The Career Path Less Traveled

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Summary

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Notes

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One thing was for certain: Emma was not an early riser. For the past two months, she had managed to arrive late nearly every day at her new job. Here she was again, on a Wednesday morning, struggling to do her morning routines in the usual rush. It was about an hour ago when she silenced her alarm hoping for a few more minutes of sleep. A decision she was currently regretting as she was about forty-five minutes behind her pre-work prep. 'Really Swan? Had to get another five minutes of shut-eye in?' She internally cursed shoving her hair back into a semi-neat ponytail with a toothbrush protruding from her mouth.

"Looks like someone slept in again?" A cocky grin greeted her from the hallway. Giving a sideways glance to acknowledge Ruby's presence, Emma finished wrestling her hair into the elastic band and plucked the toothbrush free.

Spitting the minty liquid out, she turned her attention to her roommate. "Rubes, as much as I know you enjoy teasing me on my sleeping habits I would appreciate some help here." She pointed to her blue blazer hanging from the doorknob. "I have to be at a mandatory meeting in 33 minutes; traffic is going to be a nightmare on the 17." Grimacing, she splashed cold water on her face trying to wash away the tired look and the residual toothpaste from her lips.

Collecting the blazer from the knob Ruby gave it a quick shake and once over. "Let me guess, the CEO and the other EOs are gonna be there, and this is a make or break moment for this job of yours?" Ruby's tone dripped with teasing sarcasm. She passed the blazer to Emma who gave her trademark eye roll in response.

"Something like that." She let out a sigh and shucked on the blazer smoothing out the wrinkles in the sleeves. Fetching her glasses from the sink countertop, she cleaned them of any smudges and put them on. She finished buttoning up the last button on her petite white dress shirt and took one last glance in the mirror for any imperfections. "Wish me luck," She said giving her best friend a quick hug.
"Good luck, you are really gonna need it." The lanky brunette giggled letting go and allowed Emma to make her exit.

Traffic was a nightmare. Of course, there an accident in the HOV lane blocked most of the three left lanes. Highway patrol diverted all traffic into the two right lanes. No one paid any mind to the traffic notification signs alerting everyone to the accident up ahead. The whole ordeal added seven minutes to her now twenty-two-minute trip to work.

Speeding down the residential street with a posted speed limit of 35 mph, she made a screeching right turn into the call center campus. Swiping her bag at the gate, she ignored the speed limit on campus making sure to avoid running any of her co-workers over in the process. The site was huge, with an ever-expanding parking lot that surrounds the immense structure. Getting a spot at her department's entrance was always a struggle as most of the morning account managers, who operated the phones, arrived 5:00 a.m. Luck though, was on her side as there was an open spot in the reserved parking.

Ignoring the reserved sign she poorly parked her Mitsubishi Lancer and scrambled into the building. Patiently waddling with the turnstile security door, she glanced down at her phone noting the time with a clenched jaw. 7:59 a.m. 'Just barely on time' she let out a sigh of relief exiting towards her cubicle.

Mary Margaret, her team supervisor, was looming over her desk working on what appeared to be last minute touches to the department's presentation. "Hey M&M, do you know where this meeting is supposed to be?" Startling the young supervisor, Emma gave a nervous smile.

Composing herself, Mary Margaret snagged the USB from the computer tower. "Jeez Emma, not the day to be late." She grimaced. "It's in the auditorium by HR. Considering your inability to navigate this building I would be happy to lead the way." She gave a genuine smile and exited their team's work area.

Thankfully, there were plenty of other employees still entering the room. Waving Emma off to sit with the rest of her team, Mary Margaret headed over to the podium to sit with the other supervisors and department heads. Finding a seat at the end of the row, she was greeted by a charming smile from her team Coach Killian. "Good morning, love." The two had gotten close over the past two months since she started working with him. Spending many late nights at work finishing up projects they would frequent the local pub to blow off steam. Neither would admit it, but both of them wanted to take that next step away from their work appropriate relationship.

"Yes, yes. I am late, but not fashionably so." She adjusted her glasses nervously. "Lucky me, I managed to steal a parking spot in the reserved area." She could tell he was going to make some comment and quickly cut him off. "Before you go saying anything I will be moving my car after the meeting." She tried to avoid any rebukes from the devilishly handsome Coach that would lead to a long and drawn out policies conversation.

"Seriously? No one gets that lucky." Left with little to go on he resided for a bit of jealousy mixed in with slight disbelief. "Hopefully for you Swan, it wasn't anyone important that laid claim to the spot." Killian managed to get in his word of caution before the whole auditorium's audience was
The CEO, Mr. Hyde, made his grand entrance to the sound of cheers and applause from his employees. The music queued up with "Good Feeling" by Flo Rida, which had been edited to be HR appropriate. As the beloved CEO headed down the center aisle to the podium, he was followed by other Executives who were all smiles and waves to the staff. The music faded out allowing Mr. Hyde to soak in the applause for a moment longer before hushing the crowd. "Thank you, everyone! It was a great year for 2015! Lots of progress was made in expanding our credit card division and gaining twenty-seven million more new customers!" Applause punctuated the statement of his excitement.

As the applause died down, the CEO continued with the previous years progress. Emma couldn't help but notice the sound of the of the exit door opening. Being the curious person that she was, she wrenched her neck around to see the most beautifully intimidating woman stalk down the very same entryway. The woman was noticeably angry as she stormed up to the front and took her seat right behind Mr. Hyde. Emma was no longer interested in how well the company was doing and turned her attention to the brunette with deliciously red lipstick who seemed to be staring down the entire room. Something had obviously perturbed her, and she seemed to think it was an individual in the crowd.

"Hey Killian," Emma whispered nudging him on the arm with her elbow. "Who's the chick with the "if looks could kill" stare?"

"That's our department's Director, in charge of all things Consumer Lending and Bank Options: Student loans, deposit products, personal loans.... everything bank. Regina Mills aka The Evil Queen." He grimaced.

"Evil Queen?" Emma raised a skeptical brow. "What do you mean by that?"

"Trust me, love, if you want to work here officially, avoid her at all costs. She's the one that likes to bring the ax to our department whenever we aren't hitting our goals." He empathized his statement with the appropriate hand gesture suggesting head removal. Satisfied with his answer she sunk into her chair wanting not to stand out any more than anyone else. Though she felt intimidated, part of her felt a little more intrigued to know more about the Evil Queen.

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After the meeting was over Emma made her escape back to the parking lot to move her car. Plopping down in the driver's seat, she started the car and noticed the sign that sat in front of the space. It didn't read "reserved" like she first thought. This space was reserved for "The Director of CLBO." Dread set in, her grip on the steering wheel was turning her knuckles white matching her complication as all the blood had drained from her face. "Shit."

Finding a spot out near the perimeter of the fence, she legged it back to the building taking nearly six minutes to complete the trip. Swiping her badge to get back into her department she swallowed hard imagining all the different ways her exit meeting could go for parking in her Director's space. Gathering her composure, she headed back to her cubicle avoiding all eye contact with anyone; paranoid her guilt shone on her forehead in neon lights.

Killian and Belle hovered by her desk having what seemed like a pleasant chat. Emma's stomach turned. That's the last thing she needed was them lingering by her desk talking about gossip while all of the corporate Execs were near. "Guys, please go back to your desks and work." Her voice
strained to make the weak request.

"Emma, what's wrong?" Belle, being the caring person that she was, wouldn't leave without knowing if her coworker was alright.

"Yeah, Swan are you okay? You look like someone just stole your Xbox and your MT Dew." His tone was teasing, but he was sincere in his usual fashion.

Slinking down into her chair, she dropped her head onto the desk staring at the cubicle wall past the two. "I parked in the Director's spot." She flatly stated.

"Yikes, which Director?" Belle asked kneeling down next to her friend.

"Ours." She closed her eyes. Both Killian and Belle audibly cringed.

"Well, it's not like she knows it was you who parked in her spot, right?" Killian was trying to be reassuring, but even his voice couldn't hide the sound of dread. As if on cue her email chimed with a new message. Lifting her head up just a bit she faced her computer screen looking at the email's topic: 'Meeting at 10:15'. Letting out a resigned sigh, she clicked her response as 'accept' and turned back to the two. "Well Swan, it was nice knowing you. Maybe we can grab drinks sometime."

Killian gave a weak chuckle making an effort to dash back to his desk as if the plague had set in and Emma Swan was patient zero.

"I don't think you have anything to worry about Emma; this meeting might just be your monthly review. When Ms. Mills is here, she sometimes likes to give the reviews herself." Belle gave a quick encouraging squeeze to her hand before heading off to her cubicle by student loans.

Emma dropped her head back onto the desk wishing this day to end and began to whisper prayers to whatever god would listen. "Emma? What are you doing?" Mary Margaret stood over her with a slightly puzzled look on her face.

Sitting upright, she gave the best fake smile she could muster. "Oh just trying to figure out where I am supposed to go for my 10:15 meeting." A cringed look tugged at her lips.

"Oh jeez, Ms. Mills's office is upstairs next to Credit Card Services. Don't you worry, I walk you up there." She gave a genuine smile and motioned for Emma to follow. "I will make sure to print out a map for you when I get back to my desk. Hopefully, then you can finally figure out where everything is." She teased in a friendly manner.

"Yeah, if there is a next time." Emma quietly mumbled walking past her supervisor.

Mary Margaret lead the way upstairs, taking them to the big office at the back with large cherry oak double doors. Knocking on one of the doors she waited a moment before entering, "Ms. Mills, I have Emma Swan here for the meeting."

The very same woman from earlier with the 'deadly' look, sat on the other side of the equally intimidating desk. "Ah, Miss Swan. Thank you, Mary, for bringing her up to me." She stood up greeting them both with a warm smile. She was immaculate in her business attire, a black pencil skirt that fit her figure like a glove with a matching blazer that hugged in just the right places. She accented her outfit with a red blouse which wasn't buttoned all the way leaving just enough skin on
display. 'Keep it together Swan; you're drooling.' Swallowing the hard lump that was slowly suffocating her, she moved forward offering her hand. "It's a real pleasure to meet you, Miss Swan." They way her last name fell from her boss's delicious lips made her heart stutter. Taking the young intern's hand, she gave her a firm shake.

"Likewise, Ms. Mills." Emma braved through the vice-like grip barely allowing herself to register the soft warmth that encompassed her hand. Her eyes transfixed on chocolate depths that threatened to consume her. Part of her had hoped Mary Margaret would stay for the meeting, being the cage that protected her from the shark that smelled blood in the water.

"Well I will get out of your hair, I am sure you have much to discuss with our talented intern." Mary Margaret stated with little hesitation, like everyone else she wanted to leave no room for error when it came to the Evil Queen.

"Thank you again, Mary, for the opportunity to evaluate Miss Swan. I will thoroughly go through the notes you have highlighted and send her back once I finish." It was apparent that Regina had focused her attention on the young supervisor, but she had yet to release her grip on Emma's hand. Feeling her ever impending doom draws near, with the last glance of her boss leaving the room, Emma shifted on her feet nervously.

With the door shut Regina's grasp freed itself from Emma's hand, but now she found herself frozen in an intimidating stare. "Have a seat, dear." The words were no less a command that Emma quickly followed sitting in the chair opposite of Regina's and held her breath. "I hope you don't mind, but I work better on my feet." The Director said picking up the manila folder from her desk and opening it.

"No by all means, whatever works best." Emma politely stated feeling like a butterfly pinned in place.

Regina walked around her desk reading the monthly review to herself. Moving towards the front of her desk, she rested her posterior against it. Adjusting her glasses and swallowing back another lump, Emma found her eyes fixated on the floor. It was taking everything in her body to will herself still. Her eyes began to wander on their own accord up and over Regina's black Stiletto heels. She waited patiently for the Evil Queen to begin but struggled to fight back the pounding sound of her anxiety-ridden heart.

Licking her red painted lips she set the folder down, "Miss Swan, you have been with us for two months, and in that time I have seen numbers go up. Progress." She crossed her legs at the ankles and rested back on her hands. Emma lifted her head up to meet eyes with the Director. "You are talented, beyond a doubt with all the praise listed in Mary Margaret's notes." Pausing the brunette took in a deep breath and leaned forward in a predatory manner her eyes narrowing in on her prey. "I like what you have to offer, Miss Swan." Her voice was even, though Emma could hear the beginning of a but. "I will see to it no one will even consider hiring you here after your internship is up. You embarrassed me. Because of you, I was late to the company's annual progress meeting." Her words were sharp.

For the second time today the color drained from her face as she was paralyzed searching for something to say. Something about the way the Director held herself made Emma feel weak, but also annoyed. 'Who does she think she is?' Balling her hand into a fist, she felt like knocking the woman down to reality. She gained some strength and pressed forward, "I get being upset, but mistakes happen. You're no better than me." Emma snapped back defensively not thinking before she spoke.
Raising a questioning brow, Regina found herself speechless. She uncrossed her legs and shifted her
weight drawing Emma's eyes downward again. 'Shit.' Regina was obviously weighing a choice in
her mind. The Evil Queen couldn't help the feeling of desire rising in herself to crush the blonde's
will beneath her stiletto heel. An appalled scoff purposely fell from her mouth as she shifted against
her desk.

Emerald eyes were studying sculpted legs, 'Great job, yell at the one person who can send you
packing without having to pass the request through HR.' Emma could feel the blood rushing up to
her ears as the room's temperature rose a few degrees. 'Staring at her legs isn't going to save you
either, no matter how much you imagine them wrapped around you.' She tightens her jaw trying to
focus on the awkward silence that now filled the air. Emma heard shuffling and saw the blurred
shape of a hand reach out towards her. Soft digits tightened around her chin lifting her head upwards
forcing her to meet brown pools of a hungry stare.

"I don't think you understand your position here." The Evil Queen's grip squeezed in an almost
bruising strength holding her locked in place. "You are my subordinate and will answer to me as
such. Yes ma'am, no ma'am. Is that clear?" The air around them hummed with electric waves
emanating from the brunette. She studied the intern's body language gauging her compliance.

It took a moment to register what was happening as there was an overwhelming surge of heat that
flowed through her leaving pinpricks of cold in its wake. "Yes, ma'am." The words were devoid of
confidence and fire that had been present earlier.

A devious grin etched its way across the Director's red lips, "Good girl." She hadn't released her hold
on Emma's chin, but she let an elegant digit stray tracing the curve of the blonde's bottom lip. "No
more outbursts and forgetting your place." Biting her lip in an enticing manner, she played with a
dangerous thought.

This time Emma wasn't swallowing a lump in her throat, she was her pride she almost choked upon.
"Yes, ma'am." As much as she wanted to turn the tables and put Regina in her place about sexual
harassment, she couldn't. Every bit of her was craving her boss's attention, but she couldn't help
feeling like it was her mind warping the events. 'Is this really happening? Is she making some pass
at me?' Feeling a chill at the back of her, neck she let out a shuddering breath.

"Now then." Releasing the blonde, she leaned back straightening out her skirt, "Continue with the
good work, and maybe you will have a position in this department at the end of the year." It was
business as usual; the Director gestured towards the door signaling their meeting had come a close.

Sucking in a breath, Emma stood up her eyes lingering on the Evil Queen trying to make sense of
what had taken place. She wanted to say something, working her jaw to form the words but chose
silence. Tearing her eyes off of the woman she was left conflicted and confused. 'What the shit?!'
The choice made

Chapter Summary

Emma is given an opportunity to advance her career, but does she want to? Turning down this opportunity may leave her with more strings attached than she expects.

Chapter Notes

Working off of an hour of sleep I decided to just post this chapter and be done with it so I can sleep. Feedback is greatly appreciated.

The workday flew by without any more interactions with the department's Director. Killian had sent multiple messages using the office messenger wanting to know how she was still alive. Emma ignored each one and continued with her work until finally sending him a response before leaving for the day.

Emma Swan: If you really want to know what happened we can chat over a drink at the Cheshire Cat.

Emma Swan: Also, you would be proud to know I stood my ground. She's definitely all bark. :)

Killian Jones: Alright Swan, I will buy the first round.

Shutting down her systems and gathering up her keys she left in a rush. Killian always had some last minute work he needed to finish, and she didn't want to take any chances with another encounter. Walking passed the reserved parking lot, she noticed the black Mercedes Benz sitting in the Director's space. The sight sent shivers down her spine remembering the now infamous meeting from earlier in the day. 'Keep moving.' She told herself adding a little hustle to her walk.

Emma was the first to arrive at the local pub by work. She found a stool at the end of the bar making sure to hold the spot next to her for Killian. Jefferson was already making his rounds to the patrons at the bar taking their orders when he glanced over at her. Making charades with her hands she emphasized she needed a pitcher of beer, he gave her a wink and went to work on her order.

Killian, Belle, and even David from Personal Loans entered the pub and headed towards her taking up the spots next to her. What she thought was going to be a private conversation had now turned into a group discussion. Any other night she would welcome their company, but now she was little more on edge.

"Hey, I heard you had a run-in with the Evil Queen!" David said with a loud laugh giving the blonde a friendly pat on the back.

"Indeed she did, and is alive to tell the tale." Killian settled on the stool next to her leaning on his
hand that he propped against the bar. "Tell us Swan, is her bark worse than her bite?" He asked with a cheeky grin.

Emma sucked in a deep breath through her nose and strained her jaw in discomfort over the topic. While she wanted just to blurt out exactly what happened, she felt a mix of anxiety. Thankfully, Jefferson swooped in with the pitcher of her favorite draft and four chilled glasses. "You look like you need to unwind a little." He said pouring the first glass for her.

"Oh, you have no idea." She let out a soft chuckle of relief.

"Oh come on Swan, it can't be that bad. She didn't give you the old ax." Killian chimed in pouring his glass. 'If only you knew. Getting fired would probably be a blessing.' She thought inwardly.

"If you don't want to talk about it, you don't have to, sweetie." Stealing the glass from Killian, Belle took a big gulp. Following her lead, Emma chugged down a larger gulp and then another. "Woah, slow down there will be plenty of drinks tonight."

"Trust me; it was an intense meeting." She took another long drink giving Jefferson that international look of 'keep them coming.' In which he set off to do so. "The way she treats people is astounding. Someone needs to take her down a notch, am I right?" She sat her glass down as the others decided to drink deflecting her question. "Really guys?" She gave them all an incredulous look. "She's not Voldemort." She flatly stated taking another drink.

"You haven't been working under her long enough, give it time," David stated with a smile. "Stay out of her hair, and you are more likely to survive." Cautioning her, he turned to Killian to help talk some sense into her.

"He's right, Love. She's evil. I like to phrase her opinion of us as 'slaves' doing her bidding." Killian added.

"Really?" She glanced over to Belle hoping for her cheery outlook of seeing the good in everyone. Belle continued drinking avoiding her question, "Not you too."

"Speak of the devil," David said pointing with his eyes towards the door. The Director along with Mary Margaret and Mr. Gold were heading towards a table opposite of the bar. Emma and crew all inadvertently watched in silence as the group settled in. Jefferson spotting the trio quickly sprung into action and sauntered over to grab their drink orders. Emma was no longer inconspicuous as she stared down Ms. Mills. This, of course, didn't go unnoticed. In the middle of ordering her drink, she locked eyes with the blonde intern and gave a knowing grin. 'Great Swan, keep digging that grave of yours.'

Something about the way she ran her tongue across her lips made Emma squirm in her seat. 'Is she seriously toying with me right now?' The blonde was the very epitome of 'a deer caught in the headlights.' She dropped her head immediately as what little buzz she had going drained from her. "I gotta go to the bathroom." She started scooting away from the bar with an annoyingly loud screech as the stool strained beneath her. She ducked into the short hallway next to her and pushed her way into the bathroom with her tail between her legs.

Bracing herself against the counter, she leaned forward towards the mirror. She was staring her reflection down trying mentally to give herself a pep talk. 'Get a grip Swan. She's not stalking you. Everyone from work pretty much drinks here.' She was conflicted and was thinking of calling it a night before she did anything else she would regret. Lost in her thoughts, she didn't notice the bathroom door opening. "And they call me vain." The all too familiar voice broke her concentration.
Walking up behind her in the mirror was the Evil Queen herself leaving no room to escape. "I hope you know I have access to your private messages sent on the company server." Dark brown eyes locked with green through the mirror.

"Of course you do." She strained her voice into a low sarcastic whisper attempting to turn from the Queen.

The Director's arm tore up the front of Emma's chest, soft fingers and sharp nails bit into her chin forcing her attention back to the mirror. "Excuse me?" Regina husked in an appalled growl. "We've been over this, Miss Swan." Narrowing her eyes, she waited for the proper response.

"Yes, ma'am." She corrected herself feeling her heart hammering in her chest. The warm digits strayed from their hold tracing along her jaw stealing what little willpower she had left. 'What is with this woman that makes me feel so weak?' She stared at her reflection in the mirror snared in a dangerously seductive trap. She felt her knees threatening to collapse under their weight; her mind was swimming in a high she couldn't explain.

Grinning, Regina moved closer pressing herself up against the blonde's backside. Encompassing Emma's waist with her other arm, she held her in place. "Much better." Purring the words she leaned closer to her intern's ear. "I won't allow you to discuss the details of our meeting." Her voice poured from her lips, "I have a proposition for you, Miss Swan."

Paralyzed and mesmerized, Emma locked eyes with her in the mirror; she watched the Director capture her earlobe between sharp teeth. Biting down just enough to cause some discomfort, she elicited a sharp intake of air from the blonde. Running her tongue along the soft fleshy edge, she soothed away the pain-provoking Emma to relax into the embrace. "Good girl." Releasing her hold she trailed her fingers down Emma's neck.

"Order a red apple martini, and I will show you how far down the rabbit hole goes." She breathed a kiss behind her ear letting out a seductively low moan. "If you decide to continue to drink that swill you call beer I will stop all advances. I will give you the best review and move you into a higher position out of my department." Pulling away she studied the blonde, "This is the only chance you will have to get what you want." Giving her a smug grin in the mirror, she retrieved some lipstick from her designer handbag.

Regina's warm moist breath lingered on her earlobe cooling with the subtle breeze of ambient air. The hairs on the back of her neck stood on end as a throbbing warmth pooled at her core. There was no question at this point to what her boss was suggesting, and even now she was finding it hard to wrap her mind around. Working her jaw silently, she wanted to ask 'why her,' but even then she couldn't formulate the words.

"Clean off the lipstick and straighten yourself up before you leave." She said in an authoritative tone. Once she finished with her touch-ups, she turned back to Emma who hadn't moved. "I will be waiting for your answer." She gave a soft chuckle and made her exit leaving her intern alone to contemplate her offer.

"What the shit?!" Emma exasperated in low, but loud enough gasp letting out the breath she had been holding.

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It had been ten minutes since she had gone to the restroom by herself. She was now pacing the floor heavy in thought replaying everything that had transpired. She made sure to do what she was told and removed the lipstick, but couldn't figure out how to proceed. Everything in her mind came to a
stuttering halt as Belle entered with quite the worried look plastered on her face. "Emma, I thought you might have been drowned in the toilet. Did Ms. Mills come in here?"

"Yep." She stated.

Bridging the gap between them, she grabbed hold of Emma's forearms. "Did she say anything to you?"

"Yep." She repeated.

"What did she say?" Belle screwed her face into a puzzled expression.

Working her jaw, she swallowed her thought, "I need a drink." Emma said pushing past her worried friend.

Following on her heels, they ended the short journey to the bar taking their seats. "Swan, you look like you have seen a ghost or someone ran off with your Doritos," Killian said with as much concern as he could force past his inebriated state. Both David and Killian looked at Belle thinking she knew what was up but got a confused shrug in response.

"Nope, just the Evil Queen and her higher than thou attitude." She leaned over the bar grabbing the hem of Jefferson's shirt tugging at it. "Hey handsome, can you make me a drink?"

Turning around to face Emma he gave her a friendly smile, "Anything for you, another beer?"

Across the bar, Regina feigned interest in the work gossip between Gold and Mary Margaret. Her eyes were trained on Emma watching her every move. She bit her bottom lip in anticipation worrying it between her teeth. She watched as Emma drew the bartender close to whisper something in his ear. He nodded his head and went to work grabbing something and returned to her. Emma was making subtle conversation with her friends, and it seemed like they all had agreed on something.

"Quite an unusual order for you, but I hope you like it," Jefferson said finishing up her request.

"I'm trying something new." Emma slipped him a bill, "Have a shot with us, we are toasting to the evilest of them all."

Grabbing a glass from under the bar he fished out a bottle of Gentleman Jack, "And who might that be?" He asked pouring himself a finger of Jack.

"The Evil Queen." Killian chimed in.

"Alright then." He said holding up his shot.

"Down with the Evil Queen!" The group shouted downing their drinks.

Regina raised a skeptical brow watching the group in wonder. The bartender left them to attend other patrons allowing her an unobstructed view. Green eyes locked with hers as the blonde held up a red martini that was nearly emptied. Emma seemed smug with her actions and didn't mind showing off in front of her friends. This only drew a devious grin on red lips as Regina began envisioning all the different ways to wipe that smug expression from her intern's face.

Things winded down as the group of self-proclaimed heroes finished paying their tab and headed out of the bar. It was now going on 9:00 p.m. and while the night was still young each of them was
feeling the effects of a long day set in. Standing outside for one last goodbye they waited for their unspoken significant others to show. Gold was the first to walk out giving the group a friendly smile before heading off to the parking lot.

"I really should get going guys; it was fun." Belle was the first to depart the band of heroes giving a warm hug to Emma, "Hang in there sweetie, the Evil Queen won't fire you I'm sure."

"Thanks, Belle. I think you are right. Be safe getting home. Send me a text okay?" The young blonde said in sincerity. With that Belle took her leave heading in the same direction as Gold. Belle would never openly admit to it, but everyone already knew her, and the Department Manager saw each other outside of work.

Mary Margaret and Regina both exited stopping by to check on the group, "Looks like you guys had a good time." Mary Margaret stated. "What's with the toast?"

Killian and David both busted up laughing, "Aye, that is for us 'Band of Heroes' to know, and high corporate execs to never find out." Killian whispered in between the fits of laughter causing Emma to shift uneasily in place trying to contain a laugh that was sputtering through her teeth.

"Okay, it looks like you guys have had enough fun for one night. Come on David; I will get you home safe." Mary Margaret grabbed David and stood him upright helping him on his way.

"Of course, Snow White would come to my rescue," David stated in another bout of laughter.

Mary Margaret turned to Regina giving her a wave goodbye, "Have a good night, Ms. Mills, I will take care of Prince Charming here." Theirs was another unspoken relationship known in Emma's circle of friends.

"Good night Mary," Regina said turning back to Emma and Killian. "I assume you two have a taxi on the way?"

"I have The Jolly Roger at the docks waiting for her Captain." Killian continued to laugh trying to wrangle some control over himself.

"I hope he is kidding, neither of you are in any condition to drive," Regina narrowed her eyes at Emma who was currently silent, struggling to keep her composure. "Well?"

"We are just going to walk home." Her tone was much more defiant than she had intended, but it was the influence of alcohol talking. Emma turned to Killian grabbing his arm and lifting it up and over her shoulder to balance him.

"Absolutely not," Regina stated with an edge to her tone. "I will drive you both home, end of discussion. Am I clear Miss Swan?"

"Sure, whatever you say, your highness." Now it was Emma's turn for the giggle fits earning an enraged glare from the Evil Queen.

"Brilliant! Because she's the Evil Queen." Wheezing the statement into another laugh, Killian turned he his face into Emma's neck muffling himself.

Regina turned on her heels snapping her fingers beckoning Emma to follow. "We will discuss your behavior later and don't think I will let it slide because you are drunk." She promised in a low growl away from the two, but loud enough for Emma to hear. The three made their way to the parking lot where Regina remote started her car guiding them in the dark. She opened the back passenger door waiting patiently for the two to stagger inside.
"Just when I thought I was getting my sea legs." Bracing himself against the rear fender of the car he gave Emma a dopey smile.

"Hang in there my drunken pirate." She giggled into his ear guiding him into the back seat. Scooting in behind him, she settled into the vacant space just as Killian found a much more comfortable position with his head resting in her lap. Regina slammed the door closed and opened her door getting into the driver's seat with a scoff.
You want this

Chapter Summary

Emma has to figure out what she wants more something safe or something exciting?

Chapter Notes

Long night, I am sure there are mistakes. Feedback is always welcomed.

The drive was a sobering twenty minutes of stagnant silence, leaving Emma with a throbbing headache as her hangover threatened to tear her skull apart. Killian abandoned her for sleep finding comfort in her lap leaving her alone with Regina. Of course, the only conversation shared between the two after he was out being directions to Killian's house. She was suffering in the silence plagued with thoughts of what could have been. Idly running her fingers through his soft strands of hair, she reflected on how safe of a choice he was. If things had been different tonight, she would probably be going home with her devilishly handsome pirate. Finally, just taking that next step.

Stealing glances from the rearview mirror, she could see the dark desire burning in the Evil Queen's eyes. 'Seriously what is it about this woman that gets me so worked up? I think about kissing Killian and yeah my heart flutters, but her?' The notion alone sent a shivering wave of heat down her spine inciting a vulnerable breath. Unable to stifle herself she solicited Regina's attention catching her eyes in the mirror. A captivating grin pulled at her lips as she watched the blonde struggle under her glare for composure.

Pulling up to Killian's house Regina turned off the motor allowing a pleasant sigh to fall from her lips. "We are here. Do you need help getting him inside?" Her voice was imposing with her eyes trained on Emma from the mirror.

Giving Killian a good shake, she refused to acknowledge the mirror any longer. She needed to remain somewhat composed around Killian. "I got this thanks." She gave him another shake leaning down next his ear. "Killian? Come on buddy let's get you to bed." Concerned he might be suffering from a hangover of his own she made sure to speak tenderly.

With a little more provocation he was finally stirring from his comfortable position. He shifted out of her lap and into his seat bracing himself against the door. Rubbing the sleep from his eyes, he tried to get his bearings inspecting the small space the three occupied. "Where am I?" His voice was dry and gravelly.

Reaching for her door handle she briefly turned to him, "You're home." She encouraged him to comply subtly pointing her eyes to the driver before leaving the car.

Getting the hint, Killian followed suit stopping for a second, "Thanks, Ms. Mills, for the ride."

Turning to him, "You're welcome, get some rest, dear." She sent him on his way with a pleasant
Starting up the pathway to his door, he stumbled over his sloppy movements forcing Emma to balance him. "I gotcha." She braced him with her shoulder allowing his head loll down into her neck. Reaching the door, she continued to hold him upright while digging through his front pockets. The entire time she could feel the Evil Queen's eyes on the back of her neck. Fishing the keys, she managed to open the door while continuing to hold him steady. Passing the threshold, she staggered him into the living room trying to get the layout of his home.

"Swan, the couch will do." He mumbled into her neck his hot breath rolling along her sensitive skin.

Letting out a frustrated sigh and shoving down her rising feelings for her drunken friend she carefully guided him to the couch. Helping him get comfortable she removed his black leather boots setting them on the floor. She pulled free his leather jacket throwing it on the recliner adjacent to them. His eyes caught hers allowing a charming and caring smile to crawl across his face. "Are you sure you don't want to stay? I mean riding home with the Evil Queen..." He trailed off lost in her eyes.

She held his gaze, conflicted by her feelings she subconsciously wet her lips as if tasting his on hers. The moment past and she restrained herself pressing her lips to his forehead in compromise. "Killian, I have saved the galaxy, raided tombs, survived zombie outbreaks and even fought the Locust Queen. An Evil Queen is no match for me." She reassured him with a humorous smile.

Rolling his eyes, he gave her a soft grin, "Being the hero in a video game isn't the same, but I believe you won't mistakenly call her the Evil Queen to her face like somebody I know." He chuckled almost embarrassed by his earlier behavior.

Handing him the TV remote, she went over to his refrigerator and grabbed two bottles of water. Walking back, she passed a bottle to him and plucked up the Advil container from the coffee table. Pouring out a few pills for herself she left the bottle with him knowing he needed them just as bad as she was. "I will lock the door on my way out. Have a good night, Killian." She said heading out before he could make a final plea.

Engaging the lock, she faces down the short path across the front yard to the black Mercedes. Regina was no longer sitting inside the vehicle; instead, she was now leaning against the passenger side door. Legs crossed with a cigarette resting between her fingers, she stared down the blonde. Emma hesitated. "Come along, Miss Swan." Regina commanded waving a finger in a 'come hither' fashion.

Opening the bottle of water, she gulped down the pills while walking back to the car. She refused to make eye contact with the brunette instead focusing on the stone pathway beneath her feet. As the sidewalk came into view she stopped, her eyes searching for the black stilettos. A lit cigarette butt fell at the edge of her view drawing her attention to it. She watched as Regina smothered the embers beneath her designer heel. Just enough exposed leg ignited her blood as her mind toyed with thoughts.

"You're very quiet, unlike earlier," Regina stated placing her fingers under Emma's chin delicately lifting her head up. "Now that we are all alone, you seem less willing to undermine me." She gave a villainous grin licking her lips while sizing up the blonde. "Worried about my bite?" She chuckled at a rhetorical question releasing her to open the passenger door. "Get in." Her voice was dominating and left no options in its wake.

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Twisting and turning her stomach groaned against her nerves. Questions were burning at the front of her mind as pain throbbed tugging at the sides with each beat of her heart. She pleaded silently with herself to pull it together, praying the Advil would run its course. The drive was painfully silent leaving Emma to her thoughts. Just sitting beside Regina felt suffocating.

Though Regina's eyes were on the road before her, she seemed distant in thoughts of her own. The leather steering wheel whined against her hands as her tongue occasionally rolls between her teeth. The tension between the two was mounting as the drive continued in the opposite direction of her safe and comfortable apartment. Surrounded by homes beyond her affordable reach she realized she was out of her depth. As if silently proving just how beneath her Emma was she pulled into a driveway of a massively privileged home.

They both exited the Mercedes, Emma waited with her arms crossed studying the exterior of the house. She wasn't sure what to make of it but didn't have time to wonder as Regina walked past her waving her finger in a 'follow me' gesture. She lingered for a second watching her boss's hips sway with each step. The clacking of stilettos bounding off the paved path punctuating her heart beat. 'Swan, this is no time for caution.' She pushed past her trepidation willing herself forward she kept her eyes trained on the pavement.

Entering the foyer, she was met with a white and black interior. The floor was white marble with black accents with a staircase that curved up the wall to the second story. The door slammed closed behind her causing her to look back meeting a seductive grin, "Follow me." Regina led her to the study. "Have a seat." She pointed to the chair in front of her desk as she took a seat on the opposite side.

"I enjoy complete subservience." The Director pulled out a stapled packet of paper with what looked like a business proposal typed out. "I need to know if you can meet my expectations." She slid the papers across the desk to the intern. "I will not compromise my wants for yours. If you don't agree to any of what I have outlined here," She gestured to the packet. "I will take you home, but the deal from earlier is now off the table." She gave a sinister grin enjoying the metaphorical trap she set to begin to work.

Emma took the papers and began to review it, scanning the document like it was a terms & conditions agreement every company puts out with their products and services. Skimming through the details she would stop at points that caught her interest like: '... surrender all control...'. It read like something out of an 'E.L. James' novel. 'This is real life, not some made up fanfiction that happened to get its book series.' She thought to herself. Unlike the timid heroine of the book, she didn't want to waste her time reading through this contract. "You got a pen?" She asked keeping her eyes trained on the document.

"Of course, dear." The answer poured from red lips in a pleased purr. Producing a fountain pen from a drawer, she placed it next to Emma's right hand. "Make sure you understand what you agree to before you sign; this is a legal document." She cautioned.

Picking up the pen, she removed the cap and pressed it's point against the paper, "Yeah, yeah." She said brushing off the warning like it was nothing of consequence. She signed her name in the red ink on the first page and proceeded to sign all sections of the agreement where her signature was required. What she agreed to was beyond her, but she did have to appreciate the detail that was put into this fantasy. Placing the cap on the pen, she sat it down and leaned back in her chair with a long relieving sigh.

