promise me, you won't let her think you’re offering her something and then disappoint her. My Belle’s smart, she’ll know the meaning the minute she sees this flower, you have to be honest with her.”

“I promise Moe. The next time I come to your shop requesting a peony my intentions towards your daughter will be very clear.”

“Good,” Moe paused as he typed into the cash register the appropriate fee for the flower. “Now, Belle tells me we are having thanksgiving dinner at your house? What is that all about?” He handed the debit machine over to Mr. Gold as they breached the new discussion topic.

Reagan winced slightly as he took out his debit card, “Yes, Belle has invited you to thanksgiving dinner at my home. She wishes for you to meet my son Baeden.”

“Right your son. He’s the one who knocked up Emma right?” Moe said casually, and rather indelicately, as he pulled the receipt out from the cash register.

“Yes.” Reagan ground his teeth, hoping to still sound cordial as he took the larger man’s blatant teasing.

“So then Henry, I guess, he’s a...he’s your grandson isn’t he?”

“Yes Moe, how observant of you.”

Moe made a sound of acknowledgement and Reagan picked up the potted flower, preparing to head out of the shop. Just when Reagan thought Moe was finished, the blubering walrus opened his big mouth again. “You don’t think it’s unusual that you’re asking my twenty-five year old daughter to accept a son, older than her, and a grandchild half her age into her life?”

Reagan sighed, he knew Moe was going to take every opportunity to remind Reagan of this, he wouldn’t be surprised if he repeated this conversation at thanksgiving dinner, in front of an audience this time.

“Yes, Moe it is rather unusual, but everything about my life has been unusual. I never expected to become a father at eighteen - only to lose my son - or to become a grandfather eighteen years after the fact. And I most certainly never expected to fall in love for the first time in my life at forty-eight years old. But your daughter Belle is a strange, but special woman.” Reagan finished proudly, knowing he had certainly shut Moe up as he turned around to exit the flower shop victorious.

“I look forward to dinner!” Moe called out after him as Reagan Gold left the flower shop to go and find his special librarian.

Reagan was nervous. He wasn’t exactly certain what he was going to say to Belle. He only hoped
that she dreamed of similar things when she thought about their future together.

His cane tapped heavily against the ceramic tiles, a train of students following behind him the moment they had seen him walking through the halls with a new potted flower in hand. Reagan ran a hand through his hair before clearing his throat and grabbing hold of the door to the library.

When he opened the door the library went silent and all eyes fell on him - more students had been spending their lunch periods in the library when they heard about Mr. Gold and Miss French’s courtship.

Reagan was pleased to find Belle’s blue eyes waiting for him, her face flushing the moment she took him in, his hands and his flower hidden behind his back as he walked towards the circulation desk. Belle bit down on her bottom lip, anticipation mounting within her as she smiled at her boyfriend.

“Good afternoon Reagan.” She whispered as he came to a stop in front of the desk.

“Hello Belle.” He said just as quietly - using first names was typically avoided at school.

A couple young girls who were seated behind Reagan began whispering as they gossiped about the flower they could see behind his back. Paige elbowed one of the talking girls in her stomach and a sudden hush fell over the library again as they all waited for Mr. Gold to make his move.

“What have you brought for me today Mr. Gold?” Belle asked warmly.

Reagan took a deep breath, “Today I come to you with not only a flower, but also a promise.”

Belle was listening intently, her heart beating quickly as her breath stilled.

“I hope that our relationship will be able to endeavour through any kind of hardship, including the mistakes that I know I am bound to make. But I promise you, I’ve learned what is important to me, and now that I’ve found it, I promise that I will never stop fighting for it Belle. I hope this flower will one day represent our future together, if you’ll have me.” With his sweet words finished Reagan pulled out the peony from his back and placed the pot on the counter, pushing it towards the young lady who held his heart in her hand.

“Reagan…” Belle whispered, absolutely speechless as she reached shaking hands out towards the infant peony. He could tell by the look in her eye that she was absolutely shocked, and still not clear as to his meaning of the flower.

“It’s a promise Belle, one I hope you hold me to. I have never been more certain about anything in my life.”

“Oh Reagan,” she reached out grabbing his hand as the tears began to build up in her eyes.

“I promise you, the next time I bring you a peony, I will be asking for your hand.” He brought the hand holding his own up to his lips and gave it a gentle kiss.

Belle’s chest heaved as the tears slipped down her cheek. Several gasps were heard around them, accompanied by a few aww’s from the nosey students. A silent laugh fell from Belle’s lips as she tightened her grip on Reagan’s hand for support. Reagan leant his cane against the counter as he brought his second hand up to wipe the tears from her face.

“Kiss her Mr.Gold!” A yell came from the back wall of the library near the computers.

Reagan turned around, trying to hide his blush. Kissing during the middle of the work day was very
against the rules - then again so was fucking on one of the desks in his classroom. When a chorus of students cheering for him to “kiss her” came ringing out he smiled at Belle, shrugging his shoulders before she smiled back and nodded. Reagan leaned forwards over the counter, Belle doing the same, as they tilted their heads to allow their lips to slowly meet. The kiss was short, but very tender, as he tasted her lips and the tears of joy trickling down her cheeks. An outcry of applause was heard by the students as the teacher and librarian embraced, finally parting with a smile and a blush.

“I’ll see you later tonight?” Reagan asked quietly.

“Of course. I love you!” Belle whispered into his ear before she released him, allowing him to lean back over the counter and take his cane in hand.

Reagan mouthed ‘I love you too’ before he turned around to leave the library and head back to his classroom - his heart bursting with glee.

Belle smiled widely, her face was no doubt going to hurt later she was grinning so much. She placed the potted peony right beside the vase containing the other four flours Reagan had bought her. They had stayed well nourished, but she knew they wouldn’t last over the weekend. She planned to press them into a book for safekeeping, to ensure she would always have them. Fortunately, the young peony plant was planted and it was going to last her a while longer. Belle smiled thinking to herself - Reagan Gold had promised to marry her and her heart was soaring.

* *

“So what did he get you this time?” Mary Margaret asked before Belle even had the opportunity to sit down in the chair in front of Mary Margaret’s desk.

“He promised to marry me.” Belle said in disbelief, causing Mary Margaret to choke on the water she was drinking, as well as causing Will to open up his office door and stick his head out.

“He what?” They said, practically in unison.

“He gave me a peony, it means a happy marriage, or a long lasting relationship.”

“Wait Belle was this a proposal?” Mary Margaret asked for clarity, recognizing the grandness in his week-long romantic gesture.

“No, it was more of a promise. A way to say sorry and assure his commitment.” Belle smiled, “No one’s ever done something so romantic for me before.”

“Oh Belle!” Mary Margaret exclaimed, taking the younger girl’s hand in her own as Belle blushed. “I’m so pleased for you darling! It looks like Storybrooke might be getting a second wedding, that is after you and Ana finally take your vows.” Mary Margaret said towards Will who had now ventured over to the secretary’s desk.

“Am I ever going to get my invitation?” Belle teased as Will rolled his eyes.

“I told you ladies the invites are coming, but Ana insisted on writing them all by hand.”

“I think that’s very sweet of her, makes everything more personal.” Mary Margaret said dreamily, she was big fan of weddings and romance.
“Yeah but it means we’ve only got like a month before the wedding!”

Belle was surprised by how genuinely worried Will sounded. He was such a laid back guy, this behaviour was quite out of the norm for him.

“Don’t worry Will, everyone you’ve planned on inviting - not to mention everyone in Storybrooke, courtesy of Granny’s gossip - already knows the wedding date.” Belle reassured the lanky man.

“I guess you’re right Belle.” He sighed, it was rather sweet that Will was so concerned about the wedding planning process. Belle knew he and Ana were going to be very happy together. “So Belle, I guess this means you’ll be bringing a plus one?”

“You don’t mind do you Will?” Belle’s face crinkled with concern. “I know he’s not everyone’s first choice but -”

“Oh sod off Belle!” Will immediately cut off her pessimistic train of thought. “You really think I would tell you you couldn’t bring the love of your life to my wedding!”

Belle smiled gratefully at Will.

“Besides Belle, you and Gold are going to need to pay close attention if you’ve got your own wedding to plan soon.” Mary Margaret teased, nudging her friend with her elbow playfully.

“Mary Margaret! It’s just a promise. Don’t you go gossiping about this to Emma and Ruby, or I’ll never hear the end of it!” Belle squealed, knowing this was the kind of gossip that ran rampant in Storybrooke.

Unexpectedly Regina Mills’ head popped out of her glass encased office. “Miss French,” Regina began with a thinly raised dark brow in Belle’s direction, “Belle do you want to tell me what it is I hear about you and Mr. Gold French kissing in the library?”

Will stifled the urge to laugh while Mary Margaret blanched, taking the threatening tone in Regina’s voice seriously. Belle however blushed profusely, recognizing the playful teasing in Regina’s stare. Ironically, it was often a look she might have received from Reagan.

“I’m afraid your sources might be over exaggerating the truth Principle Mills.” Belle began, playing along with the woman who had recently revealed more of her caring and playful personality in light of Baeden’s return to Storybrooke. Then Belle continued on a more serious tone, “But I assure you it won’t happen again.”

“Pitty.” Regina said rather uncharacteristically. “I was rather looking forward to teasing Gold for his sappy romantic behaviour.”

And this time Will did find himself muffling a laugh.

“By the way Regina, I haven’t heard back from you with regards to Thanksgiving?” Belle brought up, more confident than she had expected to sound in regards to inviting her boss, and her almost family, to Thanksgiving dinner at her boyfriends, who also happened to be her co-workers, house.

“Henry and I would be happy to come. I trust it’s fine if I bring dessert?”

Belle smiled, “That would be quite helpful Regina, thank you.”

“Don’t mention it dear, my apple turnovers are quite famous, aren’t they Mary Margaret?”
The younger woman froze, as a young girl she had often fancied that Regina had poisoned the apples she used to make her turnovers. Now the thought seemed silly, especially after what Mary Margaret had learned Regina had done for Emma in the past twelve years.

As if the clever woman could read Mary Margaret's mind Regina spoke up, “Relax dear, it’s not as if I’m going to poison them!” And with a sly red lipped smile, Regina retreated into her office, not denying of the fact that she still took pleasure in watching those afraid of her squirm.

“You realise this dinner is going to be a disaster.” Mary Margaret said quietly to Belle as the three co-workers quietly began to eat their lunches.

“I think you might be right M.” Belle said, acknowledging her doubt for the evening out loud for the first time. “But we have to at least try. Don’t we? It’s for our families after all?”

Mary Margaret smiled, “You know what, you’re so sweet Belle. I think Mr. Gold is very lucky to have you.”

And Belle blushed happily, thinking about Mr. Gold, the beautiful flowers he had brought her, and the actions he was taking to prove his love to her.

*[ ]*

The moment Reagan had come to the library to take her home that night Belle ran straight toward him - as much as she could in her heels - and wrapped her arms around his neck as her lips smashed against his. Reagan chuckled through the embrace, even laughing as she slipped her tongue into his mouth. It was perhaps the messiest kiss they had ever shared, but it was perfect.

“Thank you Reagan.” She said after their lips parted, and she gained her balance, looking up at him with her watery blue eyes.

“For what my dear?”

“Yes you said you were going to make mistakes, I might even make a few of them too, but you are working to correct them. And that’s more than any man in my life has ever done for me. So, thank you for making me feel like my affection is worth it.”

Reagan felt his heart tear at the seams, hearing his sweet girl speak so melancholy when he knew she was far better than he ever deserved. He brought his hand up to her check, smiling at her sweetly, as he often did in her presence.

“Oh Belle. It is more than worth it to me sweetheart. It is my everything.”

And it was Belle’s turn to smile up at him, trying not to betray the tears she felt stinging her eyes. “Thank you Reagan,” she whispered.

“No, thank you Belle.”

He said reverently before leaning down to gently ease his lips upon her own. They held each other in an embrace momentarily, before Belle cleared her throat and pulled herself together, she had had a very emotional week - or perhaps a rather emotional month all together.
“Well, now that that’s settled, I must invite myself over to your house Saturday, and Saturday night.”

“I beg your pardon dearie?” He teased, his lip quirking at her playfully.

“Oh stop it Reagan.” Belle scolded him as she grabbed her coat and her purse while continuing, “We need to get the groceries Saturday so we can start cooking and prepping for Sunday. I think you underestimate how large of an endeavour we’ve gotten ourselves into!” Belle said with a bit of a smile and a laugh as she took Reagan's outstretched arm and they walked towards the library door.

“You mean, you’ve gotten ourselves into.” He teased under his breath as he opened the door for her and this time Belle just rolled her eyes at him before giving him a stone cold stare.

“Besides, Reagan I have a surprise planned for Saturday night that I don’t think you’ll want to miss out on.”

“Oh really now?” He said, with a tone of voice hinting he was more interested in where this aspect of the conversation was going. “Then I should look forward to having you over Saturday, and having you in my bed all of Saturday evening.”

Belle chuckled as he snarled at her like a hungry predator and tickled her sides before crushing her body to his in a binding kiss. She couldn’t wait for Saturday night.
I Owe You

Chapter Summary

Belle gives Reagan a belated birthday present ;)

“A promise made is a debt unpaid”
— Robert W. Service

“Why on earth did we need a squash?” Reagan asked as he unpacked the vegetable and placed it on the marble counter.

“Because Reagan,” Belle said as if the answer was obvious, “some people like squash and it is a traditional thanksgiving vegetable.”

“But one squash isn’t enough for the number of guests we’re having – given how large my family has recently become.” Reagan said, trying not to roll his eyes.

“I’m just trying to provide a variety Reagan.” Belle said as she stood on her tiptoes to put something away on a high shelf.

“All I’m saying is, did we really need to spend nearly four hundred dollars on groceries!” Belle bit the bottom of her lip, “Well, probably not, no. But I just want this to go well! It’s the first time our families have ever had a gathering of some sorts.”

Reagan sighed. “I just don’t want you to be disappointed Belle, if it doesn’t all work out.”

Belle’s lips pulled up at the corner, turning into a small smile. She loved that Reagan cared so much about her feelings. “I promise I won’t be too upset if it doesn’t go well.” She bridged the gap between them and grabbed the lapels of his jacket, pulling him towards her. “And even if everything goes poorly, I know you’ll be there to make me feel better,” she teased seductively.

Reagan captured her lips with a quick kiss. “Aren’t we supposed to begin cooking for tomorrow?” his brow was raised playfully in question.

“Just give me a minute,” she flirted before pressing her lips against his own and capturing a few more kisses.

Despite the wandering hands and eager lips the pair did in fact manage to cook many of the vegetables, prep the turkey, and even bake a few deserts for tomorrow. Having majority of the food prepared would hopefully make Sunday less stressful for the pair of them, and Reagan knew Belle would be plenty stressed, hoping everything went perfectly and the relatively new family members got along. But Reagan knew better.

“So, when am I going to be getting that surprise?” Reagan asked Belle as they sat before the fireplace in the sitting room that evening. After spending all day cooking they had decided to order in
some pizza for dinner, the half empty box left forgotten in the kitchen as they retreated to the cozier sitting room.

Belle chuckled, setting down her book. “I wondered when you would remember that.”

“I have an excellent memory dearie, I never forget.”

Belle smiled, standing up from the couch. “It’s true, I have a surprise for you,” Belle said as she walked towards Reagan who was sitting in his armchair. Reagan spread his leg’s slightly, inviting her to stand between them. “I know how much you like your deals, and I realised that I am indebted to you.”

Reagan looked at her in genuine confusion. “You are?” he asked, not understanding her game. “You now Belle I would never hold you to any sort of –”

“I owe you,” she said, cutting him off.

“You do?”

“Yes. I believe I still owe you that birthday sex.”

Reagan swallowed, feeling his cock twitch at the prospect of being buried within her. He took a long drawn out breath, trying to cool his libido.

“Yes well, the first surprise you gave me did put a bit of a damper on our sex life,” he winced. “But I suppose that’s children for you.” He added jokingly and Belle laughed out loud.

“Well,” she said when the laughter had begun to subside. “I think I’ve planned something you’ll like to make up for it.” She said as she grabbed his tie and encouraged him to follow her upstairs.

“And what might that be?” He asked as he allowed her to lead him up the stairs, his cane clanking against the hardwood.

Belle turned around, sending him a wily grin before leading them into his bedroom. Belle stopped them at the foot of his bed, turning around to face him, and pulling down on his tie. Reagan could feel it pull against the back of his neck, and he would be lying if it wasn’t making his cock swell.

Belle stood onto her tiptoes, her mouth a breath away from Reagan’s as she whispered, “I’m going to let you tie me up and have your wicked way with me.”

Reagan stared at her in shock. “Tie you up?”

“Wrists, tied to the bedposts with your ties.” She emphasized her point by wrapping the fine silk of his tie around her wrist and tugging his neck down until she could capture his lips in a kiss.

Reagan dropped his cane and his hands went to her waist, digging into the fabric of her dress as Belle dipped her tongue into her mouth. Images of her tied to his bed moaning flashed through his mind, making him pull her body against his, giving him something to rub his hard cock against.

“Are you sure Belle?” he asked as his hands slid under the hem of her dress, cupping her ass and directing the movements of her body against his.

“I want you to be able to have your way with me,” she blushed. “It was supposed to be one of your birthday presents.”

“Does that mean I get to unwrap you first?” He asked with a knowing glint in his dark eyes.
Belle nodded shyly, untangling herself from his tie and taking a step back. The loss of contact allowed Reagan to gain control over his arousal, although having Belle stare at the hard line of his cock was not helping him.

Instead he looked up to focus on her blue eyes, the action making her meet his gaze. Her eyes were soft and trusting, her cheeks a blossoming pink, and her lips moist. He brought a weathered hand up to her collarbone, tracing over the smooth flesh, feeling the divots and curves of her body with a gentle touch. His hand’s found his way to her back, easily unzipping the zipper of her dress without even having to turn her around. His fingertips brushed over her shoulders, encouraging the dress down as it fell to her waist. Reagan had to pull slightly on the fabric to get it over her hips, before it dropped to the floor at her feet.

“My, Miss French, did you plan this?” Reagan asked teasingly when he saw her underwear and bra, both were covered in little black bows.

Belle wasn’t sure why, but she chuckled, he just had an easy ability to make her smile.

She collected herself before responding seductively, “Why yes, Mr. Gold I did.”

“What a naughty little fox you are.”

He smashed his lips against her own, slipping his tongue inside her mouth. He enjoyed the taste of her, the hint of pumpkins from the pie they had made that Belle insisted upon taste testing. He trailed hot kisses down her neck, tasting the salt on her skin, his fingers unhooking her bra. He quickly went to her nipple, his tongue dancing around her areola’s before flicking the hard nub with his tongue.

Belle rewarded him by lacing her fingers in his hair, grooming his scalp as he teased her breasts. It was like her nipples were connected to her pussy, like they were tied together by an incredibly tight string; every time Reagan bit down on her nipple the stinging sensation would go right to her clit. And her clit was feeling neglected.

“Will you touch my pussy?” Belle asked as she pressed a kiss to the top of Reagan’s head.

He dropped her breast, his chest restricted from lack of breath. “I thought I was the one in charge here tonight.” He ran a finger down her breast bone, stopping at her belly button. “I thought you were my present?”

“I am! But I just desperately need your fingers on my clit.”

“What?” he teased.

“Because I want to come, please Reagan.”

Reagan pulled away from her body with a smirk, his hands going to his suit jacket and removing it from his shoulders. “You realise once I tie you up I could use you all night. I could bring you to the edge of release, only taking my pleasure from your body when I needed it.”

Belle felt like a stone dropped into the pit of her stomach, her arousal burning within her belly. “But you won’t do that Reagan.” She said confidently, even if the thought of it aroused her beyond measure.

“That’s right sweetheart,” he whispered as he moved to stand behind Belle, his fingers undoing the buttons on his waistcoat. He leaned his chest into her back, his lips brushing the outside of her ear. “I’m going to tie you to my bed and worship you.” He smiled, feeling Belle squirm against him as she leaned into his chest. “I’m going to make you come so many times your cunt will be sore.”
“Holy fuck,” Belle reached behind her, gripping onto Reagan’s thigh for support. She felt dizzy with lust, and craving his sinful words.

“Get on the bed.” He instructed, rolling up the sleeves of his dress shirt. There was something incredibly erotic to him about staying dressed, while Belle was naked and laid bare for him in her bow tie panties. “Do you have a preference to which ties I use to tie you to my bed posts?” he asked with a wicked smirk, bending down to the floor to pick up his forgotten cane.

“Any ones you aren’t particularly worried about ruining.” Belle said with a smile as she adjusted herself on the bed, leaning into the pillows in order to get comfortable; she suspected she was going to be here for a while if Reagan had anything to say about it.

Reagan walked into the walk-in closet, pulling out the draw that contained his ties. He pulled one out, figuring the one around his neck would do for the second tie before walking back into his bedroom. He smiled seeing Belle laid out on his bed. He walked towards her left hand, leaning his cane against his thigh as he brought the tie to her wrist.

“Let me know if it’s too tight.” He said as he tied one end of the tie to the corner of his four poster and the other end to her wrist. He adjusted the tie, making sure the knot wouldn’t rub against her skin. “How’s that?”

“Excellent.” Belle responded, tugging on the restraints to demonstrate her point. It felt conflicting, having the soft silk rub against her skin, but also prevent her from moving.

Meanwhile Reagan walked to the other end of the bed, fiddling with the knot of his tie at his neck and pulling the material lose. He tied up her second arm and set his cane against the nightstand before crawling onto the bed. He knelt by Belle’s side, smiling sinfully as she spread her legs and allowed him to nestle between her thighs.

“Don’t you look delicious.” He said as he leaned forward, his thumb coming out to press against her panties.

Belle moaned out, squirming immediately under his touch, her hips rising off the mattress.

“Hush, keep still.” Reagan instructed as he pressed down on her hip with his free hand. “Don’t make me tie up your feet as well.”

Belle nodded frantically, even though he knew he could never tie her feet to the bed, she was too short and none of his ties were long enough. But she headed his warning regardless, stilling her hips as he continued to rub her clit through the panties.

“My, what pretty little panties,” he breathed, bending down towards her mound.

Belle could feel his warm breath against the damp fabric of her panties. She closed her eyes, silently pleading that he would properly touch her soon.

“And these sweet little bows. I could just eat you up.”

Belle groaned as she felt Reagan press his mouth against her mound. She could feel him press his tongue against her covered opening, trying to dip the moist muscle into her clothed pussy. The damp friction felt foreign to Belle, but his nose kept nudging at her clit and she could feel herself pulling against the tie restraints.

“It’s not enough Reagan please!” Belle begged as he sucked the material of her panties into his mouth. It made Belle tingle with anticipation.
“Please what?” he asked, moving his mouth away from her mound as his thumb gently traced her clit.

“It’s not enough to come. I need your fingers, your tongue, anything! I just need it inside me!”

Reagan smiled sinfully, reaching to the waistband of Belle’s panties before swiftly pulling them off her.

Reagan dropped his mouth to Belle’s pussy immediately and she wanted nothing more than to reach out and bury her hand in his hair - but she couldn’t. She simply pulled harder against the bedpost, hoping the knot on the tie might slip lose.

“You’re tied up for a reason Belle,” Reagan said, his breath ghosting over her folds as he raised a scolding brow at her.

Belle let out a throaty moan, that was the kind of look he sent misbehaving students in his classroom, and by Gods if Belle didn’t want him to punish her right now.

“Please Reagan!” she felt her thighs shaking, her body so desperately wanting an end to this sweet torture.

Gold buried his tongue inside her, his fingers thrusting against her clit. His movements were fast, and sloppy, but it was just the type of touch Belle needed when she was trying overly hard to come.

“Relax sweetheart,” he cooed softly, a complete contrast to the image of his lips covered in her juices and his tongue flicking about inside her.

Belle closed her eyes and allowed her body to relax. She gripped tightly on the tie restraints for support, for once glad that they were there. She focused on her breathing and the sensations she was feeling between her legs and then she began to feel the final waves mount.

“Don’t stop! I’m close! I’m going to come, just don’t stop!” she repeated, her voice hoarse from saliva and her eyes tightly closed.

When she came it felt like the orgasm lasted an unusually long time, riding out the ripples of pleasure before she came crashing down, hard.

In the time it took her chest to stop heaving Reagan had stripped off his shirt and his pants. She watched with watery eyes as he stepped out of his boxer briefs and knelt on the bed. She could feel the mattress dip as he settled himself where he wanted.

Belle hummed as he traced his length through her folds, thrusting against her lips just to enjoy the sensation. It always turned him on, watching his shaft slip through her wet lips, they way they would fold over him at moments, as if her body was reaching out for him wanting to wrap him into her body.

He slowly sank inside of her, watching himself disappear before his pubic bone was flesh with her mound. He loved the way Belle’s eyes flashed as he sank deeper, he could always read the expression of being filled on her face. He leaned over her body, grabbing her thigh and hooking her leg over his shoulder. Belle groaned out as he slipped deeper with his next thrust, rocking into her body and hitting that spot firmly inside of her that made her feel bliss.

“You’re so deep!”

“Do you like this Belle? Being tied up; at my mercy; my cock deep inside of you?”
“Fuck, yes, I like it! I need it! Harder Reagan.”

Reagan sped up his thrusts, his hips smacking into her harder. He brought his lips to her neck, panting hot and heavy breath into her skin. He could feel her undulating her hips, raising up to meet his thrusts - his girl was trying to make herself come again as he fucked her.

He pinched a breast with one of his free hands, his other hand reaching up to grab at the tie on the bedpost; he used the tie as leverage, plunging into her even harder. Soon Belle was crying out as she clamped around him, the ferocity of her orgasm making her to cry real tears.

Reagan toppled after her six thrusts later, flooding her channel with heat as the last contractions fluttered to a stop. He pushed her leg from his shoulder and Belle winced, feeling the soreness in her leg from being bent and flexed. Reagan then brushed away the trail of tears at her cheeks before nearly collapsing on top of Belle’s chest.

She didn’t mind the heavy weight of Reagan as he lay down on her, his head tucked into her neck. They lay like that for several minutes until Reagan finally shifted, rolling to lay beside Belle, although much lower then her on the bed due to her restraints. That was when Belle first noticed the ache in her arms. Her wrists were not sore from the ties, more so, her arms were sore from being restrained in the same position. As if sensing her discomfort Reagan had sat up to examine her wrists.

“Are they sore?” He asked as his warm hands checked her bindings.

“No, my arms are just tired.”

“Good,” he responded with a snarky quirk to the corner of his mouth.

“Good?”

“Yes, I want you to remember this for weeks.”

Belle licked her lips, noticing the way his eyes ran down her body.

“And I’m not even finished with you yet.”

“You aren’t?” she asked, feeling like her body might already explode from exhaustion.

“Oh, no sweetheart, I’m still going to play with my present.”

He demonstrated his point by trailing a finger down Belle’s check until it pulled down on her bottom lip. He sucked her plump lip into his mouth, rolling the flesh between his lips before giving it a sound love bite. His open mouthed kisses and nips moved down her body, his saliva mingling with her sweaty skin.

The gentle touch of his finger accompanied him, lightly running along her arms, encircling a nipple. The touch was so ginger that it sent goosebumps across Belle’s skin. He continued to tease her like that for nearly a half hour, spreading gentle kisses, and sweet caresses until Belle could feel her new sense of arousal dripping onto the bed sheets.

Finding a sense of mercy Reagan finally slipped a single finger inside of Belle, thrusting softly. His touch was not enough to make her come, he was just building her pleasure at an agonizingly slow pace.

Belle could hear herself whining as ten minutes past, then twenty, his finger still slowly fucking her. She didn’t have the energy to raise her hips off the mattress, she barely had the energy to beg him to
go faster. But he refused.

“Please Reagan, make me come.”

“Not yet,” he kissed her knee, “just enjoy it sweetheart.”

“I need to come! I might burst if you don’t let me.”

“Just enjoy yourself Belle.” He instructed, the rich tone of his voice dripping with sex. “Don’t you like having my finger inside of you?”

“Yes! I want more, please! Let me have your cock?” Her gaze fell towards his shaft, which was beginning to harden. “Let me please you.”

“You are pleasing me Belle. I enjoy teasing you.”

“Oh Gods!” Belle said in desperation, giving up convincing him to fuck her.

Instead she succumbed to his touches, her body burning as he continued to tease her. He must have been doing this for nearly an hour, slowly ebbing her towards an inevitable climax.

Part way through Belle began to notice that Reagan was stroking his erect shaft, the arousal having built up within him as well. She couldn’t reach out to stroke him, to make him desperate for her pussy, so instead she tried something else.

“I want you in my mouth? Can I suck your cock?”

“No.” He said firmly. “I like having you tied up.”

“You could leave me tied up, just fuck my mouth please.”

“Belle are you sure?”

“Yes, Reagan. I want to suck your cock.”

Reagan swallowed, feeling his balls pulse at just the thought of fucking her mouth into the mattress. He awkwardly rose up the bed until he straddled her chest, feeling her breasts against the undersides of his thighs before he moved up, close enough to her mouth. He rested one hand on the headboard, his other gripping his cock as he brought it towards Belle’s mouth.

“Fuck, you’re so hot,” he exclaimed as she opened her mouth to him, her tongue plump and wet, and just waiting for his cock.

He rested the head of his cock on the flat plane of her tongue before slowly rocking forward with his hips. His second hand immediately went to grip the headboard, his eyes closing as he slowly rocked himself in and out of Belle’s mouth. He wasn’t going particularly deep, fear of hurting her while she was tied up and underneath him too much of a factor to let him abandon all control.

It was so fucking hot, hips rocking as he made love to her mouth, his dick slipping into the warm wetness. Her breathing was coming out even harder than it usually did when she sucked him off, the fact that he was sitting on her chest and her arms were restrained probably had a lot to do with it.

Unintentionally he began to move a little faster, and Belle began to choke around his cock with the effort to breathe through his thrusts.
“Fuck!” Reagan cried, his knuckles turning white on the headboard. He wanted to go faster, he wanted to fuck her. Pulling out from Belle’s mouth he moved down her body, grabbing her hips and thrusting inside of her in one swift motion. His pace was fast and brutal as he pushed her body onto his cock.

But Belle took it all with a sense of smug satisfaction, her ploy had worked and now he was fucking her. She came almost immediately, having been teased for so long her body was desperate. But the ripples of pleasure didn’t stop after the orgasm, she could feel her body rising again as he still thrust inside of her, still hard and thick, and wanting.

She actually screamed through the second simultaneous orgasm, her arms feeling numb as she gripped his shaft. She was so tight he could barely pull out and he found himself coming embarrassingly quickly after that.

“Holy shit,” he breathed, his hands holding him up on either side of Belle as he softened within her. He stayed like that for as long as he could support his weight before he went to untie Belle’s hands and lay next to her on the bed.

“That was insane.” Belle finally said once the feeling had returned to her arms.

“It was certainly the best birthday present I’ve ever gotten.”

Belle laughed, moving into Reagan’s embrace as he wrapped an arm around her and forced her to snuggle into his chest.

“Happy belated birthday, my love.”

Reagan smiled. “Happy belated birthday indeed.”
A Family Affair

Chapter Summary

The big Thanksgiving Dinner has arrived!

Chapter Notes

This chapter did not turn out the way I expected it to; I sorta just followed the characters where they wanted to take it. I hope you enjoy, and that you and your families have a happy holidays!

Happy Reading Everybody!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“After a good dinner one can forgive anybody, even one’s own relations” -- Oscar Wilde A Woman of No Importance

“This was the stupidest idea I’ve ever had Reagan; what on earth convinced you to let me go through with this!” Belle panicked.

They only had two more hours until the family arrived for thanksgiving dinner. They had already spent the early hours of the morning cleaning the house and putting on the turkey; but the furniture, decorations, utensils, and food still needed to be prepped for everyone's arrival. And Belle was panicking.

“Calm down Belle, please. This is for our family remember. It’s our chance to build a proper family together.” Reagan placed a hand on the outside of Belle’s arm. “I need you to be brave for me Belle, you’ve always been the brave one.”

Belle blushed at his compliment. “You’re right,” she teased, pleased when she saw him fighting off a smile.

Just then there was a knock on the door.

“Thank God, it’s Bae.” Reagan noted as he peeked his head into the hallway and noticed his son's image through the stain-glassed window. “Maybe he will be able to calm you down.”

Belle rolled her eyes as Reagan let his son into the house, greeting him with an only slightly awkward side hug.

“She’s having second thoughts,” he whispered into his son’s ear before they parted.

“You can’t be Belle,” Bae said as he walked towards the younger woman. “You’re the only competent one among us!” he joked.
“I know,” Belle said as she bit her lip. “I think I just need to get some air before this anxiety swallows me up. Maybe I’ll just go for a quick walk?”

“Don’t forget your jacket,” Reagan said, by way of letting her know that if that’s what she needed to calm her mind than she should take the time for herself. “And be careful,” he added.

“I’ll be right back. Everything is in the fridge and I’ve made a list and a schedule, that’s on the fridge. Would you boys be able to get started? It would be a great help.”

“Of course Belle,” Bae said with a firm nod to his head, pleased when he saw Belle let out a breath. She seemed incredibly stressed.

I’ll go check out that list, he said as he walked into the kitchen, leaving his father to help Belle put on her coat.

“Take your time Belle and call me if you need anything. We’ll get started for you. Everything is going to be fine, I promise you,” he reassured her.

Belle put on her running shoes and headed out the door with a smile, purposefully leaving the two men alone to hopefully bond before the big dinner.

The boys began following Belle’s schedule. First they got out all of Reagan’s good utensils, crystal glasses, and silverware. They got out the autumn coloured table cloth that Belle had ironed that morning and set it on the table. Next they set up the silverware, filled the salt and pepper shakers, folded napkins, set out glasses. Then they moved onto setting out extra chairs in the sitting room and living room. Bae took it upon himself to unload the decorations Belle had brought, fall themed wreaths, and garland for the fireplace. They had finished all of the set up Belle had planned and it was time to move on to heating up the food and setting out drinks.