Regina grabbed the document and inspected it thoroughly ensuring everything was signed. Watching
her flip through the pages, Emma clenched her hands allowing the pads of her thumbs to worry into her index fingers. "I will have a notarized copy sent to you in the morning." She started placing the packet in a folder and rested it at the side. "You will read your copy, Miss Swan." Narrowing her eyes, she held the blonde in place making her point.

Giving a weak nod in response, Emma could feel her heart beating through her ears. The tension threatened to overwhelm her as she waited for her boss's command she let out a steadying breath. Sensing this Regina sat back with a satisfied look toying with her lips as she played with the words on the tip of her tongue. Releasing the blonde's gaze, she turned in her chair, "Come here, Miss Swan." Licking her lips, she tasted the words as the room fell into a static silence.

The whining sound of creaking wood signaled the blonde's obedience as she stood from her chair. Rounding the desk emerald eyes meet dark pools of desire, "Stop, right there." Regina ordered. "Get on your knees." Emma dropped down to her knees feeling the tight denim pull against her skin. "Tell me who this Evil..." Before she could finish, the ringtone on Emma's phone went off filling the room with the song 'Nerves' by 'Icon for Hire'.

Narrowing eyes fixated on her as she gave Regina a nervous smile holding up a finger, "One second." She said pulling her phone from her black skinny jeans. Ruby's picture illuminated the screen, "I got to take this." Getting off of her knees, she answered the phone, "Not the best time to be calling me Rubes." She said exiting the study.

"I don't care, Ems, you haven't been responding to my texts!" Ruby's toned carried worry through the phone. "Please just tell me you aren't kidnapped."

Idly pacing the floor, she collected her thoughts, "No, I am not kidnapped." She said in a slightly frustrated tone.

"Then, where the hell are you?" The scream was loud enough that Emma had to move the phone away from her ear.

"I will tell you later, but I am fine." She sighed, "I have to go now." Hanging up the phone, she dropped her arm to her side exhaling an annoyed breath. Turning around, she was met with a very displeased look. "I'm sorry." She gave a wry smile.

"You're not yet," Regina promised. "On your knees now." Her voice was the very essence of dominance.

Dropping in place with a loud thud she was sure she had bruised her knees on the hard marble and was grimacing from the impact. Regina was already in front of her staring her down with furious eyes. "This isn't a game, Miss Swan." She declared grabbing the blonde by the ponytail wrenching her head back to look her in the face. "My possessions obey me and respect me. Their lives are meaningless within these walls or beyond them when I say so." Her tone was even and calm. "Distractions such as that will not be tolerated again, am I clear." Her gaze was fierce and threatening.

"Yes, ma'am." She answered immediately.

Releasing her grip on the blonde's hair, she turned back to the study, "Follow me," pausing mid-step, she glanced over her shoulder to Emma, "on your hands and knees." She finished.

'It's just sex. Really kinky sex.' Taking a moment to process what just happened she shook her head
clearing her thoughts. She placed both hands on the cold marble and crawled after the Director. Back in the study, Regina sat in her chair waiting for the intern. A satisfied grin softens the fire that burned in the dark depths of chocolate. Stopping in the same spot as before she waited for the brunette’s orders. "Come here." She purred pointing to the floor directly in front of her.

Emma obeyed resting on her knees right in front of her boss's legs smelling hints of arousal drifting from the business skirt. Looking up to her, she waited. "We will take things slow tonight." Fingers tightened around the blonde locks of her ponytail holding Emma's head in place. "No more 'I'm sorry' from that mouth of yours." A wicked grin etched it's way across her red lips. "Push up my skirt." She commanded slouching backward allowing her hips to slip further over the chair giving Emma easier access.

She hadn't touched Regina up to this moment and felt intimidated doing so. Her hands trembled at the thought, and she could feel her arousal begin to pool. 'Just sex.' She reminded herself. Licking her lips, she placed her hands on the hem of the skirt and delicately pushed the material up freeing Regina's thighs. Adjusting her position she opened her legs revealing red laced underwear that matched the blouse she wore under the black blazer. "Remove them." The command came in a lustful hiss.

Raising her hands, she hovered over the olive skin up until she reached the folded fabric of the skirt. The pads of her fingers traced up the curves of tender, warm flesh meeting lacy silk. Her mind was swimming in an intoxicated lust, drinking in every detail of warmth beneath the elastic band. Hooking her fingers under the band, she carefully pulled the material towards her feeling Regina shift allowing them to slide freely. Pulling them down firm calves, she took some liberty cupping the back of one lifting it gently to work the lace past a stiletto. She repeated the process then placed the underwear up on the desk.

"Good girl." She praised lifting a leg up she draped it over Emma's shoulder. "Kiss my thigh and work your way up." She released her hold on the pony tale choosing to rest her hand at the base of her intern's head.

'You want this.' Emma swallowed her last hesitation capturing the deliciously soft skin between her lips dragging them together to form a kiss. Burying her digits into the loose hair under the pony tale Regina's nails bit into the skin below urging Emma to continue. Regina slid down further balancing herself at the edge of the chair making sure there were no obstructions. Reaching the cusp of Regina's core, Emma waited. "Fuck me, with your tongue." The obscenity slipped from her mouth in a throaty order.

Tracing her tongue along the seam of an olive-toned thigh, she tasted salty warm flesh. Following the outer fold of sensitive skin, she was drawn further in with an encouraging pull from her boss. The sweet aroma of desire was intoxicating, dipping her tongue in for a taste she felt the sharp points of nails biting harder into her scalp. The pain washed away in a shuddering wave of pleasure that rolled down her neck leaving wakes of cold. 'What is this woman doing to me?' She questioned herself stopping briefly allowing Regina's arousal to reach the back of her tongue.

"Don't stop." Came an even-toned command that showed no sign of enjoyment from the blonde's ministrations. If the Evil Queen was enjoying herself, she wasn't letting Emma know, and now it became a challenge. Burying her tongue deeper into the Director's wet folds she wrapped her hands around each thigh pulling herself closer. Trying to satisfy a thirst she set a grueling pace to a rhythm that strained against her tongue.

The leg draped over her shoulder wrapped around her back locking her in place. Scrapping the heel
of her stiletto against the fabric of the blue blazer she rolled her ankle just enough to bruise the tender skin below. Moaning into Regina's hot center, the blonde dug her fingers into the tender flesh of her boss's thigh. "Tsk, tsk." Came the clicking sound of the Director's tongue. The stiletto dug further into an unmanageable level of pain causing Emma to wince. "Pain, dear, is reserved solely for you, loosen your grip." She demanded.

She complied fighting past the pain and continued her tongue's movements hoping to appease the Queen. To no avail, the heel remained in place, but the pain was dulling to a point where it faded into the back of her mind. She could feel the muscles tightening around her tongue the only sign Regina was getting close. Even the thigh that rested on her shoulder was straining in anticipation. Emma pushed herself further feeling her mouth wearing in its movements.

A searing pain raked across the base of her skull as Regina's hand clenched holding the blonde in place riding out her climax. She rolled her head back letting out only a small hiss of satisfaction. "Good girl." Appeased she loosened her grip returning her gaze to the intern. Looking up to meet the Director's gaze she worked her jaw relieving the wound up tension that set in. The air around them was thick as a brief silence fell between them.

Red lips tugged into a sinister grin as Regina quickly pulled her leg free from the blonde. In a swift motion, the heel of her stiletto dug into the front of Emma's shoulder forcing her backward onto the floor. Instinctively she grabbed Regina's ankle, but paused when brown eyes locked with her's silently telling her 'don't you dare'. Standing over her, she gave a satisfied smile and continued to dig her heel in pinning Emma to the ground. "Who is the Evil Queen?" She asked with a knowing smirk.
I'm Afraid That This Is Really Happening

Chapter Summary

Personal days and video games are a thing of the past.

Chapter Notes

So I was gonna post an extra long chapter, but I decided to wait on the last bit. I have it nearly typed out, but I want to ensure it's detailed properly. Anyways Feedback is welcomed and appreciated. I am sure there are mistakes, it's just me working on this so I apologize in advance. And thank you everyone for the comments and kudos! You make this venture worth while, not my first time writing, but my first fanfic. THANK YOU!

It was nearly 3:00 a.m. when Emma finally entered her apartment. Being sober enough to drive Regina had sent her off in a cab to collect her car from the pub. The lights were all off a telling sign that Ruby had gone to bed. Kicking off her shoes at the front door she waited for her eyes to adjust before navigating her way through the darkness. Reaching her room she flicked the light switch and shut the door behind her with an exhausted sigh.

Peeling back her blazer she could feel sore muscles straining against her movements. The dull pain brought forth fresh memories of her time given to the Evil Queen. Removing the shirt she inspected her shoulder in the mirror. "Yep." She acknowledged the raised purplish-red stained skin.

Sighing she pulled off her pants revealing the darker bruises on her knees. 'Those are gonna hurt in the morning.' She thought to change into clean underwear before flopping down onto her bed. 'What did I get myself into?' She turned on the TV that sat at the end of her bed and drowning out any more thoughts. Turning off the switch on her lamp replaced the florescent light with a dim blueish glow from the TV. Finding a comfortable position on her side she closed her eyes surrendering to a much-needed sleep.

Waking to the sound of a knock on her bedroom door she found herself on her stomach. Sunlight from her windows bathed the room in a warm glow further stirring her from her slumber. In a drowsy haze, she pushed off the bed stumbling to her feet another knock prompting her attention. "Ems are you in there?" Ruby's voice was muffled by the door but loud enough to clearly here. Taking a brief moment she straightened herself up wiping away any residual drool from her mouth before answering her roommate.

Opening the door she was greeted by a flustered expression, "What time is it?" Emma asked rubbing her eyes.

"I don't know, you tell me?" Sarcasm laced words made it clear what kind of mood her roommate was in. "Seriously, I was super worried. I even called Killian when you didn't show up." Her tone dropped to worry as she reached out embracing her friend in a warm hug.

"You called Killian?" She asked returning the hug before letting go.
"Yeah, I thought you two hooked up or something, but then he tells me you left around nine something." Her eyes narrowed with scrutiny. "I thought you were dead in a ditch somewhere." Noticing the bruise on Emma's shoulder she pushed away the strap of Emma's tank top for further inspection. "Jeez! What the hell happened?"

In a semi-conscious manner she pulled away feeling the blood rushing to her face, 'Think Swan, don't say you fucked your boss... or anything about her heels... or how they felt... or how much you are so screwed.' What felt like a lifetime of thoughts pouring through her mind she went with the lamest excuse she could think of. "I walked into a door."

"You walked into a door?" Raising a skeptical brow she voiced her question in a sarcastic disbelieving tone.

"I was very drunk and uncoordinated so yeah I walked into an open door." Letting out a sigh she gathered her thoughts. "Ruby, I was with my boss sobering up." It wasn't a lie. "We were discussing my career over some hot cider at her place." Now that was kinda a lie.

"Mary Margaret?" She wasn't buying any of the lies she was being fed. "Hot cider?"

"No, not that boss. My department's Director. She has a thing for cider, trust me there was literally no hot chocolate in the house." Emma tried to detour from the main topic.

"Wow, isn't that like an Executive position? Seriously, no hot chocolate?" Ruby emphasized heavier on the lesser of the two questions giving Emma the benefit of doubt.

"Yeah, which is why I can't go telling Killian because that's like a big 'no, no' in the guidelines laid out by HR." Emma stressed her point wanting to make sure Ruby got the message.

"I understand, but what are you going to tell him? I mean I called him looking for you."

Turning away from Ruby she grabbed her jeans from the floor searching her pockets. Her phone was nowhere to be found. She thought calmly for a moment replaying the events from the night. She was still on her back with the Evil Queen towering over her. 'No more personal phone calls when you are with me.' Regina's dominate voice echoed in her ears along with the sound of metal and glass cracking. She had taken Emma's phone from her pocket and crushed it under her heel right next to her head. Closing her eyes she clenched her jaw in frustration.

"Emma what are you looking for?" Ruby asked genuinely concerned.

"Well I was looking for my phone, but I guess I lost that somewhere." She said a little annoyed turning back to her friend.

"Oh well, if that's the case you have a new one right here." Rudy said leaning towards the table in the hallway. "I thought you hated Apple and their evil corporate ways of conforming consumers." Holding a white box and a thick documents envelope she gave Emma a questionable look.

Emma returned the questionable with one of her own. "Yeah, I do." She said reaching for the packet and box. "Where did this come from?" She asked.

"Some guy who looks a lot like Christian Grey in a really nice suit dropped it off just a few minutes ago." She said in a dreamy voice.

Tossing the box onto the bed she ripped open the seal of the large envelope and pulled out the stack of papers. A post-it note stuck to the middle of the first page caught her attention. Written in red ink
were the words 'Read these thoroughly. - EQ'. At the bottom of the first page was notary stamp right next to her own signature. Scoffing she dropped the stack into the waste basket under her nightstand.

"What was that?" Ruby asked.

Looking up she gave her roommate an annoyed eye roll, "It's garbage, the company gave me the phone and those were the stupid terms & conditions." She grabbed the box and inspected it, the plastic cover was already removed. "You know I don't read that crap. It's a waste of time. I could care less if somewhere in it they own my soul." Removing the phone from the box she pressed the home button discovering the phone was already on.

"You know, one day you are gonna wish you read those agreements. Some of that garbage they put in there has effects on your privacy and what not." Ruby cautioned heading out the door and down the hallway. "I am gonna make some lunch before I head off to work." She called back. 

Looking over the phone, she realized what the time was 11:46 a.m. In a panic, she got up and grabbed her pants shoving her legs in one at a time. 'Super late.' Grimacing she made a dash for the bathroom but relaxed a little once she was in front of the mirror. "You know what? I am gonna take a god damn personal day." Speaking to her reflection she gave herself a reassuring nod.

Making up some bogus story about being sick and oversleeping was easier than expected when it came to her supervisor's voice mail. She was sure that Mary Margaret would call her back later to make sure she was okay. Emma also thought it best to speak with Killian when she got back to work on Thursday. She couldn't bear the thought of having to lie to him about the course of events after she left him. Heading into the kitchen she grabbed the usual gamer fuel earning a questionable look from Rudy. "Personal day, anyone asks I am sick." She answered.

"Eating that garbage will make you sick." Ruby commented, "But it's your body and your day so enjoy." Flashing her a friendly smile she waved her off.

Going back to her bedroom she turned on her Xbox and grabbed a controller. 'Nothing like getting lost in a video game with no around to bother you.' She thought with a smile setting her drink and chips on the floor.

Getting settled in she could hear the annoying chiming sound her new iPhone made from her pocket. She was really beginning to miss her Samsung along with all of her personalized settings. Fishing the phone free from her pants so notice the caller ID picture was blank but the initials EQ were preset. She knew who EQ was and a large part of her was dreading answering, but the other part wanted to hear that seductive voice. 'Stupid sex drive, we are going to have a long talk after this.'

Grimacing internally she answered the call. "Hello?" She made sure to come off aloof.

"Miss Swan, why aren't you at work?" There was that voice she both desired and despised. A cold thrill ran down her spine settling low in her abdomen.

Allowing a clearing breath free from her lips she steeled her nerves, "I am sick. I already reported my absence." She was playing a dangerous game testing her limits as the weight of disobedience reflected in her tone.

"Miss Swan, the lack of regard you hold for me is displeasing." She drawled out pausing in thought. "I will just have to correct that behavior." A desire ridden breath poured through the phone leaving Emma silent in its wake. "I think I like you better whimpering beneath me." She was toying with her and Emma knew it. "Well, Miss Swan, what do you have to say for yourself?"
Composing herself she let out a steadying breath of air, "Goodbye Ms. Mills." Hanging up the call she tossed the phone onto the bed. 'Probably not the smoothest move you made, Swan.' She thought to herself grabbing her headset and settling in on the floor between the bed and her TV. Starting a match she moved over the call wondering what Regina's point was in bothering her. Shrugging it off she selected her character and joined her randomly pick team in chat.

Halfway through the game she was making some real headway clearing out the capture point with Junkrat's ultimate ability. The Riptire's explosion wiped the board of four of the opposing team's players among them another Junkrat. "No one out Junkrats me!" She screamed through her mic as her team cheered her on. Just as the clock was winding down on the match her tv shut off leaving her in a rage. "What the shit?!" She exclaimed tossing her headset a side scrambling to her feet.

"No ma'am, she's not sick." A rich Irish accent caught her attention. "Playing a video game." Whipping around she spotted Ruby and some guy standing in her room on his phone.

Ruby gave a wavering smile, "Sorry Ems, he said it has to do with your job." She pointed to him mouthing the words 'Christian Grey' and dropped the remote for her tv onto the bed. "I'm running late, talk to you later." She gave a pleasant smile before closing the door on her way out.

"Great. One more reason why I need to find a new roommate!" She shouted not caring if Ruby could hear her or not. She then turned her attention the roguishly handsome Jamie Dornan doppelganger. "Since when does work pay me a house visit?" She raised a skeptical brow.

"Yes ma'am." He acknowledged the person on the other end of the line before holding out the phone to her, "She wants a word with you."

Grabbing the phone she already knew who was on the other line. "Yes?" She answered with a timid tone.

"No more games, Miss Swan. You will go with Graham and we are going to discuss this behavior of your's." Emma's heart sunk into her stomach. "Now hand the phone back to him." Regina didn't waste any time for a rebuttal. Sensing she was in more trouble than she could imagine she hesitantly handed back the phone.

"Yes ma'am, two hours." He stated before disconnecting the call. Looking back to Emma he gave her a sympathetic smile, "We need to get you some better clothes."

"If I say 'no' does that mean you are going to drag me out?" Genuinely she asked wanting to know if there were and options available to her.

"Well, Miss Swan, I do work part time as a police officer." He stated. "No one would question why I have you in handcuffs if I flashed my badge," Graham said in a serious tone.

"Okay so shopping sounds nice." Changing her tone into a more agreeable one she quickly put on her shoes.

"I'm glad you see things my way. So we have a few stops to make and not a lot of time to work with." He waved her towards the door making sure to follow behind still not fully trusting her to cooperate.

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The two hours were nearly over as they pulled up to the same house from the night before. They had gone to a few clothing stores picking up what seemed like a new wardrobe. The last stop was more uncomfortable being that she had to be fitted for suits meant for men. They had found one that fit
nearly perfect to her shape and Graham insisted on getting it. She was really feeling weirded out and confused as to why she had to wear anything other than her own comfortable clothes.

Grabbing the suit from the back Graham headed around to her door opening it for her. “Trust me, I am trying to help you out.” He said with a genuine smile.

"Leaving me at home would have helped me out." Mumbling she exited the car and followed him up to the front door. Last night's events playing through her mind made her rethink going home with her boss. If she had just stayed at Killian's this would be different and not so awkward. The second she thought about being on her knees in front of her boss made her think again. 'God, why can't I get her out of my head?'

She was led upstairs to the master bedroom, a four poster bed sat near the middle of the room with the usual furniture arrayed along the edges of the room. Graham began laying out the suit, "Take a shower and make sure to dry off before putting this on." He smiled.

"Seriously?" She raised an eyebrow.

"I promise you, it's to benefit you." He said guiding her into the bathroom. Graham didn't waste any time closing the door cutting off an argument before it could start. "Shower, dry off and change. We don't have time to argue, Miss Swan." He spoke through the door.

Rolling her eyes she turned around surveying the sizable room. A large tub sat at the end by a privacy window with a walk in shower next to her. There were no doors to the shower, just a wall with stone like bricks stacked up creating a divider. 'I might as well try to enjoy this while I can.' She mused removing her clothes leaving them strewn across the floor just like she did at home. Starting the shower she tried to soothe away her anxious thoughts, hoping to wash them away beneath the warm water. 'It's not like she is going to kill you, right? Just go with the flow for right now and if you end up hating it I am sure we can stop.' She assured herself.

Finished with the shower she walked out of the bathroom searching the room for Graham. Seeing the room was empty she walked over to the bed and began getting dressed. Managing to get everything else on she was left struggling with the stupid tie. Graham entered carrying with him a riding crop, leather shackles, and a glass of wine. "Okay Mr. Grey, what the hell is that crap?" Emma looked at him pointedly giving up on the tie.

"She likes wine." Graham gave her a cheeky grin handing the glass to her and then laid the items out on the bed. "I only grabbed the essentials from the dungeon, there are tons more than this. Ponder that for a bit." He said with a soft chuckle. "Alright, stand right here and hold out the glass." Grabbing her by the shoulders he moved her to the pillar of the poster bed and had her hold the glass like she was offering it to someone. "I will definitely have to teach you how to tie a tie when we have more time." He said catching her gaze briefly before carefully tying the tie.

"Seriously?" She outwardly thought to search him for answers just to be cut off with the sound of the front door slamming downstairs.

"Shh, just trust me." He said holding up a finger to his lips in a shushing gesture. Graham left the room meeting Regina halfway up the stairs. Emma couldn't hear the conversation, but she could tell Regina was in a mood. Shifting uncomfortable in her new polished leather shoes she dreaded the voices drawing closer.

Entering the room in a grey business suit with her usual pencil skirt was the Evil Queen. Her eyes already staring intensely at the blonde she was guided by Graham. Inspecting her intern from head to toe her look soften slightly, "Thank you, Graham." Letting go of his hand she walked over to Emma
taking the wine from her hand giving her devilish smile.

"I will be downstairs if you need me." He said heading back to the doors drawing them closed, but not before giving Emma a wink and mouthing 'Good luck'.

Regina's eyes wandered over the blonde while taking a drink as Emma stood before her motionless. Wanting to say something she clenched her jaw in apprehension. Removing the glass from her lips she locked eyes with the blond, "You clean up nicer than I expected." Running her tongue over her lips to clean away any residual wine she moved closer to Emma.

"Thank you, ma'am." Emma quickly fell into her role, she was biting her lip nervously waiting for the Evil Queen's command.

Brushing past the blazer she grabbed a hold of the black silk tie, toying with it between her fingers. "Good, girl." She breathed. Wrapping the tie around her hand once she tugged the blonde towards her. "Get on your knees." A seductive growl dragged its way past her red lips forcing Emma to her knees. With the tie still in hand, she beckoned her forward with a rough pull on the silk fabric. Kneeling in front of the Queen she held her gaze licking her lips in anticipation allowing her own arousal to take over. "Open your mouth." Following the order, Regina pour the last of her glass in Emma's mouth spilling some down her chin and over onto her neck.

Without a word she walked over to the nightstand forcing the blond to follow on her knees. Setting the glass down she turned back to Emma and pulled on the tie, "Stand up." Without any hesitation, she got to her feet keeping her eyes trained on the Director. "Good girl." Smiling the brunette pulled on the tie drawing her closer until they were a breath apart. Placing a finger under Emma's chin, she lifted her head exposing her neck. Leaning forward she ran a tongue up the wine saturated skin leaving a warm trail of saliva. Reaching the intern's chin she ventured forward stopping right at the edge of trembling lips.

Pulling back she peered in Emma's dilated eyes, "Tell me, Miss Swan, do you want to kiss me?" She asked licking the taste of salt and wine off her red lips.

Hesitantly she searched Regina's eyes for the answer she wanted to hear, "Yes." She responded in a shaky ridged breath.

Flashing a villainous smile she roughly grabbed the blonde by the chin, "You'll have to earn it." Tightening her hold on the tie she dragged the blonde over to the end of the bed. Shoving her onto her knees again Regina let go of the tie and walked around her carefully stepping over her intern's legs. Leaning down she pulled on the blonde locks that were neatly secured in a ponytail. "You've done nothing, but challenge me. It stops now." Yanking the blonde's hair she pulled her towards her so that she was right next to her ear. "Your safe words are: Not worthy." She purred.
The higher I get, the lower I'll sink

Chapter Summary

Alone with the Evil Queen Emma learns there are repercussions for her actions.

Chapter Notes

Spent all night working on this and reread half of it before deciding to just post it. If anyone wants to point out errors that would be great. Anyways this was intense to write and the contents could be disturbing to some I guess. Feedback is welcomed, please enjoy.

Draping her arms over Emma's shoulders she let a warm breath pour from her lips against the blonde's neck. "Do you know why I like my play things in suits?" Eloquent digits explored the fabric of the intern's jacket searching for its edges. Drowning beneath rippling tides of eagerness and consternation Emma was left in a quivering exhale. Her jaw loosely worked against her thoughts searching for the words she couldn't find. Powerless, in a metaphorical sense, she remained silent focusing on the sound of her own heart beating in her ears.

Giving a dark chuckle Regina slowly peeled back the blazer, "It's the layers, Miss Swan. I find removing them satisfying." Running her tongue along the side of Emma's neck she dragged the jacket free slipping the material past cold and trembling hands. "Beneath them are a person's secrets and insecurities." Setting it aside she wrapped her hands around Emma's shoulders digging her fingers in to give the tense muscles a bracing squeeze. "I relish these intimate discoveries, collecting them in my memories."

Relinquishing her grasp she pushed up the white collar turning it upright with her hands encompassing Emma's neck beneath the fabric. "I can't wait to delve deeper and see what I'll find in you." Looping her fingers under the silk tie she lifted it up turning the accessory backward before placing the material between Emma's lips. "Let's find out together." Tugging the tie tight she leaned in biting the ridge of Emma's ear eliciting a desire laden breath. "Very good, dear." She praised.

Regina took her time to meticulously unfasten each button of Emma's shirt. She was relishing in the blonde's uneasy breaths and subtle shudders. With the last button free she slowly uncovered defined muscles that rippled across an expanse of pale flesh. Reflexively tensing, Emma stifled a surprised gasp as a deft hand wanders over the toned surface exploring minute details. The sensation was intoxicating and the blonde contently surrender beneath the simple contact of delicate fingers. This was a drastic change from every rapacious grasp placed on her since their affair started.

Unclasping the bra the Evil Queen gently removed it watching her intern shudder in its absence. The tension was building in the blonde's spine leaving cold pinpricks scattered over the pale flesh. Grabbing the leather shackles from the bed she placed them around the bed post. "Give me your wrist." A sharp order drew Emma back to the reality of her situation staring intently at the leather bindings. "Today, Miss Swan." Holding open one of the cuffs she waited for the hesitant blonde to
follow her command. Following the command, Emma knew the time for delicate touches were over as the leather was tightened around her wrists.

Standing Regina shucked her business jacket off discarding it among the pile of clothes beside them. Emma's chest constricted and her breath tangled there with uncertainty she closed her eyes pacifying thoughts before they came. Plucking the riding crop from the bed the Director furrowed her brows inspecting the tool Graham picked out for her. "Lucky for you, Graham picked something simple." Walking around the blonde she stopped directly behind her pondering her next move. "There is a difference between punishment and painful pleasure, I am going to teach you that difference." She said running the crop down Emma's exposed back leaving a trail of raised skin in it's wake.

In the absence of the crop Emma tensed straddling the line of excitement and fear of the inevitable strike. Biting down on the fabric between her teeth an agonizing but familiar pressure dug into her back forcing her to bend beneath it. "Much better." She purred removing her heel from the blonde's back. Silence filled the room that was soon shattered with the sound of the crop slicing through the air. A loud crack punctuated the pain burning across her back ripping a cry from her that was muffled behind the silk gag. "That my dear is what punishment feels like." Another resounding crack of the crop tore over her forcing another gasp contorting her face into a pain expression. "It's unpleasant but necessary." She delivered a small series of strikes drawing tears from the blonde who was biting back her cries. "I won't find you weak if you use your safe words." She offered in a low purr before landing another series of strikes with a tempestuous flare. Tightly clenching her teeth, they strained beneath the powerful pressure nearly forcing her jaw to slip away. Pain was shooting up her back pooling in a searing heat that began to throb between breaths. Her mind strayed as her constitution was tested with each lick of the crop eroding away more of her will. Hitting a point were pain began to warp into something strange that twisted her stomach she finally whimpered through her gag, "Not worthy." Halting anymore strikes Regina stood behind the blonde drinking in her trembling form. The raised welts painted across pale skin stung in the cold air making Emma's breaths rigid and heavy. Slumping against the wooden post she braced herself, "Not worthy." mumbling the words again she absently pleaded with the Evil Queen.

Soft hands soothed down her arms as the Evil Queen reached for the leather bindings. Trembling against Regina's touch her eyes screwed tighter trying to will away her trepidation and pain. Breathing a kiss against Emma's cheek her fingers worked the latches open, "You did well." Her voice was sincere beckoning Emma from the torrent of thoughts of uncertainty. Holding onto Emma's wrists she guided her to her feet turning her around to meet brown eyes. Giving a satisfied grin she removed the tie from Emma's lips leaving it loose around her neck. "Have you learned your lesson?" She asked raising a brow. "Yes ma'am." Came a quivering whisper.

"The first time is always the hardest." Regina's eyes soften as a serene moment of tenderness and care washed over her. Gently capturing Emma's face between her hands she held the blonde still peering into the vast depths of emerald contemplation. "Remember those words, Miss Swan it's important to know your limits. While I do take delight in these activities there is a fine line between acceptable torture play and actual abuse. Only you can make that discernment." The tips of her fingers explored the smooth soft surface tracing every curve and dip that made up Emma's features.

Relaxing into Regina's soothing caress she softly nodded her head in understanding. Drawing Emma closer she placed her hand around her neck in a loose grip. "Are you ready to continue?" She asked, studying the blonde's features for any signs of uncertainty. Again nodding her response she soaked in
the cathartic moment that past between the two. The Evil Queen's lips ghosted over her trembling mouth, "You may kiss me."

Emma's eyes fluttered shut as she pressed her lips into Regina's. Allowing the blonde to deepen the kiss she tightened her hold on her neck keeping her in place. Biting Emma's bottom lip she pulled back dragging her teeth against the delicate flesh receiving a soft moan. Walking the blonde backward until her legs met the bed she broke the kiss. "Good behavior gets rewards such as these." She clarified shoving Emma onto her back earning a hiss on contact with the bed.

Hiking up her skirt she slowly removed her underwear making sure she had Emma's full attention. She crawled onto the bed slowly making her way up the blonde's leg. Stopping she straddled her thigh allowing her arousal to seep through the fabric of Emma's pants. Grabbing the silk tie she drew Emma towards her, "You make me this wet." Grinding down against Emma's thigh she ran her tongue along the blonde's bottom lip. While still holding the tie she dragged her nails down Emma's aching back stealing a whimper through a deep kiss.

Taking some initiative Emma raised up her thigh to press it further into the Evil Queen's core. Pleased with the action she purred her approval into the kiss digging her nails deeper into the throbbing flesh. Relinquishing her hold on the tie her hand traveled down the hard covered flesh of the blonde's sternum. Tracing along the curve of a breast she solicited a pleading moan urging her continued ministrations. Breaking the kiss she scrapped her nails up the blonde's back continuing the journey over her shoulder and down her arm. Her hand settled on Emma's that was clenching the duvet, entwining their fingers together. "Fuck me." She commanded, pulling her hand she guided it between her thighs.

Locking eyes with the blonde she sunk a digit into wet folds burying it deep inside her. Releasing Emma's hand she captured her wrist setting her desired pace and correcting each thrust. Getting the idea, Emma decided to add another finger thrusting deeper and curling at just the right angle earning a pleased moan. Meeting each thrust Regina rocked her hips into Emma's palm stimulating the sensitive bundle of nerves. Both hands found purchase on soft fleshy globes eliciting a soft moan from the blonde. Kneading the tissue she could feel the hardening nubs under her palms. Capturing one of the perked nipples she toyed with it pinching it between her nails and twisting.

Another finger found its way into Regina's constricting core pushing her closer to the edge. Twisting the nub in a painful way she contorted her features into an evil sneer, "Naughty girl." Slowing her pace Emma grimaced against the pain searching the Evil Queen's eyes in question. Saying nothing she replied with a devious smirk raking her nails up to Emma's neck. Wrenching her fingers around the column she began to squeeze studying the blonde's features for any signs of apprehension. Being paid with another moan she expertly applied more pressure until finding the delicate threshold.

"Now you may fuck me harder, dear." Growling into a throaty moan, she watched as Emma's jaw slackened from the tension around her neck. Emma pumped her fingers deeper and harder into Regina's drenched folds picking up an arduous pace. Muscles strained against the digits sending a shudder down the Evil Queen's spine. Studying the blonde's breathing she applied more pressure watching green eyes gloss over into a trance-like gaze. A wave of pleasure crashed over her racking her body with a powerful climax. Crashing her lips over the blonde's in a bruising kiss she stole the last bit of breath holding her there as her body shuddered in aftershocks.

Loosening her grasp her kiss was met with another from Emma before pulling back to catch her breath. Removing her fingers sent a sensitive shiver up Regina's spine, forcing an unbidden moan in its wake. Laying back on the bed she relaxed into the stinging pain from her raw back. "Good girl." The Evil Queen praised her with another satisfied moan. "I will spare you a visit to my dungeon, but just for today. There is so much more to discover." She promised, leaning down she captured
Emma's bottom lip between her teeth.
A Pain That I'm Used To

Chapter Summary

Regina wants everything and eat her cake too. Can Emma accept that?

Chapter Notes

Took a bit to write this I ran out of my stockpile. Some dirty time then back to plot and pacing. Just a reminder this a Swan Queen fic and other persons are merely plot devices. Feedback and whatnot is welcome I love you guys. Seriously, this was a venture I started just for my own fun, but now I am seriously writing it for you all. When I mean feedback is welcome I mean it to ensure I doing right by you all. Again thank you all, please enjoy there are rough waters ahead.

Kneeling at the foot of the bed Emma questioned her reality, pondering the moments passing her by. The sound of water running in the bathroom gave pause in her thoughts. Scrutinizing the closed door that obstructed her view she could only assume it was the shower. Numb legs grew wry under her weight, 'How long am I to stay like this?' She contemplated moving, just to stretch them for a minute, 'She wouldn't know, right?' Emerald eyes searched the room confirming what she already knew, she was alone. Fabric strained against her movements, she rested back sitting with her legs stretched out in front of her allowing the blood to circulate waking the nerves with violent needle pricks. Her jaw loosened under the weight of a relieving sigh, leaning back on her hands she dug her fingers into the carpet. She didn't dare lay down fearing the brilliant pain would stir from its numb slumber. The ambient air enveloping her exposed chest sending a shiver throughout her body, she long for her shirt. 'Remain on your knees until I say otherwise.' The command echoed at the fringes of her mind. 'Yeah right.' Rolling her eyes at the inner comment she lolled her head back freeing the stiff tension. Closing her heavy-lidded eyes she played back the memories feeling lingering sparks of arousal ripple through her.

Arrogant in the absence of her Queen she succumbed to the weight of her body easing onto her side. 'I will just listen for the shower.' She told herself. Finding that sweet spot where subconsciousness and consciousness coexisted she focused on the sounds of water striking the tiled floor. Her mind warped the chaotic rhythm into something more of a melody lulling her into a deeper sleep. The illusion of being awake kept her trapped within the dream, the world around her was hazy, but even then she thought she was awake. 'I'm awake.' She mumbled to herself.

A sharp kick landing against her stomach jarred her awake. Rolling onto her hands she searched her surroundings in a panic. "Miss Swan, you are a gluten for punishment." Came dry words. Grimacing against the pain and absence of air she faced black stilettos. Following long olive pale legs, she raised her glance surveying the fringes of a red cocktail dress that curved with the woman's shape. Finally catching her breath she feared the image towering before eyeing the thinly long black wooden object in her Evil Queen's hands. "On your feet." The command was filled with malice.
Staying prone on her hands in a plank position she trembled against her weight, "I'm sorry." She whispered in a pleading tone.

"On your feet." She repeated this time smacking the object into the blonde's side. The strike was blunt, but painful stealing the air she claimed just a moment before. Pushing off the floor she slowly found her footing facing away she shielded herself with her arms. "Wrap your arms around the bed post with your back to me." The Evil Queen order. Emma followed the order crossing her arms around the cold wood she braced herself against it.

"I feel that the taste of my crop was insufficient, but my cane shall instil the obedience I desire," Leaning against the blonde Regina set the cane down on the bed focusing her attention to Emma's tie. "Ten minutes, Miss Swan, you slept on the floor." Placing the fabric between Emma's lips she roughly tightened the knot pulling the corners of her lips with it. Moving the bundled blonde locks over Emma's shoulder she left her back completely exposed. "Ten strikes, one for each minute you disobeyed me." She growled collecting the cane.