“She’s been gone an awfully long time.” Reagan expressed his worry as he checked the amount of water in the pot that was boiling the ham. “What if something’s happened to her?”

“She just went for a walk dad.”

“And the first time your mother left me she just went to the bar with friends.” Reagan snapped back, the only sound in the house the bubbling of the water in various pots.

“I’m sure this is different dad,” Bae breached quietly, not wanting to upset the tentative peace he had achieved with his father. “This is Belle were talking about not … not mom.”

“You’re right, Reagan said giving his son a pat on the shoulder, “you’re right,” he repeated more confidently. “Belle loves me, and I’m certain that she means it.”

There was a pause as Baeden prepared the shrimp platter and Reagan prepared the vegetables and dip.

“How old was I dad?” Baeden finally asked.

“What son?”

“How old was I? The first time she left?”

Reagan’s mouth parted slightly with alarm. “You don’t want to know.”

“I do.”
Reagan sighed, abandoning the vegetables to turn and face his son properly. “It was right after you were born.”

“What?”

“She … sometimes I think I made her go through with the pregnancy because I wanted you, even though I knew she didn’t.” Reagan looked away from his son. “It was our last month of high school when she found out. Her parents kicked her out so she followed me to university, even though she couldn’t attend yet.” Reagan sighed, meeting the soft brown gaze of his son's eyes. “She was eighteen, she was scared, we were the only thing each other knew. I convinced her to marry me when you were a year old, she did it so she wouldn’t have to be alone. We were just kids Bae.”

“Yeah. I remember what that’s like.” Bae said, thinking about when Emma had told him she was pregnant, that he didn’t have to worry because she was gonna take care of it - he had thought she meant get rid of the baby. Now he knew differently, and he felt like an idiot.

“She left as soon as she was discharged from the hospital. I took you to our flat. I couldn’t call my aunt to help, she wasn’t happy about the pregnancy. It was just you and me.” Reagan winced, feeling the anger build up within him. “I didn’t even have anything to fucking feed you for that first day! You cried and I just kept telling myself, it’s fine, she’ll be back. Do you know how embarrassing it was, asking a pharmacist what to feed a baby when there was no breast milk?”

Baeden swallowed hard, imagining his father as a young man, thinking he was about to be alone with a baby, a baby he had nothing to feed.

“It took her two weeks Bae. But she came back. She said she was scared, she was sorry.” Reagan took a breath, the emotion draining from his voice as he continued onto the more logical part of his story. “After I finished university in Edinburgh we moved to the states, you were almost four. I got my law degree at your mum's request.” Reagan looked at his son with a sense of regret. “I didn’t get to spend much time with you back then.”

Baeden nodded at his father, not remembering much about his time in Scotland.

“She didn’t leave again until you were six.”

“I remember that. That night you took me to the bar.”

“I shouldn’t have done that,” Reagan shook his head at the judgement of his twenty-four year old self.

After a moment Baeden rhetorically asked, “You really were alone with me for the first two weeks?”

“Those were the most terrifying days of my life,” Reagan admitted. He had never felt more like a coward in those days. “Those first few days were even more terrifying than the day Killian and mum came to take you away; more terrifying than waiting for the doctors to say if you were all right.” Reagan’s voice shook as he continued. “I spent everyday thinking she was gone, and that I was going to fail you.”

Baeden stepped forward, embracing his father in a proper hug.

Just then, Belle silently walked into the kitchen. “I see you boys managed just fine on your own.”

Reagan smiled at Belle as he parted from his son. “I’d say we did.”
The Charming’s had been the first to arrive, Mary Margaret being punctual as always. Belle had greeted her friend with a warm hug and showed them the dining room and living room, before offering them drinks and settling into the sitting room.

Belle played on the carpet with baby Neal, who was flopping around on a white baby blanket - Reagan couldn’t help the flutter in his chest as he watched Belle make the plump baby smile.

Emma, Regina, and Henry showed up next, Regina apologizing for being late and blaming Emma who was not ready when they had arrived at her apartment - Emma didn’t even try to deny it. Regina grabbed a glass of wine, and surprisingly had a good conversation with Reagan about some of the artifacts in his house.

Meanwhile, Baeden and Henry were having an in depth conversation about superheros, something the father and son shared a passion for. The evening was going really well so far, except for the fact that one person was missing.

Belle walked into the kitchen, pretending to check on the turkey and turn off some of the vegetables on the stove. Reagan knew Belle was feeling anxious about her father - or, lack thereof. So, excusing himself from Regina’s company he followed Belle into the kitchen, moving to stand behind her and wrap his free arm around her stomach as he pressed her back firmly against his chest.

“I’m sure he’ll show up Belle. Last time I saw him in the flower shop, he made no mention of not coming.”

Belle turned around in Reagan’s grip, her eyes watery as she looked up to him. “What if he went out drinking again Reagan? He might have been worried about today. I wouldn’t be surprised if he’s sleeping off a hangover.”

“Now is that anyway to talk about your father Belle?” Moe French said, Baeden standing awkwardly beside him.

“I didn’t think you guys heard the door, so I let him in.”

“I’m relieved you came Papa,” Belle said, moving from Reagan’s embrace to hug her father and give him a peck on his check. Belle noticed the way his hands were shaking. She hoped it was from nerves, and not from some liquid courage.

“Well, this one’s a bit bigger than our usual thanksgiving dinner, but I wouldn’t miss spending the holiday with you Belle.”

Belle smiled, the timer beside the oven ringing and startling her. “Oh! Reagan we better get the turkey!”

Moe took a step back, watching as Belle put on her oven mitts and inserted a thermometer into the overly large bird.

“It’s ready!” she smiled up at her boyfriend, who also had on a pair of oven mitts and helped her to lift the heavy bird out of the oven.

“Need any help?” Bae asked.
“Yes, you can get all the vegetables into their serving plates.” Belle instructed as she began to slice the ham.

“You need anything Belle?” Moe asked, feeling like an outsider as his daughter worked in tandem with her new chosen family.

“It’s alright Papa, we’ve pretty much got this whole thing sorted. Why don’t you go say hi to Henry and the others?”

Moe gave his daughter a side glance. He saw no need to say hi to Henry. As far as Moe was concerned Belle’s relationship with Mr. Gold was not going to last - but he was here to support her regardless. So he bit his tongue before replying, “Sure thing,” and leaving the kitchen just as Bae and Belle sorted out the vegetables and ham, and Reagan began carving the turkey.

Once all the food was set on the table, Belle took a deep breath before inviting everyone to dinner.

“It’s delicious Belle, you’ve outdone yourself.” Mary Margaret said with a smile as she tried to coax a mouthful of baby food into Neal’s mouth.

“There’s certainly more food then we’ve ever had at a thanksgiving dinner before,” David agreed.

“Well, we didn’t exactly have big families until a few days ago,” Regina countered.

“That’s true,” Reagan said with a little huff.

“Well I like it!” Henry exclaimed.

“Me too,” Belle said as she gave the young boy sitting a few seats down from her a bright faced smile.

“None of you find this weird?” Moe asked, taking a sip of his beer - it had only been his second one.

Belle’s smile evaporated, a frown settling on her face as a nervous sort of fear began to bubble in her belly.

“I wouldn’t call it weird,” Mary Margaret said, “just unexpected.”

“Definitely unexpected,” Baeden said, with a direct look towards Henry, and for the first time the entire group began to laugh about their situation.

“I wished I had known,” Mary Margaret said, looking towards Emma. “I know you were scared, and I know we had just adopted you the year before, but you could have told me you know.”

“I know,” Emma said, looking down slightly in embarrassment.

“How did you end up taking Henry anyways, Regina?” David asked, and Henry looked at his pseudo mother with interest.

“Emma didn’t tell me if that’s what you’re wondering.” There were a few chuckles from those who knew of Emma’s stubborn nature.

“So how did you find out?” Belle asked, taking a sip of her wine.

“She asked me if we could go shopping one weekend, said she needed some new clothes. Emma never asks to go shopping.” Regina gave the younger woman an even glare. “I started to put the pieces together after that, so I just asked her. I’d never seen her cry before that day.”
“Regina!” Emma shouted at her friend.

“What? You don’t want your own family to know that you aren’t such a no-feeling badass?”

Emma raised a thin blond brow, trying not to glance at Baeden. She knew he must feel like shit, thinking about what she went through. Emma had been too afraid to tell Baeden she wanted to keep the baby - or at least give it a chance at life. She knew if she told Baeden they would have to make things work, and that meant that Emma would have to allow herself to be vulnerable to him, to embrace a relationship - whether friendly or romantic. Emma was afraid of making that sort of commitment. She had always spent her life running away from her problems, from people. The thought of being tied to one for the rest of her life, terrified her. It had been a mistake though, and she was beginning to realize what she did was wrong.

“Anyways, I told her I’d help her however she needed it. Turns out she wanted to put him up for adoption, give him his best chance at life,” Regina looked towards Henry. “Well, I couldn’t exactly see him leave the family, he was such a beautiful baby, and well, I suppose I had been lonely … missing something. I think I needed him, just as much as he needed me, as we all needed each other.”

Henry smiled shyly at his mum before shoveling some mash potatoes into his mouth, pleased when David changed the topic of conversation.

“So Baeden, how’s the job search going?”

“Well, back in New York I worked in management,” Baeden explained. “But as of right now, I’m stuck at the cannery. But it’ll pay the bills. And I can’t complain, I’ve got time for Henry.” Baeden gave a nudge to Henry’s shoulder. The boy, his boy, had decided he wanted to sit beside his father.

“And Reagan how are you handling this?” Regina asked, noticing a moment to push her one time rivals buttons and seize it. “You go from infamous school teacher … to a father … to grandfather all in one day!” There were a few sympathetic chuckles around the table before Regina added, “Not to mention you now have a beautiful young woman to keep up with,” she winked at Belle, who’s cheeks dusted with a light pink blush.

Reagan considered Regina for a moment, trying not to clench his jaw. At one point in his life he would have lashed out at Regina for talking to him with such disrespect. But now, he recognized the lighthearted barb for what it was. So he responded in kind. “I’m exhausted to say the least.”

The table, including Belle, laughed at Reagan’s joke, and he felt a sense of warmth bloom inside of his stomach, coupled with an unexpected feeling of nerves. He was nervous that he was happy. He had never had this before, this lighthearted family atmosphere. He had never shared a meal that he and someone he loved cooked with their bare hands. It was rewarding. And it was very new for the snarky, formerly under-loved teacher.

“So Moe?” David, the most outgoing, and quite frankly charming, member of the family addressed the man who had been very quiet throughout the evening. “What’s it feel like to be a great grandpa?”

“I’m not.” Moe French replied firmly, and everyone at the table stiffened. “My daughter has yet to have child.”

Instead of letting the negative attitude swallow him up David, rather recklessly, continued, “How would you feel about that Baeden? Having a baby brother?”

Belle squirmed in her seat, incredibly uncomfortable with the topic of discussion. She turned to her
left to glance at Reagan who was sitting at the head of the table. Belle noticed how all the colour had drained from Reagan’s face as his son’s laughter echoed in his ears.

“Oh yeah, because a thirty years plus age gap would mean I’d get along great with my sibling,” he laughed pushing around his green beans before looking up at his father. “Besides my dad’s too old for that.”

“Shooting blanks,” Moe spat at Reagan from the opposite end of the dining table.

“Dad!” Belle almost shouted. “Not in front of Henry,” she tilted her head towards the twelve year old boy.

“Why? He’s only what, six years younger then your boyfriend when he had his son?”

The table froze. Everyone feeling uncomfortable.

Moe took another swig of his beer. “The Gold men start early. Who’s to say he’ll be any different?”

“Dad! That’s enough.” Belle scolded this time, trying not to let the tears spill over her eyes. “Reagan and I haven’t even had this conversation yet ourselves. Alone ,” she emphasised, “and in private.”

“Alright you nosy lot, let’s leave them alone.” Mary Margaret said firmly, hoping her husband would get the idea.

“No Belle, I’d really like to know if I’ll be able to have a grandchild in the future.” Moe made eye contact with Reagan. “You’re fucking her anyways-”

“Dad!” Belle shouted, standing up and forcing the back legs of her chair to fall off the carpet and scrape against the wood floors. “You’re embarrassing me. And you’re embarrassing yourself.”

“You’re right.” Moe said, looking around the table and noticing the stares from everyone else. “I said I’d be supportive, but maybe this is just a little too much for me to handle right now. I should be going,” Moe said, standing up and scratching his chin as if he was contemplating his decision. “I’ll see you at home Belle?”

Belle winced. “Actually I’m staying-”

“Right, of course you are,” he glared at his only daughter, “staying with your rich benefactor.” Before leaving the dining room he grabbed his bottle of beer. “I’ll just let myself out.” And just like that, the front door of the Victorian slammed shut, echoing through into the dining room.

Belle sat down in her chair, the only sound throughout the room was the clinking of silverware. Reagan took a moment to reach out his hand, placing it over Belle’s.

“I’m sorry everyone.” Belle addressed the table. “I’m … you know what, actually I’m tired of making excuses for him, and trying to include him in my life. Why don’t we just enjoy our desert? Henry, you get first pick!”

“Yes!” Henry exclaimed cheerfully, and everyone uncomfortably moved on from the fight they had just witnessed.
After everyone had left there was a mountain of dishes left to clean in the kitchen. Belle had put on her apron, and filled the sink with warm water and soap in order to tackle the monumental task. She was only about one third in when Reagan finally said goodbye to Bae and came to join her in the kitchen, his tapping cane signaling his entrance.

“Hey sweetheart,” he said softly walking up beside her.

Belle started crying immediately - not heavy tears, but soft tracks trailing down her cheeks. She struggled to catch her breath as her lip trembled.

“Oh I know angel, I know.” Reagan cooed as he pulled Belle into a hug, ignoring her wet soapy hands as she pressed them against his chest. “I know sweetheart.”

“It went really well though.” Belle said after some time, finally able to get the words out. “Your … your family got on well. It was going well...”

“He’ll come around sweetheart.” Reagan said as he kissed Belle’s head. He pulled away from her momentarily, only to pick up the dish cloth and bring it to Belle’s hands. He dried her hands for her and then pulled her back into a hug. “He just needs time Belle.”

Belle snuggled into his chest, giving herself time to think before she asked, “Did their conversation make you uncomfortable tonight?”

“You’ll have to be more specific Belle!” Reagan chuckled lightheartedly.

“About … about a baby.”

Reagan tensed. “Belle, we’ve only been together for three months.” He pulled her head away from his chest so that he could look into her eyes. “I know our feelings have moved fast in that time, but it’s a little early...”

“I just meant … I’ve always wanted to raise a child Reagan; I need to know if what I want for the future, lines up with what you want.”

Reagan smiled. “I can see myself raising a child with you Belle. In fact, I could easily let myself fantasize about that.” He paused, his smile fading as his insecurities began to overwhelm him. “But I’m self conscious about my age...”

“As long as you are good, attentive father, it shouldn’t matter.”

“But it will matter to people Belle...”

“But it won’t matter to me.”

Reagan brought the back of his hand to Belle’s cheek, lightly running it along her smooth skin.

“All other people might see is a number, but all I will see is a good man and a loving father. It just depends on your perspective.”

Reagan smiled at Belle, his stomach fluttering with new possibilities. “I love you sweetheart.”

“I love you too. Now, help me with these dishes!” Belle said as she tugged down on the lapels of Reagan’s jacket and gave him a quick kiss on the lips. She turned back towards the sink, groaning at the mountain of dirty dishes. “I am never doing another big thanksgiving like this again!”

And Reagan laughed, knowing that this time next year they would be doing the same exact thing …
except perhaps, they might be doing it as man and wife.

Chapter End Notes

I tried so hard to give Moe more dimension, to get him to try for his daughter, but he just wanted to keep being an asshole about it!

Side Note:

I've just self-published an original full length erotica called Broken Hallelujah by Lily Crane on Amazon (kindle app). The e-book is just $2.99 (US) and I would appreciate it if you considered supporting me!

You can find the e-book by searching Broken Hallelujah by Lily Crane on Amazon. Or check out this Tumblr post: https://lilycrane.tumblr.com/post/181270534089/broken-hallelujah-available-now

You can find the summary and the entire first chapter preview at my website: https://lilycranewrites.wixsite.com/website
Dirty

Chapter Summary

After the big family thanksgiving, Belle and Reagan have a little alone time...

Chapter Notes

There is so much smut. It's all smut.

“I adore simple pleasures. They are the last refuge of the complex.”

— Oscar Wilde

Reagan had convinced her to stay the night again. And although he regretted that it had caused another rift between father and daughter, he couldn’t deny how pleased he was. He loved how comfortable Belle was getting in his home. At first it was the small things he had noticed. Belle knew exactly where everything was in the kitchen - the dishes, glasses, utensils; she knew which shelf the milk went on in the fridge, and the order he liked to keep the vegetables in the crisper; she even kept a box of her favorite tea blend in one of his cupboards.