Tightly winding her fingers around the thin wooden stick Regina released a steadying breath calming her nerves. The last thing she wanted was for her anger to spill over breaking her intern before she could properly train her. Snapping a cruel hit across Emma's back she felt the sting from the wood reverberate in her hand. A painful cry tore through the gag forcing Emma to dig her fingers into the bed post. "One." With a shuddering breath, the Queen counted holding her desire a bay with an even tone. Letting the pain sink in she watched an angry red streak raise over the point of impact. The strike landed high over sculpted shoulder blades that now tensed recoiling in agony.

"Two." Announcing the incoming attack she let a low growl free smacking Emma's lower back. Arching against the post, Emma tried to escape the pain feeling it burning deep into her already sensitive flesh. Scraping her nails over the post she fought against the will to move. This time the strike landed diagonally digging a rut from right to left catching the fringes of her sides. A resounding agonizing scream caught her off guard, her hands slipped from their hold as she jolted slightly to the side. "Three." Hearing the count the intern forced herself back into position trembling against the searing pain that burned brilliantly in the cool air.

Stepping to Emma's left the Queen gave pause studying the pained expression beneath a red complexion. Feeling Regina's presence beside her she slightly turned her head an emerald eye searching for brown. She noted the way her Queen was standing, emanating a sense of power and control in her posture. Watching her movements shift Emma saw the incoming hit tensing beneath its impact, but she continued to stare. "Four." She watched as a wicked grin carved it's way over the brunette's lips sending a cold thrill down her spine igniting something inside her. Embarrassed by her own body's reactions the blonde turned her vision to carpet below her. The Evil Queen had seen the change in Emma's eye before she looked away, fear was glossed over with desire. Even the blonde's poster relaxed beneath the pull almost welcoming the next strike. Tightening her grip on the crane she intentionally slammed the wood harder splitting the skin in a perfect streak. Eliciting a painful hiss that melted into a subtle moan nearly muffled by silk. "Five." The word washed over her in a relaxing tide of pleasure feeling small rivets of warmth trickle down her back.

Moving closure Regina wrapped her arms around the front of Emma's waist pressing a kiss to her shoulder. Fingers worked expertly removing the belt from its buckle while still holding onto the cane. Craning her neck backward the blonde surrendered to Regina's bruising bite paying her with a soft moan. Freeing the slacks from their hold the Queen pulled them down revealing Emma's perfectly toned posterior. Caressing the round flesh she dug her fingers in, shuddering under the intoxicating desire rising within her. She intensified the bite tasting the skin caught between her teeth feeling the
blonde quiver in response.

Pulling back chocolate pools wandered over the newly exposed flesh savoring the sight before she continued. A processioned strike forced Emma's left butt cheek to flex instinctively from the sting. "Six." The count continued followed by another quick strike to the opposite cheek. "Seven." The Queen counted before letting a dark chuckle escape her. Both hits were weak compared to the others but stung just the same. Managing to hit both sides at the same time she gave another sinister laugh, "Eight." Hanging her head Emma squinted her eyes to a rose-tinted view of the carpet. Her desire was slowly creeping down her thigh bathing her leg in a moist warmth.

The Evil Queen threw another bracing hit across the lower fringes of Emma's backside forcing Emma to find her footing. "Nine, dear." Regina's words had a hint of warning in them, as she then snapped the tenth and final blow with them same force as the fifth strike. This sent Emma falling to her knees with an agonizing shriek. "Ten." Wincing at the sharp pain the blonde toppled over onto her left side avoiding any unnecessary pressure against the raw flesh. The Queen wasn't pleased by this, "I didn't say you could lay down, Miss Swan."

Grimacing behind the tie she found the strength to return to her knees dropping her arms to her sides. "Good girl." Praising the blonde she plucked up the dress shirt from the floor and stood over her. "Give me your arms," Regina ordered. Pulling both of her arms back she felt the mixture of stinging and bruising pain scream against the movement. Dressing Emma, Regina made sure to press the cloth into her back earning a soft hiss as a red line saturated the white material. "Get on your feet, dear." The Evil Queen patted Emma's throbbing back relishing in her subtle jerks with each pat.

Standing up Emma kept her back to her Queen stoically posturing trying to recover some dignity. "Turn around." Regina command. Facing the Evil Queen, Emma's face was unreadable, her eyes were guarded unlike earlier. Reaching out the Queen trailed a finger down the front of the blonde's defined abs playfully tracing her waistline. "I wonder just how much you enjoyed your punishment." She locked eyes with green exploring further down the blonde's smooth skin dipping the digit into hot wet folds. Swirling her finger around the sensitive bundle of nerves she smirked watching Emma's reaction cave into a weak whimper. "Seems like you enjoyed yourself quite a bit." She stated with a soft chuckle.

Removing her finger she brought it to her lips teasing the blonde with the sight before changing her mind and wiping it off on Emma's shirt. "You're not worthy of that yet." Giving a frustrated sigh Emma rolled her eyes. "Excuse me?" The growl was low and menacing followed by an open hand slap stinging across the intern's jaw. "Miss Swan, remember your place." Threatening with another slap Regina held up her hand with a disgusted sneer contorting her features.

Bowing her head in submission she breathed through the gag, "Forgive me, your Majesty."

"What was that?" She furrowed her brows loosening the knot and freeing the tie from Emma's lips.

Lifting her head slightly to meet eyes with her Queen, Emma tasted the words on lips before repeating them. "Forgive me, your Majesty."

The words illuminated the Evil Queen's features with a delighted smile, "You are forgiven, Miss Swan." She began buttoning Emma's shirt tugging on the material eliciting gentle whimpers with each pull. Finishing the last button she pulled up the pants tucking the shirt in taking a moment to caress the tender flesh of her intern's buttocks. Emma shudders from the grasp stifling a curse behind her teeth. Regina smirked, zipping up the slacks she tightened the belt and went to work straightening the tie before tightening it too.

A knock at the door drew Regina's attention away, "Yes?" She answered.
Walking into the room was Graham who seemed to bow his head, "Robin's here."

"Thank you, Graham, I'm finished with her for the night, take her home once I have left." She commanded withdrawing from Emma entirely not even bothering to look back. She went to the bathroom for one last touch up leaving the two alone.

Conflicted Emma looked to Graham with a pained expression, "Robin?" She questioned quietly.

Walking over he grabbed her jacket from the floor his steel eyes meeting her with a gentle expression. "Regina's boyfriend." He whispered.

"Oh." She said perplexed with how to feel about any of it.

Helping Emma into her jacket he noted the red stain on her shirt, "Make sure you shower. You'll want that healed well enough before the next time." His voice was soft, filled with genuine concern for her well-being. Emma nodded silently as he carefully freed her pony tale from under the jacket. Gently turning Emma around Graham met her worried green eyes, "Emma, Regina likes to have her cake and eat it too. That's the reality of the situation. She gets to have a normal relationship and also gets to have her way with her possessions." Checking the door to the bathroom he gently caressed her face with his hand. "My advice to you, don't get attached."

With the sound of the door opening he removed his hand and took a quick step back. Regina entered the room plucking up her designer handbag off the dresser. "Lock up for me." She said exiting the room without another word or even acknowledging Emma. Beneath the surface, Emma felt a twang of pain, almost angry at the way Regina just left. She held Graham's words in mind and listened for the front door.

She barely hears the exchanging of words between Robin and Regina, noting how her voice was a far cry from the harshness she received. With the sound of the front door closing she looked to Graham, "Take me home, please." She stated in a cold and even tone.

Took pity on Emma, Graham was kind enough to help her into the back seat so she could lay on her stomach for the ride. They pulled up to her apartment, turning off the engine he noticed a newer model Challenger parked next to Emma's Lancer with the license plate reading J.Roger. "Looks like you have some company." He stated.

Emma carefully pushed herself off the bench seat glancing to the car next to her's. "Killian." She said with a subtly panicked voice. "Crap he can't see me like this." She thought aloud.

"I suggest getting a shower as quick as you can." He said with a gentle teasing tone exiting the car. Emma rolled her eyes at Graham's comment waiting for him to move the passenger seat out of her way. He stopped at his trunk pulling out the shopping bags with her new clothes before opening the door. "Luckily, you can just go straight to the bathroom with these." He held the bag up before freeing her. "By the way, Regina is keeping the bra. She texted me just before we got here." He continued to tease her trying to break up her mood as much as he could before she went inside.

"Thanks." Emma gave him a subtle shrug allowing a smile to slip through her cold exterior. "Get home safe, Mr. Grey."

"It's Graham, I don't look anything like the guy." He gave a soft chuckle in return handing off the clothes giving her a smile of his own. "Good luck." He said waving her off.

Making it up to the apartment she carefully opened the door trying to make as little noise as possible.
Unfortunately, the roar of Graham speeding away forced her to drop the bag in the hallway. 'Great.' She grimaced bending over to pick it up feeling the pain walking on her back.

"Ems?" Ruby asked walking down the hallway.

"Hey." Feeling very uncomfortable in the suit without a bra and pain throbbing all over she gave a wry smile.

Ruby sized her up studying the outfit, "What are you wearing?" She raised a brow.

"Listen, it's been a long day, I need a shower. Is Killian here?" She deflected the topic.

"Yeah he is in your room playing your Xbox. The guy was worried about you and couldn't get a hold of you." She explained.

"Jeez, okay well I am going to shower and then I will go see him." She said feeling a bit guilty.

"Okay, but Emma you are going to explain this," She gestured to the outfit, "later when he's gone. I am not letting you off the hook." She gave a teasing grin opening the bathroom door for her.

"Of course." She rolled her eyes closing the door with a sigh.

The shower was short, hot water any other day was relaxing, but not today. Everything was hurting and what made things worse was when the shampoo ran over the laceration near the middle of her back. She couldn't think about anything other than the pain she was in, not even about how she felt towards Regina being in a regular relationship. She dried herself off as best she could try not to agitate anything further. Putting on something that wasn't too far off from her usual style she found a nice blouse that would work. The underwear, however, served more as floss than an undergarment. Clearing her thoughts she found a pair of pants that would work for the most part just until she could get into her PJs.

Shoving the suit into the bag she exited the bathroom and entered into her room. Killian was wearing her headset playing an old Assassin's Creed game from the bed. He was deep into the game not noticing her presence as he was in the middle of a tense ship battle. She set the bag of clothes down by the closet next to the door avoiding his view. Thinking she could snag her PJ bottoms from the chair without him seeing she stretched for them. "Swan?" Grimacing she plucked the bottoms from the chair and turned to him.

"Hey." She gave a wry smile.

"Indeed, hey." Setting the headphones aside he gave her a worried look. "I was worried about you, normally you text me back. What happened to you?" He asked his tone concerned shifting his expression into a soft, but queried look.

"I was out shopping with a friend today, needed to get a new phone." She explained. "We were old college buddies, got caught up talking and unfortunately I didn't memorize your phone number otherwise I would have called you. I'm really sorry." Her features smoothed into a sorrowful look as her voice began to tremble beneath the lie. 'He doesn't deserve these lies.' Cringing internally she felt her thoughts shifting to Regina and the few moments before Robin showed up. Disgust poured over her followed by a sense of anger, looking to him she just wanted to forget the last couple of hours.

"Killian, can we just watch a movie together?" She asked nearly begging under a quivering breath.

"Sure Swan." Realizing something was bothering her, he quickly got to his feet pulling her into a gentle embrace. Tears jerked from her eyes as she buried her face into his chest stifling the painful groan he elicited unintentionally. "If you don't want to talk about what's really going on, I
understand. I am here for you no matter what, and when you are ready to talk I will listen." He said lifting her chin to meet her gaze. "Whatever you need, love, I will do it." He gave her a warm smile.

Staring into his eyes she was weighing the differences between him and Regina. Comparing them. Everything about him was genuine and kind, even his eyes were comforting to be lost in. Biting her lip she wondered what it would be like to kiss him, "Just..." Losing her words she craned her neck closing her eyes pressing a timid kiss to his lips. Stunned Killian accepted the kiss, but let Emma control the pace feeling she very vulnerable. She withdrew from him opening her eyes searching his for the words she wanted to say. "Can you just hold me tonight?" She asked.

"Of course, love." He said his eyes lost in her's.

She moved back, "I'm gonna change real quick into my PJs, pick anything you want to watch. I don't care if it's Pirates of the Caribbean." She let a soft chuckle brush past her lips.

"Sure thing, Swan." Killian's tone was wavering into giddiness. He turned away and went over to the stack of dvds by the TV searching them for a movie they both could enjoy.

Heading back into the bathroom she removed the iPhone from her pants setting it on the sink top before changing into the PJ bottoms. Picking up the phone she turned it on noticing she had messages. Opening the thread of texts she read through them:

EQ: I can't wait to have you in my dungeon. I really think you will enjoy it. I saw the way you were enjoying the punishment of the cane.

EQ: The things I want to do to....

EQ: Miss Swan, Graham says you have Mr. Jones with you. I really hope you have read the contract. You belong to me, I don't share.

EQ: Miss Swan, I'm waiting. I don't like waiting.

Clenching her jaw she decided to respond but made sure to come off calm and collected.

Me: Your Majesty, I'm going to bed. I apologize for not responding quickly. I had a shower while you were messaging me. I just need to sleep, I will talk to you later.

EQ: Miss Swan, we will talk tomorrow, you have my permission to sleep.

Rolling her eyes she sent her reply making sure to properly thank her so she didn't have any unexpected visits. Walking back into her bedroom she greeted by Killian who had propped himself against the head board with a few pillows. In his lap was a pillow which he patted inviting her offer. Flipping off the light she crawled into bed placing her head in his lap finding a comfortable position on her side. "What are we watching?" She asked.

"Definitely, Maybe." He answered with a cheeky smile. "Can't go wrong with Ryan Reynolds."

Threading his fingers through Emma's damp hair he traced lazy circles over her scalp. "It's okay if you want to sleep, I'm just content holding you." His voice was soothing filled with such warmth that made her relax under his hand.

"Please don't hate me if I drool." She said with a tired yawn.

"I could never hate you, Swan." He bent down placing a soft kiss on her head. Emma managed to watch a little of the movie but succumbed to his delicate touches falling into a much-needed rest. 'Tomorrow I will just break things off.' She thought before drowning in the comforting lull of sleep.
This is the world you created

Chapter by Xevn

Chapter Summary

Emma finally sees the strings attached and details of which her life will change.

Chapter Notes

Alright I have some explaining to do. I just started a second job on top of my regular 40 hr work week. I am going to do the best I can to get a chapter out at least once a week. I don't have any days off as of right now so it's all a matter of time management, so be patient with me. If writing paid I would totally ditch both jobs and focus my attention on it. Anyways this is a tame chapter with some plot coming into play. Regina likes having full control and has all the meticulous details outlined in the contract. I hope you enjoy and as always mistakes are mine and feedback is welcome.

Things were different in the morning. Waking up to an empty spot on the bed she absently stretched, reaching for warmth that wasn't there. Raw muscle, skin, and bone screamed their agony, claiming the breath she had taken in a huff. Her pirate was gone, but her memories of Regina were lucid and fresh with each subtle movement she made. Straining through the aches she forced herself up sitting with her feet dangling over the edge of bed. Against her body's pleas she reached for her phone, checking for any new messages. Strangely enough there was one from Killian and a few from her Queen.

Captain Killian: I hope you don't mind, but I took the liberty of adding my number to your phone. I figure you can call or text me whenever you need me or just want to talk. I am sorry I left without saying goodbye, but I didn't want to wake you. You seemed so tired, I just wanted you to get a good nights rest. Whatever is going on, I will be here for you no matter what.

Shutting her eyes she steeled her heart from the twang of guilt pulling at it's core. The kiss she gave, his lips she tasted, his breath she stole, all of it flashing before her mind. Emma wanted to just shut it all away, hide beneath the covers and pretend it never happened. 'Am I just leading him on?' Shrugging off the thought she turned her attention to the other messages received.

EQ: Miss Swan, I expect you on time today. Do not be late.
EQ: Make sure you wear the grey button up shirt, with the black tie. The same tie from last night. Jeans that match. I will allow you to wear whatever shoes you like.

EQ: Hair down.

There was a sudden surge of warmth rippling over her, disgusted with herself she tossed the phone away towards the foot of the bed. "What the hell?" She cringed, facing the floor drifting her vision to the trash bin, the packet of paperwork mocked her from it's new home. "I should, shouldn't I?" As if waiting for the answer to be spoken by some omnipresence, she let her question hang there.

A soft knock ended her staring contest, there was no pause as Ruby immediately intruded her room. "Hey, I was just making sure you were up today. Killian, made some breakfast for you before he left." She said with a friendly smile.

"Oh, thanks for letting me know." A tinge of melancholy carried through her words. It was obvious something was up and Ruby wasn't going to let it go. Walking over to the bed she sat beside Emma placing a hand over hers.

"Emma, what's going on? You aren't acting like yourself, plus there was that strange business attire from last night. Seriously, I'm your friend and I am worried. Talk." Ruby gave a firm squeeze making sure her friend got the message.

Releasing an uneasy sigh, "I might be in over my head. I technically slept with my boss." Audibly grimacing, Emma hung her head in shame shifting uncomfortably under Ruby's gaze.

"You did what?" Ruby's mind wasn't grasping the words thrown at her. Staring her down she was waiting for Emma to clarify her statement.

Letting out a resigned breath she leaned over to the waste basket and retrieved the contract she had been ignoring. "It's complicated and confusing. You were right about reading this crap. It's some sort of agreement." She paused her fingers clenching tightly around the paper work. "The Director didn't just invite me over to sober up. I knew what she wanted, at least, I thought I did. It was suppose to be sex." Glancing over to Ruby she tried to get a pulse on her.

Ruby of course was speechless, her eyes wandering about searching for the right words. "Go on?" She needed to know more before she could truly understand her friend's struggle.
"Rubes, she made me sign this before anything could happen. Which I did and there were things I had to agree to that I didn't read. She's my boss and now she's like some sort of Mistress to me and not the whole 'Sleeping with a married person' kind. Regina had Graham come and get me when I called out of work." She added, trying to elaborate her situation.

"Mr. Christian Grey?" Her roommate interrupted.

"Yes." Emma raised an eye brow with a slightly sarcastic tone.

"So what you are saying is you are possibly in a Twilight Fanfic gone mainstream story type relationship?" The wheels were finally turning.

"I think so?" Emma responded holding onto the packet gathering the strength to proceed. "She treats like I am a slave or something, more like a tool or dare I say it 'fucktoy' for her pleasure." The word itself made her skin crawl, she wasn't prude, but she never thought she may just be some sort of sex accessory to someone. "Apparently, everything is drawn up here in this contract that I signed." Closing her eyes she handed the contract to her friend feeling the vibration of her heart against her chest. "Just tell me am I fucked?" The blonde pleaded with her friend.

"Oh-kay." Ruby's tone was questionable, but none the less she took the contract and began to read it to herself. After a few minutes she rested the paper in her lap taking a steadying breath. "Fucked."

Grimacing inwards she opened her eyes and reached for the paperwork. "Thanks." Now she had to read it, decide whether or not to move to Canada or try and negotiate her way out of it.

Under consensual agreement the subordinate will surrender complete control of (His/Her) body and all worldly possessions to (His/Her) Mistress.

By definition the subordinate's body belongs to (His/Her) Mistress to do with as she pleases with no boundaries such as time, place, or situation. Disobedience or refusal of a command will be met with corrective actions (Punishment of The Mistress's choosing unless stated otherwise).

By surrendering complete control of (His/Her) body the Subordinate understands that it may be used for sexual acts (mutual or non-mutual). The Mistress has complete control over any apparel worn, and may choose outfits she finds suitable for the Subordinate to wear. The Mistress will also have complete control of grooming, in which she can instruct the Subordinate to maintain a certain appearance including but not limited to; Length of hair (head, facial, body and pubic), skin care,
Length of hair will be dictated by The Mistress, she may require the Subordinate to dawn a style and/or color of her choosing. For facial hair (depending on gender including an individual in transition) The Mistress may require it to be shaved or styled, which must be maintained at all times. Body hair will be waxed or shaved depending on its thickness. The pubic region will be smooth unless instructed otherwise. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

Skin care will be dictated by The Mistress, she may require the Subordinate to maintain (His/Her) skin with specific instructions. The Subordinate may need to see a specialist to help keep skin soft and smooth, depending on condition whether from normal wear and tear to after care for punishment sessions. Complexion must be maintained as well and will be kept in pristine condition. Any products suggested or supplied will be used by the Subordinate as instructed by the specialist and/or by The Mistress. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

Weight must be maintained at healthy level, this may be dictated by The Mistress as she sees fit. The Subordinate may be required to see a specialist to help designate what a healthy level of weight is for (His/Her) height and age. This may require a set nutritional diet that the Subordinate will adhere to whether to gain, lose or maintain (His/Her) weight. The Mistress may even demand a specific diet to enhance a sexual based result. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

Build (Physique) will be maintained and dictated by The Mistress, the Subordinate may be required to exercise with a personal trainer provided by The Mistress. Some play sessions may require some form of physical exertion that will test endurance and strength. This is to ensure the Subordinate has the capacity for such activities without sustaining unnecessary injury or exhaustion. The Subordinate will also maintain (His/Her) physical appearance for the benefit of (His/Her) Mistress. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

In further definition: complete surrender of control of the Subordinate's body (He/She) will not take on any lovers or relationships during this time unless stated otherwise. Having a relationship without the expressed permission of The Mistress will result in correct actions. The Mistress may have others or take on more subordinates as she pleases. The Mistress may also have a normal relationship or lover in which will be excluded from activities with the Subordinate. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

weight, and build.
Worldly possessions in definition: all possessions; including assets, finances, and material goods will be surrendered to The Mistress. The Mistress will have complete control and will do what she deems fit with them. A wardrobe will be provided if necessary and all other clothes will be removed. The Mistress may choose to return any items at any time or if the contract is ended. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

Corrective action as defined, punishment will be used to correct disobedient behavior. Anytime the Subordinate refuses or disobeys a direct command from The Mistress will result in a punishment session. The Mistress may choose to punish the Subordinate for her own pleasure. To prevent any actual abuse The Mistress will provide a safe word and/or safe words to the Subordinate. It will be up to The Mistress and the Subordinate to recognize when punishment is no longer safe and to cease all actions. It is never the intention of The Mistress to abuse the Subordinate. Only The Mistress can punish the Subordinate, the Subordinate is not allowed to harm, hurt or punish The Mistress. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

Sexual activities as defined, The Mistress can engage in sexual activities at any time, place, or situation. The Mistress may use sexual activities a reward for good behavior or for her own pleasure. Depending on the sexual activities the Subordinate may be required to wear sexual devices and/or toys at The Mistress's command. The Subordinate may be allowed to request certain sexual rewards at this time, but only with The Mistress's expressed permission. By signing this section of the contract the Subordinate understands and agrees to adhere to the above requirements of (His/Her) Mistress, Signature_________________ Date ___________.

Emma couldn't read anymore, her mind was still partially asleep. She wasn't sure what to think of it. Glancing up to her roommate she gave a wry look, "Rubes, what the hell do I do?"

Shrugging her shoulders in response Ruby was still in shock over this discovery. "You signed all of it and it's got that seal thingy on it." Her answer wasn't comforting at all. She looked down at her phone noting the time, "Ems, I really think for today you should just suck it up and just work. We don't have enough time to logically think through this right now and I'm sure being late isn't going to help your situation."

"I guess." Resigning to her temporary fate she set the contract on her nightstand. "I hate to say this, but I am really sore from last night, could you help me get dressed?" Grimacing she prayed that Ruby wouldn't want details hoping she would just help her.

"I'm not gonna ask." Sharply standing she went over to Emma's closet looking for some clothes.

"Rubes, the bag, I need the grey button up, black tie, and there should be some nice boot cut jeans in
there." She said directing her friend to the bag of clothes by the door.

"Oddly specific, I'm just gonna assume it's what your boss wants." Shrugging off any questions in her mind she fetched the requested attire and returned to Emma. "Okay, stand up and face away from me." She held out her hand to steady the blonde's movements. Emma's movements were stiff, pain stretched through her back and down her backside forcing a subtle gasp to escape. "Jeez, what the heck did she do to you?"

"Rubes, it's fine, I'm fine. I sorta didn't mind it. She has this way about her, I can't describe it at the moment and I am sure you don't want to know the details." Meeting eyes she turned away in embarrassment of the admission feeling a sharp thrill run down her spine.

Hooking her fingers under the hem of Emma's shirt she paused, "Not judging, kink is kink. Just didn't think you would be into that, you know?" Ruby placated Emma's worries trying to help calm her friend's nerves. "So what about Killian?"

"I don't know. Before all this stuff started happening I thought we were going to be together. I just don't know and I need to sort things out." She shrugged.

"Well that contract is pretty specific about dating..." Lifting the shirt up she noticed the condition of the blonde's back interrupting her thought, "Jesus, Ems this looks awful!"

Cringing beneath Ruby's words she shivered against the cold air, "I know."

"You can't wear a bra it will only irritate it more, I will just get an ace bandage, it should work for now and not move around so much." She said tossing the shirt into the laundry bin. "Just don't move, I will be right back." She quickly stepped out of the room leaving Emma alone.

Wrapping her arms around her chest Emma stared down at the contract thinking about Regina. She wanted to stop, but again she found herself enthralled by the woman. Thoughts of Killian tugged at the fringes of her mind sending a mix of emotions leading her further away from a decision. Ruby returned a moment later with a first aid kit. "I am gonna try and doctor this for you, but it will sting." She warned.

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Sitting precariously in the passenger seat Emma worked on the breakfast Killian made for her. The guy knew how to make a meal and she was thoroughly enjoying each bite. Thankfully, Ruby decided to drive her to work making sure she was there with time to spare. Pulling up to her department's entrance Ruby turned to her a look of concern twisting her features. "Please be safe, I trust you know what you are doing. Just don't press your luck." She warned.

"No worries, we'll talk later. Thanks again for the ride." Carefully leaving the car she wander up the steps and inside the building.

Walking to her bay she gingerly sat down barely registering the people around her. Logging into her computer she waited for her systems to pull up glancing over to Killian's empty desk. 'He must be running errands.' She thought to herself. Turning her attention to her email she went through the updates and notices. An alert popped up 'Meeting with CLBO Director at 8:30 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.' Acknowledging the alert she could feel her pulse quicken.

"Miss Swan?" A somewhat familiar voice pulled her attention above her cubicle wall. A beaming smile graced her view as Mr. Hyde was peering down at her. Startled by the presence of her company's CEO she jumped to her feet.

"Mr. Hyde, hello." Nearly uncoordinated she walked around her cubicle noticing he was with Killian, Mary Margret, and Regina. Giving him a puzzled look she tilted her head, "What can I do for you?"

"It's not what you can do for me, Miss Swan. I don't normally get a chance to do this, but you've been recognized by your peers for the Excellence Award." He's smile widen, holding out a plaque with her name on it, she looked around in disbelief as more of the department employees came into view. Some where standing at their desks as others were walking over to congratulate her. "While your timeliness is still in question, you've been recognized for your work ethic and willingness to help your fellow peers. Many submitted kind words on your behalf explaining how you personally took it upon yourself to help them with different struggles that improved overall success for Deposit Products." Leading the department Mr. Hyde began to clap applauding her achievement.

"Thank you, seriously, you guys are the reason why I come to work. I am happy to have helped so many of you and this award means so much to me." She graciously stated holding up the award.

"Well Miss Swan, I can't wait to talk more at Head Quarters in Riverwood. I won't take up any more of your time, again congrats." He flashed another smile before heading back to his temporary office.

Killian walked over and gave her a big hug, "Congrats, love." Looking over his shoulder she could...
see the Evil Queen watching them. Her features contorting into a disapproving glare Regina cocked her head.

Brushing off the glance she pulled back from the embrace, she was caught up in Killian's eyes. "Thank you, especially for the breakfast." Noting the contrast between the two she lingered on his attention longer.

Giving her a genuine smile he traced a hand over her shoulder, "Couldn't let you come in today on an empty stomach. We should go out tonight and catch a movie or something to celebrate." He suggested.

Looking back to where Regina had been she found the space empty. Surveying the area she caught the woman stalking out of the department. "I would love that, I will let you know how I am feeling after work."

"Let me know for sure, okay Swan?" He said heading back to his desk.

"Congrats, Emma. Not everyone is able to win that award. I'm so proud of you." Mary Margret walked over to her occupying the space Killian vacated.

"Thanks, M&M. I'm sure you had a hand in it." Smiling she gave her supervisor a brief hug.

"No, just submitted the feedback and helped pass it forward to DM for further review. It was all you, you did an amazing job and we all noticed it." She praised her gently patting her shoulder. "When your meeting is over we will talk more about the trip to Riverwood for the ceremony." Mary Margret waved her off.

Heading up to the CLBO Directors office she felt her chest tightening in anticipation, 'You got this Swan, we are at work. She can't do anything here.' Noticing Regina's door was open she stopped in the doorway hearing a conversation taking place. Knocking she popped her head spotting Regina and a gentleman standing in the middle of the large office. "Sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt I just wanted to let you know I was here for our meeting." She announced. Her eyes lingering over Regina she took in the sight of her Queen's outfit. A black sleeveless blouse with a plunging neck line exposed just enough skin for Emma's imagination to wander. A deep grey pair of dress slacks loosely draped over her designer heels was definitely different than the pencil skirts.

Turning her attention away from the man Regina gave Emma a pleasant smile, "Thank you Miss
Swan, come in. This is Robin, he's the Lake Park DM." Introducing him, Emma felt a twang of jealousy shoot through her from hearing the name. 'Was this the same Robin from last night?'

Out of professional politeness she walked over and extended her hand, "Hi Robin, I'm Emma Swan, Deposit Products Placement Intern."

Returning the gesture he gave a brilliant smile, "It's a pleasure to meet you, Emma. Congrats on the Excellence Award, if you ever feel like moving to Lake Park we could really use your talent." He kindly stated.

"I'll keep that in mind, thanks." Releasing her grip she slinked backwards.

"Well I best be going, it was nice seeing you, Regina. Emma." He nodded.

Walking the LPK DM out Regina gave him a brief hug, "I'll call you later. Have a safe journey back home." He leaned over and whispered something in her ear, Emma noticed the body language between the two and realized this had to be the same Robin from last night. There was definitely chemistry there and she was fighting to keep herself composed.

Closing the door Regina engaged the lock turning back to her intern, who was now noticing there were no windows into the CMA department. "Miss Swan, I would to personally congratulate you on your achievement." Walking over to the blonde she inspected the outfit pleased her command was heeded. "My expectations for you are high, and while we are in Riverwood next week you will be adhering to everything I say."

"Ms. Mills, I am not sure about this." Emma voiced her concern dropping her head she focused her eyes on the floor. There was no response, just the shifting of air as The Director slowly moved towards her. Gentle digits encompassed her jaw, softly drawing her attention towards her Queen.

"Miss Swan, you gave yourself to me, the time for hesitation and indecision has passed." Narrowing eyes smothered any objections. Smoothing her hand along Emma's jawline she traced along the edge tangling her fingers in the blonde tresses. "You're mine for as long as I see fit." Drawing Emma closer until they were a breath apart she lightly caressed her cheek with her free hand. "Just let go and enjoy the ride..." Her thoughts trailed off, searching green eyes as the words settled in she noticed how the blonde relaxed into her hold. Bridging the gap she captured tentative lips coaxing them to part. Dominating the kiss she brushed her tongue past quivering lips swallowing her intern's moan.
Taking in a breath the brunette broke the kiss her eyes settling on Emma's enjoying how she was lost in the haze of desire. The Evil Queen enjoyed the way she could manipulate the blonde, pushing the right buttons to receive desired effects. Tracing the pad of her thumb over Emma's bottom lip, "Did I make myself clear?" Her voice was low barely breaking over a whisper.

Pushing aside any troubling thoughts she had about the contract she decided to give in and go with the flow. "Yes, your Majesty." She breathed.

"Good." Regina's smile widen, leaning down she found purchase on Emma's neck. Pressing a kiss against her sensitive pulse point she lavished the subtle moan that escape from her interns lips. Slightly sinking her teeth into the tender skin which bunched under her bite, her tongue savoring the rare taste eliciting another moan. Intensifying the bite Regina ignited a storm of electrifying pinpricks that rolled down Emma's neck and over her body leaving the intern shuddering in their wake.

Scraping her nails along the back of Emma's scalp she gathered a fist full of hair. "Let's talk about Mr. Jones and the nature of your relationship." Pulling on the tendrils she wrenched the blonde's head back locking eyes with her. "Are you two involved?" She asked scrupulously studying Emma's features.

Working her jaw Emma trembled under the question thinking about the details of the contract she signed. Carefully deliberating her answer she reflected on her feelings for him, "He and I are friends..." Swallowing her thoughts she couldn't discern what other answer she could give. The two were close and she knew that, but it was difficult to put into words just how close. He had been the one person she grew to feel more for and admitting to that meant letting him go. She knew what she felt with Regina, a high that fully consumed her, but also an emptiness that was cold and lonely when she came down.

"Friends?" Raising a perfectly sculpted brow Regina queried the answer with skepticism. "Bear with me Miss Swan, but I am finding it difficult to accept that your relationship with him is purely platonic." Her features hardened into a dubious glare, "Lying to me is ill-advised." Tightening her hold The Director moved forward trailing her tongue up the front of Emma's throat, feeling her swallowing against the moist digit. Tasting up the blonde's chin she snared Emma's bottom lip between her teeth. Drawing it into her mouth she teased the sensitive flesh with her tongue sucking with a bruising force.

Tugging on the intern's lip she pulled back scraping her teeth along the soft skin before releasing it. "For your sake, Miss Swan, I hope you aren't lying." She released her grip and walked over to her desk resting in the chair she place one leg over the other. Without waiting for a command Emma moved for the chair in front of the desk. "No Miss Swan, chairs aren't for pets." She flatly stated. "Come here and kneel next to me." With a sharp snap of her fingers she directed her intern to space beside her. Complying Emma took her place next to her Queen facing her she patiently waited.
"Did you read the contract, dear?" The Director turned to her computer pulling up her email.

"Kinda." The statement left her quickly without any thought.

"Define, 'kinda'." Reading through her messages she continued the indirect conversation.

Rolling her eyes she grateful that Regina's attention was on her computer completely missing the degrading gesture. "I started reading it this morning, but only got through some of it. Wanted to make sure I was on time." She answered.

"Well, Miss Swan, until you read the whole thing I am going to continue to leave out certain responsibilities that are defined in our agreement." She simply stated in a mundane tone.

This peaked her interest, "What do you mean?"

"Miss Swan, while I enjoy being cruel, but I am also responsible for your care. Think of this as a punishment for not reading the contract like I advised you to. Until you finish reading it, I am going to ignore my responsibilities." Smirking to herself The Director continued with her work.

"I will read it when I can." Letting out a frustrated sigh Emma tried to stretch free the tension coiling in her back from the uncomfortable position.

"See that you do. Now then, we need to discuss my expectations of you while we are in Riverwood." Turning around with a devious grin etching its way across her face she focused her attention on her intern. The look sent a thrill down the blonde's spine, Emma could tell this was not going to be a regular business outing.
You speak like someone who has never been Smacked in the fucking mouth. That’s OK, we have the remedy

Chapter by Xevn

Chapter Summary

Sometimes it's better to hold your tongue than send a text.

Chapter Notes

Hello my loyal readers! I am alive, spent like all my time working. This is what happens when you are responsible and adulting. Screw 80hr work weeks.... Remind me next year to just say no. Anyways here is a nice little teaser to what I have planned and some plot with some NSFW filler. Seriously though, o.o thank you all for your messages and feedback, I promise you I am working the tools out of the story. It's gonna be worth it I promise. btw eff Robin coming back into the show, he was a better character dead than alive. I am hating the upcoming 2nd half of this season.

Stirring from a sleep that was all consuming, she could feel the slight tingling shocks pricking at her finger tips. Her wrists straining and becoming raw and tried from the bite of padded leather holding against her own weight. Opening her eyes to the blank stare of darkness she felt a shiver stretch through her spine. 'Where am I?' The thought pulled at memories from hours before, trying to fill the gaps in the timeline. Her mouth tasted liked she had been sucking on copper penny, moisture collecting just behind her teeth settling on her tongue. Working her jaw her teeth sunk into something stiff but flex against her bite. The crisp cold enveloped her body sending an alarming panic coursing through her mind. She struggled to move finding the ground just within reach of her toes.

"Ah Miss Swan, nice of you to join us." A wicked, but all too familiar voice rasped from behind her. Warm digits pressed into her exposed side dragging up against her rib cage before stopping right at the cusp of her breast. "Think dear, how did you end up here?" The voice breathed against her ear forcing the tiny hairs along the back of her neck to stand on end. "Take your time, we have all night." Soft lips press against the back of her neck waking those memories that seem more distant than they were.

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Trying something just a bit a different Emma had decided to sit with an agent as he took calls. "Thank you for calling Storybrook Bank in Phoenix, my name is August how can I assist you today?" The call was anything but simple, as what was a technical login assistance became a drawn
out profile issue. "I'm sorry for the inconvenience I am going to place you on a brief 3-5 minute hold and work diligently on this issue so we can get you logged in." With the customer acknowledging his statement he quickly placed the customer on hold and pulled up two other systems.

"How often do you receive these type of calls?" Emma asked.

Typing in the social security number of the customer he never took his eyes off the screen, "At least 10 out of 30 calls that I service have some sort of profile based issue since we introduced single sign on for our credit card customers." He stated in a slightly sarcastic tone. Looking into E-solutions he could see the customer was successfully signing in, "Since there is an open ticket for the majority of these problems I have taken upon myself to play around with SSO, usually by delinking the account I can buy maybe 3 to 4 weeks for them." Clicking on the delink button generated a pop up screen prompting with a message, 'Delink should only be used for customer's account linked with the wrong account and shouldn't be used for customers looking for separate logins.'

"Should you be delinking them?" She asked more or less curious about his methods raising a questioning brow in his direction.

"Emma, if I dare ask for permission it would prolong the time to assist the customer. Essentially, I am buying more time for the development team to fix the issue. I still submit the tickets and advised the customer that login will work temporary until the issue arises again. By then I would hope we have gotten our shit together and fixed the issue." He stated acknowledging the prompted pop-up with a click on the accept button. "Besides if they didn't want us to do this it would say 'can't' verses 'shouldn't'. I choose to see these things as guidelines and until I am told otherwise I will continue to take a shot in the dark verses sitting on my hands and doing nothing." Turning to her he gave her a quick wink placating her concerns.

"Does it at least work?" She asked writing down a few notes in her journal.

"Of course, having the separate log ins work better than the one. If I played by the rules then I wouldn't be an Excellence Award recipient. I only have the customer's best wishes in mind when it comes to my decisions and while it's not perfect neither are our systems. Trust me on this, it's far better to ask for forgiveness than it is to ask for permission." Returning to the call he address the customer in an ecstatic tone. They spent another minute on the line together as he had the customer login on both sides to ensure his counter measure worked.

Hanging up he logged out of his soft phone and jotted down his time, "I get you are one of the few responsible for the products that we offer, but it's not the products we have a problem with. It's the programs running them and the website. Seriously, who names a system tied to everything 'Atlas' and expect everything to run smoothly? When Atlas crashes everything stops working including the website. Trust me on this, those calls suck! 'Why does it say my account is closed?' is always the first
thing I get from each caller. Apologizing to the customer sucks and so I decided to be more hands on and go further with my troubleshooting to fix issue or at least appease the customer's concerns. We are gambling with our early investors as we play catch up with all modern banking."

"What do you mean, and sorry for asking so many questions. I hope I can help with the information you provide." She simply stated noticing the way he seem to be holding a lot of stress on his shoulders.

"Let me explain this as best as I can in layman's terms: Many banks like Wells Fargo, Chase, Bank of America, and Federal Credit Institutions have been around for years. Their websites developed with the internet. Our credit card site developed with the internet. We then decide to take on a failing bank in 2008 and try to develop a website in 3 years verses 10 years." Applying the appropriate gestures to emphasize his point he continued on his long drawn out explanation.

"Short-cuts happen, many features that are offered else where are no where to be found here. The programs we use are unstable as shit and us tech support agents are left holding the bag. The company wants to continue to beat out AMEX for the JD Power and Associates award, which on our credit card side we are, but numbers start to fall on our side and then the whip is cracked harder against our backs. This department is unlike any other department, Lake Park is servicing calls, our site is servicing and technical support. We handle more shit and get treated like shit when everything starts to fall apart."

Pointing upwards he continued on his tangent, "The Evil Queen only looks at numbers and never at the fault of the company which is why there are so many empty seats. Many have left to be apart of other departments offering better pay and less work." There wasn't a breath between sentences and he seemed to tense while describing the misery he chooses to face each day he comes in. The man was burning with rage, but some how managed to keep it at a work appropriate level.

"Jeez, I am so sorry I had no clue. I thought we just handled servicing calls. So if there is any feedback I can send forward, what would you suggest?" Emma knew this was a can of worms, but she realized that there was something here that desperately needed to be fixed. August was generous in his details and seemed to be unphased by any restraints placed on him by her presence. She felt lucky to get to be placed with him and really wanted to help with their departments growth. Including fixing preexisting issues that could plague newer agents especially the class of 30 that would be answering calls in less than a month.

Resting his head in his hands he spoke downwards in a slight dismay. "If there was one thing I would like fixed. that would be firing our department's Director placing someone more willing to work with us than against us. Which will never happen." Letting out a resigned sigh, "So, how about a smaller sample size for tickets. I think 100 is way more than enough."
Something about the statement made her skin crawl, a small part of her wanted to defend Regina. Instead, she bottled up her feelings and address the usable feedback, "Of course, I will do what I can to make the sampling size smaller and see if we can get an escalation system put into place for issues that make it impossible for customers to do online banking."

"Thanks, I doubt it will help right now, but we will take anything we can get here to resolve as many issues as possible." Taking in a breath he grabbed his headset and prepared himself for more calls. "If there isn't any more questions, I can keep going if you like?" He offered.

"No, go ahead." She waved him on. The moment he went back into open time he received another call, repeating his opening statement he actively listened to his customer's issue and worked through the call with an upbeat tone. Feeling the subtle vibration in her pocket her attention was pulled from the Agent's call down to her ill-regarded cell phone.

EQ: What are your plans this evening?

Thinking for a moment she weighed her thoughts on Killian's offer, a normal outing. Free movie and friends hanging out doing friend stuff. On the other hand, there was her Queen, the woman that did anything, but normal. She felt flushed just thinking about their last engagement. She decided to play coy:

Emma: Movie with friends, why?

It didn't take long for her phone to buzz again with another message from Regina.

EQ: Wrong answer, try again dear.

Emma's face turned a tinge redder, she briefly glanced up to August, who was taking down key notes about his customer's request. Turning to the side to continue her text based conversation discretely, she pressed her luck further.

Emma: No seriously, Movie.

After sending the message she expected another immediate response however the longer she stared at her phone she realized that was not going to be the case this time. Pocking her phone she focused back on August and continued to take her notes. She spent the rest of her afternoon with him poking
and proding him for more information about his job. They had lunch together in the cafe' where they talked about life outside of work and some more about work.

Emma from time to time would check her phone hoping for a response, finally irritated enough she sent another text.

Emma: Sorry, I am seeing a movie with my friends, your majesty. If you are lonely I am sure you could just call Robin.

Again there was no response.

By the time the two headed back to their department Emma had completely moved on. She focused her attention on her job and pushed Regina to the back of her mind even though the woman was just upstairs and not out of reach. "Well, this has been an eye opening experience, I really appreciate the time you shared with me. I look forward to seeing you in Riverwood." She said with a friendly smile.

"I will show you around in Riverwood, make sure you actually have some fun. The stiffs don't really know how to let loose for the after party, but I know some places." Giving her a wink, August sat down at his desk, "After all we low-level employees gotta stick together."

"I will hold you to it!" She beamed before heading back to her desk to finish up her report.

Frustrated, Emma rested her head between her hands propping herself up on her elbows. She was starting to regret sending a text that obviously displayed her feelings on Regina's boyfriend. She really didn't have the right to feel the way she did, she was actively lying about her relationship with Killian. Well not entirely lying as she wasn't sure about him being anything more than a friend. That she kissed. Which lead no where and yet maybe could be leading somewhere. 'Right?'

"So, Swan, are we on for a movie night?" Killian hovered by her desk.

Before she could say anything there was a ping from her inbox, the message's topic read: 'Late Night Number Crunch'. Emma rolled her eyes before reading any further. "I'm assuming that's a no?" Rocking back on his heels he gave her a grimacing smile, "Maybe another time then?"
"Another time, sorry." Shrugging her response she dropped her head onto the desk feeling a complexity of thoughts surging to the surface. She was not looking forward to a late night in the office, especially with her back throbbing like it was. A normal night actually was becoming more appealing than being at work any longer than she needed to be.

Kneeling down next to her desk he placed a reassuring hand on her shoulder, "There will be other nights, I promise."

Screwing her eyes shut, "Of course, just not tonight." Emma couldn't help, but feel this late night wasn't work related at all. Instead she believed it to be in response to the texts she sent.

Most of the night was spent at her desk reading through the monthly reports for opened accounts while listening to Pandora. Occasionally texting Ruby to fill the time between boredom and lack luster of enthusiasm for the tedious work was only prolonging the ever expanding night. Deciding to take a break from her work and Ruby's Inquisition, she headed to the break room for a much needed caffeine fix. All Emma needed now was a hot coffee to get her back on track and finish the reports. Just the idea of coffee perked her up. The trip, however, was met with disappointment as the card reader was broken refusing to accept her payment. " Seriously?!" Giving the machine a frustrated kick she leaned her forehead against the glass cursing inwardly. As if her night couldn't get any worse she could hear her phone chime from her pocket.

Pulling her phone out she looked down half expecting it to be Ruby wanting more details, but instead finally received a message from Regina.

EQ: Why aren't you at your desk, Miss Swan?

Giving the machine another kick in response to the universe screwing with her she texted back.

Emma: Coffee break.

EQ: My office, now.
Groaning she dragged herself away from the break room and ventured upstairs through the empty department. Finding the door left open she invited herself in expecting Regina to be sitting at her desk working, but the office was empty. Thinking she misread the text or that her mind was playing tricks on her she checked the message again with an annoyed sigh.

The second she pulled out her phone she was greeted by another text.

EQ: Place your hands on the desk and bend over. I will assume you are smart enough to know what exact position I want you in.

"You can't be serious." Emma spoke aloud to herself letting out an indignant scoff towards the phone. Another message followed shortly as if in response.

EQ: Quite serious. Make sure your phone is within view.

Everything within her wanted to see if Regina was behind her, but testing The Evil Queen's patience seemed like a bad idea. Walking over to the large cherry oak desk she placed her phone near the center within reach and followed her Queen's command assuming the desired position. For a while she waited. Not moving. Holding herself in the same position, just waiting. She was feeling agitated, staring down her phone wanting a response, something. Clenching her jaw she continued to wait nearly willing the phone to respond to her. The screen illuminated with a message prompting her attention. She threatened to move feeling her body jolt, but was halted by the text glaring at at her.

EQ: Don't you dare move.

EQ: You don't get to be jealous.

EQ: I didn't sign myself over to you.

Biting back an argument that was foaming to the forefront of her mouth she stared accusingly at her phone. "You did this to me." She relented to a weak whisper hoping to get a word in on how she was feeling. 'Used.' Emma felt ridiculous speaking to her phone like it would change anything that was being sent through it.

EQ: No, you did this to yourself.
Emma watched as the antagonizing messages poured through her phone rolling her eyes at the last message to come through. She itched to grab the stupid device and text back her thoughts on the subject. Rebel against Regina's orders and give her a piece of her mind, but found herself enthralled with each new message that came through. 'What is point? If I can't saying anything then why am I even here?' She knew what the point was. Control. This informal meeting was nothing more than a show of power and control her Queen held over her. 'Could have just asked me to jump would have saved me some time.' Annoyed she focused back at the messages skipping to the most current one to come through.

EQ: You gave yourself to me and my wants.

EQ: From the moment we first talked you wanted this.

EQ: I have given you every chance to say no.

EQ: Provided you with an excellent offer to move you up and out of my department.

EQ: Instead you chose to play along thinking you could amend things, change the rules.

EQ: My rules, Miss Swan, will never change.

EQ: If you can't live up to the agreement and forget these naive thoughts then leave now, otherwise stay just like that and wait.

Emma glared down at the phone angry, wanting to turn heel and leave, but she wasn't having it. No. While everything inside her was screaming and fighting to cut her loses and leave she found herself lured in. She wanted her Queen. Fuck the damn Pirate and his kindness she wanted this cruel torment that beckoned her with promises of pain and pleasure. She let out a relieving sigh and held herself still, waiting. The time was passing in a painfully slow manner, testing her patience punishing her with a tedious silence. Her finger tips pressed hard into the polished wood finish gripping onto what she wanted. She desired this cruel woman playing a dangerous game.

EQ: Stay. Move and this ends now.

An empty cold silence swallowed the room as the phone's back light dimmed then faded to complete black. Minutes passed. There was nothing physically holding her there and yet she felt like she was being crushed under an un-measurable weight. Her pride. Listening to the ambient noise of electricity humming through the florescent lights above her with the subtle sound of the AC circulating the air around the room, filled the empty void she was trapped in. Waiting.

Without warning the silence was broken with a loud thud, the office door was slammed shut behind her prompting her attention. Fighting her body's natural reaction she jolted subtly shifting in place straining to keep still as she was ordered to do.
"Millennials, always glued to their phones." Came the sarcastic husk of her Queen's voice. Closing her eyes Emma waited, she listened to the foot steps bounding off the carpet playing against the tempo of her beating heart. Holding still she continued to listen, feeling her Queen draw near, walking around to the right of her opposite of the door the motion stopped. Emma turned her head to look, meeting a heated glare before receiving a painful slap to her face. "No." The resounding echo from the impact vibrated through her jaw up to her ear deafening into a mute numbness.

Having no time to spit out a response she felt sharp digits rip across her jaw as The Director positioned herself behind her knocking Emma's legs apart with a skilled knee. Forcing her intern's head back she captured the fleshy earlobe between her teeth, dipping two fingers into the blonde's mouth. The Director released a breathy command stroking the moist digits against the inside of Emma's cheek, "Give me your wrists, dear." Regina didn't wait for Emma's compliance as she pulled the neck tie free from the collar slipping the fabric up against her throat. Pressing her covered breasts into the punished flesh beneath the fitted button up shirt elicited a sharp gasp from the intern.

With a purposeful tug she choked Emma with the makeshift noose until she found her more complacent with the given command, "Now, Miss Swan." Emma was beginning to get the understanding that her Queen was in no mood for games. Finally, giving in to the demand, Emma relinquished her wrists holding them together in as presenting them to The Director. Removing her wet digits Regina worked to free the tie from it's knot. Once Emma's hands were securely fastened together Regina trailed her hands up defined forearms feeling the smooth fabric of the dress shirt beneath her palms. She brushed aside the soft blonde hair uncovering a pale neck while pressing her hips into her intern's back side. The action earned an aroused moan from the blonde who was relaxing into the delicious pressure. "What are your words?" The Evil Queen purred into a seductive kiss at the back of Emma's neck.

Knowing exactly what she being asked Emma whimpered into a soft breath, "Not worthy." Her body trembling against Regina's in anticipation pleading to move, wanting this slow torture to end. Keeping herself in place she was wanting to play along in her Queen's game making sure to follow her rules.

"Good girl." Placing a hand square in the middle of sculpted shoulders the Queen forced her subservient down onto the desk pressing her hard against the cold wood. "Don't move." She ordered. Reaching her hands around to Emma's front she unlatched the belt from it's buckle loosening the leather until it hung limp. Releasing the button that held her intern's pants together with a deft hand she pulled the material down letting the fabric gather around Emma's knees keeping them constricted from any movement. A warm hand explored the back of the blonde's thigh caressing around to the middle until traveling up. "He will never fuck you like I can. You will never be satisfied by him." She stated in a dull tone, her fingers grasping at the smooth skin of her inner thigh.

"You don't know that." Emma shot back in defiance feeling frustrated that Killian was even being brought into this.
Grabbing a bunch of blonde locks she tugged her intern's head back, "Keep telling yourself lies, maybe you will believe them." Regina hissed. Raking the pads of her fingers against the sensitive bundle of nerves she pressed hard against it allowing the tips of her nails dig into the edge of soft flesh. Meeting Regina's unrelenting rhythm Emma rocked her hips trying to add much needed pressure to the aroused flesh. "Lies are easier to believe than truths." Drawing a ragged moan from her possession's reluctant lips Regina continued with her speech, "Lies are easier to swallow." Forcing two digits into moist inviting folds freed a rigid breath from the coils of Emma's defiant mouth. "You keep him around to aggravate me." Thrusting deeper into Emma's hot center she let her nails carelessly brush against the sensitive tissue allowing them bite in, reaping subtle yelps of discomfort.

Stealing another low moan from her intern's mouth she plunged another digit into wet heat, "He will never be enough. I will always be on the tip of your tongue, fucking you in the back of your mind." Pumping hard against the taught muscles she felt Emma begin to constrict in response. "He is an imbecile, a troll." Recoiling against her words, Emma began to press off of the desk. Releasing her hold on the blonde's hair she rested her arm across the strong back leaning her weight onto it. "No, dear. Stay down. I'm not done with you." Thrusting harder into the tender flesh she focused her attention on the building climax her possession was struggling against. "Yes, I am being condescending, but I assumed you wouldn't notice." Hooking her fingers she pressed in at the correct angle playing against sensitive flesh driving deeper into the awaiting orgasm. "After all you are enjoying this." Halting all movement she gauged her possession's state of mind, "Or am I wrong?" A wicked grin etched its way across her lips as she listened to the absence of words, "I guess not."

Biting her lip Emma stifled her argument letting Regina continue her ministrations drawing her closer to the edge. Closing her eyes tightly dragged white lights from the corners of her eyes, she felt her thighs flex against the strain of her impending climax. Feeling the crushing weight of Regina's body holding her down she rested her chin on her biceps. Emma's elbows were painfully holding her weight and Regina's as they dragged against the wooden top with each thrust. "Please." Moaning weakly her plea she begged for release.

"Who is your Queen?" Regina hissed into a painfully seductive bite as she sunk her teeth into the bunched fabric and raw skin of her intern's back.

"You are." Emma breathed into a low moan her body relaxing into the pain.

"And you are?" The Evil Queen demanded Emma's answer before clenching back down in the same spot feeling the fabric whine against her teeth. She drove her point home thrusting deeper into the blonde with a punishing pace.

"Not Worthy!" Releasing a loud straining cry Emma collapsed against the desk in heap of dead weight. Her climax peaked raking through her body with a shuddering wave of pleasure that carried with it a rush of adrenaline. Trembling against the flush body behind her she fought to move,
wanting a chance to return her cruel torment in kind. A hand jetted out tangling in her tresses wrenching her head back in a searing misery.

"I am leaving for the rest of the week. Think about me. Think about this." Regina drove her fingers in cruelly scrapping against Emma's insides. "I will do what I want, when I want and you will always like it. Mr. Jones is nothing more than a fascination, an infatuation." She curled her fingers against the throbbing muscle toying with another orgasm bringing Emma to the edge again just to hold her there. "He will never be enough for you and you will always crave me. 'Your Evil Queen' who relishes in these cruel delights that you willingly allow." Emma laid motionless against the desk taking the punishment, hearing the words punctuating each thrust. The fight she had in her dying out lost beneath the waves of pleasure, or was it?

"Again, dear, this is just a taste of what I have to offer, but there is so much more than this." Pumping into her with a vicious thrust she teased the pleading pressure grasping onto her finger tips. "You aren't worthy and I will make you worthy of my attention." Leaning down she breathed bitter words against Emma's ear, "Lie to me again about your relationship and I will show you just how cruel I can be." Beating another thrust into the blonde's core she made Emma feel her promise. "I will show just how Evil I am and you will enjoy every bit of it screaming my name begging me for more." Bitting a kiss into the back of Emma's neck she forced a powerful orgasm to the surface feeling the intern's body rocking against her with a lust laden moan.

Letting the second climax run its coarse the two remained on the desk panting in exhaustion. Regina paying pleasingly possessive kisses over any exposed skin she could find before finally composing herself. Removing herself from Emma she straightened out her attire. Fixing her mid length locks using her fingers as a makeshift comb. "Graham will take you home, You may finish your reports tomorrow. You will text me when you get home." The Director's orders were clear, but something about the last few minutes weren't. Emma couldn't help but feel that she wasn't the only one with jealous thoughts. Then again this wasn't a relationship and neither of them were suppose to have feelings so for now she had to push the idea to the back and focus on the now. She was just another tool for her Queen's pleasure, to be used and thrown away when done. Regina was done and she was leaving.
It had been already a week without Regina and work had become a tedious grind as there many things left for her to do. Something about the extra tasks seemed nothing more than Regina's vindictive way of torturing her while she was away. When she wasn't finishing a report or handling a project she was avoiding Killian like the plague. All encounters shared between them were awkward. Emma would lie through her teeth or spit out some poor excuse as to why she couldn't see him after work.

The added misery dutifully provided by Graham, who made The Evil Queen's orders quite clear about the precise distance she wanted between the two 'friends'. If they spent anytime together outside of work he was to report it regardless how innocent it may be. Killian was the center of her friend group, being detached from him meant being completely isolated from her friends. Except for Ruby.

Spending time together with her roommate was taxing. Most conversations would lead to some drawn out interrogation about Emma's aloofness towards Killian. Anytime he would swing by to hang out she was involuntary thrown into covering for her. Ruby was reasonably tired of it, but Emma wasn't sure what to do about it. She didn't have the time to ruminate over her 'dueling' relationships. Needless to say she was stress and frustrated.

It was finally Friday again. The last day of the work week and the start to her weekend. Emma wasn't going to spend another night stuck in her room. She came up with an ingenious scheme to
ditch Graham and hang out with her friends. Despite her doubts about him actually trailing her everywhere she needed to be sure he was preoccupied. Fortunately, Emma was able to divulge some useful information in between Ruby's interrogations.

Apparently Graham was infatuated with Ruby and they had been texting each other non-stop all week long. In fact, they exchanged phone numbers the night he drove Emma home. The very same night Regina's impromptu meeting about her relationship with Killian fell on. While she didn't hold anything against Graham, Emma wasn't thrilled to know the guy following her around was possibly seeing her room mate. She had politely excused herself from the topic after she couldn't stomach anymore 'delightful' details.

Revisiting the subject the next morning proved to be vexing. Feigning her newly found interest so she could tactfully request Ruby's participation in her scheme played on her patience. Thankfully it didn't take too much convincing to enlist Ruby's help, but it came with a price. She gave Emma an ultimatum. Ruby didn't want anymore involvement with the deception going on in Emma's love life and made it clear this was the last favor she was doing for her.

Taking a page out from 'Farris Bueller's Day Off', she called out of work with the 24 hour flu. Simplifying Farris's process she set up her room with the essentials, adding some final touches with used tissue strewn about the floor and bed. Emma assumed she didn't have to go all out thinking Rubes would pretty much keep Graham busy with movie night. All she had to was make one appearance, play up being sick then dart back into her room. Of course, it worked like a charm. Graham didn't suspect a thing. Besides he was too busy fawning over Ruby to thoroughly inspect Emma's well rehearsed act.

Things were finally coming together. With 'Mr. Grey' preoccupied she was able to sneak out her window and shimmy down the tree next to it. More like falling and hap-haphazardly grabbing onto branches until unceremoniously landing on her ass, but she was successful in sneaking out. An Uber downtown later she was in Central Phoenix meeting up with Killian, Mary Margaret, David, and Belle outside the movie theater. Surprised to see her Supervisor amongst the group she received a pointed look from Mary Margaret.

"Dying of the plague?" The sardonic tone Mary Margaret used was very unlike her, but after a moment of staring down the blonde let loose a friendly chuckle.

"You made it." Greeting Emma with a warm hug Killian planted a gentle kiss on her cheek. "Seriously thought you were bailing on me, love." While he didn't mean for the statement to be cruel, Emma couldn't help, but feel guilty. She knew she was going to have to talk to him sometime tonight. A conversation she was dreading.

"Sorry, it's a long story." Her sentiment was genuine regardless of the complexity of feelings
knotting up in her stomach. "But I am here now, so what are we seeing?" She quickly deflected the subject hoping to move the moment along. After all this was the first chance to hang out with the group since the Cheshire Cat incident last week. Normality was something she was craving, but the pressure was still there.

"Well we were thinking food then the movie." Belle got the picture that there was something going on between Killian and Emma. The two weren't their happy fun loving selves, and Emma's body language was tense.

Mary Margaret also picked up on the awkwardness, "There is this really nice sushi bar right around the corner that has all kinds of dishes that are to die for." She shot Emma an incredulous look when Killian wasn't paying attention. 'What is going on with you?' She mouthed. Emma rolled her eyes in response with a muted sigh, 'It's complicated.' Emphasizing with a shrug before beaming a smile back at David and Killian who were now paying attention.

"Sushi sounds great, shall we go?" Feeling Belle and Mary Margaret staring her down trying to squeeze more information out of her, Emma forced the group back on task.

"Yeah, I am starving. Lets go grab a table and get some grub." David, oblivious to the strange group dynamics, finally threw in his two cents taking a hold of Mary Margaret's hand. 'Wow since when did they move to PDA? Mary Margaret and David have always kept things somewhat professional.' Observing the two together like there wasn't anyone watching was so different. It's not like it was a secret the two were together, but they really didn't show it.

Killian, following suit, reached for Emma's hand pulling her from her thoughts. Paying a soft kiss to the back of her hand before venturing on left Emma feeling even more guilty as she faked the best smile she could give in response. 'This is gonna be a fun night.' She inwardly cringed as memories played in the back of her mind. Memories of The Evil Queen.

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Things didn't turn out too bad during dinner. There was little to no alcohol being consumed by the group which meant bad judgements weren't going to factor in tonight. Belle and Mary Margaret managed to keep the scrutinizing looks down to a minimum as Killian and David talked about random car stuff. Emma did her best to follow along as she fought off anymore thoughts of Regina. 'Not too bad for the first half of the night.' She told herself.

However, thinking about it now she realized there was going to be a dark movie theater next. 'Keep it together, Swan. Your friends will be in there with you so no funny business.' She told herself.
almost sad to let go of her inner teenage dreams. This guy was the first major crush in her life in a long time and letting him go meant letting go of apart of herself. As much as she hated to admit it, he was the guy that made her feel more like herself than anyone else did.

Just watching him and David talk shop left her in a slight daze, feeling like she was losing her grasp on him already. 'Was having sex with her boss really worth losing him?' Feeling her phone vibrating in her pocket Emma was pulled back to the present. Checking her messages she was staring down the very initials playing the staring role in her melodrama.

EQ: I was told you called out of work today. You will go with Graham to the doctor tomorrow. Rest up and get well soon.

'How very non-characteristic of you, Regina.' Tilting her head in thought she got the feeling this was Regina’s way of saying that she did care. Granted, there was a line in the contract that came to mind about doctor visits, but she didn't have to add the slightly fluffy stuff. Contemplating her response she glanced back up at Killian who was now laughing at some joke that David shared. Looking back to her phone she thought of something decent to say.

Emma: Yes, Your Majesty. I appreciate your concern.

It was kind and to the point. She wasn't going to ruin a good night with a long drawn out text based conversation. Though, she wasn't discrete enough for her present company as a gentle nudge to her ankle interrupted her texting. Drawing her attention away from the text she looked to see who's foot it was. It could only belong to one of two people. She spotted a petite blue dress slipper. Knowing who's foot that belonged to she looked back up to meet eyes with Mary Margaret. The stern line across her lips spoke volumes. 'Restroom.' Her Supervisor mouthed.

The two excused themselves leaving Belle to chaperone the boys while they were absent. Entering into the small restroom, Mary Margaret leaned against the sinks with her arms crossed. "Okay, something is going on. First you spend the week ignoring Killian. Then you skip work, which by the way isn't something you should be doing. To now this awkward behavior. Seriously, Emma what is going on with you?" Mary Margaret was indeed her Supervisor, but also a friend. Trying to find a way to speak candidly about everything was like navigating a minefield.

She had to come up with a truth that wouldn’t give away too many details, "I think maybe Killian and I are moving too fast. I kissed him a couple of nights ago and now I am all kinds of unsure about what I want." Emma felt relieved giving a half truth about her feelings. "There's also another person that has taken an interest in me and it's way too complicated to get into." Grimacing noticeably she eyed her supervisor silently pleading with her to not pry any further.
Raising a questionable brow pointedly towards Emma, Mary Margaret wasn't having it. "Try me."

Cringing at the response Emma gathered her breath and formulated her words, "They are much older. Refined. They have a lot of rules and like things a certain way. It's exciting and different. Drastically different. Also very complicated as they basically know Killian and I are a bit more than friends. They don't approve of it at all." Resting her hands on the sink she leaned forward feeling more conflicted.

Mary Margaret turned placing a hand on Emma's shoulder trying to comfort her, "You really like them both don't you?"

Nodding her head, "Yes, very much so. Killian is like a fresh breath of air and Re-the other person is constricting, but in the right kind of way." Hoping M&M didn't care about the slip of her tongue to inquire further about Regina's identity she closed her eyes.

Taking a moment to process her thoughts Mary Margaret carefully weighed some options in her mind. "Emma, dump them both gently. Figure out what you want. It's not fair to be leading either one of them on when you don't know what you want. Focus on work and focus on you for a bit. If either of them is meant to be they will come back to you when you are ready."

Swallowing the surfacing argument about how Regina isn't the kind to take rejection lightly she realized it didn't matter. Mary Margaret was right about the situation. Emma was leading them both on trying to get the best of both worlds when she wasn't sure what the best part was. Sleeping with Regina only made her more confused as she wasn't sure if there were any real feelings past their physical relationship. Killian and her have been friends for months always dancing around their feelings. Crush is what she felt for sure for him, but what else was beyond that she didn't know.

Pushing off the sink she rocked back on her heels allowing a sigh to fall from her lips in the process. "M&M, thank you. I am going to probably need to leave after I talk to Killian." Her tone was filled with melancholy as she prepared herself for the inevitable decision. "Be alone for a bit and collect myself."

Opening up her arms she reached over and gave Emma a hug holding her for a brief moment. "It's gonna be okay. This too shall pass and things will be better for it." Releasing Emma, they both shared a smile. "Now then, focus on work no more ditching or I am writing you up for attendance." The threat was anything but serious as the two giggled off the tense atmosphere.

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Heading back out to the small dining room Emma noticed a maturely poised blonde woman standing by the table chatting with Belle. The woman's attire was the very essence of proper. A tailored gray dress jacket with a matching pencil skirt defined her lithe shape. Accented by the black silk blouse with short heeled gray pumps completed her ensemble. While she seemed to be having a relaxed conversation, everything about her body language appeared to be strict. "Oh my goodness, Mal is that you?" Mary Margaret said with a warmth in her voice she hadn't heard her use before.

Turning her attention away from Belle the woman walked over greeting Mary Margaret with an affectionate embrace. "Mary Margaret, I haven't seen you in ages. How are you doing, my dear?" With an unobstructed view of the woman's face she notice she was indeed much older, but was the very definition of gorgeous. 'Jeez, don't even think about it. You are dumping two people to focus on you, remember? Get a grip, Swan.' Emma physically restrained herself from face-palming.

"Good. What are you doing down here? I thought you would be in Chicago by now." The two seemed very familiar with each other including Belle, making Emma feel like the third wheel. Killian and David weren't even the slightest bit phase either enjoying some sake bombs. 'They must have slip the order past Belle.' Emma rolled her eyes at the thought.

"I don't like showing up until the day of. Besides, I have a wonderful group of assistants that handle my meetings. I am actually down here finishing up interviews for the next DM for deposits." Mal explained giving a subtle look to Emma. "And who might this be?" Something about the way her blush-gray eyes locked onto hers felt familiar. Emma nearly quivered beneath them, struggling to stay composed as if feeling like the woman was sensing her attraction to her.

Noticing Emma shifting uncomfortably next to her Mary Margaret pulled her closer for a proper introduction. "Oh yes, this Emma Swan one of the new interns. Emma, this is Maleficant, the Senior Vice President of HR." The title slipped out of her Supervisor's mouth with little emphasis. In fact, Emma found it odd just how casual this whole meeting was, knowing full well this was an Executive much higher above Regina.

Maleficant's eyes narrowed in upon hearing the intern's name, keen on inspecting her further. "A real pleasure indeed it is to meet you, Miss Swan." Nearly purring Emma's name brought forth lucid memories of a similar introduction. Producing a dull black leather gloved hand in a polite gesture Maleficant reached out offering it to Emma. Transfixed green eyes fought back against the same look that threatened to consume her not too long ago. 'Deja-vu.' The young blonde thought.

Grasping the hand with a firm grip Emma rose to the unspoken challenge, "A pleasure to meet you too." There was an edge to Emma's tone. Regardless if she was reading this whole situation wrong she wasn't going to be repeating the same mistake twice. Defiantly standing her ground only seemed to invigorate Maleficant's resolve earning a concieted smirk in return. 'I am not imagining this. It's
happening again.' Feeling the thick tension in the air Emma clung to the bit of spin she had, not backing down. 'Not this time.'

Mal broke the hand shake first content with the exchange, "Very intriguing." The words slipped passed her red lips in a soft breath barely breaking above a whisper. Releasing her gaze from green eyes she focused back to Mary Margaret who seemed completely oblivious to the short staring contest. "Well I shall be going. I wouldn't want to keep you from a relaxing engagement with your friends." She fondly smiled her sentiment before leaning in for another hug. Slightly turning her head she whispered, "Rebellious as always, I promise not to mention this to your step-mother." The words were loud enough to hear within the short distance almost like it was on purpose. Pulling away she finished the conversation openly, glancing over to Emma with a vindictive smile gracing her features. "Regina would just flip with all the fraternization going on here."

'Did I just hear that right? Mary Margaret's step-mother is Regina? Maleficant talks to Regina?' Emma's head was swimming. Matter of fact she was feeling rather light headed. 'I have been sleeping with my boss's step-mother who is The Director of our department. The other person I was just talking about with my Supervisor.' Looking around the room she couldn't tell if it was her that was moving or the world. Landing on the deviously pleased grin of Maleficant she felt her knees quake beneath her. "Fuck me." Uttering the words as a numbing darkness swept over her she met the ground with a hard thud. Hushed gasps were quickly snuffed out by a high pitched whining in her ear. Then there was nothing.

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Waking up in a strange room with dim lights she tried making sense of her surroundings. It was definitely not her bedroom, but without her glasses she couldn't discern one blurry shape from another. Sitting up she felt the tug of something on her arm, the more she moved it, brought about a slight stinging sensation. "What the heck?" She questioned aloud, stirring someone awake from their slumped over position. Catching the movement she squinted trying hard to focus her vision enough to see who it was. 'Killian?' She wondered.

"Ah, you're awake." The thick Irish accent was a dead giveaway for who the voice belonged to.

Groaning her delight, "What happened?"

The blurry outline of Graham walked over to the bed grabbing something then placing it onto her face. Granted with the gift of sight again from her glasses she met eyes with him. "Well, let's just say it wasn't pretty. Ruby was very worried. She's outside trying to get her shift covered so you have some friendly company for the next twenty-four hours."
"Twenty-four hours?" Emma's head was throbbing as she finally could see that she was in what looked like a triage room. The stinging sensation she felt earlier was nothing more than an I.V. drip. She could only assume her fainting spell was diagnosed as dehydration. Flashes of event's pulled from the dark empty space of her mind as tried to put the pieces together.