He noticed the way she would stretch out on his sofa, always using one of the throw blankets when she would get a little chilly. There were discarded books on end tables in the living room and even his bedroom. She kept a toothbrush in his bathroom and countless bottles of shampoo, deodorant, and other personal and feminine hygiene products. He had admitted it was a slight shock the first time he noticed the box of tampons in the bottom drawer of the bathroom vanity - but then he felt pleased, it was a sign of her general comfort in his home.

Reagan also noticed that he had unintentionally begun clearing out spaces for her clothes in his closet, and spaces for books on his shelves.

He loved having her in his home, in his life. He loved curling next to her every night; he loved eating meals with her; he loved telling her to put the book down and finally go to sleep. He loved her.

Perhaps it was time he asked her to move in with him?

“Reagan?” Belle asked from her place in his bed, propped against the headboard with a book.

Reagan poked his head out of the bathroom, toothbrush in his mouth as he mumbled a, “Yes.”

Belle set down her book in her lap, feeling the duvet deflate with the weight of the five-hundred page hardcover. She heard Reagan spit into the sink, and the sound of running water before the bathroom light flickered off and her boyfriend walked into the bedroom.

“I just wanted to thank you again. I know it didn’t turn out how I hoped but … well, I had a lovely
thanksgiving thanks to you.”

“As did I sweetheart,” Reagan smiled, leaning his cane against the bedside table as he pulled aside the duvet and sank into the bed. He turned off his lamp and settled into the blankets, letting out a weary sigh. It had been a long day. “Come on Belle, put the book away sweetheart. You’ve had a draining day.”

Belle sighed, she’d been reading the same page for the last ten minutes anyways. She placed her book on the end table, next to her glass of water before she reached to turn off the lamp. Once the room was encased in darkness realized how heavy her eyes felt. She was exhausted. When she moved down into the bed she felt Reagan’s arm reach out for her waist, pulling her tightly to his body. She sighed into his embrace, feeling contact as he snuggled her into his dreams.

She began to wake in the night, her skin feeling hot. Belle let out a soft moan, feeling the pleasure before she realized what was going on. Her skin tingled and she had an overwhelming desire to clamp her thighs and grind against the friction.

She felt warm breath ghost against her ear, and then a moist pressure skim along her neck. Her eyes blinked open in arousal, realizing that Reagan was nipping kisses onto her neck and his fingers were playing with her pussy. Where had her panties gone? She wondered, before she fidgeted and realized he had pushed them down her thighs.

She groaned out when his slick fingers slide over her clit. She was fully awake now. She looked to the window, it was still dark out; then she looked for the alarm clock, until she realized she didn’t care what time it was, just that Reagan do something about the buzzing he was creating at her core.

Belle began to thrust against his hand, rocking her body against his. She realized how sweaty the backs of her thighs were and she felt sticky pressed against Reagan’s chest. Even the bed sheets between her legs felt damp. He must have been teasing her for a while.

“Belle, sweetheart, I need you please.” His voice was rough from behind her, and that's when she felt it, his cock was hard and pressed against the crease of her arse. He had been thrusting against her body as he played with her juicy cunt. “Please Belle I need you,” he begged, slipping the head of his cock forward into her folds.

Belle groaned, kicking her panties off and spreading her legs wider, to give him better access. She felt the tip of his cock bump against her clit before it slipped into her opening. She could feel the head of his cock cradled in her lips as he lightly rocked against her.

“Yes Reagan!” she whispered, her head nodding more frantically.

She moaned out when he plunged inside of her. She felt connected to him, pressed tightly against his chest as he pulled out and rocked into her again. It was easy and deep, and she didn’t think they could manage much else given it was most likely the middle of the night.

Belle felt her skin flush, as she thought about their coupling. Reagan must have been having an incredibly explicit dream to wake up in the middle of the night, hard enough that he needed Belle
desperately. His voice had sounded so broken when he pleaded with her. His need was turning Belle on and she could feel the arousal coursing through her veins.

“Shit Belle, I’m so close already,” Reagan whined, his chest filling with uncertainty, not wanting to disappoint her, but desperately needing to come.

“How long were you hard?” Belle asked, biting down on her lip as he fumbled with her clit. It was a terrible angle, and she could feel him trembling as he tried to keep it up – but it actually excited Belle more.

“At least half an hour,” his voice cracked. “I teased your pussy the whole time, feeling you grow slick with arousal.” His confidence grew, his thrusts become harder. “I couldn’t touch myself I was so on edge, I just rubbed against your ass, desperately waiting for you.”

Belle moaned her approval, reaching her own hand down to her clit to help expedite the process. “What were you dreaming about?”

“I was spanking you. In my classroom. Christ, Belle I was calling you the dirties things!”

“Tell me!” She begged, wishing she could see the constrained look on his face as he tried to fight off his release.

“You didn’t finish an assignment and you asked me to punish you. You fucking asked me to spank you! You pulled up your skirt and you had no panties on. Fuck! I called you a dirty girl.” His thrusts faltered when Belle moaned, turned on by his words. “I spanked you and shoved my fingers in your greedy little cunt and you begged me to fuck you.”

“Fuck, Reagan I’m gonna come, keep talking please!” she begged as she increased the speed of her fingers on her clit, her eyes closed tightly as she pushed towards her release.

“You were such a needy girl, begging me for cock. And your arse was so red and hot. I woke up, my cock weeping for you Belle, for your sweet little cunt. I love the way your pussy pulses around me, you’re so tight. I needed to be inside you. I want to fill you; with my cock, with my cum-”

“Yes! Fuck!,” Belle shouted, feeling her clit tingle as the climax pounded through her channel.

Reagan followed her seconds later, shouting with relief as his forehead pressed against the back of Belle’s neck, the scent of her curls drowning him.

“Thank you Belle!” Reagan puffed, out of breath.

But Belle only mumbled in response, feeling Reagan soften within her as his cum began to spill out of her centre. She was lulled into sleep moments later, the ripple from her orgasm still running through her as thoughts of his fantasy played out in her mind.

Reagan smiled against her skin, kissing the back of her shoulder as he pulled himself from within her. The sheets would need to be changed tomorrow. He thought to himself before he too drifted off into sleep.
“Good morning,” Belle mumbled as she lightly traced a finger over Reagan’s chest.

“Hello sweetheart.”

Belle shifted her legs, blushing as she felt the dried cum flake between her thighs. Her underwear was forgotten somewhere amongst the sheets and so her bottom half was bare. “Last night was incredibly hot.”

Reagan felt slightly embarrassed. “I’m sorry, I just really needed to come inside of you.”

“Don’t be sorry,” Belle leaned forward and kissed the tip of Reagan’s nose. “No one has ever needed me so badly that they woke me up in the middle of the night just to fuck.”

Reagan pulled her against his chest, his eyes wincing as a ray of sun blinded him. He closed his eyes and pressed his mouth against Belle’s in a fierce kiss. She surprised him when she straddled him, the sheets bunching up between them as she placed a hand on his chest. The kiss deepened when their tongues, slick with desire, brushed against each other. Reagan’s nostrils flared with arousal, his hands going to her hips as they made out like teenagers.

Almost twenty minutes later Belle pulled away, out of breath and aware of the hardness beneath her. She smirked. “According to someone’s fantasies,” she raised a brow at her boyfriend, “I’m a dirty girl.”

Reagan ran his palms along her thighs, feeling his balls pulse with anticipation.

“I’m covered in your dried cum, will you wash me?”

Reagan smiled, part of him was just as excited to gently wash Belle, to care for her, as he was at the prospect of shower sex. It wasn’t something he had tried since he was a very young man, and Milah was not interested in it after the first time.

“Alright, hop off,” he lightly patted her thigh. “I’ll meet you in the bathroom.”

Belle slid off Reagan’s lap and scurried into the bathroom. He could hear the sound of the tap twisting and water running as he tossed his legs over the side of the bed. He reached out for his cane, realizing that he had never put his boxers back on.

When he got to the bathroom he noticed her discarded tank top on the floor - she was already in the shower, steam fogging up the glass. He sat his cane against the vanity and walked towards the door. Reagan had a walk in shower, it was necessary given his leg. The shower was large and plenty big enough for two adults. Reagan limped towards the glass door, pulling it open and stepping into the heat. Belle turned to him, flashing him a white smile. Her skin was wet, her hair dark and clinging to her back. Reagan shivered. Belle reached out to him, pulling him under the spray.

Reagan rested his hands against her waist, feeling her slick skin. He pulled her close to him. His cock was already semi-erect from their make-out session and he felt it quickly rising as she ran her hands over his chest, soaping his skin. Reagan allowed her to explore him as he relaxed into the warm water. They had to shuffle slightly in order to take turns under the heat of the spray, but it didn’t matter the moment they began kissing.

Reagan felt Belle’s tongue gently ease into his mouth, sliding against his own as her hands slid against his body. He groaned out when her small hand gripped his cock, pumping him, the head bumping into her stomach with each pull. He began to palm her breasts in response, her nipples already hard when he tweaked one. He thrust into her hand when she hummed into his mouth, the vibrations make his balls tingle.
As they continued to wash each other, Reagan’s hands slipped between Belle’s thighs. He sucked on her bottom lip, drawing the kiss out before whispering against her lips; “What a dirty girl, covered in my dry cum.”

Belle groaned, feeling his hands slip between her thighs.

“We better clean you up.”

Reagan continued to clean her thighs before his questing fingers reached her pussy lips. It was a little difficult for him to tell if she was aroused, given that her body was already wet from the shower, but judging by her moans and the way her hand clamped down on his cock when he found her clit, he knew Belle was enjoying herself.

They continued to tease each other, Belle pumping his cock and Reagan’s fingers playing with her pussy while their tongues danced.

“Reagan?” Belle asked as they changed the angle. “Would you fuck me?”

Reagan groaned, sealing her lips in another kiss. He would love to be inside of her right now, but he didn’t think his leg could support her against the slick tile walls.

But then Belle’s beautiful little mind spoke up, she had clearly been thinking one step ahead of him when she asked her initial question. “Do you think you could do it from behind? If I bent over, leaned against the wall?”

Before Reagan could respond he abruptly turned Belle around in his grasp. She squealed with surprise, nearly tripping over her feet, and thankful for the grip of the shower mat. She felt Reagan’s hand press against her back, pushing her body down. Belle complied, reaching forward to lean her hands against the wall as her ass brushed against his cock, nearly lining them up.

“Is this what you want sweetheart?”

“Yes!” Belle nodded, biting down on her lip as she felt his hand dig into her hip.

The head of his cock slipped through her folds, finding her centre and slowly easing inside. He grunted as he bottomed out, stilling for a moment to gain his footing before pulling out and roughly thrusting back in. He was plunging inside of her roughly, and Belle was taking every inch of him. It was incredibly erotic, feeling the spray from the shower trickle onto her back while Reagan filled her completely. His fingernails were leaving dents in her hips as he held her tighter, needing more leverage to bury himself inside of her.

Reagan’s eyes began to narrow with the efforts of his thrust, nearing his peak. The sound of his ball slapping against her wet ass was too erotic and he felt his control slipping.

“Belle, I need to come.”

“Just a bit longer,” she gasped, “and a little harder!”

Reagan groaned, pulling her hips back to meet his thrusts. He began to pick up his pace, taking her brutally from behind as he felt her little hand sneak between their legs. She was rubbing herself off!

He felt the moment Belle began to ripple around him, and it was too heavenly to stop his release anymore. His thrusts stopped, his body exhausted, as his dick pulsed his seed into her pussy. When Reagan stumbled backwards, slipping from within her he noticed the was his cum began to drip out of her little pink hole, her muscles pumping.
“You really are a dirty girl,” he grinned, massaging the globes of her ass before he encouraged her to stand up and face him.

Belle smiled, giving Reagan a bliss filled kiss before she felt her body shiver. “Come on, I’m starting to get a bit chilly.”

Reagan nodded and Belle turned off the tap. He followed her out of the shower, wrapping her in a towel before he took one for himself.

“I’ll see you downstairs,” she said.

“Okay,” Reagan said, knowing it would take some time for Belle to sort out her hair. He walked into the walk-in closet, picked out a suit, dressed, and headed downstairs to make some toast.

When Belle came down the stairs he had her cup of tea waiting on the kitchen counter with a plate of toast slathered with butter and raspberry jam, she liked it extra sweet.

“Thank you,” she smiled sadly, and Reagan noticed.

“What is it? What’s wrong?”

Belle sighed. “Nothing you can fix Reagan.”

“Maybe I can try?” he asked. When she didn’t respond he tried again; “Moments ago I left you completely sated and happy, and now you look miserable. What happened?”

The corner of Belle’s lip quirked as she cupped her tea cup, feeling the warmth ease into her skin. “I was just thinking.”

“You’re always thinking my little bookworm,” Reagan said affectionately, “I’m afraid you're going to have to elaborate.”

Belle playfully rolled her eyes. “I don’t know how I can go back home to my father. How can I face him after what happened at dinner? After all the awful things he said?” she paused. “I was so embarrassed Reagan.”

Reagan took a sip of his own tea. “Perhaps you should be honest with him. Maybe you need to establish some ground rules with him? If he won’t be supportive of your future, then he needs to keep his opinions quiet; or relatively soon you won’t be able to be a part of his life?”

Belle sighed. She didn’t want to give up on her father. But it was beginning to seem like she didn’t have a choice.
Reagan asks a big question. Belle makes an important decision. Someone ends up in jail.

He had parted from Belle reluctantly this morning, leaving her at the library with words unsaid. It had been three weeks since thanksgiving, and the Christmas holidays were approaching. She had been spending a lot of time at his house recently, and he loved having her there. He had even begun thinking about how wonderful it would be to permanently have her presence at his home.

He knew that things with Belle’s father hadn’t improved. Moe had chosen to try and keep quiet about Belle’s choices, telling her that he couldn’t understand the decisions she was making with her life. He had started drinking again.

Although Belle joked that it was a good thing her father spent long hours back at the Rabbit Hole - so she didn’t have to see him - Reagan knew it was bothering Belle. Moe had come far in his sobriety. He had begun managing his alcohol consumption, but now, it seemed like he was spiraling again. And Belle had been miserable for weeks. Reagan feared that at this point, even asking her to move in with him wouldn’t cheer her up. But he was certain of his decision, and he was going to do it regardless. He missed seeing her smiling face, especially so close to the holidays.

They had been mostly silent on the drive home. It was Friday, and even the end of the work week hadn’t lightened the mood in Belle’s heart.

“Belle?” Reagan asked softly, Belle continued to look out the window. “I had been hoping to ask you at a better time,” he snorted to himself, “but you’ve been so solemn lately. I suppose I fancy that my news will cheer you up, but I’m really not certain anymore-”

Belle finally looked towards Reagan, the crease of confusion in her eyebrows making him stop his train of thought.
Reagan cleared his throat. “I was wondering Belle, if perhaps, you would want to move in with me?”

Belle’s mouth fell open. “Move in with you? Like live with you? In the Victorian?”

“If that’s amicable to you. Or if you’d rather we looked for a different place, although it will take-”

“Yes,” she cut him off.

“Yes?”

“Yes.”

“That was much quicker than I expected, I must admit.”

Belle smiled. A real smile. It had been so long. “The Victorian is fine. I love your home. I love you Reagan.” Belle lunged forward, not caring that he was driving and pulling him into a hug. Reagan’s eyes widened as he felt her strangle his neck - he had to swerve in order to stay in his lane.

“You don’t think it’s too soon?” he asked when she pulled away from him.

“I think it was about time I moved out of my father’s place.”

It was true. She had been wanting to move out for ages, but she just couldn’t leave when her father had been in such bad condition. And yet now, it seemed like his condition would never change; his drinking would never change. Belle had given her father so much support with his addiction, and she still would - she just didn’t know how healthy it was to remain living with him. Perhaps, in some ways, she was enabling him?

Belle sighed, not wanting to spoil the first good mood she had been in. She looked towards Reagan, a light-hearted, but serious expression falling on her face. “I just have a few conditions; I want to contribute to the bills, and groceries, and other things that come with being a homeowner! I admit, I’ve never properly owned something before - and I know I don’t own your house, that’s not what I’m saying - I just, I want to learn and I want to contribute.”

Reagan could feel his heart warming with the surge of electricity he felt at Belle’s excitement. He gave her a cocky grin. “Well, I am a teacher.”

Belle pushed Reagan’s shoulder playfully, teasing him. She had to bite down on her bottom lip to finally get her grin under control. It was strange how someone could go from miserable to incomparably happy, all thanks to the deeds of one person.

After a moment’s pause, Reagan was stupid enough to ask, “How will your father take it?”

Belle’s shoulders slumped. “Probably poorly.” Although she loved her father, she decided she wasn’t going to let his mood, or his drinking, stop her from moving forward with her life. She was prepared to start a new chapter with Reagan, and she desperately wanted to. “He hasn’t been home for two days though.” Belle shifted in her seat to face Reagan, the seat belt pulling on her winter coat. “Could you come over this weekend? You could help me start to pack up my things. I’d love to be moved into your place before Christmas. We could have our first real Christmas together?” she asked, her tone hinting at more of a question, as if asking for his approval on the matter.