"You can't be alone for the next twenty-four hours due to the concussion when you hit your head. You passed out in a sushi bar, with a certain work friend you weren't suppose to be seen with." He raised a brow in mock disapproval.

"Right, that's probably going to screw things up." She rested back in the bed feeling like the room was being to spin again.

"Mind you, I already knew you were gone from the moment you fell on your ass." He gave her a friendly wink. "I let you go. Didn't say anything to Regina about it." Graham let out a frustrated chuckle, "Boy, was I embarrassed to receive call from her enlightening me of the current situation."

"Graham are you going to be okay?" Emma asked after registering his concerned expression feeling responsible.

"Yes, but now I'm under a microscope. I slip up again and I loose my job with the police department." He glanced down to her, "No more letting you run about. I have to hold the leash tighter for her. Things have to change." His grim complexion set in while he mulled over the details in silence.

"What does she have to do with your actual job?" Emma wasn't seeing the connection between this side job he had with Regina and his actual job.

Letting out a soft sigh, "Her late husband was Police Commissioner Leopold. She has strong ties within the department, best friends with my boss. Pulled the strings to give me my Detective's Shield. She owns me." Sparing the details he tried to explain his connection with Regina.

The short explaining left her with more queries than answers. "Why would she do that for you? How did you even get involved with her?" Pressing for more information Emma felt like she already had an idea of what Graham was about to say.

"Smacked your head pretty hard and now you're the Detective asking the questions?" Letting out a tickled laugh he hung his head shaking away his better judgements. "How else do you think? I was
just like you, only I was crushing on the Police Commissioner's wife. We had an affair and I played to the venue then she got bored. When her husband passed away due to a heart attack, she reeled me back in. I was up for review and she got me my Shield. No longer wanting to play whipping boy after awhile I tried to leave." He shrugged off the last sentence with a nonchalant gesture. "You don't leave her though. She keeps you until you have no more use."

The gravity of the situation was finally setting in, "You don't sleep with her now, do you?"

Shaking his head in response, "No, that's no longer a requirement. I just serve her now." He said confidently. "I would appreciate you keeping all this between us though. I don't want Ruby to know about those ties."

"Absolutely, that stays between us." Agreeing to keep his secret she finally noticed the absence of Killian and the others. "What happened to everyone else?"

"Well, once we got here Ruby kinda chased them away. Something about needing to prevent anymore problems for you after I told her about Regina's phone call. Ruby really has your back when it counts. She even tried distracting me when you crashed down the tree in your efforts to leave without me knowing. Granted, I knew what she was doing, but I wasn't about to turn down a kiss from her regardless." Graham smiled fondly thinking about it.

Emma on the other hand really didn't want to know about her roommate's exploits, "About that call. How did Regina know I was out if you weren't following me?" She asked trying to change the subject.

"Apparently, you met Maleficant tonight and fainted in front of her. Mal for short, was Regina's Mistress. Learned everything she knows from her and she's far worse than Regina. The woman likes kidnap fantasies and has no problem implementing chloroform to make those fantasies realistic. She gets the stuff from her husband and was taught how to use it, but even then that's dangerous. Regina and her haven't been together in a long time and them being up at this Award thing with you there spells trouble. Especially, after tonight going fuhbar like it did." A frustrated sigh escaped his chest as he finished the long exposition.

"I was meeting Killian to end things." She stated also letting out a frustrated sigh. "Mary Margaret even told me I should end things with Regina. Though, she doesn't know it's Regina. Now I really don't want her to know its Regina." Cringing she stared down away from Graham feeling ashamed.

"Nonetheless of your intentions you're in a hep of trouble. Dressing you up in the right outfit isn't going to save you this time. You are going to have to find away to pacify her wrath and pray Mal has
no interest in you." The two shared a cringed look as he pulled out his phone hearing the buzzing from his jacket's pocket. "Speaking of the devil, I have to take this." He pulled away from the bed railing answering the call, "Yes ma'am?"

A bunch of 'yes ma'ams' carried the conversation with Graham rubbing his temple occasionally in contemplation. Emma noticed just how much Regina's words were driving into him with each pacified response. "Yes ma'am, tomorrow night." He nodded his understanding through the phone. 'What are they talking about?' She wondered.

Hanging up the phone he turned back to Emma, "Looks like you've got a flight to catch and it's not with your coworkers." With a pained look he empathized his remorse leaving the words tangling in the air. Making an abrupt departure he pushed past the curtain walls off in search of Ruby. Drawing the covers over her head she curled up beneath them. 'How am I going to get out of this?'

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Needing some serious girl time Ruby and Emma spent Saturday on the couch watching movies. Emma had made herself comfy in Ruby's lap with an ice pack on her head to relieve the throbbing pain. Ruby and Graham were still texting, but she made it a point to keep it at a minimum focusing her attention on her friend. They didn't talk about the event nor speak the names of anyone involved giving Emma a brief reprieve to recover.

Regina hadn't texted or called, but Killian's messages were piling up. After the first ten she switched her phone to silent preventing anymore interruptions during the movies. They started off with the usual romance movie where they both had their audible 'aw' moments then moved onto action flixs. Both shared the same enthusiasm for Speed and Speed 2: Cruise Control. After the day was spent, Ruby ordered pizza and helped Emma pack. Graham was kind enough to leave a list of clothing she was to pack. No doubt it wasn't a request, more like an order.

Packing her suit case for the 3 day trip she folded up one of the black dress shirts pausing in thought. 'I don't have to go. I am sure work would understand my head injury was serious enough to stay home. Maybe I could buy myself some more time and figure things out.' Grabbing her phone she hesitated. Emma considered her options. Working through her thoughts she found the right words.

Emma:

I am not feeling well at all. My head feels like it's splitting in two. I am going to stay home. Please forgive me, Your Majesty. I accept whatever punishment you have in mind when you get back.

Emma sent the message and waited swallowing down the lump in her throat. It had been only a few
minutes with no response. Teetering on laying down she almost believed she had gotten her way, but
Emma decided to still finish up her luggage just in case. She headed out of her room and into the
kitchen where Ruby was already digging into the fresh pizza. "I don't think I am going to go. I just
sent Regina a text backing out." She stated in a tense huff.

Pausing mid bite Ruby nearly choked. "Ems, are you sure that's a good idea? I mean after everything
you spoke about. You think one text is going to let you off the hook?"

Rolling her eyes she stuffed her hands into her pockets. "Maybe?" Emma squeezed the response
through a strained jaw.

Before Ruby could get out her argument her phone buzzed on the counter top with an incoming call.
Setting down her slice she whisked up her phone answering it in a hurried voice, "Hello." Listening
for a brief moment she went from a pleased smile to a look of confusion. "He's giving two minutes to
meet him at his car before he comes up to get you. Something about carrying you over his shoulder if
he has to." Ruby rolled her eyes then turned back to her phone. "Why can't you do that to me?" She
asked in a giddy tone.

Walking off with a disgusted scoff, Emma didn't have time to deal with Ruby's gross school girl type
rush. She was actually frustrated with how easily it was her roommate to switch gears with a guy in
the picture. Even if this was the bed Emma made, she didn't want to lie in it just yet and she really
could use Ruby's support. Storming out of the tiny apartment she slammed the door shut behind her
with her bag in hand. Meeting Graham at the car she caught the end of a flirtatious conversation he
was having with her roommate. Rolling her eyes she tossed her bag in the back and got in. "Just go."

The two sat in silence as he drove to the airport. Flashing his badge at the gate and stating where he
was heading he continued on his way onto the maintenance road. This twisted Emma's stomach into
knots. Under the impression she would be flying on a regular commuter flight she hadn't thought
about the company she would be with. Pulling into a hanger near the end of the runway she felt a
rush of anxiety as Graham parked the car next to a private jet. "Who's in there, Graham?" She asked
turning to him placing her hand on the dash as if to trap him.

Brushing off the question he got out and walked around the car opening Emma's door. "Are you
going to cooperate?" Graham's words were cold and detached. Not his usual self.

"At least tell me who is in there." She held a stern tone not moving from her seat.
"Alright, the hard way." Reaching in the car Graham wound his hand tightly around Emma's wrist unlatching her seatbelt with the other. Pulling her out of the car he spun her around pressing her up against the side. "I can't protect you anymore." He said slapping his police issued handcuffs on her wrists.

Gasping at the cold steel connecting with her delicate skin she got the picture there wasn't a way out. "I have to show her I am living up to her standards. I don't like this anymore than you do, but you can change things. Regina likes you more than she is willing to admit and maybe you can use that. Maybe you can get free, but you have to play along in order to do that." Tugging her back he faced her his eyes brimming with concern and trepidation.

"Graham, who is it?" Emma's heated gaze burned through his, straining the guilt buried in his chest. Pulling out a black silk blind fold from his coat pocket he went back to doing his job. Tightly securing the fabric around Emma's eyes he inspected it making sure it would hold. Graham hesitated for a moment before shaking off his concern and throwing her over his shoulder. He carefully carried her up the steps of the jet's entrance. Once inside he rested her back into one of the reclining chairs at the back of the cabin.

"Good boy." Came a pleased purr. "I will tell Regina you followed your instructions to the letter. As a reward I will let you go." Reaching down with the key he intended on freeing Emma's wrists. "Leave the key with me. I want her just like that." Maleficant's voice dropped into a seductively sinister tone.

Nothing was said leaving Emma in a dark world with no clue what was going on beyond it. She rested back uncomfortably on her cuffed hands feeling the metal biting into her wrists. Not sure what to expect against the static void she remain shrouded in darkness with an infrequent sound of her captor moving about. After take off she assumed there would be something, but she was left alone feeling like she was being watched. Nervousness had dried her lips to a noticeable level and in an effort to remedy the issue she ran her tongue along them. "Would you like a drink?" Breaking the silence with a the soft rasp of Maleficant's voice sent a shudder through her body.

"Yes please." Against her better judgement she breathed her answer. The sounds of movement played against the backdrop of the subtle roar of the twin turbines outside. Emma's heart began to pound in her chest feeling Maleficant's weight settling on her lap. Gasping in surprise she felt a hand wander up the center of her chest. Soft digits encompassed her neck before tracing up along her defined jawline. Finally coming to a stop in their exploration they rested in a firm grip around Emma's chin.
"Open up, dear." Maleficant breathed her order with a refined sense of eloquence. Obeying, Emma opened her mouth feeling Maleficant's fingers flexing with the movement. "Do not spill a drop." Placing the rim of the glass to Emma's lower lip she delicately poured the liquid into her mouth.

Swallowing, Emma felt the burn of alcohol making its way down her throat, but heeded Maleficant's command. Once the glass had been emptied Emma heard someone else approach retrieving it. "That my dear is a 4 Wise Men martini. I find one isn't enough to nullify any undesirable behavior. So how about another?" The question was obviously rhetorical. Signaling the silent attendant with snap of her fingers Maleficant let out a wicked chuckle.

"So, my dear, let's chat." Patting Emma's chest she relaxed against her resting her head on the chair. Emma could feel Maleficant's warm breath sweeping across her ear raising the hairs on the back of her neck. "Regina must be losing her touch if you are blatantly ignoring her rules. Or maybe you are a gluten for punishment?" Whispering the question she leaned forward running her tongue along the outline of Emma's ear. "Are you, dear?" Maleficant's lips teased the contoured shape wrapping them over the stiff flesh drawing a ragged breath from Emma.

With Maleficant's lips busy teasing her ear Emma struggled to find her words. The surging heat from her core was building into a throbbing need. "No, I am just not sure what I want." Honestly ripping free from her mouth she moaned her appeasement. Internally she was frustrated with herself. Especially, with how willingly she let someone else stir her arousal. Emma couldn't believe how easily it was to bring out her carnal self. 'Do I have any dignity?' She criticized.

"I appreciate your honesty." Continuing in a low whisper Maleficant raked her hand down Emma's front. "Tell me, how many people have you slept with?" With Maleficant's words purring against her ear Emma shifted slightly in a silent response. "No? You don't have an answer. Or are you unwilling to share?" Biting the flesh between her teeth Maleficant let out a low scoff pulling another moan from Emma's lips. The hand that rested on her abdomen vanished. Releasing her bite Maleficant pushed herself up shifting her weight accordingly. "It's okay to be shy at first, but by the time I am done with you, we will have figured out what you want. I promise." Grasping Emma's jaw again Maleficant forced her compliance. "Another drink, dear? Please don't waste a drop. I wouldn't want to depose of the pleasantries." Her serene voice was laced with a menacing undertone.

With the pungently strong liquid pouring down her throat Emma kept herself steady holding back the urge to gag. Maleficant finished the glass making sure every fluid once was spent before handing it off to the attendant. Leaning forward she breathed a kiss against hesitant lips before resuming her position with her head resting on the chair. "I can see why Regina likes you. Young, defiant, and resilient." Maleficant's hand found purchase against Emma's throat gently caressing the skin in a teasing fashion. "She wants something she can't fully have." Pressing her lips against the tender flesh of Emma's neck she re-positioned herself straddling Emma's thighs.

With the alcohol coursing through her veins Emma found herself weak to resist any advances placed upon her. As if sensing this Maleficant pressed her body completely flush with Emma's. Tangling her fingers in Emma's hair she held onto the tresses in threatening manner. "Let's revisit the question. How many people have you spelt with? Do I need to elaborate?" Maleficant pulled on the hair gently
encouraging her captive to comply.

"One other than Regina." Emma winced her answer with less restraint than before.

"Killian?" Maleficant asked threading her fingers through the thick locks allowing the pads of her fingers to stroke against the sensitive skin of her scalp.

"No. It was some guy in college." Keeping the details to a minimum Emma relaxed under Maleficant's weight. Though her thoughts were lucid she felt the slip of her inhibitions. The coiling strain of her jaw loosening with the pleasant warmth of intoxication fully taking hold of her.

Tickling the skin with the round edges of her nails Maleficant purred her satisfaction into teasing kiss. Her tongue tasted the delicate lips toying with them until they parted. Leaving Emma wanting, Maleficant pulled back in delight with the sound of a weak whimper from Emma begging for more. "My, aren't you so willing." She noted. "What's the extent of your involvement with Killian if you haven't slept with him?" Snaking a hand down between them Maleficant pressed her palm against the tight fabric of Emma's jeans. "Just some light touches above the clothes? Or..." Firmly gripping the fabric she dug her palm into Emma's sex, "were they firm and filling?"

A lustful gasp escaped from her mouth losing herself in the arousing hold. "I kissed him." Emma rolled her hips into the appealing pressure silently pleading for more.

"Just a kiss and yet you are begging me for more." Hissing the astonishing truth Maleficant dragged a finger along the seam that cover the center of Emma's throbbing core. "Tell me, would you rather have Killian doing this to you or me?" Driving her finger into the material Maleficant stroked the eager flesh below beckoning an answer from Emma's panting lips.

"You." She wantonly gave her answer. Emma, in an effort to lean forward in search of lips was restrained with a painful tug of her hair.

Balling the blonde strands in her fist Maleficant held Emma still with a tsk of her disapproval. "I appreciate your truthfulness, but your deplorable behavior outweighs it." Leaning forward she breathed a sinister laugh against Emma's neck trailing her tongue up the delicate skin. Stopping at the corner of Emma's lips she whispered, "Plus, I don't think your Queen approves of this licentious display either." Maleficant ripped Emma's head backwards until her face was completely parallel to ceiling. "How would you handle this conspicuous display of disrespect?" She asked the silent member that had gone unnoticed during their drawn out breathy discussion.
"With punishment." Regina hissed into a searing kiss raking her teeth across the sensitive flesh off Emma's bottom lip.
"Hold that thought." Maleficent purred her command placing a soft digit against Emma's lips in a silencing gesture bringing pause to a prolonged moan. Regina's fingers retreated from Emma's pleading folds leaving her craving their return. The weight of Maleficent's body evaporated from her lap leaving her alone in her dark world. Frustration returned as her body quivered in the absence, her hands stinging from the loss of circulation urged her to move. Turning onto her side, she rested the side of face against the chair. Alone.

Whispers uttered beneath breaths too quiet to decipher. Emma quaked with anticipation.

Nothing. Emma's mouth dried against panting breaths, she longed for her Queen's touches and Maleficent's cruel teases. Welcoming waves of warmth played against the agonizing thrumming of a pattering heart beat. Caught between a place of arousal and exhaustion she leaned towards sleep. Though not moving, Emma found herself unable to make heads or tails of the world around her. The saturation of alcohol played with her world in a vicious spiral. She prayed silently to end the suffering.

Her body relaxed finding comfort in the new position drifting into a gentle sleep. She could still hear the muffled whining of the turbine. Felt every subtle bump. The sting of her own breath burning her nose. Her mind wandered, replaying events by flashes of sounds. Words. Whispers. Moans. The warmth that soothed undignified actions. All swallowed in an empty gap of time.

"Sleeping beauty can walk herself to the car." Maleficent's voice drawled, shocking her back to life. The blindfold loosened bathing Emma's closed eyes in bright light.

Fatigue was setting in, making it difficult to keep her head upright as she walked. Emma staggered behind the silhouettes cutting through the disorienting beams cast from the headlights of the idling limo. Slicing through the imagery was a memory hidden between fragments of time. The limo morphed into a familiar beige SUV, the darkness shifted to a bright day. For an instant, there was no
hanger, but a simple driveway of a humble home. The women replaced by parental figures swinging a child between them with each step. Rubbing her eyes to clear her vision she caught the outlines of her mistresses hearing the clicking of their heels echoing through the large metal structure keeping the tempo of their pace.

Unable to grasp reality she felt her legs oscillating heavier with each passing step bringing about a sudden stop. The sharp smacking of heels distorted into a flapping pattern of rubber streaking across a glass windshield. The shadows cast against the present night backdrop grew greater and less defined swallowing the headlights in darkness. Silence consumed the atmosphere.

Involuntarily closing her eyes for a brief steadying moment, she felt the swaying of her body against the noticeable pull of gravity. As if she were falling. Fighting her lead filled eyelids, she opened them to a vast distance of black with just a glimmer of light ahead of her. Tempting to move she found her ankles dragging against a dark current. Unintelligible whispers circumscribed her movements. Everything around her shifted, while she stayed in place. A dull pain slammed against her face leaving a caressing cold in its wake. Unaccompanied footsteps rushed towards her reverberating in her rib cage.

"Miss Swan?" A ghosting whisper of Regina's voice pressed against her ear. Emma's eyes opened to a concerned look she hadn't seen before. The floor defining her line of sight focusing her view onto a blurred vision of Regina's face. Gagging on parched words Emma tried to refine her thoughts into a coherent notion. Her back tensed in the effort to move, her mind drunk in the illusion of a sea of black with the fringes of her sight blinded behind the mist. Her palms pressed into the hard cold slab beneath them, but her mind swallowed the feeling leaving her floating in the void. Her eyelids caved under their own weight drowning her in the beckoning darkness surrendering to a world of nothingness. A directionless light detailing her tired arms scattered her thoughts leaving one, 'Why?'

"I'll carry her." A gruff unfamiliar voice echoed beside her ricocheting off a vast cavern with no sense of end.

Pressure encompassed her wrist pulling her down into the black, the light completely vanishing. She fell forever with just the unfeeling wisps of air hissing the descent around her before meeting solid ground face first. Her perception returned to her in a cruel vision. Stretched out before her, were echoes of memories strewn across an ever expanded mind derived in a disorganized measurement of time. The longer she stared, the more clearly illustrated events of her past defined her timeline scattered along an imperfect path of polished black sandstone. Cast in eroding obsidian were statues of figures present in defining moments, shaking hands with Regina being their first meeting, Ruby hugging her in a welcoming embrace, Killian giving her file folders of papers she had dropped, and a crippled Ford Expedition. Frozen in time was her 4-year-old self-climbing through the smashed windshield past crumbled lifeless figures of her parents.

Pivotal moments that matter most until drowning in a melody left vacant with its ill-reprise. "Try pinging the web page with a response code. The simplest attack is usually overlooked. Create a network with an infinite amount of pings, and it will crash." An echoing voice of a man played against the silent void. The memory raced to keep her dragging on with it.
"How could this work if it's got a larger broadband? This is just one computer." Her words breathing against an excited sigh of wonder.

"Use the patrons to bounce the signal. Anyone accessing the site leaves an IP address. Relay their response code with the file lulzcanon.exe, and it will do the rest." Rough lips pressed into her neck her sensitive skin teased with grains of unkempt facial hair softly seducing a long forgotten fire between her legs. A calloused hand firmly enveloping hers pulled her deeper into the memory before flashing backward into the grip of her mother's hand swinging her forwards before letting her go in a small jump. Ideas pacing to keep her from burning out. Fading slowly into the black she watched the little form of herself climb into the vehicle of her childhood.

Breaking her mind slowly with the vision toying in the memory placing her in the passenger seat beside her 4-year-old self-caged in a self-fulfilling prophecy. "It's fine, she can rest in my lap." A distant voice, Regina's, serenaded the soft cavern of introspection leaving her powerless against the tide that pulled her soul further down with it.

The subtle thrumming of a V6, motoring its way along a vacant road, vibrated a near perfect picture of a time long passed. The world surrounding the SUV forever engrained in her mind was fleeing from a bleak and undefined view. Warm fingers paid pleasant homage along her scalp as if quietly comforting an addled mind. Focusing her attention to the securely fastened toddler in her booster seat, Emma watched the memory expand into a near perfect clarity. Trapped in smiles painted on shells of her parent's faces coiled around a peaceful moment of bliss; She felt the warmth of love wash through her. A moment she would always remember. Happiness. A feeling she has never managed to hold onto since.

With the passing trees coated in a fresh layer of snow and flakes drifting delicately down smashing against the windshield. The present version of herself self-sat as an uninvited guest to spectate the moment in time she would never forget. Wishing to end the dream here Emma reached for the handle of the door beside her only to be drawn in deeper with the call of her mother's serene voice. Settling into the passenger seat across from her younger self, she studied the happy family recalling the conversation in rehearsed detail. Emma was consumed in the invitingly sweet recollection of her youth the pull of the past too keen to escape. Lost in the memory, she breathed the words in a silent breath smiling in fondness with an underlying feeling of dread pressed against her features.

"I think the first thing we should do in the morning is: build a snowman. What do you say, Emma?" Her father asked looking at the little version of herself through the rear-view mirror. Emerald eyes smiled back into the warm blue depths of her father’s. The spectator was lured into the blue hues, noticing the subtle changes in contrast with the light from the brilliant glow of the sun shining through broken skies of gray. The looping outlines of his irises sharpening into a point that cut through her innocence contorting in her mind with a blade of hate. Her will resenting the artifice of warmth that he was in her youth.

"You care too much." The stoic voice of Maleficent pressed into the memory with a poised taste of
venom seeping through. Misplaced. Turning to her tiny form, Emma caught the beaming smile of utter glee, the toddler unable to find the exact words to express her delight. Her beanie was one size too big encompassing her tiny head with golden locks escaping from under it. It rested loosely above her brow every once in a while slipping down with a thump of a tire meeting the uneven road.

"Does it really matter if I do?" The words of her Queen pulsing in her veins, cascading over the dream nearly pulling her away. Compendiously lifted by the voice she fell with the phrase drawn into the shallow lulls of her father’s whispering echoes.

"Do you want to build a snowman?" Asking again with a teasingly raised brow, he practically sang the question. The illusion reeling her further into the vision lost beneath the surface of the present slicing away her resolve.

Gaiety pounding in her chest with a response she expected from her fragile self, "Yes, Daddy." The 4-year-old giggled her answer using both hands to push up her early Christmas present back to its rightful place. Her older self-tempted to reach out wanting to keep the beanie out of her little self's face. Wanting her younger version to have an unobstructed view of her parents' faces praying to replace the feeling of malice swelling in her heart. Hearing her mother shift in the front passenger seat she stopped turning her attention back.

"What about Robin? I thought he was the one? You never dared to show him who you really are. Could you hurt him? Like Emma?" There was an underlying menace in Maleficent's tone vibrating off the car's interior.

The essence of rage straining under her skin, fed into the dream. The memory relented with a bump in the road, like a skip of the stylus against a scratch in a vinyl record, overlaying a terrorizing image of the family. Her parents were lifeless in their seated positions with the toddler crying covered in splotches of red. Another bump placing the memory back on track resisting her present's impression of the past. Far from over. Silently pleading for change.

"After you two are done freezing outside, we can have hot chocolate with whip cream and cinnamon. Grammie makes the best." Reaching from her turned position her mother tucked a few free strands back behind little Emma's ear. "You haven't lived until you have had Grammie's world famous hot chocolate." Watching her mother, Emma mimicked the gesture fondly remembering the feeling of soft pads tracing along the curve of her ear.

"Emma doesn't know her worth. There is so much to her, not even I can begin to grasp." Defiantly deflecting the question, Regina whispered in a hushed hiss. Hands gripped tightly onto her incapacitated appearance fluctuating the feeling into empty cumbersome belts holding her against the seat drowning inside the shade of her memory. For a brief moment, she found a silver string tethering her to Regina. Her Queen’s figure poised on an imagined throne with the beautiful silver held in the firm grasp bound around her fragile neck. A desire burning between her thighs that alternated between the present and embarrassingly into the past.
"What's she like, mommy?" Asking in wonder, the toddler tried to envision her grandmother.

Leaning against the headrest her mother smiled, "Kind, and loving. Trust me, sweetie. When you meet her, you will never want to let go of her. Her hugs are the warmest." The simple statement was easy to understand at that age. Her mother wasn't wrong either.

"She's a tool, just as he is. Use them, but never get attached." Maleficent's words sliced through the straightforward narrative producing a painful twist in Emma's stomach colliding with events of the past.

The young version of herself caught sight of something just past her mother's shoulder. "What's that?" Pointing towards the road, she drew her mother's attention to the object looming at the edge of her view. At first, it was far off, but with the quick pace of the vehicle, they were moving closer to it.

"Emma's a tool, trust me." Responding to the provoking comment, Regina never faltered behind the ideally placed facade.

Being pulled through the door of the car, she found herself standing on the cliff just ahead, the words spoken within the car clear as if she were still present. Her name, taken on top of a desolate mountain of hope. She helplessly watched from her perch feeling trapped in the presence of a rotting idea in her heart. Turning from the view, she couldn't escape the words playing forward. Unfeeling hands wrapped around her face forcing her to watch. The towline of the current unchanged against the uncaring catalyzes of her childhood.

"It's a Reindeer! Santa must be close by!" Ecstatically identifying the magnificent beast standing in the shadows cast by the setting sun her father glanced up at her from the mirror.

"Dear, you may have her fooled, but you can't masquerade behind this guise for long." Maleficent's evil chuckle echoed around her in a loud volume. Forcing her to succumb to weight heavier than her body over her knees she crumbled to the hate filling the space inside the broken lock.

Frame by frame the past continued forward against her will. 'Dare I place it all inside of something I can't reach?' Emma's own thoughts dragged up against the words left hanging in the silence. Her mind dug a swallow hole dropping a seed of darkness in just to watch it grow. She never felt so cold. The war waging within her begging for change, brushing against a decoy soul.

"Like Rudolph?!" Sharing the same enthusiasm her father had her smaller version squeaked her question.

"Yes, like Rudolph. Though, I would guess this one must be Comet. No red nose." Playing along to his daughter's delight he made a silly, but a valid observation.
Giving her father a queried look she surmised her theory, "He might have dirt on his nose, to fit in."

The simple words soaked through her mind in a warped inflection.

"I think you fell in deeper than you imagined." The outside conversation was much quieter than before, Emma almost didn't recognize Maleficent's voice. "Maybe knowing her past is what makes you want to hold onto her tighter."

Emma’s eyes parted finding the present taking shape in the dark with the passing of street lights flickering over the interior of the limo. Her head was rested against something soft and warm, fingers tangled in the loose strands of her golden hair. Shifting subtly she looked up to be met with a dark exterior of a face she recognized. A shushing breath had brushed over her cheek before a hand covered her eyes pushing her back into the dream. Finding herself back in the passenger seat she could see things hadn't progressed without her. Her own mind cruelly caging her at the moment she wished to forget.

Letting his daughter’s opinion set in her father played along with a thoughtful shrug of his shoulders. "True, but Rudolph doesn't have to fit in. Remember? Santa sees the importance of his red nose so bright that he asks him to lead his sleigh. All of the other reindeer respect his difference as a strength. Without Rudolph's nose, they would be lost in a blizzard, making it impossible to deliver all of the presents. Can you imagine not having presents on Christmas?" He shot back his question with another playful look.

"Why can't I just let go of this? What's the point of being here?" Her thoughts exploded against the peaceful break in time. “Maybe I would rather fit in, dad!” Frustrated with her father's words she pounded on the back of the chair to no avail leaving the events of the past on its structured path. ‘It would be so easy to give in.’ Hanging her head, she pressed her clenched fists into the bench seat. Her jaw strained against the pressure of her teeth. ‘You left me here alone.’

"No presents?" Emma nearly whined her response. Sitting for a moment in thought, she deliberated her answer. "You're right, Daddy." Catching something off to the right of the road, she spotted another deer bounding alongside the SUV. "That one must be Blitzen!" She pointed.

"She's searching for no one, but herself." Regina's words settled in with a glimmer of hope shining against the darkness surrounding her desolation.

Raising her head she immersed herself in the last fragments of innocence, taking a mental picture of her parent’s smiling faces. Remembering every detail of their features knowing it was the last pleasant memory she had of them. Solace on the verge of loss. Everything had frozen around her giving her the opportunity to reach out and touch them one more time. Even if it was only a dream. Inhaling the memory with no more useful thoughts she slowly sunk into it.

Time pressed forward at a gradually detached pace as she watched her father turn his head to see the
deer making a sharp turn into the road just ahead of them. A single tear trailed down Emma’s cheek feeling the sudden shift of weightlessness take over as her father instinctively slammed on the brakes. "James! Watch out!" Her mother’s cries were distorted and distance, lost in vain as he spun the wheel trying to avoid the creature. The pull of the vehicle’s weight tipping over on itself as rolled over the railing flipping back onto its wheels. The tree line closing in as the SUV skidded along broken axels down the embankment. Bracing herself for the sudden impact the world around her faded into black jarring her awake.

Covered in a cold panicking sweat Emma awoke shooting upright in her bed. Clinging onto the sheets as if she was falling she panted with the aftershocks of adrenaline pounding in her chest. Her head was throbbing from a hangover she couldn't quite place. "Why did I have to dream of that?" She asked herself feeling like her mind had betrayed her. Her lips quivering in response to the dream tears stained her face. Sadness plagued her thoughts as the memory ran its course leaving her empty and alone in its wake.

"Dad, why did you have to leave me here?" She curled against her knees holding herself sobbing through her thoughts. "Why couldn't you both have stayed? I can’t make it on my own." Anger started to soak through the sadness. Emma ruminated on how she was looking for a way out, running in circles, feeling burden-bound. How many mornings she found herself alone, how many nights chased her dreams of success? Emma couldn’t count. The tears that soaked her pillow with images, sounds, her own mind working against her while she slept. “Fuck it all.” She seethed behind her crumpled exterior. The echo of metal slamming into wood shattered her thoughts. Tears falling down to the blankets resting between her legs she held herself tighter against the stinging sensation of being alone.

Managing to bring her breathing under control she rubbed her damp palm over her eyes, brushing away the fresh tears. Composing herself, she squinted trying to see through the darkened room filled with blurred blobs of furniture. Catching the faint blue glow of a digital clock on the nightstand beside her, she focused her attention on the shape’s outlined in the light. Emma flicked the switch protruding from the lamp blinding her in a sharp brightness that antagonized her pounding head. "Shit." She uttered screwing her eyes closed feeling in a dull effort for her glasses.

Knocking her knuckles against a glass tumbler splashing cold water over her hand drenching the surrounding items. Continuing her clumsy attempt to search for her glasses she felt the familiar plastic frame in success. Lazily she brushed them against the sheets drying them. Noticing the sheets were much softer, the feel of silk. Emma couldn't recall ever taking her contacts out. Let alone how she even ended up in bed. Trying to piece together the puzzle of time wasn't in the cards for her. Between the hangover and her concussion, she didn't dare think.

Inspecting her surroundings, the room was an understatement of the typical hotel room. It was open and generous with regal style accents splashing over what would normally be mundane accommodations. This had Regina's style written all over it. Looking down to the nightstand, sprinkled in water, she found a note with two pills resting neatly on it. Recognizing the handwriting, she read over the simple instructions. 'Take these and if it's not 8 a.m. go back to bed.' Raising a brow, she noticed the initials 'EQ'. Without question, she choked back the pills and swallowed down the entire glass of water. Checking the time it was only 6 a.m. 'What happened? How did I end up here?" She thought, her mind pleading in a painful aching to stop.
It was early, and whatever plans her Queen had wouldn't start until two hours later. Emma wanted to know how she ended up in a hotel; her last memory was being on the private jet. Her Queen was there, but her presence, concealed. Her vision blinded behind the folded black fabric. Forcing her mind to fight past the pain, she envisioned her helpless form trapped beneath the weight of her captor.

"How would you handle this conspicuous display of disrespect?" The words echoed in her mind reverberating off the encasing of her skull. Further instigating a painful response, the thrumming throbbing of her head aching against the thoughts. Wetting her dry lips with a moist tongue, she focused her attention on the moments corresponding the desire filled voice. "With punishment." Regina's voice hissed in a searing kiss, sharp teeth tugging at the sensitive flesh of her lips.

A surging heat teased at her core, Regina always managed to play the right part to her desire. Emma knew that her Queen was the one that truly peaked her arousal regardless of those around her. She hated to admit it to herself, but not even Bae could ignite the fire that raged inside her. Maleficent was indeed the very words of sensual, but her Queen was so much more. She bent to every word uttered and melted beneath every stare.

‘Why her?’ Emma asked herself feeling lost within the woman’s ways. Her own body turned enemy. Whenever her Queen was around, she found it hard to breathe. Being in her presence was like drowning in a sea of fire.

Baelfire, a name she hadn't thought about in years. The two were like a lit match struck against wanton desires that quickly burned through the short fuse. Brief. He was her bad boy experience, picking up useful skills along the way. The playlist of her life until now was all due to him being the best internet pirate. They plundered in simple treasures of corporate secrets, exposing the rich and powerful as corrupt freeloaders. Crashing websites and collecting small crumbs of acknowledgments from the anonymous community turned out to be empty. It was a shame he couldn’t grow up, being the lost boy that he was, he focused more on partying and gaining the experience of a college frat boy. There was a moment that she felt like being an unethical hacker was her true calling, but again it felt empty.

Falling back against the headboard, she recalled the events leading up until now. "Regina, or should I call you 'Queen'? Don't you think punishment, is overrated? I mean your disciple, seems to care less about the weight of your presence. Practically, forgetting the taste of your lips and begging for my touches." This observation didn’t sit well. She may have been along for the ride, but something inside Emma was building to an argument. Maleficent continued the same pressure as before, pressing her fingers into the seam of Emma's pants. Gripping the fabric in a tight hold, she rubbed her fingers into the material. Playfully instigating, a pleasant pulsating rhythm against her core. "You wanted my help to expose your 'Possession's desires, and I am.” The statement only plagued Emma’s thoughts further wanting to voice her rebuttal but found her body relenting to the pleasure being forced upon her.

A broken mess. Like scattered pieces of a puzzle beneath chocolate depths. Emma longed in her
The breath of her Evil Queen played against her lips. "She doesn't listen, nor does she abide by my rules, she is insolent." The warm breath evaporated, leaving Emma alone to Maleficent's ministrations. "What use do I have over a slave who doesn't listen?" The words were crescendoing against her ears with the increased pressure teasing against her jeans.

Trying to find herself, Emma found a stranger trapped inside. Broken. Disconnected.

"Many." Breathing into another kiss, Maleficent teased Emma's lips beckoning their obedience. Emma resisted feeling the stinging of her pride burning through her desire. Something inside her was screaming this was wrong. Before she knew her Queen was there, it was different, but now she felt shameful and guilty. "There's that defiance. See dear, she does listen." In a mocking laugh, Maleficent tasted the clenched jaw tracing her tongue up the defined edge. "It's not about breaking their will; it's bending their will to yours." Removing her hand from the strands previously held, she traced along Emma's cheek. "Punishment, as you put it, is fun for you two to partake. She craves it, wants it. However, with loose lips, she speaks a sober heart." Deft fingers unlatch the button holding onto the fabric between them. "Surrender, and I will reward you." Whispering only to Emma Maleficent kissed the delicate skin of her neck drawing the flesh into her mouth painting it with long licks of her tongue.

Scoffing against the words, Regina shifted indignantly. "Explain Mr. Jones."

Emma felt the uncoiling of her jaw, slacken with her Queen's question, feeling the words breathe past her lips. "A guy I feel like I should be with." Maleficent's tongue made one last pass before leaving the wet skin to the ambient air.

She was scared to get close but hated feeling alone.

With a kiss pressing against her lips in response, "Good girl." Maleficent breathed. "Regina is...?" Pulling back, she freed the button of Emma's jeans with the flick of her hand.

Emma's intoxicated mind began to spill over. Unable to see she was starting to confuse the woman sitting on her lap with the woman she was longing for. With Regina's name spoken she wrapped her feelings around it. The truth burned through desire focusing her thoughts on a sobering moment of reflection. "She's who I want."

Feeling like Regina was beneath her skin, she couldn't run away. Emma's best defense was running to her. Every original action lost in the subconscious desire to consciously defy her Queen. She craved Regina's attention.

Chuckling her delight, Maleficent fished her hand beneath the fabric of Emma's jeans slipping past
the elastic band of her boy shorts. "See, a drunken' mind, does speak a sober heart." Maleficent sarcastically pointed out the blunt truth dipping a finger between wet inviting folds. "And what about me?" She asked stroking the digit along the sensitive flesh.

*Emma felt it, the subtle shift within her realizing Maleficent was waiting for her chance to reach inside to take all of her. She was fighting her internally pushing Maleficent back.*

Paying the older woman with a false subservient moan, Emma rocked into the digit without thought. "I just want your fingers inside me." The admission was unbidden and brash. Her breath sharp with her hips rolling hard into the finger begging for it to delve deeper inside her.

Regina’s breath caught in a noticeable gasp, “Seems my pet has more spine than you thought.” A hint of praise slipped through the remark.

"Seems to me, you haven’t done your job." Maleficent released a sinister chuckle massaging the nub hardening under the pad of her finger with a cruel pace. "No, my dear, I am no tool at your disposal. Regina, if you would put her in her place, please." The edge in her tone was anything, but a request. With the resounding contact against her unattended cheek, Emma tried to place the extra hand. "Thank you." Maleficent purred directing it to the additional participant. "I don't like my play things using me." Lips caressed the tender flesh, placating the pain sprung on by the slap. "Quite the opposite. I relish in malleable entertainment."

With quivering lips, Emma pleaded with the hand against her hot drench center, "Forgive me, Mistress.” The unfamiliar title tasted bitterly on her tongue. The apology was a half-hearted attempt to please the woman pleasuring her. Emma’s body selfishly craved this attention eroding away that little bit dignity she had left.

Maleficent saw through the deception breathing an angry hiss, "No, you should know how to behave around your betters. This behavior will not be tolerated." Her hand slipped up resting just above Emma’s throbbing core. "Regina, sweetheart, I think we need another drink." The thought breathed against a subtle command. Emma leaned forward in disagreement halted with another slapped. "Thank you, dear." Maleficent punctuated her satisfaction with Regina's collaboration.

"Please." Emma breathed in a hushed breath.

"No, I don't play those games. I have a mean side that doesn't play well with others. Regina is kindly pacifying it with her actions. You should be grateful to her.” Unbuttoning Emma's shirt, Maleficent pushed the fabric away revealing a small path of pale skin. Tracing a finger down against the solid structure of Emma's sternum elicited a path of raised skin in its wake. "She's experienced it, knows what it's like and cares enough to keep it from you. Though, I am contemplating showing it to you.” Both hands were finding their way around Emma's throat caressing the skin in a threatening fashion.
Choking back a thought with the absence of Maleficent's welcoming touch on her throbbing sex Emma stifled a dissatisfied moan. She took the threat literally. "Open up, dear." It was Regina's turn to give an order. Emma obediently relented, wrenching her jaw open with the tension of Maleficent's hands pressing into her neck. "Good girl." A moist digit traced over her lip wetting it with sweet nectar. Tasting it, she was pleasantly surprised to recognize the drink. "Apple Martini, your favorite." Dipping her fingers inside coaxing Emma's tongue to taste the liquid running off her fingers. Wrapping the spongy digit around her Queen's fingers, her mouth enveloped them sucking them clean.

"So you want to play too?" A satisfied tone vibrated along Emma's jaw with Maleficent's thumbs massaging the tight skin that defined her throat.

"She's mine, of course, I do." Regina hissed in a hollow answer devoid of any contextual emotion. Shrouded in the darkness she couldn’t see the looks exchanged between the two women, but the tension was at an uncomfortable level. Emma wasn’t used to this side of Regina, quiet, restrained, almost powerless. Knowing what Graham had told her, she wondered if Regina was still in a way subservient to Maleficent. Or, maybe it was Regina had been concealing her feelings on this shared experience.

Maleficent released her hold on Emma's neck, with a swift breeze stealing away Regina's soaking digits. "Then, by all means, play." A rough grasp pried her jaw open, Emma could feel the tension between the two shift drastically. Emma was getting the impression that there was some sort of power struggle unfolding before her. She couldn’t linger on the theory as her attention was pulled back to the present. Cold liquor poured sloppily down her chin with the fill of it drowning her mouth with its delicious taste. Hearing the glass discarded with a careless toss, she felt the return of digits being forced in against her wet folds. "Show me she belongs to you." Emma’s breathing hitched in the back of her throat, choking on her excitement. Her body relaxed against the touch recognizing the subtle, but noticeable difference.

“Please, Your Majesty.” Breathing a plea to her Queen she longed for more than just her fingers, but her words were tangling in her chest. The feelings she had been confused by were now boiling to the surface. She wanted to feel those delicious red lips against her own, breathing a shared kiss. She wanted her Queen. Just her.

Thrusting two skillful fingers deep inside Emma’s core Regina held them there. “Please, what?” A warm whisper played against a long neglected ear.

Emma stifled her answer, biting into the bottom of her lip feeling her heart slamming against the cage of her chest. She was trembling. “Maybe she needs more encouragement?” Maleficent purred. The fabric of her shirt was pushed aside exposing her skin to the cold air. Lips found purchase just below Emma’s collar bone. Gentle and pleasant kisses teased the skin, but her Queen’s warm breath lingered along her cheek. She felt eyes studying her.

With a swift pump of her hand, Regina repeated the question, “Please, what?” Emma’s hips followed the motion begging for more.
“I want your lips.” Emma gasped with the sudden pressure of sharp teeth biting into her chest. Arching into the pain, her breathing became labored under the surging heat from her core inwardly cursing her body’s natural reaction. Maleficent’s hand journeyed up Emma’s taught abdomen her fingers lazily dragging along the pale skin following every rise and fall with each stimulated breath.

Regina’s free elegant hand soothingly explored the features of Emma’s hollow cheek, the slash of her cheek bone the natural dip of her temple. Contact lost against the fabric of the blindfold before reappearing with a delicate trace over her lips. “Make no mistake. It’s not about your wants. It’s about mine.” Words ghosting into the blank stare of a black oblivion influenced Emma’s hips forward into the stationary digits. “This is my world.” Feeling the return of Regina’s fingers on her lips, she opened her mouth. “You will learn to crawl.” Sliding a finger between the parted lips Regina simultaneously thrusting her other fingers into Emma’s sex, eliciting a moan from her.

There was no better loss than to lose herself in Regina. Left with no reason she came undone. Emma found it to be such a beautiful surrender.

Coherent thoughts lost beneath the waves of desire Emma couldn’t resist her Queen’s actions. Raising her thighs to meet her Queen’s evil pace she felt Maleficent’s hand continue to wander grasping her covered breast in a tight squeeze. Teeth gnashed in searing bites tearing painfully pleasure filled moans from her wanton lips. The two women played off each other in tandem bringing Emma closer to the edge with each thrust, bite, and cry.

Moaning through the very fringes of a shuddering climax building under the women’s ministrations, Emma tensed. The action bringing all motions to a sudden stop. Behind the veil, she couldn’t see the looks shared between the two or the words mouthed in silent pants. Just the quiet shifting of weight with the sound of lips meeting in a heated kiss, a kiss not shared with her. A gasping plea begged for their return but was shushed with a finger pressed to her lips. “Hold that thought.”

This was her Queen’s world intruding into her thoughts, bringing shape to her mind. Left longing and alone by her deplorable behavior. Punishment, her mind flexed the word bringing new light to the meaning. Emma’s wants were crushed beneath the sounds of words whispering through pants. Alone in her shame.
Falling In The Black

Chapter by Xevn

Chapter Summary

One step forward, two steps back.

Chapter Notes

Yes new chapter, and guess what? It's a got a friend. If only you all knew how close I came to hitting the delete button. >.< Anyways, Feedback is welcome.

There was a sick feeling crawling up her throat in a dry rasp. Wrapped in sheets that clung to her moist and cold skin she felt the labor of her breath. Devoid of alcohol her thoughts returned to her in a stuttering disorganized mess. Caught someplace in between tired and hungover her face felt like it had been smashed in with a bat. Working her jaw she felt the strain of soreness springing to life unlike the first time she woke up. As Emma sat up, the regrets from last night cascaded through her chased by her commonplace sense of self-loathing.

Opening her eyes to the same room as before she found with the ambient light from the sun clear in definition. 'Must have fallen asleep with my glasses on again.' She rolled her eyes at the thought. Regal wasn't even close to the correct description. There was no way in her life she could ever afford to spend a single minute in this place. Emma rubbed her hand across the sinfully soft sheets measuring her self-worth and found herself undeserving. 'How can I convince someone that I'm worthy of their time, especially someone like Regina who seems able to have anyone or anything she could desire?' Swallowed up in the thought Emma felt the last bit of her pride smothered beneath her doubts.

‘Wallowing in self-pity isn’t going to make it better.’ Dragging herself out of the warm, and inviting bed she struggled to correct herself against the exhausted weight of her body. Stumbling about the room, she found the marble vanity with double sinks against the backdrop of a large mirror. Unable to face herself in the mirror just yet, Emma turned the faucet on and rinsed the sleep from her face. Squinting pain-filled eyes stared back. She turned her head slightly to examine the new bruises and bloody scratches she acquired passing out on the tarmac of the airfield last night. Humiliation burned up the sides of her neck. Her orders had been so simple. All she had to do was walk a few hundred yards from a plane to the car waiting in the hangar. She wiped at angry tears willing them to stop. An uncomfortable sounding cough announced the presence of the man invading her room.
Quickly turning around in surprise her eyes fell on a tall man dressed in a dark gray three-piece suit, Mr. Grey 2.0. Much to her chagrin he looked like he belonged here. "Who the fuck are you?!" She noticed him turn a shade darker flinching his vision away from her.

"Philip, these are for you." Holding out a set of clothes to her in a shameful voice he introduced himself. Of course, Regina would have a man to serve her here just like she had Graham at home.

The cold draft of realization enveloped her naked modesty. Surging forward, she swiped the clothes from Philip's hands then withdrew quickly into the adjacent bathroom. "Haven't you heard of fucking knocking?!" She screamed through the door. She knew her behavior was out of line, but she couldn’t seem to stop the outpouring of her frustration. ‘God, Regina is used to so much better than I can be at this moment.’

"I was told not to." He simply responded.

Without thinking the question through, she growled back, "Who told you that?"

"Maleficent." The weight of the name carried through the door sending a thrill up her spine. Leaning her forehead against the door she clenched her jaw closing her eyes feeling her body wanting to cave. There wasn’t an end to this woman’s cruel intentions, just finding some sturdy ground beneath her feet and already she’s knocked off-balance. Just one saving grace fell upon her thoughts, ‘At least he wasn’t Regina’s.’ "If you could, please, shower quickly. They are expecting you in the dining room.” He emphasized with a serious inflection in his tone stirring her from unsettling feelings.

Saying nothing, she breathed an annoyed grimace through her teeth. ‘I am really starting to loathe Regina’s friend. The constant head games are getting on my nerves. But, I did bring this on myself.’ She thought remorsefully thinking about her role she played up until now. Embarrassing moments flashing across her mind from the night before she drew a frustrated sigh. 'How am I going to get through today carrying the weight of my failures?’ She buried the thoughts for the time being, she was expected and lingering any longer could hurt her standing in Regina’s eyes more. Pushing aside all reservations of the situation she was in, Emma focused her thoughts into one; ‘Fake it, until you make it, Swan’. She had overcome a lot in her life far worse than this.
Determined to prove her worth she drew herself taller. Stepping under the hot relaxing stream her eyes wandered over the exotic assortment of toiletries. Exquisite glass bottles containing the soaps replaced the standard complimentary ones hotels normally provide. Pulling the delicately crafted glass stopper released a pleasant torrent of smells. Her mind drifted away in wonder, ‘If I’m so undeserving, then she wouldn’t have left these for me, right?’ There was a warmth in the thought that changed her gloomy perception igniting the desire to truly impress her Queen. ‘I am going to show her I can be so much more than this.’

After her shower, she found all the necessities for her morning routine, including a much-needed toothbrush. "Thank you." She thought out loud almost feeling childish relishing in the simple things taken for granted most days. Once done, she quickly dressed spotting the accessories to her new form-fitting suit laid out on the bed. This hadn’t been among the things she packed. It wasn’t even from her closet. Fumbling with the tie for longer than she wanted Emma finally gave up the struggle inwardly cursing, ‘Fuck the tie, I will have to deal with it later.’ Unbuttoning the top two buttons of the white dress shirt she’d rather to make it obvious than look like a fool who doesn’t know how to tie a simple fucking tie. Stuffing the folded fabric in the jacket’s chest pocket she smoothed her clothes and glanced at herself in the mirror one last time hoping she would meet Regina’s approval.

Walking out into the short hallway from her room, she found a massive living space with a couch and a few chairs surrounding a decently sized TV. ‘Right, like I will get to spend any time in here.’ She rolled her eyes at the thought. Digging her hands into her pockets, she continued walking until reaching an open doorway. She heard an ongoing conversation, "She's not worth your time, too much defiance. I can break her in for you." Emma didn’t have to guess the voice; Maleficent was speaking her doubts. Emma nearly started into the room, but froze fearing the reception of these two women who were so openly discussing her much like someone discusses the puppy that refuses to be housebroken.

Almost scoffing in her response, "I can handle her just fine. Miss Swan, hasn't fully realized her position just yet. You know better than anyone that individuals without any comprehension of our world struggle at first. She just needs more time." A small spark of hope tore its way up her spine as Emma lingered out of sight biding her time until the right moment presented itself.

"I'm just saying, she's a lot to take on. With Robin in your life, how can you balance your time between the two? She needs to have a dedicated tutor, someone to teach her her place. I'm only offering my help, that's what good friends are for." Carefully speaking, Maleficent tried to placate the stab at Regina's wounded ego.
"I appreciate the offer, but trust me I can handle her. Robin has his priorities which gives me too much time on my hands." Regina's rebuttal left Emma her opportunity to make her appearance and gave her some semblance of hope that Regina had not entirely given up on her. Casually strolling through the doorway, like she hadn't heard a word of their conversation, she was greeted with the sight of the two women. Maleficent was positioned at the head of the table with Regina sitting to the right of her. Both were working on their breakfast, but there was no place setting for her. Emma battled with her inner demons telling her yet again someone had decided she was not worthy. Regina had carefully chosen that phrase. It was obvious enough why. Emma fought back a sigh as her Queen ignored her presence.

"So glad you can join us, Miss Swan." Eyeing Emma's attire Maleficent greeted her. Regina however, didn't bother to acknowledge her. Instead, she continued to cut small ribbons in the delicately prepared apple stuffed crepe. "Please, find your place." The words were spoken carefully composed as if holding a hidden meaning. One, which, Emma didn't catch as she timidly reached for the chair at the end of the table closest to her. Regina paused silently waiting for Emma to realize her mistake. "Oh dear, haven't you figured out your place yet?" Maleficent mockingly asked knowing it was getting under Regina's skin, further proving her point. Emma's embarrassment burned its way through her core. Both women could see she had hoped to please and failed. Her shoulders slumped a little giving evidence the comment cut deeper than necessary.

"Old habits." Regina responded simply shrugging off the question.

With her eyes level to the floor Emma walked over to her Queen making sure to show some improvement. "May I?" Emma’s voice quivered as she directed her question towards Regina.

The tension evaporated from Regina as she continued cutting up the dish. "You may." With the permission granted Emma rested on her knees against the tile holding her posture with a steeled spine. Something inside her wanted to strengthen Regina's resolve. Emma had a passing, thought, 'I need to play my part better or I will be tossed aside to Mal.'

"She does learn, rather slowly, but she has potential." Soaking in Maleficent's back-handed compliment Emma sat on pained knees trying to please the woman that mattered most. The tension in her spine lessened as Emma realized her position put Regina’s chair between her and Maleficent partially hiding her from the older blonde.

"She has much." Regina acknowledged skewering a small portion with the tip of the fork. Gently
caressing the side of Emma’s bruised cheek, Regina smoothed down a path with her tender digits. Warmth enveloped Emma from the simple caress of her Queen, she bathed in the sensation of approval. Regina tipped Emma’s chin up, purposely meeting eyes with her pet, she fed the delectable treat past obedient lips.

Emma was lost inside the chocolate depths feeling Regina’s intense appraisal staring back at her. That crease she is so fond of appears above Regina’s nose. As if rewarding her, Regina presented Emma with another bite. "You need to eat." She encouraged searching emerald eyes. Accepting the bite, Emma cleaned the fork with her teeth holding her position. "Good girl." The praise was far more rewarding than the food presented.

The conversation forward fell on deaf ears as the women moved onto the topic of business. Emma had her fill, taking each bite with a poised dignity only stopping when Regina handed her two pills and tipped her very own water glass to the blonde’s lips. “I expect you to drink it all. We can’t have you dehydrated.” Emma reveled in the moment, tasting Regina’s lipstick. It wasn’t the kiss she had begged for last night, but it was a second hand kiss from her Queen. It was more than she deserved.

Philip reappeared collecting the empty plates, Emma remained on her knees feeling strange and out of place in his presence. He glanced at her almost silently acknowledging her before Maleficent pulled her attention away. "What do we do with her? Surely, she isn’t house-broken."

"She will come; I am sure she knows how to heel." Regina's words nearly stung her pride as they were filled with a venom she hadn't heard before. Emma was pleased to feel them directed towards the older woman. Regina silently directed her to stand in front of her finally inspecting Emma’s attire. Concerned there was a disapproving comment coming Emma braced herself and tried to escape her Queen’s eyes. But, nothing was said. Instead, Regina stepped into her space gently grasping the shirt she buttoned the remaining two buttons. Emma couldn’t help but look up in a pleased reflexive glance.

"Of course, better off as a lap dog than having free range of the house." Maleficent chuckled the undignified line in rebuke as she stood to gather her things. Regina rolled her eyes at Maleficent’s commentary as she reached into Emma’s pocket for her tie. She raised one eyebrow at her as she slipped the silk around her neck and skillfully tied a perfect Windsor knot. She slid it in place with the briefest smirk. “I can’t have you looking less than perfect my pet.” She rubbed her hands down the front of Emma’s shirt brushing away non-existent wrinkles. It was apparent the two didn't quite agree on what to do with her. But, at this moment Emma was fairly confident that she had not completely destroyed everything yet. She had time to prove she could be what Regina wanted.
Emma shrank into the back wall of the elevator avoiding the space between the two warring women as the tension in the car rose with the elevator rapidly descending to the lobby where most of the executives would be rushing to their transportation. Emma was both excited and terrified over today's events. What did Regina expect of her? The doors opened to a face she recognized, August. The two women moved past him with little effort, but Emma was stuck. "Emma!" Beaming a warm smile to her, he waited outside the elevator his attention briefly drawn to the other women walking passed him.

Feeling the pull to move forward she exited drawn into a conversation she wasn't sure she was allowed to be having. "Hey, did you just get in?" Regina paused mid stride turning a pointed look towards her. It was obvious her Queen wasn’t pleased and the sinister grin painted on Maleficent’s face was betting on an unfavorable outcome. Emma glanced their way hoping for a lifeline.

"Yeah, it was the most unpleasant ride. I thought you and I were going to get some face time in, but instead, I got stuck with some whiny kid. When did you get here?" He asked curiously.

The timeline played against her mind, "Last night. It was a last minute booking. Apparently, work screwed up my flight."

"It happens. So, I promised to show you a good time, I have to get settled in, but later on if it’s okay I would be happy to take you to a local pub. Better than the Chesire Cat." He promised. Feeling Regina’s narrowing glare Emma struggled to find a way to appease everyone, she didn’t know how to respond. Normally, she would jump at a chance to go out, but that was before.

Watching her pet quivering beneath her stare, Regina took matters into her own hands. Quite literally in fact, grabbing Emma’s hand she pulled her pet towards her in a possessive gesture. “Miss Swan will have no time to entertain. She’s here on business and to progress in her career. Unlike other employees.”

His jaw fell wide at a loss for words. "Babe!" Drawing everyone’s attention to the lobby with a loud shout. A man that could easily have been an Abercrombie and Fitch model was purposefully striding their way grinning for all he was worth. August spun towards him eagerly. “Good, you two can finally meet.” He said dropping his bag to the floor in time to greet his life partner.

Emma stood transfixed and wary for her next step. But, Regina cut in again. “Perhaps another time Miss Swan and I need to get moving before we are late to a meeting with Mr. Hyde.”
on Regina’s heels as they made a rather hasty retreat.

"Seems to me she doesn't know how to heel." Making her observation known, Maleficent chimed her thoughts.

"Oh please! That was actually work related. You do know August. He works for me." Regina further scrutinized Maleficent’s assessment taking light in Emma's defense.

Swallowing her comments, Emma silently pressed forward with the two. Philip was waiting outside by the parked limo. Without any words, he opened the door bowing his head beneath their presence. Stepping inside the limo, Emma was startled to find a young brunette dressed in the typical office attire. "Ah Aurora, what's on the itinerary, for today?" Maleficent smirked her question noticing the girl quivering under her gaze.

Emma hung back watching for her queue to take her seat. With the young assistant sitting on the back seat and Maleficent taking the spot beside her, Regina rested on the bench adjacent to them. Meeting eyes with Emma, Regina patted the spot next to her. Holding no interest in the schedule or even listening to Maleficent's voice Emma decided to catch up on her text messages. With a quick glance over to Regina who was busy with her phone, Emma began sifting through the bulk of the texts received from Killian she began reading the most recent messages.

Killian: Swan, we need to talk. (Sat, at 8:52 p.m. MT Standard)
Killian: I am at your place. Where are you? (Sun, at 1:26 a.m. EST)
Killian: Spoke with Ruby. Why did you change flights? (Sun, at 1:33 a.m. EST)
Killian: Stop Ignoring my calls, Swan. Just talk to me, please. (Sun, at 4:08 a.m. EST)
Killian: You're with Mal? Emma, you need to call me. (Sun, at 10:56 a.m. EST)
EQ: Stop sighing your annoyance and pay attention, Miss Swan. (Sun, at 11:03 a.m. EST)

Noticing the time on the display, her phone automatically shut off. Turning her head, she met with eyes of a disapproving glare from her Queen. Tucking her phone within her coat, Regina mouthed, 'No more privileges.' Giving no room for a comment, Regina focused her attention back to Maleficent and the young assistant. Emma’s attention, however, lingered on her phone, not happy that her Queen had hijacked control over it. And, more than a little discomfited from Killian’s
knowledge of who she was with. Her gut instinct was shouting. 'How the hell would Killian know about Mal? Not even Ruby knows about her. Could Graham have said something?' She again looks to Regina hoping the look on her face displays her discomfort. Emma wanted to discuss Killian with Regina, but not with present company. Sighing again she shoved her phone back into her pocket, and she relaxed back against the seat. Her body still fighting against pain and exhaustion.

"Come along, Miss Swan." Regina's voice beckoned. 'Just keep moving.' Emma urged herself forward, pleading for her legs to continue to carry her weight. Finding herself in a room filled with people she didn't recognize Emma searched for Regina. She was coasting. A warm hand encompassed hers settling her growing anxiety.

"Miss Swan, focus. This is not the time for a nap." The words whispered softly against the loud tangents of a speaker voicing his analysis of floundering statistics.

"Does anyone know why we are struggling in these numbers? I get Deposits is a new department, but why are we losing so many new customers so quickly?" Mr. Hyde's voice singled in upon Emma's ears. Stammering followed a hushed silence as no one had the answers to his question. "Seriously, no one knows why? What am I paying you for?"

"Maybe it's because the applications running the website are flawed? That and not everyone is doing their job?" Unconsciously answering the question aloud with a rhetorical, but sarcastic response Emma found herself surrounded in appalled gasps. Emma was shocked by the verbalization of her thoughts.

"Miss Swan, restrain yourself." Came an embarrassed quiver from her Director.

"That's quite alright Ms. Mills; I am intrigued. Go ahead, Miss Swan, please enlighten us." Mr.
Hyde shushed the room.

The room swung into focus with all eyes pointed towards her. Emma felt the epitome of being naked in front of a class giving a presentation, but realized if she wanted to win back her standing with Regina this would be her only chance to do so or she could find herself Mal’s new toy before dinner. Sinking in her chair, she strained against the rising flames of embarrassment pouring into her complexion. Taking a breath, she steeled her resolve standing up to define her own words.

"Numbers don't lie, trust me I spent enough time looking over the reports. I don't like pointing fingers, but it's clear to me that Lake Park has three times as many Senior Deposit Product Reps than Phoenix does. They are dumping calls on agents in Phoenix that they should be more than capable of assisting.” Expressing her resentment with a strangled laugh she tried to restrain her personal opinions on the matter.

“It's not hard to walk someone through website registration. It is the first thing anyone learns on their initial training on day 1. The numbers of transfers to Phoenix is ridiculous, for every one agent in Phoenix, which at the moment is at 73, there are about ten unnecessary transfers. Whether it's because they are improperly trained or lazy which I supposed could depend on viewpoint, but one thing is absolutely clear, they aren't doing their job." Her eyes fell on a face she recognized, Robin's. He was staring slack-jawed at Emma. Locking eyes with him in a heated glare his flee to Regina looking for help. A small victory to watch him squirm against her sharp words, but one she didn’t have time to bask in as she continued.

"If there was someone capable of leading the site reviewing the numbers they would realize this. The reports don't lie.” With another sharp stab into Robin’s ego Emma felt a darker side to herself twisting the knife like words, relishing in the sting of her bite. “Maybe some coaching could be done to correct the behavior, but I suspect you need to look into quality control. Someone has let this behavior continue; it might be worth investigating why. Even though Phoenix is drowning in calls, we are still managing to service them at an excellent rate. If you check the numbers, you notice our team handles more than twice the workload with less than half the people.” Narrowing her eyes on the quivering sight of the DM from Lake Park she spat her words.

"Let me emphasize this the best way I know how; Some people are computer illiterate and need to be guided step by step through the registration process. Since we are an online bank, it should be standard training to know this process. And to provide assistance with great consideration to our customer since ultimately they are who determine our success.” Collecting herself Emma smoothed back some loose strands of her blonde locks.

"I will personally look into the matter, but what about our applications? You mentioned they were flawed?” Mr. Hyde drew her attention back to him.
"Seeing it first hand SSO isn't working for a good majority of our customers. I dug deeper into the matter a couple of nights ago. About Sixty percent of our customers that are forced to conform to the new process experience issues. Some can be overcome with troubleshooting, but no one has the time to reset their password each time they log in. Waiting for an authentication code can take precious minutes from their busy lives. Online banking should be convenient and fast. That's the only edge we have in comparison to a typical brick and mortar banking system." Taking a breath, Emma leaned forward onto the table feeling August's anger fuel her words.

"For those customers, we can't help on the first call are left waiting for a resolution for months on end. It must look to them as if we don’t care for their business since we are only using stopgap measures to resolve it temporarily. Maybe instead of waiting for a large sample group, shrink it down to something more realistic. Profile based issues that prevent viewing a customer's accounts online should be immediately looked into otherwise consider those customers a loss. It doesn't take a genius to figure that out. Hell, I would be glad to look over the code myself and fix the issue. Atlas is running off of a mesh of DOS and JAVA. It would only take a couple of hours to find where the missing period or line of code is.” She nearly bragged about her skills but left the statement hanging in the air. Feeling the weight of the room shift over her, Emma rested back into her chair. Her confidence dying against the silence and scrutinizing looks cast her way.

Leaning forward pressing his palms together Mr. Hyde composed his thoughts. "Very brave, Miss Swan. The spine you have is impressive. No one else in this room is willing to speak their mind and yet you are. It's surprising, you are just an intern, and yet this room is filled to the brim with members of management and executives. Not one of them as vocal as you. I was wondering why Ms Mills felt the need to include you in this meeting. In fact, I was angered by your presence, but I think you have made it clear. A good leader knows when to get out of the way and let the worker take the lead. It makes me wonder who else needs to speak in these meetings. It also makes me wonder who I should fire first.” His eyes narrowed onto hers. Shifting his attention to Regina a grin etched over his features. "I surely hope you intend on keeping her. Otherwise, I might have to steal her for myself." He chuckled his comment.

Swallowing in a breath, Emma felt a high unlike any other; her heart was thrumming against her chest. Something about the way she tore into Robin brought about a thrilling pleasure. Hiding behind the guise of an opinionated employee was something much darker. Guilt was nowhere to be found. The room emptied within minutes leaving her a moment to recover. Concern for actions finally flooded in, 'What did I just do?'

Stepping into the hallway, Emma kept her head down not sure what she would find if she met eyes with her Director. She could see the familiar silhouette from the corner of her eye speaking with the CEO in a hushed conversation. Unable to hear them her mind played over different outcomes, most
of them were unfavorable considering her atrocious behavior. Thinking about Maleficent's and Regina's discussion from earlier, she acted like a dog without a leash.

Trapped within her head, she didn't notice the intense stare of her Queen drinking in her form. A delicate digit paid homage to the soft swath of skin beneath Emma's chin, lifting her from her heavy thoughts. "My beautiful swan." Whispering the possessive words in a gentle sentiment, warm chocolate depths filled with praise smiled back into emerald eyes. "Brilliantly composed." Tender pride swelled within the aching heart Emma had been carrying.

"Well, that was impressive." Maleficent interrupted the moment with her words of false praise. "However, dear, there are fires that must be extinguished and a bruised ego that needs some soothing." Emma internally cringed at the statement but kept her composure.

Lingering within the green seas a moment longer, The Director poured her thoughts into Emma. Regina’s hands found purchase on the blonde’s shoulders smoothing down the arms of the jacket. Her fingers explored the clearly defined outlines of Emma’s sculpted arms, her Queen’s lips parting in silent thought. Brown eyes keened in an alluring gaze stirring a mental image that sent Emma’s heart throbbing into a deep bass of percussion. Desire was burning through Emma’s core as thoughts crept across her skull. Her knees ached to fall beneath their weight. "She's right." Letting one hand drift further down her Queen’s fingers traced over the back of Emma’s hand. "I need you to go back to the hotel and wait for me." Breathing the words she allowed a finger to stray, brushing the pad over the curve of Emma's thumb. The simple touch left Emma’s lips quivering, longing to taste the perfect shade of red.

“Considering my distaste for meetings, I will take your pet back for you.” Maleficent again was tearing into their moment with a mundane tone of enthusiasm. Much to Emma’s displeasure her Queen’s eyes pulled away from hers. With their absence Emma felt a shuddering wake of cold trickling down her spine calming the flames of arousal. The thought of being alone with Maleficent was filling Emma with a feeling of dread.

Within an instant Regina was back to business. “Thank you, I have no idea how long this is going to take.” Stifling her rebuttal Emma shrunk against her Queen’s acceptance of the offer.

“Robin’s a weak willed man. I am sure five minutes on your knees will be enough.” The comment drew about a fiery jealous grimace from Emma’s mouth. The nuance didn’t go unnoticed as Maleficent’s eyes smiled their satisfaction in the younger blonde’s discomfort.
“Only one person is worthy of my time.” Regina delicately deflected the remark turning her attention back to Emma. “Once I am done here, I will be rewarding you with more than just my time.” Cupping Emma’s cheek with her hand Regina traced her fingers along the line of the tense jaw.

Resting into the gentle caress Emma felt the surging courage to voice her desire, “Please, let me stay.”

“You’ve done enough, my pet. You need to rest.” Brushing her fingers over the bruised skin Regina pacified Emma’s whimpering plea. “Go with Mal.” Whispering her command in a stern voice Regina withdrew leaving Emma in Maleficent’s care.

The door slammed shut behind her with a loud thud ripping Emma’s attention towards the sound. Tilting her head up, Maleficent’s eyes film with thought. “You were a Good Girl today. Maybe a reward is in order?” Her lips parted in a devious contemplation, dancing at the tip of her tongue were words left unspoken. The gravity of the situation was finally taking hold of Emma; she was alone. Not just alone. Her company was a two-step viper. Hesitantly making the first step backward Emma swallowed the lump tightening in her throat. Chasing Emma’s step Maleficent moved forward her eyes lingering before changing direction.

“I will order us some room service.” Maleficent’s demeanor loosened as she continued moving past Emma without another word. Letting out the breath Emma was holding she nearly collapsed from the deprivation. ‘Don’t let her get under your skin; you did well today.’ Emma told herself.

Retreating to her room Emma closed the door locking it behind her. Kicking off her shoes she shrugged off her jacket and tossed it onto the chair that rested by the door. Facing the mirror, she stared into green confident eyes. She was surprised by the image, hardly recognizing herself. Loosening the tie, she reflected on the memory of Regina’s hands skillfully linking it. Setting it down on the countertop Emma smiled at the thought longing for Regina’s return.

A knock beckoned her attention, "I have a treat for you in the dining room." The call of
Maleficent's voice seeped through the door.

There was unsettling weight of dread building at her core. An eerie feel to the air spurred the hair along her nape as she entered the dining room. Emma’s eyes fixated on a decadent slice of chocolate cake sat at the end of the table with a small card sitting upright against the rim of the plate. There was no sign of Maleficent. The card was screwing an auger of curiosity into her mind. Drawing closer to the dish she picked up the card and inspected it further. Printed in gold embossed letters was a name she hadn't thought about in years: DarkSwan. Furrowing her brow, Emma dropped the card taking a step back.

"I'm going to show you how a real Mistress handles a troublesome pet." Maleficent's voice dripped with venom. Taking another step back, Emma tried to turn around hoping to make her escape but was captured in a cold unfeeling embrace. "Shh, just breath." Shushing Emma, a clothed hand smothered her face forcing her to breathe through the rag. Struggling against her captor the two stumbled back a step before Emma's barefoot lost its grip against the slick marble floor. A sickly sweet smell burned through her nose as her eyes began to roll back into the black. A color fade out pushing her into a new transition left her reaching out for a hand in the rough. Her body relented under its weight falling into the figure behind her. "You always seem to have a hard time being conscious in my presence." A sinister chuckle numbed into silence.
A numbing darkness weighed heavily against Emma's thoughts. Reeling in the dark, her wrists pulled into the bite of cold metal preventing her movements. Emma was vexed by the loss of time squinting her eyes trying to free the dark fabric from her view. Failure was calling her within a lulling whisper of haze. She struggled to speak her thoughts finding her jaw taught, restrained by a material she couldn't register. Soreness sent her into distress with her body recoiling against the restraint of its own crippled form.

Emma found herself lying stomach side down with her chin awkwardly resting against the cold tile. Her exposed torso heaved with breath, feeling the weight of her arms numbly pressing into her back. Her mind visualized her position thinking along the lines of a criminal that had just been tackled and cuffed. Only her pants were left to shield her from the ambient air circulating around her. Emma choked on pleas filling up her throat playing against the dark. 'What did I do this time?' She wore her empty guilt bare for her Queen to see.