“I love the sound of that.” Reagan said, an image of Belle under a throw blanket, sipping warm tea and reading by his fireplace - two, maybe three stockings hung if Bae should decide to join them. Reagan signaled to his right, pulling up in front of the curb of Game of Thrones. “I’ll be at your
place at eleven tomorrow?"

“Ten?” Belle countered, hoping to see him sooner. She also knew it was going to take them forever to pack up all her books.

“Of course.” Reagan nodded as Belle unbuckled her seat-belt. She turned to face him, as if ready to say goodbye, but Reagan reached out his hand, his thumb brushing at the corner of Belle’s mouth. “It’s so good to see you smile again Belle.”

“I’m sorry I’ve been so out of it lately. Even the kids at the library have noticed.”

“Well, I know what will help,” Reagan suggested. “Once all your things are settled at my house, we’ll look into getting a Christmas tree. Together.”

Belle sent him a soft look of affection. “How did I get lucky enough to find such a man?”

“I ask myself something very similar every time I think of you sweetheart.” He stroked her cheek before leaning in to kiss her forehead. “I’ll see you tomorrow.”

Gold arrived just at ten. He wasn’t surprised to find that Moe still hadn’t returned to Belle’s apartment. Reagan had sent his man Dove to check up on Moe last night and he learned that Moe had been sleeping on the couch of one of his drinking buddies. Belle was happy to hear that he was safe, but no less frustrated, and slightly disappointed in her father.

The couple had agreed to tackle her bedroom first, and when Reagan sent Belle a dirty look she assured him that she didn’t mean it like that. Belle had a few boxes already laid out on her bed - they had many empty boxes just hanging around in the shops storage rooms and the back of the greenhouses.

After taking off his suit jacket, waistcoat, and rolling up his sleeves - which Belle continually teased him for dressing so formally when helping someone move - Reagan set to work on packing up Belle’s books. It was a monumental task. Belle had books in her bookcases, on her nightstand, under her bed, and in the living room.

While Reagan worked on the books Belle was busy packing away her clothes. Although Belle had more affection for her books then she did her clothes, she figured organizing the clothing, and handling her more delicate items was something she needed to do. If Belle had left Reagan in charge of packing her bras and underwear they would have been having sex nearly ten minutes into the packing process. Besides, when they began to unpack her belongings at the Victorian Belle could add her books to Reagan’s library - a task she was secretly looking more forward to then the christening of the house they were soon to be living together in.

“How are you doing?” Belle asked, sticking her head out of her bedroom and into the living room.

Reagan was carefully taking the books of the shelf next to the television. “I’m beginning to worry that we might need to convert one of the spare bedrooms into a reading room.”

Belle knew he was joking, but she gasped at the idea, wanting very much to make it into a reality. “That would be wonderful!”
Reagan smiled at Belle’s joy, beginning to think about the idea more realistically. “I could ask Bae, and perhaps even David, if they would be willing to install some built-ins one weekend?”

Belle leaned against the frame of her bedroom door, biting down on her lip to stop the smile. “I think that would be really nice.” But then her smile began to tremble as a negative thought slipped into her mind. “But you don’t have to do it if you don’t want to Reagan; I don’t want you to feel like you have to change your home for me.”

Reagan put down the book he was holding, focusing his attention on Belle, and the distance between them. “It’s going to be our home now Belle. And I’m perfectly comfortable with making some changes that will suit our life together.”

Belle smiled, skipping forward into the living room and colliding into Reagan’s chest. He let out an ‘omf’ as he accommodated her weight, and hugged her tightly to his body. “As long as you don’t plan on changing the historical integrity of the house,” he warned seriously - the Victorian’s character and history meaning very much to him.

Belle pulled away from Reagan in order to make eye-contact with him. “Of course not!” she agreed wholeheartedly before a teasing grin stretched onto her face. She brought her hand to Reagan’s chest, the smooth silk of his dress shirt causing her nipples to tighten with anticipation. “I had an English and History teacher in high school who taught me to value things that pertain to history.”

“Oh you did, did you?” he raised an eyebrow, that cocky smirk that Belle found so sexy settling onto his tanned face.

“Yes.” Belle wrapped her hands around Reagan’s neck, pressing her breasts against his chest as she began to rise onto her tiptoes. “He was an excellent teacher.”

“What else did you learn from him sweetheart?” Reagan whispered before Belle’s mouth lightly pressed over his own. He groaned out when he felt her tongue quest into his mouth, feeling the pull of arousal in his cock. He began to thrust against Belle’s hip, feeling the pleasure as his cock rapidly began to swell.

Belle was exhilarated, her breasts aching as she pulled against the hair at the back of Reagan’s neck. They continued to kiss even as she slipped her hand down his chest, holding onto him tightly until her palm found the outline of his cock. She always felt a wave of excitement when she found him hard and warm. Belle continued to rub him through his trousers, her touch nice and firm as he began to grunt into her lips. She knew he was becoming more desperate when he bit down on her lip, his body becoming lost as her little hand rested over his shaft.

Just as Belle began to fumble with the zipper of his pants she heard a jingle at the front door, and a muffled curse word as a pair of keys were dropped to the floor. Belle pulled away from Reagan, his lips still trailing down her neck, oblivious to the noise, until he too heard the sound of a key being fumbled into a lock.

“Shit!” Belle whispered under her breath as she straightened out her hair and took a step back from Reagan. “I wasn’t expecting him home yet! I haven't told him!”

“Fuck!” Reagan whispered, turning to look at the front door, the door handle turning.

Moe French stumbled into the apartment. He wasn’t drunk, but clearly hungover from the previous night. “What the hell is going on here?” he asked, looking between the lovers, and noticing the box.

“Papa! I’m glad you’re home, I was worried about you!” Belle tried to change the subject.
It didn’t work.

“What the hell is going on? Why do you have a box?” He looked towards the half empty bookshelf. “Are those your books Belle?”

“Yes Papa we were just-

“You’re leaving?”

He sounded so broken that Belle’s eyes began to water. “I’m not necessarily leaving. Well I am, but it doesn’t mean I wont see you-”

“You’re leaving!” Moe cut her off, a little angrier this time.

“Papa, I’m moving in with Reagan. We’re going to be staying in the Victorian together. It’s the next step for our relationship and where we want-”

“What about our relationship Belle! Are you happy to toss me aside so easily now that you’ve found a rich man who can give you the life you always dreamed of!”

Belle’s mouth fell open, shocked that her father would think so lowly of her. “It’s not like that Papa, I love him you know that-”

“And you don’t love me anymore Belle?”

“Of course I do Papa!” Belle walked around the sofa and took a step towards her father. “But I can’t live with you forever. I’m not a little girl anymore! I’ve been taking care of you for too long!” Belle took a deep breath, letting her passion cool down. “It’s time that I got to start the next chapter for my life, whether you want to be a part of it or not! But this is the next step for me! I want to move in with Reagan-”

“Fine, you want to move in with this pervert! I’ll help you! I don’t want you in my damn house anymore anyways!” Moe surged forward, grabbing the box from Reagan and scooping the remainder of the books on the shelf carelessly into the box. Reagan reached out to stop Moe, but his cane was resting against the couch and Moe had already begun heading towards the door.

“Papa!” Belle shouted as her father began to race down the staircase. “Wait Papa!” Belle followed him down the stairs, her heels clanking as the bell to the shop door chimed, the glass rattling as the door closed behind her father. Belle exited the shop, puffing for breath, noticing her father move onto the street, near Reagan’s Cadillac. Moe placed the box on top of the hood. “Papa please, you have to understand-”

“Oh I completely understand Belle! You’re choosing this monster over me!” Moe spat at Reagan who had moved to stand in the doorway of the flower shop, his cane in hand as he finally made it down to the street.

Belle looked around, noticing the stares of people who were passing by in the street, stopping to get a good view of the scene that was being made. Belle feared that a crowd was going to form and Moe was about to do something that he would regret.

“I bet you’ve always chosen him over me, haven’t you Belle?”

“Father I don’t understand.”

“How long has this really been going on Gold?” Moe spat at Reagan who had moved to stand
shoulder to shoulder with Belle. “From one man to another? Did you fuck her while she was in school?”

Belle flinched, disbelieving in her father’s accusations and how little they said about both Reagan, and herself.

“Did you fuck her while she was your student? Do you have a thing for little girls Gold? Did you make sure she got good grades so she could go to college, so she would have to leave me.” His eyes flicked towards Belle, ignoring the tears pooling in her eyes. “Was that your plan all along? To take my baby away from me?”

“What the hell is going on?” Emma Swan shouted, finally arriving at the domestic disturbance. She noticed the way Reagan was clutching Belle, noticed the tears streaming down her face and the red shade of embarrassment.

“Good timing Sharif Swan. I want you to arrest Mr. Gold for sleeping with a minor!”

“That’s ridiculous Miss Swan!” Reagan shouted, unconsciously lifting up his cane.

“Gold put down your cane!” Emma shouted and Reagan complied, gaining his senses as Belle gripped tightly at his elbow.

“You can’t let this monster get away with his crimes any longer!” Moe shouted.

“Mr. French, I’m going to need you to calm down!” Emma said as she walked towards Moe.

“Calm down! He’s trying to take her away from me!”

Emma raised a hand of warning. “Mr. French if you keep this up I’ll have to arrest you for breaking the peace.”

“Be our guest Miss Swan,” Gold snapped.

“Keep that up Gold and I’ll arrest you both!”

“No!” Belle shouted as Emma began to put her father in handcuffs.

Surprisingly Moe did not resist Miss Swan. Despite his size advantage on her, he suspected that Emma could beat him in a fight if he tried to overpower her. So Moe allowed her to usher him into the police car, a smug grin crossing over his face when Emma went towards Gold, a second pair of handcuffs dangling from her finger. He was, of course, less thrilled when Reagan was forced to sit in the back seat of the car with him.

“You can meet us at the station Belle,” Emma shouted before she sat down in the driver’s seat of the car. Emma turned around to look at the two miserable men, she couldn’t help but chuckle. “You guys are a piece of work.”

~*~

“Emma this is ridiculous!” Belle chased after Emma who guided Mr. Gold into one of the cells, while Moe French sat sulking in the other. “Reagan and I were never intimate, emotionally, or sexually while I was in school. My father just can’t justify why I’m ready to move on with my life,
with a man he doesn’t approve of!”

Emma sighed, locking the bars. “Belle we live in Storybrooke, a bunch of people just witnessed that fight. You know Gold’s reputation. I can’t just ignore this.”

“So you’re going to keep him in jail over night despite having no evidence, and no charges for that matter, just to appease the town?”

Emma sent Belle an apologetic look. “Belle I’m really sorry. After today we can put the whole thing to rest. Officially, they’re only here for domestic disturbance. I’ll just hold them both for a few hours.”

“Well then, can I stay with him?”

“What?” Emma was dumbfounded. No one volunteered to be locked up with someone - even if it was only for two hours.

“Can I stay with him? If you’re going to lock him up unnecessarily,” Belle emphasized, hoping to pressure Emma, “I want to know if I can stay with him?”

“Belle this is crazy!”

Belle raised a brow, defiant to the bone.

But Emma didn’t fold as easily as the kids who were talking too loud in the library.

“Look Emma,” Belle sighed turning out of Reagan's line of sight. “Reagan didn’t even remember me when I first came back to the library. He had no idea that I was a former student - it actually pissed me off that I was so forgettable! After a lot of banter and determination, he took me on romantic dates, we had a first kiss, and we didn’t become sexually inti-”

“Alright,” Emma stopped her there, “Belle I get it. You can stay with him, but nothing gross better-”

“I know Emma,” Belle rolled her eyes, as if she would try anything with her father in the next cell over. In fact, it was part of Belle’s reasoning to stay - it was the only way she could talk to the both of them and sort out their problems without one of them storming off.

Emma unlocked the cell and Belle stepped inside, ignoring the grumpy expressions on the two men.

“Alright,” Belle started, but then she turned around, aware of Emma seated on her desk, watching them. “Um, Emma, do you think you could give us some privacy?”

“Absolutely not,” Emma said, picking up her bear claw and going in for a big bite. “I’m staying for the show,” she said with her mouth full.

Belle sighed. “Alright then,” she straightened out her posture, her rant prepared. “Papa,” she started, looking through the greenish bars towards her father who was seated on the little bed, “I don’t need you to talk, but I do need you to listen.” She took a breath. “This,” she gestured between herself and Gold, “this is happening whether you are ready to accept it or not. Reagan is my future, but that doesn't mean you can’t be a part of ours. In order for that to happen, the drinking would need to stop.” Another breath. “And I think some time away from each other would be the best thing right now. You need to decide if you really want us in your life - yes us , because Reagan and I are partners. If you don’t want to be a part of it, that hurts me, but I would rather make a clean break then have to watch you struggle and to go through these same mistakes: first thanksgiving, now this. If you aren't ready to try, then just say so, but stop leading me on.”
Moe shifted where he was. “I’m not ready yet Belle.”

“Okay,” Belle said with a nod of her head. “Thank you for the honesty. When you are ready, whenever that may be, you will know where to find me - and I promise, no matter how long it takes I will be ready to accept you.”

Moe sent a scowl towards Gold.

“If Belle wants you in her life then I will support her, forever.” Gold stated firmly and Belle smiled at him, despite being locked up in a jail cell together.
Belle and Reagan have moved in with each other and the Salmon Pink Victorian is in much need of a good christening.

You know what that means ... smut!

“For the two of us, home isn't a place. It is a person. And we are finally home.”
— Stephanie Perkins, Anna and the French Kiss

Monday would be her first official night in his house, as a permanent resident. After their little spell in jail, and subsequent familial therapy session courtesy of Miss Swan, Belle and Reagan had continued to move her belongings into his house.

Belle did her father the courtesy of spending the weekend with him. They talked through some very difficult truths, and although he wasn’t ready to give up the alcohol, Belle felt like their relationship was in a better spot - and she would keep her promise; when he was ready, she would welcome him back so long as he met her conditions.

As a result, on Monday morning Belle stood at the curb of Game of Thrones with a suitcase and her father. When Reagan’s Cadillac pulled up he opened the trunk and Moe placed the carry on suitcase inside before giving his daughter a blubbery kiss to the cheek.

Work had been uneventful. But nonetheless, Belle’s stomach had fluttered all day with the excitement of returning home with Reagan. And it only grew more rapid when Mary Margaret confronted her at lunch.

“She pulled the brunette librarian aside to her desk. “You and Gold moved in together.”

“Oh, yes,” Belle said, slightly surprised that she hadn’t mentioned the whole jail thing.

“I’m so happy for you Belle! This is such big news!” She pulled her friend in for a tight hug.

“Congratulations!”

“Congratulations indeed,” Regina said with a sly grin. “I heard you managed to get both your boyfriend, and your father arrested.”

Belle rolled her eyes as she pulled out of Mary Margaret’s embrace. “It was a complete misunderstanding.”
“From what Emma tells me, it was a great show,” the principle teased. “Oh, and have fun breaking in your new house tonight,” she winked before retreating back into her office.

~*~

In the end, they didn’t even make it to the bedroom.

When they got home they went into the kitchen, in order to unpack their lunches.

Reagan leaned his cane against the marble counter as he moved towards his Belle, reaching his arms out and wrapping them around her waist. Belle giggled in response as she pressed her back flush with his front, the hard edges of the buttons on his waistcoat digging into the flesh at her back.

“I missed you today.” Belle said as Reagan moved her curls aside, exposing the delicate skin of her neck and placing a chaste kiss there.

“I missed you too,” he said between kisses to her neck. His arms tightened around her waist in a hug and their bodies began to sway from side to side, happy to finally be within one another's embrace.

“I spent all day thinking about coming back to our home, together.” Belle said with a smile that Reagan could feel radiating through her body. He directed his kisses upwards until he found her cheek and gave her a long lingering kiss there.

“And I spent all day thinking about having you in our bed.” He said with a snarl as he spun his darling Belle around, forcing her to face him as he pushed the small of her back into the counter. Belle bit down on her lip, her blue eyes finally locking with his own. Reagan’s thumb went up to her lip, gently pulling it from within her teeth and spreading the moisture that he found there. Here eyes were so blue, and so pure, he could always get lost in them. “God I love you Belle.” He said as he leaned forward, covering her plump lips with the thin line of his own.

Belle’s arms wrapped around his waist, clenching into the fabric of his expensive suit jacket. Her knees went weak as he thrust his tongue into her parting mouth, a long groan escaping his lips as he felt her body melt into his own. Belle had never been kissed so desperately by a man before. Reagan Gold always kissed her with all the feeling in his body, like every kiss might be the last, and each kiss would never say enough.

“I love you too.” Belle whispered into his ear as she brought her hands up to card through his hair and sent her tongue to tease at the tanned skin of Reagan’s neck. Next, her fingers opened up the top two buttons of his dress shirt and kissed at the skin of Reagan's collar bone.

“I’m so thankful you agreed to move in with me,” Reagan said as he grabbed Belle hard at the hips and lifted her body up against the counter. Belle squealed in surprise as he lifted her so easily, they tended to avoid activities like that, especially with Reagan's bad leg. “Speaking of, it’s time we christened our house.” He continued speaking as he undid the buttons on Belle’s dress shirt before biting down on the smooth skin of her neck and roughly hitching up her skirt.

Belle let out a gasp of surprise when her arse came into contact with the cool marble counter. She had to shuffle slightly so that Reagan could get her skirt bunched up around her waist. She pulled tightly at the silver hair within her hands, causing Reagan to pull her body closer to the edge of the counter, the thick bulge in his dress pants rubbing against her core. Reagan moved his hand from Belle’s waist to her pale thighs, his immaculate nails digging into the skin and leaving new marks to mingle with the scratches he had already left there. His hand went further, teasing the inside of her
thigh before he snuck between them and found her naked sex, coated in arousal as she rocked into his hand.

“Belle?” His voice cracked slightly with shock. “Did you not wear any panties to work today?” He asked with a cocky raise to his brow, his long hair falling in front of his face.

Belle bit her lip and looked up at him with a guilty and mischievous expression glinting in her eyes. “No Mr. Gold. I didn't.”

“My, what a naughty girl you've been.” Reagan said as he teased her opening, slipping the tip of his finger in and exploring the ring of pumping muscle before crooking the single digit into the spot that drove Belle wild; Belle tossed her head back, her body nearly becoming limp as a tear built up in the corner of her eye. He thrust two fingers inside of her, hard and fast, quickly contrasting the sharp ache in Belle’s cunt by slowing his thrusts, taking long and lauded pumps before scissoring his fingers inside her needy pussy. He was driving her to that high slowly, making her wait out the pleasure and feel it in every part of her body before he let her come.

He withdrew his fingers, eliciting a cry from Belle as he slowly brought the digits to his mouth and sucked her essence off them. He groaned as he tasted her. The tip of Belle’s tongue darted out, she wanted to clean him. Reagan groaned with satisfaction, this new side of Belle making his cock ache. Ever since that time in his classroom that had become more exploratory sexually.

“Do you know how hard you’ve made me Belle?” Reagan asked as he brought his hand, slick with saliva to Belle’s mouth. Her tongue darted out, encircling his fingers and obscenely taking them into her mouth in one eager bob of her head. Her tongue lapped between his fingers, closer to his knuckles, desperate to find any remaining taste of herself on his salty skin. She hummed in pleasure when she found it, causing Reagan to smile with pride at his little treasure.

With his other hand Reagan palmed himself, trying to alleviate some of the growing pressure in his trousers. Belle’s mouth stilled on his fingers, the wet sucking noise coming to a halt as she heard the tell tail noise of his zipper being pulled down. Belle sat up straight with enthusiasm, hoping to see him pull out his cock and thrust into her.

Reagan reached for his cock, pulling it from the restraints of his boxer briefs and holding firmly at the base. Belle watched with hungry eyes, licking her lips as his dark hand stroked over his shaft, the blunt head of his cock weeping pre-cum. He hissed as he pushed firmly on the head of his cock, spreading his cum over his dick so he could pump himself more efficiently.

Reagan pulled his fingers from Belle’s mouth and brought them back to her slit, teasing her folds before going right to her aching clit. Belle’s hips thrust forward as he gently rubbed soothing circles over the bud, sending bolts of pleasure through her body as he built her up again.

“Did you feel dirty without your knickers today?” He asked in a mere whisper, his accent so thick that only a practiced ear like Belle's could understand him, she loved it when he got needy like that.

“Yes, I wanted to surprise you when we got home.” She said teasingly, and it cost her. Reagan pinched her clit roughly causing Belle to scream out in pleasure, her channel fluttering as she felt the first buzz of her orgasm washing through her. “Reagan can I come?” She begged through unexpected tears. “Please, please, please!” she repeated desperately, the orgasm catching her so fiercely by surprise she didn't think her body capable of holding it off.

She had never asked for permission before - and god if it did not send the blood right towards Reagan’s cock. He snarled, reducing the pressure on her clit, knowing her body was shaking with want of release. She was so goddamn close and looked absolutely helpless as she placed her elbows
back onto the counter for support.

“Please!” she cried, her voice hoarse as he continued to gently tease the underside of her clit.

He leaned forward to nip at her ear, whispering, “Ask me again sweetheart.”

“Please, Reagan can I come?”

“Of course you can Belle.” He said as he pinched her clit once more and the waves rushed over her body.

Belle whined and writhed against the counter, shunting her hips to ride out the orgasm as her pussy pulsed. Reagan continued to rub circles on her clit, this time more fierce and desperate, he was finished teasing.

Before Belle knew it Reagan's thick cock had thrust into her pumping channel, her cunt still unrecovered from her first orgasm as he pulled out all the way, grabbed her hips and plunged back into her. Belle let out a whelp as he continued the punishing pace, his eyes locked with hers, hungry to watch her pleasure as he felt her tug and pump around his hard flesh.

“Come whenever you need to darling.” He growled out as he brought a hand up to her covered breast and roughly plucked at her nipple while his teeth sought out the other.

A small flutter rippled through Belle’s body as she clenched around him, her eyes rolling back in her head as he continued to pound through the wave of pleasure with disregard.

Belle’s fingers clenched at Reagan's shoulders, trying to sit up straight rather than lie haphazardly across the kitchen counter. Reagan followed Belle’s movements as he struggled to keep her breast within his mouth. It hurt his neck too much at this angle so he released her breast, the fabric of her shirt soaked and her peaked nipple sticking up against the material.

The new angle was intoxicating for Belle, his cock rubbing against her clit, mixed with the feeling of his belt, and pants, and her skirt bunched up at her waist. There was so much pressure everywhere, his hands on her clit and in her hair, his mouth trailing down her neck and lips.

“Do you have one more for me Belle?” He asked, his voice weak and lilting, Belle knew that meant he was close, his fingers shaking against her clit. Belle nodded as she sent an unsteady hand down to her clit to help him.

“I love you Reagan, and I want my home to be with you, always,” she mumbled in hysteria before peppering his cheeks with kisses.

Reagan was renewed, a sense of vigor overcoming him as he placed both his hands at Belle’s hips, thrusting into her hard and fast as they rocked together in rhythm. Small moans escaped her lips as the orgasm began to overtake her, and with the first flutter of her channel Reagan lost himself in her, flooding her pussy with warm cum, spilling his seed with each thrust until he was spent, shaking, and out of breath.

Belle’s head rolled to the side, her body briefly limp through all the bliss and euphoria until he pulled out of her and she caught her breath.

Belle quickly slumped off the counter, bending to her knees, her clothing hitched at her waist and her hair disheveled as she knelt before him and opened her mouth.

“Fuck.” Reagan said as he puffed out a breath, reaching for support against the back of the island
Belle’s mouth came forward as she sucked his softened cock into her mouth, lapping at the folds and creases of his member, drinking down the taste of their fluids. She balanced herself with one hand at his hip as she dutifully licked him clean, running her tongue under the ridge of his head causing his cock to give a spent little twitch in her mouth.

Belle smiled around his dick.

“Gods Belle I don’t think I can handle any more,” Reagan said with a smile and a playful tickle of Belle’s cheek with his forefinger as she released him from her mouth with a soft plop and carefully tucked him back into his trousers.

Reagan zipped his pants back up as Belle stood to her feet, pulling down her skirt and brushing her hair from her face. He looked to her lips before bending down to kiss her, his tongue slipping inside her mouth to taste them. They groaned simultaneously as they parted.

With a smile Reagan said, “I think I’m going to like having you live with me.”
“Reagan?” Belle stuck her head around the kitchen doorway.

“Yes Belle?” he said as he flipped over his egg.

“Remember what you said to me before I moved in?” she saw the annoyed look in his face meaning he would need her to be more specific, “about getting a Christmas tree? Do you have a Christmas tree?”

Reagan paused, the spatula stilling in the air as his egg cooked. “I haven’t put one up in years.”

“So that’s a no then?”

Reagan scoffed. “That’s a no.”

Belle walked into the room properly now, watching as he turned off the stove and flopped the egg onto a plate.

“Well, could we get one? You promised we would do it together?”

Reagan’s brow furrowed. It was the first of December and he knew that Belle was a holiday person, she had already decorated the entire school library with garland, ribbons, and empty present boxes that he had watched her wrap a few nights ago.

It’s not that Reagan didn’t like Christmas - he had a few fond memories of Christmas with Bae. He just hadn’t had the time, energy, or reason to put a tree in the past decade. But he supposed he had a reason now - a very good one in fact. And he had promised her.

“I don’t see why not. But it has to be a fake one, I couldn’t manage a real one,” he tapped the end of his cane to his foot by way of explanation.

Belle walked up to him and kissed his cheek. “Thank you,” she said.

“For what?”

Sneakily Belle reached out to Reagan’s plate, taking it in her own hand. “For breakfast.”

“Hey!” he shouted as she walked towards the dining room, a smile on his face as he sighed and
turned on the burner again.

They had spent that weekend decorating the tree together. Belle had brought all her sentimental ornaments with her and Reagan had dug through a pile of old boxes in the basement.

Reagan had a feeling that it was going to be the start of the happiest Christmas he had ever had.

~*~

“Are you sure we have to do this?” He asked as Belle straightened his tie.

“Yes, Will is my friend.”

“But I don’t like weddings.”

Belle rolled her eyes. “When was the last time you went to a wedding?”

Gold paused. He had no answer. “You’ve got me there.”

“Besides,” Belle said as she bent to the floor to put on her heels, “it might be a good opportunity for me to get some ideas.” She wiggled her eyebrows at him playfully.

“Excuse me what?”

Belle shrugged her shoulders as she picked up her winter jacket. “You know some inspiration?”

“Belle-”

“Oh relax Reagan,” Belle began to laugh. “I’m not pressuring you to propose anytime soon, I’m just teasing you.”

Reagan nodded, an excess of air puffing from his lungs. “You will be the death of me woman.”

Belle turned towards him and smiled, placing her hands on his chest. “As long as we have many happy years together first, I’m okay with that.”

“You cheeky wee thing,” Reagan said as he began to tickle Belle at her sides.

“Hey, Reagan!” she squirmed. “Stop it! Please!”

“Alright, alright,” he said as he pulled her towards him for a kiss. “Let’s get to this wedding then.”

~*~

Winter weddings were beautiful. The way the snow fell outside and the frost fogged up the windows, the twinkling lights, and the feeling of the holidays made Belle smile. She was also grateful that the ceremony and reception were inside because it was freezing outside - she mentally wished the bridal party luck when they ventured to take their pictures.
The ceremony had been very sweet. Anna looked gorgeous in her wedding dress, and Will, of course, made a few jokes in his vows.

And during the whole thing Belle had found herself holding Reagan’s hand.

Belle was impressed by Reagan’s behaviour; she was pleasantly surprised that Reagan had not made a single snide remark the entire evening - not even when he found out they were to be seated with Mary Margaret, her husband, Regina, Emma and his son! Reagan was surprised to find out that Emma had asked Baeden to accompany her to the wedding. He didn’t think they were at that point in their newly established acquaintance - but nonetheless, he was pleased for his son.

“So, I guess you two will be next?” Mary Margaret said towards Reagan and Belle.

Regina chuckled before taking a big gulp of her wine and draining the glass.

“We’ve only been living together for a month,” Belle said self explanatory.

“Everyone knows you’ll be engaged within the New Year.” Baeden piped up and everyone turned to stare at him. “What? It’s obvious how mad you two are for each other.”

“Do you know something I don’t?” Belle asked Baeden, before sending Reagan a critical look - he raised his hands innocently in his defense.

Reagan was incredibly relieved when the main entrees were brought out and the conversation had been tabled, instead they began to talk about Henry and baby Neal.


After dessert it was time for the bride and grooms first dance. Belle watched on, trying not to become teary eyed as Will looked on adoringly at his now wife.

Belle wanted that feeling.

She had always thought about getting married as a little girl - but truthfully it became less of a priority with school, and when she was starting her career - Reagan just sort of stumbled into her life unexpectedly. But now, it was something that she could see herself having, with him. It scared her to admit it, because if their relationship didn’t work out she knew she would be three times as heartbroken - but wasn’t it worth the risk?

The MC announced that the dance floor was now open to the other couples, and Belle watched as David offered his hand to his wife. She wondered if Bae would pluck up the courage to ask Emma, or maybe he was going to wait until they’d both had a few more drinks.

But Belle was totally caught off guard when she felt a hand on the back of her chair as Reagan stood up.

Clearing his throat he extending a hand to her. “Belle, may I have this dance?”

Belle’s mouth parted prettily. “Yes,” she smiled, her genuine joy covering her slight confusion - she didn’t think Reagan would be able to dance with his injury. Not wanting to embarrass him in front of Regina, Belle allowed him to lead her onto the dance floor, his cane left in his son’s care. “Are you
Belle asked when they found a spot on the corner of the dance floor, away from the more ambitious dancers.

Reagan smiled, placing one hand on Belle’s waist while the other held her hand to his chest. “I think I can manage a little swaying with the woman I love.”

Belle didn’t even try to stifle her smile. Instead she brought her free hand to his shoulder and leaned her head against his chest.

They swayed together. Feeling close together. And in love together.

“I’ve dreamed of doing things like this with you.” Belle admitted into his chest as they were halfway through the first song.

“Really?” Reagan moved back slightly, the skin at his neck making rolls as he found an angle where he could see her face.

“I’ve always been a big daydreamer; envisioning worlds with knights and sorcerers; historical romances; and the leading man in my dreams had always been a faceless imagination. That is, until I threw that stapler at you.”

Reagan laughed, remembering the memory of his fiery little librarian. God he loved this woman.

Belle smiled too, looking up into the richness and joy she found in his brown eyes. She continued with an earnestness to her whispered words. “Now every romantic hero, every lover or story I conjure up in my dreams, it’s your face I always see.” She felt Reagan’s hand move from her waist as he brought it to her cheek. “You’re everything I dream about.”

“You’re such a beautiful human being Belle,” he leaned in to kiss her, “both inside and out.”

Belle smiled, leaning back into his chest as he returned his hand to her waist and they continued to sway to the music.

“This is nice,” she sighed, “being in your arms.”

Reagan Gold leaned into her touch, pulling her closer to his chest.

Dancing really wasn’t that difficult. He put most of his weight on his good leg and let his hips do most of the moving. Part of Reagan wished he could have properly waltzed with her, like in Beauty and the Beast, her favourite fairy tale. A brief anxiety settled in Reagan’s chest and his body stiffened as the familiar feeling of not being good enough for her settled over him.

Uncertainly, he asked, “In your dreams, is this something you would want to have with me?”

Belle looked up at him, seeing the worry etched across his tight features. “A wedding party you mean?”

Reagan nodded with trepidation.

“I don’t need anything fancy like this.” Belle looked around the ballroom. “I’d prefer something quiet, in the forest, with twinkling fairy lights.” She turned her attention back to Gold. “I know Will didn’t either, but he did it for Anna.”

“If you wanted something like this, I would do it for you too Belle.”

Belle smiled. She definitely wanted to be married to this man.
“All that matters to me is that we are together and happy.” He kissed her temple. “If I have my way, I’d like to be with you forever.”

“I want that too Reagan.”

“You know how much I love you?” he stated in a moment of pure vulnerability.

Belle nodded as she bit down on her lower lip. “It makes my stomach flutter every time I think about it.”

Gold leaned down and captured her lips in an opened mouthed kiss. It was heated, but nothing that could be considered indecent for a public setting.

“And you know how much I love you?” she countered back to him when they parted.

“I’m still in disbelief every time I think about it.”

“Well don’t be,” she smiled confidently, “because I do.”

“You do?” he teased and Belle rolled her eyes before playfully bumping into him.

“Love you I mean!”

“I know darling, but I do too.”

*

As the evening wore on, Gold found himself getting tired. He certainly wasn’t as young as he used to be. But he did enjoy watching Belle dance around with her work friends. He hadn’t seen her that confident before, it was exhilarating to learn new things about her.

He stood at the bar, leaning his back against the counter, a glass of wine in one hand and his cane in the other. The corner of his mouth crooked towards a smile when he saw his son making his way over towards him.

Baeden had really cleaned up. His hair was freshly cut and his rented suit was cut perfectly to him.

Baeden ordered a beer from the bar, taking a swig as he and his father settled into an amicable silence watching the dance floor.

“So,” Gold spoke up after some time, “Emma asked you to be her date?”

“No, not exactly,” Baeden winced. “She said it would be a chance for us to get out, talk, have some fun, but it’s not like a date, it’s too public.”

“So have you had a chance to talk?” Gold asked, thinking the wedding wasn’t the best place to have a serious conversation - then again, he recalled the conversation he had with Belle an hour earlier on the dance floor.

“Yeah, we talked a lot about Henry, how he’s taking things,” Baeden explained and a little smile tugged at the corner of his mouth. “Emma said he’s been really happy and that I’ve been good for him. Regina even said I’m making him come out of his shell a little bit more at school.”
“That’s excellent Bae!” Reagan patted his son on the shoulder. “You must be so proud.”

“I’m not going to lie,” Baeden brought a hand up to rub along the stubble on his jaw, “it’s a great feeling knowing I’m making a difference in his life.”

“So she’s giving you a chance,” Gold said in affirmation rather than asking a question.