'Cold. So very cold.' Her mind was filming images of her Queen standing over her watching with a cruel smile etched into her features. 'What is she waiting for?' Her thoughts threatening to spill over with the simplest push were working against her. 'She said I was good, I did good.' Disorienting fear overwhelmed her. 'Right?' Taking a cautious approach Emma fought past her paranoia in an effort to move. Pushing herself up with her chin she strained to balance her body's weight while
dragging a leg closer.

"I am so glad you can join us." The familiar voice twisted her focus into a cunning illusion. The tone was distorted by her own mind, overlaying Regina’s misplacing Maleficent’s. Heels clicked towards her causing Emma to reflexively tense. A hand snaked around her waist carefully positioning her onto her knees. "A spoiled pet, is a worthless pet." Breathing the words along Emma’s neck Maleficent dragged her nails over the defined abs. There was a sudden loss of contact allowing Emma a moment to relax but she fought the urge. The hand returned wrapping tightly around her neck pulling her back into the proper position. “Not good enough.” Maleficent made her observation known.

Fingers twining tighter constricted the column of her throat as the other hand firmly pressed into the small of her back. Correcting the pet’s posture she forced Emma’s shoulders back and straightened out the slack in her spine. “Slouching is unacceptable.” Travelling up the middle of her back Maleficent’s hand inspected the smooth skin pausing when her digits felt the imperfections of healing wounds. “So you enjoy pain, no matter I will rectify that.” Emma quivered under the touch. This wasn’t Regina. She didn’t trust Maleficent and the thought of her promising to hurt her was terrifying.

Trying to escape the hands of her captor Emma leaned forward into the hand holding her neck in place. “Eager to begin I see.” Nails welcomed the movement, digging into the sensitive flesh with a precise effort. “There is no need to rush this.” Chuckling her delight Maleficent pushed Emma back into position. “You don’t move unless I tell you to do so.” The grasp began to steal her breath in a blinding white light. Gagging on the tension she fought for air. Her head relented under the pressure.

“That’s a good girl.” Releasing her hold Maleficent rewarded the pet the ability to catch her breath. “I like my playthings completely compliant, remember?”

Pressure throbbing against her eyelids pleaded for this to end. She hadn’t recovered completely from the past couple of days and this treatment was agitating her concussion. ‘Regina why aren’t you stopping this? Did I do something wrong to deserve this?’ Tears threaten to consume her eyes filled with doubts. ‘Please don’t leave me alone to this monster.’ Tilting her head up she tried to discern from the flood of noises if Regina was there. Listening for the static sound of movement, a breath even, but couldn’t hear anything other than the venomous woman beside her. Her search for hope dwindled down to emptiness.
“None of my pets are like you. They bend and break with the flick of a finger. You, though, have so much spine. I want to break it, cripple it beyond repair and leave you longing.” Pressing her chest into Emma’s back she emphasized her statement with a painful tweak of a hardened nipple. “Call me your Mistress and I will show you mercy.” Whispering the option in a seductive tone she placed a bet against Emma’s loyalty. With the absence of Regina’s opinions Emma was severely scrutinizing the offer. Remembering how the exchanging of words played out over breakfast Emma could only surmise Maleficent was intentionally trying to steal her.

Everything within her was screaming no. She didn’t care if Regina was watching or how helplessly trapped she was. Emma wouldn’t allow herself to be drawn into a false sense of reality driven by Maleficent’s desires. This woman was the embodiment of hell. People were nothing more than objects in her eyes and with Regina it was clear she was something more. She just needed more time to prove it. Her Queen’s expectations were silently judging her and she drowned in the loneliness. ‘Better replaced by loneliness than to be at the hands of Maleficent.’ Shaking her head she resisted the persuasive request pulling back from Maleficent’s hands.

“Bitches receive stitches.” Growling her displeasure in Emma’s unyielding response Maleficent withdrew from her. In a quick change of atmosphere Emma dreaded the repercussions of her answer but steeled herself in the thoughts of Regina. She couldn’t avoid this, losing ground beneath her Emma couldn’t stand down. After all the letdowns she had been through, she was haunted by the loss in trust she held. Her world was breaking down into chaos along with the fleeting vision of her sight. Emma’s mind wrapped around the image of Regina in a desperate hold.

“Fine with me. I will have to get my fill now.” Feeling the sinister motion of the tip of a rod traced over her shoulder blade, she heard the smirk in Maleficent’s voice “You only have yourself to blame.” Tracing down Emma’s spine she could feel the older blonde savoring the sight of her quivering form. Her arms strained against the cold metallic bindings. Emma wasn’t going down without a fight. Biting into the leather mouth piece she struggled to find her feet. Before she could stand, the stinging bite of the rod sunk into her back. Merciless. Another blow raked across her back. She staggered down onto her knees.

A ribbon of pain arched over her bicep. “Stay still.” The command stung. The rod smacked hard over her shoulder. Grabbing her hair Maleficent tugged the younger back into position. “Don’t move.” She hissed. Smacking her side Emma rocked into her weight. There was no escape as Maleficent focused another strike in the same spot. A flurry of blows landed without end. Her body recoiled with each bruising contact. Louder than words each crack resonated in her ears. Seconds of pain drew into minutes. Emma pleaded against the leather gag for it to stop finding it wasted breath.

Unable to take anymore she slumped under the weight of her body, letting herself go numb she bathed in the cold. Emma didn’t notice when Maleficent’s attack ceased as her mind was already
sinking into the crushing wait. “Who is your Mistress?” The question beamed with a devious sneer. Ripping free the gag she roughly grasped the weakened jaw pulling Emma up again.

“Regina.” Emma’s ragged breath uttered the silent prayer.

Reacting to the relentless will Maleficent smacked her anger into Emma’s defiant expression. “Let’s chat, shall we?” Rhetorically speaking she painted her hand down the twisted features of Emma’s face. “Does DarkSwan mean anything to you?” The question was lost to her as her head dropped under exhaustion.

“No, no. You can’t avoid the question.” Slapping her hand over the young blonde’s cheek she stirred her consciousness. “DarkSwan, answer me.” The name called to distant memories she buried.

“Why does it matter?” Slurring her words Emma returned the question with one of her own.

“Defiance? Really? I suppose you enjoyed the sting of my rod.” Gauging the frail features Maleficent slammed a punch into the gut of Regina’s pet. Winded by the impact Emma slung into the grasp begging her body to breath. “My kindness has its limits.” Throwing another punch for good measure she reveled in Emma’s weakened pleas. “You are DarkSwan, are you not?”

“Yes!” Pridefully admitting to the name Emma gasped in a much needed breath.

“Now we are making some progress.” Paying Emma with another sock to the stomach Maleficent’s fingernails dug into soft skin encompassing Emma’s jaw. “Did you enjoy tearing apart the lives of your betters?” Silence followed the question. “Let me rephrase the question; Why did you exploit company executives?” Punctuating her inquiry with a painful slap to the face Maleficent dragged an answer from quivering lips.

“Because I could.” Emma responded in a cold mannerism completely shifting from the weak willed being first perceived. “Why do you care?” Emma didn’t care to know how Maleficent knew her old alias. She just wanted to end this torment.
A painful sucker punch to her face pushed her backwards onto her thighs. “Enough of that. There must be a motive. Enlighten me.” It was clear to Emma that if Regina was present this would have stopped. Regina may be strict, and cruel, but she hasn’t ever hurt her like this. What Maleficent was doing, was literally beating her bloody. This wasn’t punishment, this was an assault.

Composing her words she played with a sinister notion, “It was fun and the money was good.” She spat her words out with the taste of a warm metallic tang. “College wasn’t cheap.” She further explained against her better judgment.

“I wonder if your Queen knows just how much of a bite you have. Remember your place.” Backhanding a smack across the ridge of Emma’s nose Maleficent tried to gain control over the conversation.

“Fuck you.” Emma’s voice echoed in a malice filled breath. “This is nothing compared to the beatings I earned during my childhood.” Emma sneered her remark knowing inciting the woman that held her prisoner, controlled the outcome, was dangerous. Her head was throbbing its cries to stop, but her pride was burning through her core. She had pushed too far to back down now.

“You cannot control this at all.” Maleficent wasn’t willing to play this game, both hands found their strangling hold around Emma’s throat. Forcing the girl backwards on the floor Maleficent straddle her waist holding Emma’s breath. She waited until Emma was no longer capable of resisting her before withdrawing her grasp. “Was exposing William Pennington’s dirty laundry fun?”

Shocking images of a man bound and gagged played against Emma’s thoughts. She couldn’t forget the sight as his indecent form was posed in still shots of digital photos. An echo of Bae’s laughter in the hollow cave of her skull sprouted from her lips, “The guy stole millions from his investors; he got what he deserved.” Emma’s resounding laughter sliced through the thick miasma leaking off of the woman holding her down.

Trying to find her foothold of control Maleficent continued to squeeze wanting to snuff out the cackling voice beneath her. Feeling the alter-ego gripping her physically, Emma surrendered to the metamorphosis. DarkSwan tore through her body taking the abuse with a poised delight. Choking under her laughter she managed to hoarsely speak another vicious bite, “Is that all you’ve got?” Forming the words with a menacing smile Emma wore her dark set of armor.
“Far from it.” Lifting the delicate neck Maleficent slammed Emma’s head down onto the floor. Sinking into the floor her clarity evaporated into black mist of an empty world. The descent was endless with Polaroid pictures flocking to her like a swarm of birds. Her hands flung out trying to grasp onto anything to stop her fall. Snatching a photo from the static darkness her eyes recognized the faded memory of an unkempt goatee. The picture pulsated in a flickering beat drawing her into the image.

“Can you believe the crazy shit people do? That guy has some sick fetishes.” Bae’s words surged towards her as the world around her flung into view. She was in her dorm room, staring addle brained at her former boyfriend. “Babe? You alright?” Neal waved his hand in front of her face trying to break her stare. “Hello?” He blinked his question.

‘Was it fun?’ Maleficent’s seething voice burned against the back of her skull.

The definition of her room was strikingly clear but turning away from Bae she found the burned fringes of the memory lost in a white glow. Looking back to Neal her jaw mechanized a response, “That fucker was just begging for it.”

“I know right? God, when this gets leaked his life is over!” Shouting his enthusiasm Neal took his place at the desk mulling over the scandalous photos. “I’m sure he will make a great prison bitch.”

“I wonder if his wife knows he likes being gagged and bound. Total Mapplethorpe shit here.” Losing full control of herself her body moved on it own accord. Hovering over Neal she took in a breath of his scent lingering in the smell of engine oil and gasoline.

“The poor woman probably hasn’t a clue. Married to a scumbag I am sure she finds many lonely nights in bed.” Trailing the cursor over the files he clicked open a spreadsheet of numbers. “Emma, this is a huge score. Look at this! None of these numbers make any sense. He supposedly has all these properties that he is renovating, but when you compare them to actual locations on google maps they are just empty lots.”

“I know, I already reviewed them when I got them. I wanted you to see it first before I post it.”
Pleased with herself she reached absently towards a plate with a fine line of white powder in the center.

‘Who paid you?’ Maleficent’s hiss played over the audio of the past.

“The Ice Queen will surely pay off your tuition with this. Don’t forget to fix me a bump when you are done.” His eyes fixated on the plate with a longing gaze.

“She owes me for this one, more than coke and dollar bills.” Sniffing up the line she set the plate down beside him. “Fuck you, make your own line.”

‘Mind your words.’ A painful punch sent her falling backwards onto the bed. The feeling of impact slipped past her as she fell from the memory back into the black. Drifting down into another memory her eyes watched as the photo drew distance in scope until it was lost. Ghosting into the smaller form of herself she watched as the folds of the aftermath caress her view. Staring blankly at the back of a tan seat she rubbed her eyes trying to clearing away the image.

The clicking hiss of the dying engine swallowed her confidence. Fingers struggled against the plastic clasp of her seat belt. “Mommy it’s cold, I want out.”

‘You can’t escape me. Stay still.’

“Mommy, my face hurts.” Tiny hands worked the clasp free. Shrugging off the harness she pulled herself from the seat, fragments of glass cascaded down off of her onto the floor. Squeezing past the warped back of the front passenger seat she crawled onto the debris littered center console. Her eyes caught sight of her mother resting forward onto the dash with red liquid draining from back of her head. Placing a hand on her mother’s back she begged for her attention, “I hurt, please mommy.”

‘Stop moving.’ A strangled growl fell over her movements.
Shifting on her knees she turned to the vacant stare of her father’s eyes. “Daddy, Mommy is sleeping. Everything hurts, fix it.” His lips reflexively exhaled with a single tear running over the bridge of his nose. “Why are you crying? It’s okay, I just hurt a little bit.” Reaching out to him Emma rested a comforting hand on her father’s shoulder. Running her palm over the wool fabric of his coat in soothing motion tipped the balance of dead weight. Sliding down from the steering wheel he slumped in an awkward position with his head pinned between his sagging shoulder and the instrument panel. “Daddy?” Recoiling from the motion she sat back on her heels staring down into his cold eyes.

‘Don’t you fucking dare cry those false tears.’ Maleficent’s voice cracked under her confidence.

“Daddy? Say something. Did I make you mad?” Shoving her hands into his crippled form she tried to shake an answer out of him. “Please, say something.” Her voice quivered the simple plea.

‘Don’t cry.’ Pleading with Emma Maleficent tone morphed into a weak whisper. ‘It's okay, you're okay.’

Turning away from him she looked back to her mother Emma pushed her weight into her. “Daddy won’t talk to me, please wake up. Please talk to me. I’m scared.”

‘Wake up, please Emma.’

Crawling over the dash she squeezed through the broken windshield feeling the sharp edges claiming bits of her skin with each careless move. Tears were clouding up her eyes with sobbing breaths expressing her fear. ‘I don’t want to be alone.’ Her present thoughts laced through her memory. The searing hot surface of the hood stung her hands and scorched through her pants bringing about a painful cry. Quickly she slid down to the ground meeting a soft impact of soothing cold snow.

Standing at the side of the road she waited for anyone to find her. Reflecting on this moment it was the loneliest she had ever felt. So hopeless and lost with no one there to hold her or calm her wry mind. She was so small in the vast world. Warm tears stinging her cheeks she remembers the emptiness filled with silence. The cold chill crawling up her neck beckoning her to lay down and
give up. She resisted and continued to stand waiting for a flicker of hope cast in the dying light of the day.

Bright headlights drew around the bend calling to her like a beacon. The fabric of the blindfold was removed revealing a blurred vision of a bedroom floor. Too heavy to move she watched the frantic outline of Maleficent pacing a rut into the floor beside her. Closing her eyes Emma stared down the car pulling over towards her. The car doors swung open as hurried steps impacted, crunching in the snow. “Emma?!” Her eyes flung open with the shout of Regina’s horrified voice. Shoving a pleading Maleficent out-of-the-way Regina rushed over to Emma’s helpless body. A smile washed over the younger blonde’s features recognizing her Savior.

Cradling her head within her arms Regina soothed over the bruised skin of Emma’s face. “I missed you.” Whispering the words brought about a sobbing realization of how much she needed Regina.

“I missed you too.” Regina’s voiced trembled the sentiment. Drawing her closer Regina paid a delicate kiss to the bruised temple breathing in the smell of Emma.

“How dare you? I made myself clear last night. She was not yours to touch. She is mine.” Regina stated clearly through gritted teeth not loosening her hold, cradling Emma’s head in her lap.

Maleficent stood her ground. “I can command you to give her to me.”

Pressing another kiss to Emma’s temple. “You cannot seriously believe you and I have any bond left after this do you? Get out of my room. Stay out of my life.” Regina picked up the rod laying on the floor near Emma’s shredded shirt.

She hefted it in one hand and raised an eyebrow in challenge.

Maleficent gave one last attempt as she gathers her purse, “For what it’s worth, she isn’t who you
think she is. And, I am sorry.”

Worried brown eyes studied green. Regina dropped the rod and used her hand to brush bloody strands of hair from Emma’s face as the door closed.
Chapter Summary

Regina finally gives Emma some much needed aftercare and starts to see the person buried deep beneath the surface.

Chapter Notes

Happy belated Valentine's day. I didn't intentionally mean to post this with the holiday week... but I guess it's a happy accident? Either way here ya go. Feedback is welcome.

Lost in a dazed stare with the movements of a penlight drowning out her vision Emma was catatonic. The events of the night echoing with a numb recollection in the backdrop of her mind. Every crack broken over her punctuated each painful moment she prayed to forget. “Pupil dilation is normal.” A feminine voice assessed. With a click, the light was gone leaving discolored splotches in her view. Trying to make sense of the room around her Emma could hardly make out the three figures occupying the space. Her surroundings had the familiar feel of the hotel and with the lack of medical equipment only furthered her foggy assumption.

“Would you want to press charges?” A low masculine tone carried the question.

An aggravated scoff fell from Regina’s mouth, “Of course I do. I want her to suffer every blow she dealt, but I need to speak with my lawyer first. Mal, always finds away to worm her way out of her consequences.”

Cold hands pushed passed the loosely wrapped blanket inspecting the damaged flesh of Emma’s ribcage. Flinching back from the touch with a displeased sneer familiar blonde locks fell into view. Confusion drowned out the woman before her replaced briefly with the sinister image of Maleficent. “It’s okay, I’m not trying to hurt you.” The gently spoken words washed away the illusion leaving behind a friendly unfamiliar face. Emma remained wary, but allowed the woman to continue.
“Okay, I will gather the evidence and take a statement tonight. When you are ready we will move forward.” Emma’s eyes drifted towards the conversation, but found her focus blurry.

With the return of cold hands came another bout of painful pressure that sharpened her view on the woman in front of her. Tightly grasping her hand around the unwanted wrist Emma drew back a fist in recourse. Instinctively, she throw out a strike to fend off her perceived attacker only to have her hand snatched up in a superior hold. “Easy.” The word whispered in a calming tone held a subtle voice of command.

“Emma!” Gasping in concern Regina turned her attention towards her pet.

Rushing over to provide assistance was the uniformed male. “Stand down, Rickett. She’s not a threat.” Halting him with her words she held Emma’s hand her eyes locking with green. “You need to let me help you. I mean you no harm.” The woman’s voice held firm, but solicited a soft tone. Confusion filled green eyes flitted around her looking for safety, an anchor.

Unable to discern from friend or foe Emma resisted. Fighting to free herself from the strong grip she flailed her fury. “Emma, it’s okay. Please.” Regina’s soft words ricocheted off the fortified walls. “Let her help you.” In a desperate attempt to pacify the rage within Emma, Regina flung herself into the fray, wrapping her arms around her traumatized lover. Surrounding Emma in a pleading embrace her Queen pressed into her filling Emma’s nose with a familiar scent of apple and spice. Recognition of the smell soothed the wrathful motions leaving Emma idle in thoughts. “I’m sorry, please just let her help you.” Begging a plea against a delicate remorse Regina painted her hands down the hackles of her tenderized back.

Surrendering in the caress Emma rested her chin against her Queen’s shoulder allowing the weight of her body to press into the embrace. Emerald eyes fixated on the lingering threat while her hands slinked around her Queen’s form in a shielding effort. “I’m okay, you’re not. Let her help you. Please, Emma.” Kissing the gentle command into Emma’s neck Regina’s hands clenched hopelessly into the fabric.

“Regina, can you give me her arm?” The woman whispered the question. “I need her completely relaxed if I am to continue without worsening her injuries or harming me.”
"I won’t be able to interview her if you do that.” Rickett voiced his concern.

“I know, but she’s in flight or fight mode. The least we can do is numb the pain. It’s up to you, Regina, she’s your pet.” Reasoning in her observations the woman used her knowledge to decide her course of treatment.

Thinking of only Emma’s well being Regina smoothed her palm down the flexed arm. “No more pain.” She breathed the thought into a curved column encouraging Emma to lift her limb. With a delicate hold Regina raised the arm in a show of mercy stifling the resistance with soft pleading kisses. Emma’s eyes narrowed on the syringe feeling its precise sting bury into her flesh. Feeling the coarse burning of the liquid pulsing up her arm she recoiled from Regina’s hold in a disorganized escape. Agony tore through her movements further weakening her attempts to flee. "Emma, no."
Uttering her command Regina swiftly cut off Emma’s retreat. Slipping behind her pet she pressed into the slender back encasing the blonde with a tender hold. Within seconds the defiance evaporated.

Resting her chin in the curve of Emma's neck Regina loosened her hold, "I will be right here the entire time. I won’t leave you; I promise." She whispered the calming words. "Evelyn, please proceed."

"Thank you." Bowing her head the woman collected a few items from her bag. "I'm going to have to suture the gash closed above her eyebrow. If you could, please, hold her steady."
Placing her hands delicately along the battered jaw Regina tilted Emma's head back presenting a flat surface. "Is this okay?"

A numbness washed over the blonde with pleasant tingles of warmth encompassing Emma's features, "Yes." Though the question was directed towards Evelyn, Emma found herself responding in a painless breath. Numbness lifted her up above the suffering and she found herself enraptured within her Queen's hold. "I'm sorry." Whimpering she closed her eyes letting her vision drown out in the darkness of her eyelids. "Forgive me for not being stronger."

"No, please, forgive me for not seeing through her deceptive intentions. You didn't do anything wrong." She kissed her repentance into the weakened shoulder. "Never would I have allowed or done this to you. Never."
The warm smile on Emma’s lips seemed out of place against her bruised extremities. “There is nothing to forgive--it’s not your fault.” Pressure tugged at her temple stirring an unsettling awareness stealing her from the tranquil moment. "Real friends stab you in the front.” Hearing Bae's words fall from her mouth Emma growled her displeasure as tension filled her spine.

"Relax." Breathing her order Regina's hands held firm.

"Her tolerance is much higher than expected.” Verbally noting the observation, Evelyn looped the stitch closed.

"Pathetic in comparison to the stuff I've been on." Viciously biting her words Emma spoke her expertise.

Evelyn and Regina’s eyes met over Emma’s shoulder. Evelyn’s professional veneer gave little away, but Emma could see Regina’s surprise and hesitation. Graham must not have found this particular secret from her past.

"Lovely, I just gave an opiate to an addict.” Expressing her irritation in a sigh Evelyn continued her work.

“At the time I referred to it as an opiate adventurer, but that was a lie and half.” Emma snarked out. Rolling open keen eyes with a glaring warning Emma's mind flashed the image of a woman from her past over the present. 'You can't just walk away from this.' The sarcastic tone scoffed in the back of her mind. 'We're family, you can't turn your back on me now.' Drowsily blinking her vision clear she locked eyes with the doctor. "Now, a recovering addict, thank you, been clean two years now.” Frothing her words into a bitter sneer. “Not interested in diving back in. The cost is too high.”

Relenting to the euphoric high against her Queen's tender kiss Emma slumped into the caring embrace. Humming as she inhaled the scent of Regina, she nestled further into the bend of Regina's inviting neck. The blanket pooled around her lap exposing her lacerated back.

Evelyn glanced at Regina giving her a commiserating look, one that spoke volumes about what she
believed Regina’s next 24 to 48 hours could be.

"Rickett, make sure you photograph these." Ordering the officer in a disgusted tone she breathed her thought, "This is beyond cruel."

Emma flinched with each close of the shutter mentally recalling each strike. "Please." She begged the word into warm flesh of Queen's throat.

Evelyn and Regina’s eyes spoke again offering no clarity or comfort. Emma knew they were wondering if she wanted something stronger; she just wanted to be done. To feel safe.

Tugging the last stitch closed the doctor gave the wound a final inspection, "Once an addict always an addict, and I didn't help your cause." The statement wasn't menacing, but to Emma it was. It was an assumption of failure.

Lunging forward in protest she found herself trapped. "Enough." Quivering the order Regina's hand slipped from its hold finding a delicate grasp drawing Emma's face towards her. "No more. It's over, she's gone, Emma." Carefully placing her hands Regina tightened her hold kissing Emma's cheek. "She will never hurt you again; I will never allow it."

"I'm finished, ma'am." Rickett stood beside her waiting for his queue.

She rewarded him with a gentle stroke of her hand. "Thank you, please go wait in the livingroom, I will be out in a little bit."

"Yes ma'am." Dipping his head Rickett made his leave.

"Could you move her so her back is completely exposed?" Asking the question Evelyn pulled out
another syringe this time keeping it out of view of Emma.

Subtly coaxing the blonde to move she whispered, "Can you straddle my lap?" Receiving a weak nod from Emma, Regina guided the sluggish legs over hers, meeting glazed-over green eyes.

“One of my favorite places to be” Emma slurred out.

Breathing in the same air Emma leaned forward capturing her Queen's lips out of impulse. She needed to feel them, savoring the taste. With the dull sting penetrating the raw skin of her back Emma deepened the kiss in desperation. Parting the kiss Regina sucked in a breath, "I'm not going anywhere." She reassured her pet resting her temple against Emma's.

"I just need to feel you, please.” Emma trembled the soft plea into a hesitant kiss letting her eyelids fall shut.

Paying her with one last soft kiss Regina guided Emma's tired head back to her shoulder, "I'm right here, rest.” Nuzzling her way into the right spot Emma relaxed with warm tears calmly pooling into Regina's blouse. Allowing her mind to settle she drifted off into an insensible sleep. What felt like minutes was lost to another disorienting gap of time. No longer was her Queen with her, but her scent lingered. She found herself resting on her side in the darkened room. Listening intently, her ears picked up on the quiet conversation beyond the room, "I'm leaving you with these. Follow them to the letter and don't let her get a hold of the bottle." Evelyn's words were strict and calculating. "I wouldn't dare trust her with them."

"Trust me, I will keep them out of reach. What's the damage?” The warmth was no longer present in Regina's voice in its place was the hollow sound of exhaustion.

Letting out an exasperated sigh she collected her thoughts, "Without X-rays? I can only suspect a few fractured ribs. They will need time to heal so no extensive activity. Same thing for the concussion, but with the stitches, bandage them and try to keep them dry. I will permit a bath, but make it as short as possible."
Taking a moment to let the words sink in Regina released a pained breath. "Thank you, I really do appreciate you coming over so late."

"No need, I'm just glad it's not worse. When you told me it was Mal, I expected much worse. The last time I was called to clean up her mess, the girl was hospitalized for a month."

"I thought they were rumors. Just people mouthing off their suspicions because they didn't understand our world. That or because I was at her side and they couldn't be. You know how many people were jealous of what she and I had at one time." Regina’s voice had lowered with the weight of the doctor’s words.

"It was ages ago. When you two got together, I thought the same thing was going to happen to you. I'm surprised it didn't, but then again you found a way to satisfy her appetite. Really, you didn't know?"

"She was never cruel with me, just the usual mind games and some punishment. She would say things, but never did she ever act them out. I didn't know she was truly capable of any of this. I would never have allowed any of this to happen."

"Regina, don't beat yourself up over it. You need to focus on Emma. I've seen the aftermath of these events play out before. That girl was thrown out like yesterday's trash and left completely alone. With no one there she fell into a deep depression and slit her wrists. I can't imagine the emotional pain she was going through to want to end her own life."

“I wish I would have listened to Gold, he told me once that Mal was venomous enough to poison her playthings. Why couldn’t he have been less cryptic with me?” Frustration poured from Regina’s mouth.

“It’s too late for looking back into the past for missed warnings, you need to protect her now. She’s even more vulnerable and can easily slip back into the habits of her addiction to numb the emotional scars. Watch her closely."
"I will."

With a click the lights flickered to life saturating Emma's vision with blinding white. Stirring from her prone position Emma drowsily sat up. The sound of running water caught her attention as her eyes drifted without any direction around the room. "I'm right here, Emma." Brushing a hand down the side of her pet's face Regina drew Emma's blurred focus to her. "Come with me, please?" Nodding her head she followed her Queen into the bathroom. Sitting on the edge of the large tub Regina gently pulled Emma towards her. "I am going to remove your pants, lean on me."

Placing her hands on Regina's shoulders she leaned her weight forward bracing herself. Expertly her queen had managed to slide both of Emma's legs free without incident. Brown eyes lingered over the pale and bruised legs, soaking in thought. Hesitantly Regina reached out to touch the bruised skin, gently soothing up until stopping at the fringe of fabric. "Can I remove these?" Asking the question she tugged at the boy shorts.

Emma gave a quick snort, "I don’t remember you ever needing permission."

Before Regina could tell her to get in the tub, Emma began unbuttoning Regina’s blouse in a silent plea for her to join. Emma struggled to control her fingers through her drug induced haze, but she was afraid if she quit, Regina would find a reason to leave her alone to bathe. Instead Regina slipped her hands down Emma’s to grab her hands, “Let me. You climb in. Leave me a little space behind you.”

Emma sat herself carefully in the tub, leaning her heavy head on the cool porcelain. A few minutes later silky skin slid in behind her. She fought back a smile as warm lips kissed gently across her shoulders. Delicately her Queen swept aside her blonde locks resting then neatly down her chest. Kissing down the nape of Emma's neck she poured a careful stream of water from a small tumbler. Her back instinctively tensed, but then relaxed due to the continued contact of her Queen's lips.

Carefully navigating the agony ridden exterior she tenderly caressed unblemished skin. Regina wished to take away the pain, steal the awful memories and mend the broken soul. Pressing a remorseful kiss into the side of Emma's neck she silently whispered her sorrowful guilt. "It's okay, you're here." Emma whispered her contentment leaving Regina feeling more deserving of this beautifully brave woman.
“I cannot help it. I nearly lost you today.” Steeling herself Regina continued the process until Emma’s back was rinsed clean from any residual red stains.

Setting the glass down Regina parted the blonde tresses so that they naturally draped forward around the blonde head. "Lean forward." Bowing her head Emma felt the warm water rolling over her scalp. Staring down into the partially submerged lap her eyes watched as diluted drops of red splashed into the pink tinged bath. She was almost drawn into the memories from earlier with tears threatening their return. Soft digits pulled her back with a massaging call of lavender soaking into her thoughts. Regina's fingers gently stirred the soap into the dirty strands carefully avoiding the throbbing gash at the back.

"Can you lean back for me, I need to wash your torso." Bracing her hands around Emma's arms she helped steady her movements until Emma's chest came into view. "Place your hands on the sides so you can hold yourself up." The last thing Regina intended to do was aggravate the wounds across her pet's back. Emma however couldn't stand the distance between them any longer and rested into the supple curves of her Queen's breasts. Her skin tingled upon contact with the soft warmth that flexed with each breath from Regina. "Emma, your back..." Regina began to voice her concern but faded under the pleasant feel of Emma's body relaxing into hers.

Finding a comfort spot in the bend of her Queen's neck Emma hummed her contentment, “Feels too good to hurt anymore.”

"Okay." Regina's voice gave a soft crack as she sucked in a steadying breath. Brown eyes drifted over the bruised valley below hesitant to move as she soaked in the subtle movement of each breath from Emma. Drowning in the waves of emotion she didn't know she could have Regina collected a handful of water. Crushing the thoughts she painted the palm over tender flesh of Emma's chest letting the water drain from her hand.

"That feels nice." Whispering her delight Emma lifted her hand up to caress the elegant features of her Queen's face. Turning into the hold she paid a tender kiss to her pet's palm breathing in scent of lavender and copper. Another hand washed down the valley of Emma's breasts eliciting a trembling breath. Wrenching her neck up Emma pressed a kiss into her Queen's neck as Regina smoothed over the painted skin of Emma's torso. Overwhelmed with the stirring feeling of desire drowning out her senses she longed for her Queen's hands to explore her body further.
As if reading Emma's mind Regina removed her hands and grasped the raw wrist removing the hand from her lips. "It's time to get out and dry off, sweetheart." Her tone was firm and held no room for an argument. With Regina's assistance Emma exited the bath. Standing in the cold air Emma shivered waiting for her Queen's attention. Wrapping her in a towel Regina gently patted the material into the wet skin. "Go lay down in my bed." Emma's heart soared with the thought of being allowed to rest in the same bed as her Queen.

She waited with anticipation for Regina's presence fighting through the drug induced drowsiness and exhaustion of her body. Emma listened to the shower imagining the water cascading down Regina's body wishing she could join her. Her Queen's absence was unbearable and fought back her primal instincts to wait patiently like she was told to do. When the water shut off she felt her will renew straightening out her posture. Entering the room with only a small towel to dry her hair Regina raised a brow, "I told you to lay down."

"I couldn't without you." She gave a soft smile.

Discarding the towel in the laundry bin Regina stopped at the edge of the bed. "Is that so?"
Returning the smile she gently caressed the skin beneath Emma's chin. "Well it's time for bed." Climbing into bed she flicked out the light from the lamp and rested down next the blonde. Noticing Emma hadn't moved Regina lifted up the blanket, "What are you waiting for, come here." Sliding under the covers she found herself in soft hold. "Make yourself comfortable." Nestling into her Queen Emma curled into her making a pillow out of Regina's arm.

Emma’s unsure of the hour, but she knows its pre-dawn. The burning pain in her back taunts her but she pushes it away unwilling to ask for pills just yet. She snuggles deeper into Regina’s bare chest appreciating the soft swell of her breasts against her cheek. Under any other circumstance Regina would not be allowing this continued contact. She listens to her Queen’s measured breaths enjoying the soothing rhythm hoping it will lull her back to sleep. The pain in her ribs dimmed in this position, half supported by Regina’s body allows her mind to churn onto less pleasant, less safe thoughts. ‘Why does Killian know about Mal? Why does he know she’s dangerous?’ In the depths of her soul, she knows why. He always knew about her. Mal had questioned too deeply. Known too much. Killian had fed her information. Anger slowly built as Emma struggles to stay where she is.

Fingers comb through her hair. “My dear, are you ready for another pain killer? It’s been 6 hours since your last one. Evelyn said every 4 to 6 hours was permissible.”
Letting the question hang in the air for moment. Emma took a deep breath to gather her thoughts.

“No. I wouldn’t mind a handful of ibuprofen though. I’d rather live with the pain for now. I need a clear head.”

Regina carefully sat forward bringing Emma with her. Gentle caramel eyes met saddened green. “You don’t have to be strong all the time.”

Emma sighs, “It isn’t about that.” Emma tries again to make a coherent thought that won’t upset her Queen. “Do you know where my phone is?”

Regina’s mask slips on quickly. “That’s not why I need it.” Emma says apologetically. “I need to show you something.”

Understanding and then confusion slide quickly across Regina’s features. “Let me get you a water, the ibuprofen and your phone.” The stay here command didn’t come, but Emma knew it was implied.

As Regina slipped from the room she picked up Regina’s pillow and took a deep inhale to give her strength. ‘How is it that the one I am afraid to talk to gives me the courage to do it?’ Emma mentally chastises herself, steeling her nerves and waiting.

Moments later Regina returned carrying the phone and its charger. “You forgot to plug it in my silly little swan.” she teased as she plugged it in next to Emma’s side of the bed and tried to hand Emma the device, but instead Emma slid over to give her space. Regina raised an eyebrow at her.

“Give me another moment, I need to get your water and pills.”
All the while she was gone, Emma watched her phone slowly come back to life sitting next to her on the bed. She had yet to touch it. Regina stood in the doorway watching her before entering and giving her the pills. Emma could see her Queen weighing out her words before speaking. Regina handed over the bottled water and 3 pills. Emma noticed one didn’t look like the other two, but chose not to argue. Her Queen could care for her better than she could herself at this moment. Emma’s shoulders sag under the thought. She hates being a burden.

Reading her thoughts, Regina slipped into bed beside her and caressed a bruised cheek. “One was a hydrocodone. The others were what you asked for. Let’s keep the pain manageable.”

Emma gave her a small smile. Regina noticed the vulnerability and brushed a few unruly hairs out of Emma’s eyes. “For today, let’s not worry about your amazing strength. I want to show you how much…” she stopped and changed her facial expression, “I need to show you how glad I am that you are here.”

Emma broke the eye contact and picked up her phone without hesitating she handed it back to Regina.

“Look at my messages. I wanted to show this to you yesterday in the limo, but it wasn’t the time or place. But, I think we need to discuss this.”