“Emma understands that I want to be a part of Henry’s life, and I think she’s realized it will be a smoother transition for him if we can get along - and with Regina too. I’m grateful for what she’s done for Emma and Henry.”

Gold nodded even if it was difficult for him to admit that his professional nemesis was actually a good woman. “I’m happy for you Bae,” Reagan concluded.

“I never thought I’d be a Dad like this!” Baeden shook his head as he took another swig of beer.

“I know what you mean.”

Beaden sent his father a curious look. He had always wanted to know more. He had always felt like part of his own childhood had been a secret. “You and Mum, really didn’t want me?”

“Of course not Bae.” Reagan immediately went to defend himself, not wanting his son to, once again, think the worst of him, but Baeden cut him off before he could protest any further.

“No, I get it Dad! I was an accident that came at a really bad time, but it doesn't mean you didn’t love me any less.”

Reagan’s mouth parted, a response falling short at the tip of his tongue. “When did you get so wise?” he finally asked.

Bae smiled shyly. “When I became a father.”

Reagan laughed light heartedly, thinking that his experience was the exact opposite from his son’s. “When I became a father it felt like I knew nothing - I was so unprepared.”

Bae nodded. He understood. In fact, he thought he would have felt the exact same way if had the privilege of being around when Henry was a baby. “I actually think it’s easier, with Henry being older,” Bae admitted. “We have stuff we can talk about and we’re pretty open about the situation. We talk about it a lot now. He was frustrated with all the secrets, and he’s sorta demanded this vow of honesty from all of his.”

“Smart kid, I should teach him how to make a contract.”

“Dear god no!” Bae choked on his sip of beer. “I fear that he might actually be a little bit like you and I don’t need to encourage it.”

“Nonsense,” Gold said lightly, knowing that Henry would most certainly make a better man they he himself was. “Henry’s sweeter then any of us are.”

“Except perhaps Belle?” Beaden segued.

Reagan found himself smiling softly towards her as she and the girls had sat down to take off their heels. “Well, you’re right on that account,” he said softly.

Baeden gave his father a knowing look, and he held his gaze firmly until his father took note of it.

“Have you gotten a ring yet?”

“Not yet Bae.”

“Would you,” Bae itched the back of his neck, “I mean would you tell me if you do?”

Reagan gave his son a searching look.

“It’s not just Henry’s life I want to be a part of. My wounds are healing, you’re a changed man, and Belle is special; I just, I want to be a part of your future family.”

“Bae?” Reagan questioned his son, judging the earnest tone in his voice.

“What,” Bae raised his shoulders in an uplifting shrug, “weddings make me sappy?”

Reagan smiled before nudging his son’s bicep. “You always were a sensitive boy.”

*

By the time the bouquet toss came around Belle had already taken her heels off, spent a good half hour on the dance floor, and was feeling more than a little tipsy on wine and the declarations of love from her boyfriend.

So when she caught Anna’s bouquet it was no surprise to anyone - not even, Mr. Gold.
Belle had already gotten her Christmas shopping finished. Both she and Mary Margaret were early starters and had been prepping in November. They had even convinced Ruby and Emma to come along on some of their outings, in order to inspire the girls - who were traditionally last minute shoppers. And while shopping with the girls was fun, there was certain things she needed to get alone; she also found that she was more organized and driven when alone. But regardless, Belle’s shopping had been completed mid December and she was free to begin wrapping presents.

Belle adored wrapping. She had bought all sorts of wrapping papers, ribbons, and bows. She treated every present as if it was a work of art. She even arranged them underneath the tree to her liking. It made Reagan chuckle every time he found a stray piece of tape attached to her somewhere.

The presents Reagan had wrapped were just as meticulous. He didn’t consider himself as artistic as Belle, but he was a very precise man and aesthetics mattered to him.

When Bae had been over last week he commented how their tree looked like it came out of a magazine - with the exception of some of the old family and handmade ornaments on the tree. And Belle loved it that way - it was personalized to them.

Although the tree was looking excellent, the rest of the house was quite bland and Belle was dying to decorate it - she just hadn’t had the time, with work, and the wedding. So having a break off of work over the holidays was a blessing. School had ended on the 21st and Belle had a few free days before Christmas in which she was free to decorate and bake.

She planned on asking Reagan if he had any Christmas decorations - Belle had only brought over a few Christmas lights and tree ornaments from her place. Belle paused for a moment, she wondered if her father had bothered to put up a tree?
She had been calling him every week to check in on him, to see how he was doing. The first time she had called he had let her go to voicemail. That had been hard. But in the weeks since he had answered her calls and talked to her about the new things happening in her life. Belle never mentioned the drinking - she didn’t think he was ready for that so soon after their massive fall out.

“What’s wrong Belle?” Reagan asked, setting down a journal article. He had the research for their book on fairy tales scattered about the dining room table. The book was mostly complete and Reagan planned to use the holiday break to work on getting all of their citations in order - it was his least favourite part of any academic work but their publisher had been quite insistent that the sources be completed by the New Year.

Belle walked into the dinning room. She was wearing blue jeans and a red Christmas sweater.

“I was just thinking about my father.”

“I see,” Reagan pushed his chair away from the table and gestured for Belle to come towards him.

Belle walked over to Reagan and sat down gently on his lap. He brought a hand up to rub over her back, feeling the soft sweater beneath his touch.

“If my son and I can make up after what I did to his mother, I think you and your father will be able to get through your differences.”

“I do hope so.”

“Listen young lady, if you’re needing a pep talk about hope the woman you should call is your friend Mary Margaret.”

Belle gave him a small smile of mirth. “Actually, I initially came here to ask you if you had any Christmas decorations? I want to decorate the house.”

“Oh!” Reagan thought about it. “There might have been some things in the basement, next to the box I got out for the ornaments.”

“Can I have a look?”

“If decorating the house will cheer you up, then by all means.” Reagan brought the back of his hand up to her cheek and stroked it softly. “We can’t have you feeling all melancholy on the holidays.”

Belle smiled, leaning forward to wrap her arms around Reagan’s neck in a hug. “Now how could I be melancholy when I have you.”

“Exactly!” He teased, and it was worth seeing the gorgeous smile grow onto Belle’s face.

Belle had braved the dusty old basement and pulled up a bunch of boxes. She was surprised to find garland, outside Christmas lights, old stockings, candles, and other Christmas things. She was less surprised to find a separate box of antique Christmas objects. At first, she was a little hesitant to use them because she figured they might be part of Reagan’s collection, but after gaining his permission she used the objects happily.
She had spent nearly all morning perfecting the living room and kitchen. She didn’t even stop at lunch. Reagan had made her a salmon sandwich in which she nibbled on while draping garland in the dining room.

In the beginning it had been amusing, watching her arrange candles and an antique collection of snowmen on top of the curio cabinet; but when Belle had climbed up onto the table, tip-toe over his research in order to hang little crystal ornaments from the dining room chandelier he lost all amount of concentration.

“Is this really necessary?” he asked with a laugh when her foot managed to step on his pen.

“Sorry, but this is going to look excellent! I’m almost finished, really!”

Reagan merely chuckled, instead deciding to focus on his own meal more effectively as he watched her carefully tie the old ornaments onto the priceless chandelier.

“What do you think?” Belle asked, ducking her head as she backed away from the chandelier to give him some space to properly criticize her arrangement.

“I think it looks excellent.”

Belle placed her hands on her hips, still standing on the table and looking down on him as he leaned back in his chair. “You’re just saying that.”

“Absolutely right I am!” he didn’t lie.

Belle rolled her eyes. “But you don’t think it’s ugly?”

“No I don’t. But I do think it’s time you got your bare feet off the dining room table and let me get back to my citations. I would like to get this finished early so I can actually spend the holiday with you.”

The corner of Belle’s lip tugged in thought before she carefully climbed off the table. She was prone to physical disasters and it was a miracle she hadn’t fallen off or taken the chandelier down somehow.

“How is it coming?” she asked as she looked at his laptop, seeing about four pages of citations finished.

“Good I think, but you know how laborious the process is though.”

Belle nodded, remembering the long hours spent citing academic works for her degree. “Will it go quicker if I help?”

“You know it would, you are a librarian after all.”

Belle smiled, choosing to take that cocky remark as a compliment. “Alright! Let’s get this baby ready for publication!”

* *

In the end it had only taken them two days to get everything properly sorted.
Having the citations completed and sent off to their publisher was a weight off of Reagan’s shoulders. Now, he could properly enjoy his very first Christmas with the woman he loved. He just didn’t know that meant spending the morning of Christmas Eve helping her bake an endless supply of cookies.

“What are our plans Christmas Day?” Belle asked as she stirred a bowl of cookie batter.

“Bae said he might come over for dinner. He is spending mid day with the Nolan, Swan, Mills clan.” Belle nodded approvingly as she remained focused on her baking. She had already completed a batch of chocolate chips, shortbread, gingersnaps, and cranberry trail mix cookies. They were currently working on her cinnamon cookie recipe.

“You do know we will never eat this many sweets.” Reagan stated as he measured out a tablespoon of vanilla extract and tossed it into the wet mixture Belle already had going.

“Don’t be such a Grinch,” she scolded playfully. “Besides, it’s the act of baking I enjoy even more than eating them.”

“What part exactly?” Reagan questioned as he moved to stand behind her.

“I guess I like knowing others will enjoy the cookies.”

Reagan brushed aside Belle’s hair and leaned into her neck. He whispered into her ear, “Because you like to please others?”

“You know I do,” Belle flushed.

Reagan began to trail soft kisses down Belle’s neck his hands roaming over her stomach. But just as he was about to grind into her ass Belle turned around in his grip. She kissed him squarely on the mouth before he felt a firm hand on his shoulder pushing him away from her.

“Here, taste this,” she shoved a spoonful of cookie dough into his mouth - virtually ruining the mood.

“You know, that’s not exactly what I was hoping to taste.” Reagan said as he licked his lips.

Belle shook her head at him, needing him to focus on baking rather than sex. “Is there enough cinnamon in the mixture?”

“It could use a little more.” Reagan replied truthfully although Belle’s raised eyebrow said she didn’t believe him.

Reagan dipped his finger into the mixture and offered it up to Belle.

She couldn’t help but smile, feeling a tug in her lower stomach, even though she wanted to stay focused on the baking. Regardless, Belle sucked the digit into her mouth, making sure to clean all the dough off of Reagan’s finger.

“Hmm, you’re right.”

“We should be having sex instead of baking?”

Belle gave him her stern librarian look and it didn’t do anything to cool his libido. “No,” she said firmly, “you’re right about the cinnamon you impossible man! Now either control yourself in my kitchen or you certainly won’t be getting any sex Christmas morning!”
Reagan raised his hands in defeat, although part of him was feeling incredibly smug by the fact that Belle called it *her* kitchen.

After dinner they had hung their stockings over the fireplace and spent the evening cuddled on the sofa reading their perspective books.

When it was time for bed Belle still found herself excited and Reagan found himself loving her even more. He pulled her into his arms and held her tightly all night long.

~*~

“Happy Christmas sweetheart,” Reagan whispered as he softly tickled Belle’s cheek hoping to wake her up.

Belle let out a big yawn as her eyes adjusted to the light. When she recognized Reagan she smiled and then her eyes widened in a palpable excitement.

“It’s Christmas!” she shouted like a child, hopping onto her knees with glee.

Gold placed a hand on the outside of her thigh, admiring the way her chestnut locks were bouncing over her face. “Happy Christmas my love.” He admired her enthusiasm.

“Merry Christmas to you too!” Belle squealed before she tossed her leg over Reagan, straddling his midriff somewhere and leaning down for a messy kiss. She bumped into his nose and her hair was certainly in one of, if not both their mouths, but Reagan loved it anyways. Belle pulled back, a little embarrassed as she gathered her hair in her hands and shuffled her body towards Reagan’s lap. She knew the moment she found it because not only did he grunt in pleasure, but underneath the sheet he was naked and unmistakably hard.

“Can I unwrap my first present now?” Reagan teased, but his soft tone was still enough to make Belle flush.

She nodded her ascent and his hand quickly went to her nightdress, grabbing at her waist and pulling it over the little librarian’s head.

Belle shivered slightly as her nipples were consumed by the crisp air in the bedroom - she would have to get Reagan to put a log on the fireplace downstairs. They had heating, but there was something charming about using a proper fire on Christmas morning. Belle had never had a fireplace in any home before.

Her derailed train of thought came to an abrupt end when Reagan leaned up and pulled one of her nipples with his teeth. Belle tried not to groan out but the pain was too much as he pulled at her breast.

“Reagan, I’m ready already.” Belle found herself saying as she ground her hips somewhere against him.

She felt him smile against her breast as he sucked the tissue into his mouth, releasing it with a pop only to plant kisses all along the skin. When it was evident that Reagan was going to continue teasing her, Belle decided to take things into her own hands. She reached for her clit, finding herself grossly wet. She hummed out as she began to rock against her hand.
Reagan looked up at her in awe. She really was going to frig herself over-top of him, his hard cock brushing against her hand as she shifted her hips.

Belle grunted, her hand speeding up against her clit as her other palm landed onto Reagan’s chest for support. Reagan placed his hand over hers, feeling his balls ache with how close he was to her cunt - the heat of it nearly searing his skin.

“Are you going to make me watch you come?”

“Yes,” she barely managed her voice a mere exhale of pleasure.

“When my cock is right here, ready for you, ready for your sweet pussy?”

Belle whimpered, his dirty talk making her need grow. She increased the speed of her hand, the rotating of her hips stopping so she could focus on getting herself off. Soon her channel began to pump, feeling anxiously empty.

“Are you sure you can take it sweetheart? I’m right here.” Reagan shifted, moving aside the sheet and causing Belle’s hand to fumble.

She cried when she felt the head of his cock bump somewhere against her opening.

“That’s not fair!” she exclaimed, resisting every urge to just sink down on him.

“Do you think you can come before you give in?” The head of his cock was now sliding against the cleft of her opening, rubbing until he bumped into the back of her hand.

Belle’s head fell in frustration - the arousing kind.

“All you have to do is ask.”

“Fuck,” Belle gave in. “Please Reagan may I have your cock?”

Gold smiled sinfully. He gave Belle a nod, holding his cock firmly as she sank down upon him.

Belle groaned, quickly riding him, her hand still at her clit. “Reagan I’m not going to last long,” she worried.

“Oh Belle I was about to come before I was even inside you.”

“Don’t hold back please.”

Reagan took hold of her hips, thrusting up inside of her and finally sending Belle into her orgasm. She went limp almost immediately, leaning against his chest as he pumped himself to completion inside of her.

When they finished Belle rolled off of Reagan, a light sheen on her skin from the exertion.

“Merry Christmas darling.” Reagan pulled her against him, giving a kiss to her temple.

“Merry Christmas to you too.”

Gold sighed heavily. “I think I might need a nap before we head downstairs.”

“Absolutely not!” Belle pulled away from him, invigorated. “It’s present time!” She shot out of the bed and pulled on her nightgown. With a bounce in her step Belle skirted out of the bedroom, her
speedy steps echoing on the staircase.

Reagan shook his head with a smile. “How did I get so lucky?”

Reagan wasn’t used to receiving gifts. He wasn’t even used to purchasing gifts either. He had been nervous when shopping for Belle - but she had really loved the boots he had already gotten for her in November, so that gave him some sense of confidence in his ability to shop for her.

He had been paying attention to the books on her reading list and was able to purchase a few of them for her. He also noticed a backing mixer she had been eyeing when they went to the mall together a few weeks ago. Belle had been absolutely astonished with the gift, thinking about all the things she would bake next. He had also given her a few DVD’s and a new duvet that had been on her list. Belle had even teared up slightly when she opened the “our first Christmas” ornament and hung it on the tree.

But he had saved the best gift for last.

“Hold on,” Reagan said as Belle had begun collecting the discarded wrapping paper, “there is one more.”

Belle looked under the tree, all the presents had been opened except the ones they had purchased for Bae and Henry under the tree. “What do you mean?” she asked confused.

Reagan opened the drawer on the end table and pulled out a little envelope. It looked like an unassuming Christmas Card. He handed over the paper to Belle, his fingers twitching with nerves as she took the paper from his grasp.

“What is this?”

“One more present.”

Belle smiled, opening the unsealed envelope and pulling out a bulky card. There was clearly something concealed inside of the card, she saw a slip of paper sticking out. The cover of the card was simple, a street post that was glowing yellow amidst falling snowflakes on a cobblestone street. Belle opened up the card, the left inside jacket reading, in Reagan’s handwriting; To my love, I hope you can accept this gift which I know is as much a part of your heart, as you, are a part of mine. Belle’s eyebrows scrunched in curiosity.

“Open it,” Reagan instructed, regarding the package of papers resting in the right hand side of the card.

Belle pulled out the package and set the card on the table. She unfolded the papers, her mind assaulted by words and unsure where to focus until her scanning eyes found it; This document acknowledges that the deed to Game of Thrones, 312 Main Street, is hereby transferred to Belle French.

Belle had to reread the sentence.

“Reagan? Is this the flower shop?”
Reagan nodded. “And the apartment.”

“You’ve, you’ve just given me an entire property?”

Reagan flinched for a second, worried Belle was about to scold him. But thankfully, instead, she lunged forward and captured him in a tight hug.

“My father can stay there now?” Belle pulled away from him, her brain still in disbelief. “I won’t have to worry about him missing the rent! Gods, I know you haven’t been taking the money I was giving you for it!” She slapped his arm playfully, before she looked down at the papers to consider them for a moment. “Is this why you would never tell me if he was short or not?”

“Partly, yes.” Reagan admitted with a tilt of his head. “I hope it’s alright, I didn’t want to presume, I know how proud you can be.”

Belle smiled, he knew her so well. “Reagan this, this is unbelievable for me. The mental security you’ve given me, the weight lifted off my shoulders! I don’t even know how I can thank you!” She leaned forward into another hug.

“Being able to spend my days with you will be thanks enough,” he whispered into her neck.

Belle pulled away from him, cupping his face in her hands, the papers still securely held in her right one. “Oh you sweet man, that’s exactly what I want too!”

Reagan gave her a quick kiss. “I love you Belle, more than I knew I was capable of.”

“You’re the first man I’ve ever loved Reagan, and I’m certain you’ll be the only one.”

Reagan smiled. “Merry Christmas my darling.”

“Merry Christmas my love.”
Birthdays and Beginnings

Chapter Summary

Reagan has a very special gift for Belle’s birthday. Ruby helps the girls, ring in the New Year in Style.

“Remember tonight ... for it is the beginning of always”

— Dante

Belle had insisted on making her own Birthday cake. She was dying to use her new mixer for a serious backing task; as a result, she let Reagan know a day before the 27th that she would be making her own cake and if he had been planning on it he did not need to purchase one. Reagan simply chuckled; he loved the women more and more each day.

Reagan didn’t have anything extravagant planned for Belle’s birthday. Truth be told, he had been consumed with worries for Christmas. But he had been conscious enough to make a special dinner reservation for her, and a possible surprise planned for afterwords.

When Belle had woken up she was disappointed to find the bed empty. But moments later Reagan walked into the bedroom with a breakfast tray.

“Breakfast in bed?” Belle smiled down to the pancakes - they were soaked in syrup, just like she liked it.

“Happy Birthday sweetheart.” He gently set the tray in her lap before giving her a kiss on the side of her head.

“No ones ever made me breakfast in bed before!”

“Well perhaps,” he sat down on the edge of the bed, careful not to disturb her food, “it can become a new tradition.”

Belle felt her stomach flutter. “We’re making traditions together.”

“It looks like we are.”

“Thank you Reagan,” Belle smiled, taking a big piece of syrupy cake into her mouth and groaning with satisfaction. Reagan chuckled, wiping a piece of syrup from off her chin and sticking the digit into his mouth.

After breakfast they had gone for a walk together. They stopped into Granny’s and spent a few moments drinking tea at the counter with Ruby. After that they had returned home, each to a good book.

After lunch Reagan had insisted Belle open her presents - he had plans for the evening and since they were on holiday it would be nice to break up her special day with mid-day gifts. Belle, who
loved presents, was all for the idea.

He had gotten her a pearl necklace set with matching earrings, bracelet, and ring. He knew Belle had been wanting something like that for a while. She found pearls incredibly classy and they reminded her of both fairy tales and history - two of her passions.

He had also given her a few seed packets and potted in door flowers - Belle had expressed an interest in starting a garden in the back yard for the summer and Reagan was more then willing to accommodate that desire. He was even willing to build her a ruddy greenhouse if she wanted - but he decided to save that for a later gift.

Instead, his final gift came wrapped in a box.

When Belle opened up the box she found a package of paper, much like the contracts Reagan made for his leases. For a moment she feared he had given her another fucking building.

“A contract?” Belle questioned as she opened the paper. Clearly Reagan was a fan of presents that involved Belle having to read them in order to decode what exactly the gift was. As she read further she realized it was a work order and that both Bae and David Nolan had agreed to the job. But Belle still wasn’t sure what exactly it was. “Reagan you’ll have to explain…”

“I seem to recall promising you a reading room.”

Belle’s mouth fell open.

“I thought the study just off of the library would be an excellent place for it.”

“Are you serious?” Belle questioned, recalling their conversation from a month ago when she moved into his house.

“Bae and David have agreed to make the built-ins for us. They will of course match the historical period of the home. I thought you would be interested in collecting some designs to-”

“Reagan you didn’t have to-”

But Gold stopped her there. “It’s our home Belle, and I’m hoping it will be our home as we continue to grow.” Reagan gave a thin, honest smile. “I think it’s about time it started reflecting us.”

Belle leaned across the couch to give him a kiss.

“Thank you, Reagan.”

“Why can’t you just tell me where we’re going for dinner?” Belle asked as she sat at the antique makeup vanity; she had found it in one of Reagan’s guest rooms and asked him if she could bring it to the walk-in closet and use it herself. He loved the idea. Truthfully, Reagan had dreams about a possible wife using the vanity when he had first acquired it - but he would never truly admit such a dream. Although now, with Belle, it seemed like a very probable reality.

Reagan did the clasp of pearls at the back of Belle’s neck and watched her hair tumble down her shoulders after it had been fastened.

“Alright,” Reagan gave in, his stomach couldn’t handle this kind of unanticipated excitement. “I got
us reservations at Dante’s.”

“Dante’s!” Belle exclaimed, looking up to Reagan’s face in the mirror. “We haven't been there since our first date.”

“I thought it would make a grossly sentimental treat.”

Belle smiled in mirth. “It is just the appropriate amount of sentimental.”

The two story restaurant was just as beautiful the second time around. Belle was shocked that Reagan had even managed to get the same private room at the back of the restaurant. The table was set romantically for two and the lights from the chandelier reflected in the head to floor mirrors.

After the main course the waitress had brought a small piece of lemon meringue pie with a candle in it for Belle.

“I know you made your own,” Reagan shrugged his shoulder, “but I let them know it was your birthday.”

Belle gave him a coy smile. “I would never say no to two birthday cakes.”

Reagan laughed. “I imagine not, you have such a sweet tooth.”

Belle rolled her eyes at him. Surprisingly, Reagan enjoyed it when she gave him attitude like that.

“Here’s to twenty-six,” he raised his glass of wine and Belle did the same, their glasses clinking before they took a sip.

“To twenty-six,” she repeated as she closed her eyes, prepared her wish, and blew out her candle.

“What are we doing here?” Belle asked.

Reagan had pulled the Cadillac up to Game of Thrones on their way home from Dante’s.

“My Dad isn’t here.” She stated flatly. “When he called this morning he said he was staying with a friend, they had tickets to a hockey game in Boston.”


“You arranged it?”

“I gave them the tickets.” He raised a brow as if it were obvious.

“Why?” her curls bounced as she shook her head. “I don’t understand.”
“I didn’t want us to get interrupted this time. After all, you do own the building.”

Belle’s mouth began to drop as she pieced together his meaning. “You want to have sex, in the flower shop!”

Gold smiled sinfully. “Well we might not have gone all the way on our first date, but we were certainly getting somewhere before we were interrupted by a baseball bat.”

Belle smiled fondly before she began to laugh and simultaneously shake her head. “This is a terrible idea.”

Gold stiffened for a moment, fearing she hated his idea. “If you don’t want to-”

“I do,” Belle cut him off. “I want to!” her cheeks and palms began to feel warm. “It just seems very naughty.”

“Like my classroom?” Gold raised a suggestive brow.

Belle was definitely blushing now; and her insides were clenching at the memory of her cunt dripping onto one of the desks.

“I find myself continually surprised by you Mr. Gold.”

“Surprised good?” he asked uncertainty.

“Very good!”

Just like on their first date, after a few heated kisses Belle found Reagan hard and ready. He had her back pushed up against the glass display case as his hands gripped firmly at her waist.

Belle had already taken off his suit jacket and she was working on his tie as he began to suckle the skin at her neck. If memory served him correctly he had left a very delicious red mark on her skin that night, and he was definitely interested in marking her again.

Belle moaned into his touch as she unlooped his tie and tossed the fabric onto the floor. Instead of going for the buttons on his dress shirt she slipped her hand between their bodies and found his hard shaft. She stroked over his pants, thinking about having him inside of her as she built up his pleasure.

Reagan found that her ministrations were quickly becoming distracting, and he could no longer focus on the love bites he was leaving across her skin. Instead, he lifted Belle up and placed her rear end on the counter.

This is where they had been when they were so rudely interrupted the first time.

But there was nothing stopping them now.

Deciding to add to the game, Belle said, “We have to hurry, my father’s just upstairs.”

“Oh gods,” Reagan breathed against Belle’s shoulder. He had to take a moment before he got into character. “Are you sure he won’t catch us?”

“You might have to be quiet.”

Reagan nearly growled as he pulled up Belle’s dress, bunching it around her waist.
“Forget the panties, just do it!”

“Fuck!” Reagan grunted as he unzipped his pants and pulled his cock out of his boxers. He took a step towards the counter, pulling aside Belle’s panties and lining himself up with her opening.

“Fuck me!” she commanded in a whisper and Gold didn’t waste any time, thrusting into her in one swift movement.

His thrusts were hard and fast, despite the challenging angle. He placed a firm hand over Belle’s mouth, keeping her from making too many noises - they couldn’t disturb their imaginary host.

Gold knew he wasn’t going to last very long; the brush of Belle’s panties, the heat of her cunt, the fact that they were still fully clothed, coupled with their hard and fast pace was quickly spiraling him towards a climax. Fortunately, Belle was ready as well. He felt her fumble between their bodies and frantically place her hand over her clit, causing her channel to clamp firmly around Reagan’s cock.

Belle felt it the moment his cum filled her, the heat of it sending another wave of ecstasy through her spine.

“Happy Birthday sweetheart,” he whispered into her hear as he slipped from within her and leaned against the counter for support.

Belle smiled. “That was excellent. Did you buy me the flower shop just for this?”

Gold laughed as he tucked himself back into his pants. “Of course not, it was just an added bonus,” he winked. “Now come on birthday girl, someone I love made a cake for you that’s just waiting for us to eat.”

Belle hopped off the counter, re-adjusted her dress, and left the flower shop with Reagan’s hand guiding her firmly.

~*~

“You look so different.”

“Different bad?” Belle asked as she stood in front of the mirror in their walk in closet.

She was wearing a short black dress with lace trim and a mesh cut out that went from the top of her belly button to the bottom of her bust. The sleeves went off her shoulder and gave a tantalizing view of her collar bone and cleavage.

“No, different delicious .”

Belle ducked her head as Reagan stood behind her, bringing his hands to her stomach and his lips to her neck.

“Ruby picked it out. It’s much more risque then I would have-”

“Maybe Miss Lucas should find things for you to wear more frequently.”

“Reagan!” Belle shook him off. “I’m uncomfortable in this kind of thing. It’s not,” her head fell as she sank to sit down on the ottoman, “It’s not me. I prefer skirts and dress shirts and cute things not,
not ... I’m not sexy."

“Oh Belle.” Gold knelt down beside her and placed a hand on her nylon covered thigh. “It doesn’t matter what you wear. To me you will always be sexy, and beautiful, and smart. Oh, sweet girl,” he brought his second hand up to Belle’s chin, tilting her eyes to meet his, “don’t let the asinine social constructs about femininity get to you. You are everything that you wish, or think you need to be, even if you can’t see it, or always feel it, I would be more than happy to remind you how much I do see it.”

A shy smile began to spread across Belle’s face - his speech having made a positive impact on her emotions. “Where was that kind of speech when I was in high school and struggled with serious body images?” she joked. “God girls can be so mean!”

Reagan chuckled, an easy smirk crossing his tanned face. “That speech was definitely not meant for you back then, or we would have been in a very sticky situation.”

“Sticky?” Belle questioned his choice of words.

“I’m not wrong?” he raised his shoulders jokingly a goofy expression crossing on his face as his eyebrows nearly rose to the top of his hairline. Belle burst out into proper laughter. Gold smiled, happy her emotions were shifting towards the positive. “It’s okay if you don’t feel comfortable in a certain type of clothing - for gods sake, I wear suits everywhere because dressing casual makes me feel too vulnerable.”

Belle sent him a sad smile before cupping his face and leaning down to rest her forehead against his own.

Reagan brought his hands up to the sides of Belle’s arms. “Change if you want, but, I think you look beautiful, and I know you’re going to have a wonderful New Years Eve with your friends.”

“But I won’t be able to kiss you on midnight.” She pouted.

“I’m sure you and Mary Margaret can occupy yourselves while the single women receive kisses from strangers.”

Belle pulled away from Reagan, making a face at what he was suggesting. “Reagan did you - she's like my almost daughter-in-law!”

Gold laughed at the ridiculousness of his family situation before a thought crossed through his mind. “Almost?” he asked, wondering if Belle meant because she and Reagan were ‘almost’ married, or because Mary Margaret was only ‘almost’ related to him.

“Almost.” Belle repeated.

“Almost.” He agreed.

“I knew this dress would look spectacular on you!” Ruby nudged Belle’s side as the girls returned to their table from the dance floor.
“How did Gold even let you out of the house?” Emma shouted, loud enough that the girls could hear her over the music in The Rabbit Hole.

“I’m sure we’ll ring in the New Year properly when I get back home tonight.”

“OMG Belle!” Ruby chastised and Emma made a face of disgust.

“What, I can’t talk about my sex life?” Belle asked, recalling that was the sole topic Ruby usually wanted to talk about.

“Not when your sex life is with Gold!” Ruby and Emma responded almost simultaneously and Mary Margaret laughed.

Belle just rolled her eyes at her friends light-hearted double standard.

“Here you are ladies,” a waitress said as she placed a round of sangria onto the girls table.

The friends picked up their drinks, each taking a few sips before Ruby set hers down on the table. “Okay, okay, let’s play a game.”

“Ruby, I don’t know,” Mary Margaret began, “your idea of games are-”

“This is a serious game I promise!”

Emma gave Ruby her Sheriff look.

Ruby flinched slightly before reassuring the girls that she was being sincere.

“Alright,” Emma sighed, taking a big sip and getting her game face on. “I’m ready then.”

“Yay!” Ruby clapped, her red nails gleaming under the harsh bar lighting. “Okay, okay, if you could hope for one thing in the New Year, what would it be?”

The girls looked at Ruby surprised.

“Wow, Ruby that’s deep.” Mary Margaret remarked.

“I know!” Ruby smiled, a red lipstick grin. “But you have to be honest and real!”

“Fine then,” the blond said, “why don’t you start Ruby?”

Ruby took a deep breath. “I want to go back to college.”

“What!”

“Ruby?” Belle said softly, a feeling of hope burning inside of her chest.

“Granny’s been giving me more responsibility with the dinner and I want to finish my business management degree. I guess I’m ready to start settling down a bit?”

“Ruby, I’m so happy for you!” Mary Margaret exclaimed.

Meanwhile, Belle sent her best friend a little nudge and a smile, her eyes conveying the depth of pride she felt for her friend. Ruby returned the smile.

“Okay, Mary Margaret, you next.”
Mary Margaret considered her thoughts for a moment. “I want to make peace with Regina; I know it’s an ongoing thing, but I’ve never truly apologize to her. She’s sacrificed love and a free life to be there for Emma and myself, even though we didn’t know it.”

Emma gave her adoptive sister a guilty grin. “That’s very mature M.”

Mary Margaret rested her head on Emma’s shoulder affectionately before pulling back and saying, “Okay Emma, your turn.”

Emma made an uncomfortable face. “Alright,” she sighed, honesty not being her strong suit. “I want to forgive Baeden - or myself rather. I don’t know how I’m going to do it, but Henry needs that.”

Mary Margaret placed her hand over Emma’s. “I’m so proud of you.”

Emma smiled uncomfortably, trying not to roll her eyes at her sister, even though she felt the pride of having pleased her.

“Okay Belle.” Ruby took a big sip of her sangria, excited for what her best friend was going to say. “It’s your turn.”

Belle bit down on her bottom lip, thinking about her father and then thinking about Reagan. “I know, I should probably hope for my father’s sobriety,” Belle paused, drawing a long breath, “but I feel like I’ve been hoping that for so long…” She straightened up her shoulders, a sense of confidence centering her decision. “Maybe it’s time I chose something for myself?”

Her friends smiled. Ruby gave her a nod of encouragement to go on.

“I think, I think I’d like for Reagan to propose.”

“Aww Belle!” Ruby lunged forward and hugged the smaller girl.

“You did catch the bouquet at Will’s wedding, that’s a sign.” Mary Margaret said with a wink.

“I’m just afraid, if I hope for it, will it happen?” Belle admitted. “Is it too soon?”

“Girl,” Ruby pulled away from the embrace slightly in order to properly see Belle. “I’ve never seen you in love before. It’s not too soon and he is the right one!”

“Really?”

“Really.” Ruby assured her as Belle gave her another little side hug.

“Now!” Ruby picked up her drink before glancing towards the countdown timer above the bar. “Let’s drink to our dreams, and count in the New Year!”

Nearly ten minutes later the girls were counting down, clinking glasses, and ringing in the New Year with their hopes in mind.

End Notes

Hope this story brings joy to some of you. I'm certainly very excited to continue it.

#HopeForRumbelle
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!