Regina hit the icon and began scrolling through.

Killian: Swan, we need to talk. (Sat, at 8:52 p.m. MT Standard)
Killian: I am at your place. Where are you? (Sun, at 1:26 a.m. EST)
Killian: Spoke with Ruby. Why did you change flights? (Sun, at 1:33 a.m. EST)
Killian: Stop Ignoring my calls, Swan. Just talk to me, please. (Sun, at 4:08 a.m. EST)
Killian: You're with Mal? Emma, you need to call me. (Sun, at 10:56 a.m. EST)
Killian: Emma if you aren’t going to answer, I pray you are at least reading your texts. (Sun, at 4:00 p.m. EST)
Killian: She’s dangerous. Don’t be alone with her. (Sun, at 4:01 p.m. EST)
Killian: Please Emma, tell me you are okay. (Sun, at 9:37 p.m. EST)
Killian: Goddammit just text me back. (Sun, at 9:52 p.m. EST)
Killian: I’m so sorry. I tried to warn you, but you ignored me. (Mon, at 3:12 a.m. EST)

Emma watched her Queen prepare to speak and then stop several times.

Meeting Emma with a puzzled expression Regina searched for the right words. Her mind queried further into what this meant, but drew back to a simple question knowing her pet needed her response. “Was this why you wanted my attention in the car?”

Emma nodded knowing there was not much else to say on the matter. “I didn’t want to say anything in front of her. I didn’t trust her then, but I couldn’t tell you why. I just didn’t”

Emma looked lost as she waited for Regina to process what she was saying. Emma twined the fingers together hoping her Queen would feel her trust. This wasn’t about blame. This was about Killian. Green blazed hopefully into chocolate again, wide open and trusting. Questioning.

“Before we do anything, I need to speak to Graham and a few of our friends in IT at work. We can’t talk to Mr. Jones until we know how connected to her he is. Let’s not draw this out, but if he is what I think he is...he won’t be working in my department long.” Lifting Emma’s hand up to her lips Regina breathed in a steadying breath.

Regina powered the phone down and left it on the night stand. “Let’s leave that for another day.” She once again slid off the bed and went to the nearest bureau and removed a black silk kimono that she wrapped around her figure, but not tightly. Emma enjoyed the gaps that formed giving brief flashes of tanned flesh.

“Stand dearest.” Emma followed the succinct order, allowing Regina to slip a rather short navy blue robe onto her pale frame. “I thought it would bring out the color of your eyes. When I was shopping the other day, I just had to have it for you.”
Emma’s chest swelled with the knowledge. Regina thinks about her even when shopping. ‘Maybe this goes a little deeper for her too’

Regina brought the belt around sore hips and tied it very loosely and then reached in the gap to run a hand up between her breasts. “I did not want to completely ruin my view. Come my pet.”

Hours later the two were still entwined on the couch wrapped more in each other than the blanket. The flickering TV allowed her to slip in and out of sleep while Regina lazily played with her hair. Emma thought she couldn’t remember the last time she felt this content. Or had she ever?

Interrupting the pleasant time they had been sharing came a sudden knock at the door, ”Room service.” The lock clicked open with the attendants key card granting him entry into the room.

”In the living room, please.” Regina continued to hold Emma casually directing the attendant with her hand; she didn’t notice the second figure following room service.

”Well isn’t this just great? How very domestic of you two being here together.” Painfully recoiling from her Queen's hold Emma sat straight up searching Regina's features for answers.

”Who the hell...” It was obvious Regina was just as surprised if not more annoyed by the interruption. ”Robin, what the hell is the matter with you? Didn’t I make myself clear yesterday, Go home to your wife and child. I am done being your mistress. You were using me to make yourself look good.” Drawing her kimono closed she quickly stood up locking eyes with him. “Get out!”

Twisting her head to see what was going on Emma was met with a disgusted scoff, ”Really, this is the reason why I am getting canned? Because you have found yourself a new fuck buddy that likes taking a beating? That is just rich.” Slinking off of the couch Emma went to her Queen's side.

”Don’t you dare make it about her, you did this to yourself. We already discussed this last night. How could you expect me to want to be with a man that was sabotaging my department? What kind
"Its obvious, you let the little twerp tear into me at that meeting and now I am getting fired for it!" Fixating his eyes onto the young blonde he began posturing. "She's fucking jealous of me! This whole ploy is to get me out of the picture!"

‘Remember with these elitist pigs; If you give them an inch they will steal a whole mile. Crush them before they crush you.’ The Ice Queen’s words played in Emma’s head. Within an instant Emma’s weak disposition dissolved into a cruelly vindictive demeanor.

"Seriously?” Robin's weak attempt to intimidate Emma, only aggravated her. ‘Why is it every time something good happens it has to be ruined? I am so sick of this crap.’ Reflexively clenching her fists Emma longed to tear into him. "I have nothing to be jealous of. Beyond a dysfunctional dick and the lack of any real talent..." Taking a step forward to emphasize her threat. "I am smarter than you. I am better than you at work because unlike you I actually can read the code and fix the problem. You didn’t even bother hashing it to make it unreadable. I literally have a superior intelligence to yours; an unquantifiable wealth of knowledge that could easily exploit any of your pathetic attempts of engineering some half-assed plan to get yourself out of mid-level management. Script Kiddie bullshit."

Regina stood between the two thunderstruck at the transformation. Her swan had never spoken with such an extensive vocabulary, but yet she could still hear her Emma shining through in bits.

Swallowing the burning lump in his throat he took a step backwards in retreat, "Regina, put your dog on a leash." Trying to maintain his composure his eyes fled to Regina. “That is what you are into right? That deranged fetish crap where you tie them up beat them for fun?”

"Robin, with all the time you have spent with me, do I really strike you as the type of woman that would actually hurt someone I care about? Yes, I like to play, but you have no idea what this is. So, no I think I am going to allow this a moment more, maybe you will learn something from her and what real loyalty is. I would choose your words more carefully if I were you." Crossing her arms Regina continued to observe the change in Emma wondering where her pet was going with this tangent. She was prepared to intervene if things went sideways.
"Fuck you for thinking you were brilliant! Did you watch Office Space and think it would be so easy to slip in a little code? With a rudimentary mind, you fumbled around in ignorance, incapable of comprehending how ill-thought-out plan your plan was." Stalking forward in a menacing posture she continued to antagonize the swollen ego of the man. "A noob could have seen the inner workings, but luck, was momentarily, on your side. Guile is not your strong suit, so instead you used seduction to mask it. Using false pretense to keep the one person who would inevitably see your flawed plan occupied was the only logical conclusion your insipid mind could come up with. If you had thought about your next move at all you would realize that the INTERN assigned to deal with data would easily see what was happening. It doesn’t take a genius to know who they would have to report it to. Another spineless plan that rapidly went flaccid like your dick. Really, your vanity out shines your wit."

Stumbling back Robin collided with the breakfast trolley falling flat on his back. Scooting away from Emma like a worm he looked back to Regina pleading for help, "Call her off, please."

"Emma..." Regina cautioned, but lingered back getting the sense that Emma was only flexing her intellect to break what was left of Robin's ego. This was another side to her pet she hadn't seen before and it intrigued her, yet concerned her. Was this the drugs talking, the pain, or was this the person buried deep below the innocent exterior that was unleashed by Mal? Regina thought she knew everything there was to know about Emma, but Graham's extensive research seemed to be lacking a lot of important details.

Pausing in step Emma met her Queen's contemplating gaze and leaned in to whisper, "He used you, my Queen. I am just teaching him a verbally crippling lesson." Emphasizing the verbal part Emma assured Regina with a warm smile before turning back to Robin. Her smile replaced by a contemptuous smirk she crouched beside him noticing his whimpering attention was held by Regina. Snapping her fingers in front of his face Emma drew Robin's eyes towards her, "So there is some sort of understanding in that vacuous mind of yours." Giving Robin a mocking pat on the head he flinched away.

"Please stop. Don’t hurt me. I’ll leave and you will never see me again.” Trapped within Emma’s cold calculating glare he attempted to persuade his attacker.

"Where was I? You didn’t satisfy her needs so naturally Regina looked elsewhere and found me. That's when your luck ran dry. Your arrogance. That insufficient consideration of your capabilities, not once did you plan on someone like me being in the picture. A novice mistake. It’s okay though, we all have to crawl before we learn to walk.” Teasingly slapping his cheek she gave a small
chuckle. “I am the nemesis of expectation, you could never have anticipated my brilliance. You couldn’t calculate my proficiency in pleasuring her or speculate on my ability to multitask my responsibilities. I can crush you.” Reaching down she yanked him up by his shirt sneering her remark. “I hate to destroy this delusional world you created where you thought you could best me, but wake up and smell your suckage Robin! I am the master of CLUTCH and I just pwned your ass. Be grateful I am in no condition to be merciless, otherwise I wouldn't spare a scrap of your dignity.”

Regina raised an eyebrow and shook her head at Emma smirking. “Miss Swan, you aren’t a comic book villain and Batman isn’t coming after his side-kick. You have made your point. It’s time to kick him out of our lives for good. Remind me to limit your painkillers, they give you arch villain complexes.”

"You are unworthy of her help; Nothing more than a poignant waste of a man. Not even worth the bruising on my knuckles.” Releasing Robin, Emma stood back observing the quivering mess she had made of him.

“Send my regards to Marian.” Regina opened the door providing him with an exit. Taunting the man with her lingering presence Emma flexed her fist ready to tear into him some more. Scrambling to find his footing Robin took flight sprinting past Regina not once looking back. ‘Good job.’ Emma congratulated herself until she glanced at her Queen. “Miss Swan, we need to talk about this inappropriate behavior of yours.”

Chapter End Notes

Goodbye Robin, you will not be missed.
Avarice and greed are gonna drive you over the endless sea

Chapter by **Xevn**

Chapter Summary

When I send my heart your way
It bounces off the walls you made
Ricochet- Starset

Chapter Notes

Welp. Here is my apology for the very unexpected hiatus. If it helps any there are more chapters on the way. Feedback is welcome and please enjoy. Thank you so much for your loyal support.

Regina closed the door engaging the deadbolt keeping her eyes trained on her pet. She tried to formulate the words while her mind processed what just happened. This behavior wasn't something Regina ever thought possible from her pet, and it was a startling revelation. Something much darker stirred her thoughts. How much control did she have?

Granted Regina was pleased to be rid of the fool, but it wasn't by her means. Emma had taken complete control over the situation without Regina's expressed permission. Troublesome, she needed to quash the behavior before it became the norm. Her eyes wandered over the confident mutt who was now basking in the small victory. Emma was holding no regards for her new position and seemed completely oblivious to any wrongdoing. Not okay.

For a brief moment, Regina found herself captured in a wave of desire. This was her pet, that tore into the prick for her. If she had commanded Emma to do so it would be much different, Regina wouldn't have a qualm about it. Regina would have gladly rewarded her pet, but this was not the case. The idea of having Emma on a tight leash came to mind followed by filthy images. Her pet on her hands and knees, waiting for her command. That voracious mouth greedily pleasuring her with a snap of her fingers. Unconsciously Regina's lips tugged into a devious smile; one Emma hadn't noticed. Regina needed to control Emma, but she had to approach the issue with delicate tact, inculcate the desired behavior and reward Emma for her loyalty.

Her pet was in no condition for punishment, but her mind was malleable, and Regina could work with that. She couldn't risk losing Emma; this girl was the first pet she ever found worthy to be at her side. While the others were mere toys in comparison; none of them could stand on their own two feet and prove themselves. They all eventually tried to use Regina, whether it was financial gain or a better position within the company. It was Emma who showed promise and shined in the meeting with Mr. Hyde and even made Regina look good. Emma could be so much more with the proper
"Miss Swan; We need to discuss this inappropriate behavior of yours." Emma’s rigid body relaxed with the call of her name; her proud grin eroded into a look of worry. Emma was the epitome of a puppy about to be scolded. Regina inwardly smirked her satisfaction while keeping a stern demeanor.

The rush of adrenaline pounded in the blonde's veins; her thoughts varied between the eagerness to please and her own satisfaction. Noticing her Queen's displeasure in her actions, she crumbled into uncertainty. Even now the haunting voice of the Ice Queen beckoned her compliance, 'Finish what you started.' Emma's fist tightened with the words.

Taking a shallow breath, Emma screwed her eyes shut. "He wouldn't leave." Her voice trembled with defiance gurgling at the back of her throat. Tension thread through her spine again pulling her up stronger. "He deserved much worse. I should have crushed him into the ground." Hearing Ingrid's words out of her mouth again Emma was starting to believe them as her own.

'This isn't Emma.' The she look weighed heavily on her pet as Regina drew near caging Emma with her presence, "Did I give you permission to speak?" Raising an eyebrow the words held a sharp tone, Regina crossed her arms waiting for a response. "Well?" Her Queen was in no mood for games and gauging from her tone Emma had done something wrong. 'Why is it everything Ingrid made me do, always feels like it's my mistake?' The tug of war going on in her head was finally subsiding.

"No, your Majesty." Withering under the burning glare from her Queen Emma shrunk into herself.

"You will speak when I ask a question, nothing more. Am I clear?" Regina's words were firm.

"Yes, your Majesty." Focusing on the floor, Emma wished she could sink into it.

Placing an elegant digit under Emma's chin Regina lifted up Emma's crestfallen look. "How's your pain level?" Chocolate depths swirled before her, but Emma couldn't get a pulse on the woman. 'What is she thinking?' Delicious red lips pressed hard into a thin line further masking any thoughts of her Queen.

"I don't feel anything." Sighing the answer Emma succumbed to exhaustion resting into Regina's hold.

Tucking a few loose strands of gold behind her pet's ear, she smoothed her palm over the bruised jaw. "Go rest on the sofa, while I make a few calls." Her actions were gentle, but Regina's words weren't.
"Yes, my Queen." Acknowledging the command, Emma slinked back to the couch. Without Regina's lap, Emma rested into the cushions finding a comfortable position lazily propped upright against the backrest. ‘I always fuck everything up. I am just a disappointment to Regina. Just like I was in mother’s eyes.’ Closing her eyes to drown out the thoughts, she gave in to sleep.

Something wet and cold smeared across her lips stirring Emma from the light sleep. Dripping down her chin and running down her neck, the chilled liquid settled on her exposed chest. Drowsily opening her eyes, Emma met with a smoldering brown look. "Regina-" Another line of cold painted over her lips silencing her words. The haze Emma was in lifted, able to see her Queen she noticed she was still wrapped within her kimono. The perfect amount of exposed skin defined the freely hanging cleavage leaving little to Emma's imagination.

"When I ask a question, you will answer," Regina whispered into a seductive but commanding tone. At the edge of her view, Emma watched her Queen's hand trace the outline of her lips concealing the tantalizing object. Her jaw loosened under the subtle actions; curiosity was brimming. Rewarding her pet, Regina slid the melting entity into her mouth for further inspection, Emma instantly recognized the taste of ice. "Don't move. Otherwise, you will only hurt yourself." Her Queen cautioned before placing a new cube between her painted red lips.

Removing the belt that held Emma's robe closed, Regina straddled the blonde's lap. The warm skin of Regina's thighs teased the already pooling arousal electrifying a thrill that raced up the blonde's spine. Drinking in the intoxicating feeling of her Queen's heat percolating on the swath of her thighs, Emma realized this was a mutual desire. Any troubled thoughts from prior were smothered with the searing kiss pressed into the punished column of her neck. A pleased sound tugged free of from her pet’s mouth.

Producing the liquefying ice Regina brushed it over the sensitive flesh. Rivets greedily rolled down from the path exploring the expanse of her pet's neck raising pin pricks in their wakes. The cold playing with her skin forced a shudder from Emma who was struggling to keep her composure. A hunger flooded through her being begging her to grasp her Queen. Emma's fingers firmly gripped the fabric covering the cushions keeping her desire in check.

Regina carefully balanced her weight; a palm buried in the cushion next to the blonde's head while the other hand toyed in the bowl filled with ice. Breathing a chilled breath down the straining throat, she watched her pet swallow a moan. A pleased smile crawled across her features obstructed from her pet's sight. Letting the fragment fall from her mouth she continued to observe the subtle yank of Emma's hand as it fought to keep it's hold.

Collecting another cube, Regina traced over the perfectly toned abdomen studying the muscles flex under the teasing cold. “That change in your personality from earlier; What was that?” Regina asked.

‘So this is just another game, what are the rules?’ Realizing she was in no position to ask a question she logically concluded a process of trial and error. “He needed to leave, so I made sure he did.”
Emma knew this was not the correct answer.

“That was not what I asked.” Pressing the ice into a bruised patch of skin over Emma’s ribcage Regina aggravated a painful response.

Grimacing under her Queen’s cruel touch, Emma got her answer to rule one. “It was impulse; I thought it was the right thing to do.” She couldn’t decipher between her instincts and Ingrid’s programing.

Keeping the pressure on her Queen met eyes with her pet, “It was more than impulse, that was a whole other person speaking. I need more of an explanation.” Regina’s years of experience could easily see through someone else’s unquestionable training at work.

“I didn’t have the best upbringing; no one was going to come to my rescue, so I had to defend myself. I learned to push back with everything even when I had nothing but words to fight with.” The answer was sufficient for now, but Regina knew there was more to this than her pet was willing or able to share. Emma was too fragile to press for more information.

“That answer will suffice for now, but we will revisit the question another day.” Regina needed to start working on undoing the other dominate’s training. The pressure subsided, cold was replaced by warm lips. ‘Correct answers receive pleasure.’ Emma mentally noted rule two.

Soothing away the remaining sting of pain Regina continued to tease the battered skin with her tongue. She lingered longer than necessary testing her pet’s patience against her hot breath, which didn’t take long. Compulsive fingers buried into Regina’s dark brown tresses urging the Queen for more. Resting back on Emma’s lap she escaped the greedy hold and captured the disobedient wrist. “You may not touch me.” Emphasizing her point Regina dug the tips of her nails into healing welts from the handcuffs.

Clenching her jaw to distract herself from the pain, Emma spoke through her teeth, “Forgive me, my Queen. I won’t let it happen again.” ‘Rule number three.’ She inwardly winced.

Using the ice, Regina numbed the throbbing skin, “Did I give you permission to intervene in my fight with Robin?”

‘Are you serious? She’s pissed about me defending her?’ Emma felt the tension coiling in her jaw as she processed the question. Regina could see the frustration building in her pet. “Did I give you permission; yes or no?” The sting from her Queen’s seen returned demanding an answer. Regina was purposefully baiting Emma; She needed her pet to engage in the inappropriate behavior in order to neutralize it.

“No.” Growling out her answer Emma fought to keep her anger in check, but defiantly glared back
to Regina. ‘She should be fucking grateful.’

Dropping the wrist Regina quickly acted, grasping her pet’s jaw she forced Emma to focus her attention on her. “Your actions were not an extension of mine. This behavior of your’s right now is not welcome. Are you really my pet or someone else’s?” While Regina’s tone was firm, her eyes bared sincere concern.

‘What did I do wrong? Mother wanted me to put assholes like him in their place, isn’t that the right thing to do?’ Conflicted Emma replayed her Queen’s words in her mind. ‘I’ve never been anyone else’s pet. What does she mean?’ She couldn’t focus her thoughts, struggling to find the answers she pleadingly looked back to her Queen. “I don’t know, please…”

Regina had her right where Emma needed to be, “My pet’s wait for my directives, they never act without my permission. You will obey me and only me. No more instincts, just my commands. I will think for you until you are able to understand what I require from you.” Regina’s features soften, “Is that clear?”

Nodding her understanding, she kept her eyes trained on her Queen. Fetching a fresh cube from the bowl, Regina continued to tease her pet. “Don’t move.” She ordered. Drawing circles around Emma’s nipple she compelled the sensitive flesh to harden before devouring it in an open kiss. Emma arched into the warmth giving into the pleasurable feeling of her Queen’s teeth pinching the pebble of skin. Moaning her delight the blonde urged her Queen further wanting the continued affection.

Drawing a line of cold over her pet’s sternum Regina’s lips followed the path occasionally dragging her tongue to taste the raised skin. Emma’s head rested back against the cushion’s surrendering to Regina’s ministrations her abs constricted under the cold objected eliciting a moan. Repositioning herself; Regina gave ample room for her pet to move. “Open your thighs, dearest.” The command was definite, and Emma complied without a second thought. “Good girl.” Tracing the smooth ridge of Emma’s pubic bone the Queen watched her pet squirm.

Placing her hand over her pet’s throat Regina pressed into the column silently instructing Emma to hold still. Dipping the ice into in her pet’s swollen folds, she teased another moan free from Emma’s lips. Swirling the objected around the sensitive bundle of nerves she extracted another explicit response. “Fuck.” The blonde shuddered and twitched fighting back the urge to bat the ice away.

“Mind your language, pet.” Dipping the cube into her pet’s hot center drew about another indecent reply. Tightening her grip around Emma’s neck, she silently corrected the verbal response before plunging the bit of ice deep within the hungry folds. Strangely the cold turned into a burning warmth that solicited a pleasurable whimper. “Who do you belong to?” Punctuating the question with a deft thrust Regina’s eyes met with keen green.

“You.” Emma effortlessly breathed out rocking her hips into her Queen’s touch. Curving her fingers to correct the angle, Regina made sure to brush the cold device against the right spot. Regina
observed the unbidden lust gloss over her pet’s eyes.

Thrusting her fingers harder into her pet Regina was vigorously pushing Emma towards the edge of a brutal climax. “Do your actions deserve a reward?” Raising a brow, she smirked a devious grin; already knowing the answer, Regina was enjoying the torment it brought about.

“No.” Under a labored breath, Emma prayed her answer would still bring about the reward.

“Correct.” Pushing her pet further Regina felt the muscles constricting around her fingers, “Only when you obey me will I give you release.” Giving one more thrust, she held her pet at the pinnacle. “I will not reward bad behavior.” Dragging her fingers over the pulsating flesh of Emma’s anterior wall, she vexed her pet further. Withdrawing her slick digits, Regina rested back keeping a firm hold over Emma’s throat. “When I find you deserving I will finish what I have started.” Expecting Emma to rebuke her actions, Regina gauged her pet.

Hesitantly Emma focused her thoughts on the proper response, “I understand, my Queen.” She was beyond frustrated but grasped the concept being taught. She resented the idea of it but knew better than to question Regina’s rules, and Emma wanted to please her Queen.

Pleased by Emma’s response Regina solidified her pet’s behavior with a hungry kiss. Devouring the blonde’s panting breaths, the Queen plunged her tongue past the quivering lips. Adjusting her position again, her Queen straddled Emma’s solitary thigh. Pressing her seeping core against the welcoming, warm flesh, she stoked the blonde’s arousal. “May I pleasure you?” Emma broke the kiss to ask the question hoping to repent for her actions by pleasing her Queen.

Carefully contemplating her response Regina couldn’t deny how turned on she was by Emma’s willingness to appease her. “You may not touch me, only your thigh.” Regina needed complete control over the situation. “I want your hands at your sides. If you need to, you may hold onto the cushions. Keep your eyes trained on mine. Do not kiss me unless I kiss you.” Regina made her instructions clear.

“Yes, my Queen.” Emma breathlessly acknowledged her Queen’s commands. She mashed her thigh into Regina’s sex earning a ragged gasp. Emma knew her Queen was passed the point of turning her down and needed to be satisfied regardless of Emma’s building frustration. She concentrated her efforts onto a slow rhythm meeting each roll of her Queen’s hips.

Regina found purchase resting her hands on Emma’s shoulders to balance herself and gain momentum with each pass. The slick friction continued to tease the stiff bud drawing out lustful pants. Studying her Queen’s eyes, she watched as pupils swallow the deep brown irises. Emma stifled the urge to touch her Queen by digging her fingers into the couch, but this didn’t pacify the pounding of her heart. She wanted more; Emma needed to feel Regina wrapped around her. Emerald pleaded with the dark desire drowning out her Queen’s vision.
Regina’s hands drifted lower, possessively seizing her pet’s breasts provoking a low groan from the blonde. Emma's knuckles were turning white as she squeezed the life out of the plush cushions. Every muscle was straining to adhere to her Queen’s commands. Emma was acutely aware of Regina's arousal pouring over her thigh, each unbidden moan drawn out by the perfectly matched thrust. Her, always flawlessly composed, Queen was coming undone by her actions; it was freeing to watch.

Enraptured by the crescendoing waves wracking her body, Regina's head rolled back. She fought for sips of air between the wicked surges, but she was far from finished. Recovering quickly, Regina threw herself forward, planting her hands on the backrest of the couch trapping Emma's head. Lascivious chocolate connected with passive green, promising to consume every last piece of Emma.

The rising heat between Emma's thighs was becoming more unbearable. Her swollen folds throbbed their desire for release with each beat of her heart. Emma's lips began to tremble, feeling a plea dancing at the tip of her tongue. She was losing control over her urges; her hands threatened to betray her, loosening their hold they hovered in place. Emma tried to focus her attention on the rhythm of her Queen's hips, but even this was a misguided attempt.

Another moan tore from Regina's mouth pushing Emma past the point of self-control. Her hands surged forward grasping her Queen's hips in a ravenous hold. Without skipping a beat, the brunette snatched both wrists, "Bad girl." Slamming Emma's hands into the backrest, the Queen captured the blonde's neck in a punishing bite. Growling her displeasure Emma fought back grinding her thigh hard into Regina's core, coercing another orgasm. Her Queen's bite increased piercing the tender flesh, subduing Emma's resistance.

Regina rode out the second orgasm latched onto her pet's neck to stifle her moans. She didn't let up on the pressure even after Emma surrendered. Her anger was beyond seething, but she held back from punishing her pet further. After the pulsating waves of pleasure had receded, Regina relinquished her bite. Keeping a firm hold on the blonde's wrists, she studied her pet's remorseful expression.

"Seems to me you are going to need a lot of training." Regina's features relaxed into a warm smile, "We'll start once you are fully healed. For now, we need to focus on tonight's event." Releasing Emma's wrists, she carefully stood up holding out her hand, "You need another bath."

The bath was a welcomed treat, Regina was just as caring as she had been last night. The tension from earlier had completely dissolved, but Emma's sexual frustration was apparent. Every touch from her Queen kept her core throbbing regardless if they were innocent or not. Emma knew this was her punishment, but God, did she hate it.

Regina was meticulous when dressing her; another suit, but this time her Queen decided the jacket was too much. Instead, she opted for a vest, feeling it was less restrictive for Emma's movements. Emma appreciated the thought. Though, she wasn't thrilled with the idea of wearing makeup. Regina didn't give her a choice in the matter since it was needed to mask the bruises. Even if she
couldn't hide the gash above Emma's eyebrow, she wanted her pet as close to perfection as possible. It was more to Emma's benefit than to Regina's, but Emma didn't see it that way.

The elevator ride down was silent, but Emma could still hear her racing heart. Her Queen was in a shamelessly tight red dress, and Emma couldn't stop staring. Emma's imagination played out different scenarios of peeling off that red dress, but she knew better than to act them out.

Both made their entrance to shocked looks. It was clear the attention was trained on Emma's battered appearance as only a handful knew what had happened. Regina made sure to provide a sufficient excuse for Emma's condition. Chalking it up to clumsiness; a simple misstep in the stairwell led to a terrible fall. Thankfully, Mr. Hyde had quickly step in to draw away the attention with his speech about each recipient's accomplishments. Emma couldn't focus on the; her mind was too busy worrying over the subtle glances from other employees and executives. She could only wonder what they were thinking but could assume from some of them that they were tasteless.

Emma felt like a piece of meat on display; her attire still had a sense of femininity with the way it hugged her lithe figure. The makeup didn’t help either. She would have preferred the bruises, but even then that might encourage more looks from twisted minded older men. Her eyes drifted over the other tables meeting a sinister glare from Maleficent. Emma returned the glare with one of her own, “Relax.” Her attention was reeled in with the quiet, but a firm command from her Queen. “Emma, do not antagonize her.” Regina shot a threatening glance towards the older blonde in an attempt to defuse the situation. Reluctantly, Maleficent did, but Emma and Regina knew this wasn’t over.

Once all the recipients had stood for their moment of applause the ceremony ended. Emma had no appetite for the meal in front of her; poking the roasted Cornish Game Hen, her thoughts drifted to something more appetizing sitting beside her. Regina was caught up in business talk like usual leaving Emma alone to play with her food. Looking over at the table where August and his date sat, she couldn’t help but feel a bit envious of the entire table. They were laughing and enjoying their time together, probably sharing non-work appropriate stories. Her table was full of stiff executives that found fun discussing productivity numbers. ‘So exciting.’ She rolled her eyes.

Things picked up after everyone had finished their meals and left to mingle. Emma stayed within proximity to Regina as she and August talked about her misfortune with the stairs. Antonio shared an embarrassing story about August having a similar experience. Though, his was more entertaining since it involved sex and August’s naked body falling from the second story balcony. She had learned a little more than she wanted about the two’s sexcapades but enjoyed the bright red shade August dawned.

“Seriously, babe? You had to tell that one?” August asked.

“Yes, come on it was funny.” Antonio teased.

“Having the fire department rescue me from the tree, is not funny.” His statement brought about
another round of laughter, and even August got swept up in it.

“Hey, at least you got a phone number from one of them afterward. He must have seen something he liked.” Antonio playfully nudged his partner. “I know I did; size is everything.” He winked at Emma. The friendly atmosphere drastically shifted when Emma turned to check in on Regina’s location.

Emma fought back the rising panic as she looked for Regina. Hyde had taken her off to refresh their drinks to have a private chat. Regina had given her only ibuprofen before the awards ceremony so that Emma could be mentally present, but the constant throbbing reminder of her ribs kept her feeling off balance. Regina had been her anchor for the last hour, and August a much-needed buffer. Since her ‘behavioral’ corrections from Regina this afternoon, Emma had needed someone to keep everything on an even keel. Regina had been oscillating between being a doting lover and a very disappointed dom. However, at this moment Regina had disappeared into the depths of the afterparty. Emma had purposely kept Regina in her line of sight and then, that fool from accounting, the one from Chicago, spilled his drink on another man’s date.

Emma knew it was ridiculous, but somehow this all felt staged. She doubted that it was. However, she had created bigger and better diversions in crowds herself in a former life. She had to hand it to them if it was anything; it was effective. The slap and scream were out of place at this event, but yet the whole thing drew everyone in between her and Regina quickly. Too quickly. Emma felt eyes on her, but she couldn’t find Maleficent in the crowd. Twice during the awards ceremony. Maleficent had made threatening gestures, but Regina had stared her down. Emma knew she was near. The little hairs on the back of her neck were vibrating a warning. Emma turned to where August had been beside her with Antonio only moments before only to realize; he too was gone.

As her heart rate increased and she broke out into a cold sweat. She chose to seek out the sanctuary of the ladies room. At the very least it would get a few of these older gentlemen to quit looking at her like she was dessert. She cringed remembering a time when Ingrid would make sure she was dessert for one of those. She may not have had sex with a lot of people, but that is if you use the Bill Clinton definition. Through her late high school years, Ingrid had taught her that you could please those sleazebags on your knees and get out with whatever she needed. If she came back empty handed she wouldn’t be fed, and her little chemical habit certainly wouldn’t be fed either—that was always her greatest fear. Emma tried to shake off the past, but some parts just didn’t want to stay in the dark anymore. Some day she would have someone that she mattered to; she hoped it could be Regina. But, she still had her reservations. Regina needed too much control like Ingrid always did.

In seconds Emma found herself in the ladies room looking at her pale features in the mirror, shaking hands adjusting the edges of her mascara. Regina wanted her flawless, perfect. ‘I just wish just once that someone wouldn’t need me to be anything more than I am.’ She thought feeling smaller. Tired. Hurting.

“You did not expect the ladies room to save you, did you? Just remember everything that happens here is your fault. It seems to me you enjoyed our time together. You panted, begged and dripped your arousal pooling on the carpet. You know you did. One taste and here you are back for more you dirty little bitch. Though this is hardly the right place for an encore, it will have to do for now.”
Maleficent stated coldly. She walked steadily toward Emma pushing each stall door open using a chrome rod from the towel rack to make guarantee emptiness. “What’s the matter little girl, can’t find your mother? Don’t worry; she won’t want you much longer. No one would have a use for a broken toy. Except for me. I like to see how many bits can be ripped off.”

Emma refused to turn to face her. She stayed at the mirror adjusting makeup that was now perfect. “God, you are just like mother. Ingrid has been out of my life for awhile, so unless you mean my lover you need to look elsewhere.”

Maleficent’s eyes narrowed. “Ingrid?”

Emma had expected her to challenge the word ‘lover’ because she was more than certain Regina didn’t consider them lovers. She wasn’t entirely sure how they would be categorized, but she knew that wasn’t it. As much as Emma wanted it to be true, Regina had made it clear–she was not good enough for her.

“Mnhmm, Ingrid, my crazy bitch of a mother.” Emma watched Maleficent working through the issue, connecting the dots. Her powerful image was uncertain. “The beating you gave me, you gave the wrong person. Ingrid is the answer to every question you asked of me. But, judging by your reaction, you know who she is. And, I bet you deserved what she did to you.” Against her better judgment, Emma turned to face Maleficent. “Whatever you did to my mother, that operation of ours, that was personal. She wanted your husband destroyed. So, I don’t know what you did, but I am willing to bet every humiliation you had was less than you deserved.” A smirk slid quietly onto Emma’s face. “I guess my question for you is, which one of you was the mistress because looking at you now I doubt it was you?”

Anger flared in Maleficent’s eyes as she swung her rod knocking Emma to her knees in one rehearsed motion. Emma fell forward hitting her head and hands on the ground. Only to have Maleficent wrap her hand around her throat to bring her back to her knees. Blood dripped from her torn sutures as her throat constricted. “Do I seem like a bottom to you? Submit, you stupid little whore.” Maleficent squeezed tighter, and Emma’s vision started to cloud. Emma struggled in a disorganized attempt to wrench the arm away but lost the strength to fight. Her body began to cave in the short battle as her hands fell limp to her sides.

The silence shattered by the unmistakable click of a camera’s shutter. A sweet voice came from behind it, “Senior Vice President, I suggest you stop before I send this recording out live. The picture would make a nice thumbnail to go along with it. I wonder what damage this will bring to your perfect reputation?”

Maleficent’s mouth hung open for a moment. Releasing her grip on the blonde’s throat, she let Emma fall to the floor. “We aren’t finished slut, but duty calls. We’ll have to do this another time” She excused herself from the room quickly through a door Emma hadn’t even noticed along the back wall.
After she managed to catch her breath, Emma weakly pushed herself back onto her feet. “Thanks. I had a recent encounter with her that has left me at a disadvantage.” Emma said in a trembling breath as she tried to use a paper towel to stop the blood flow, but her bruised ribs made it difficult to get her arm high enough to do much good.

The small blonde sat her camera on the shelf next to the sink and helped “Here let me do that. The name is Elsa by the way. Mary Margaret introduced us last month.” Emma turned her face to her so Elsa could see the wound better.

“Right,” Emma said slightly embarrassed that even now she didn’t remember the woman. That was the same day she met her Queen, and if she were to be fair, that was the only thing that she remembers from that day. Everything else was just a blur. But, she knows the name. “Aren’t you the Project TL they planned on moving into the DM position?”

Elsa nodded as she tossed the paper towel into the trashcan and grabbed another one. “I am. But, I think that isn’t important right now. How are you?” she asked with a look of genuine worry. “My sister, Anna” Elsa’s eyes teared up, and she stopped what she was doing to wipe around her eyes before resuming her work on Emma. “She was one of Mal’s playthings for awhile. My parents hated it. Hated her. Anna pushed us all away. We lost touch with her when she wouldn’t let us help her. Save her. She died a few years ago. We couldn’t prove where the broken bones came from, but she chose her own death rather than be with that bitch any longer.”

Emma looked into the poor woman’s sad eyes. “I am so sorry.” She entwined their fingers with one hand and gave it a quick squeeze before dropping it. The two women were too absorbed in the moment to notice the door open and close.

A disgusted huff came from behind Emma. “I leave you alone for a second, and you go looking for someone else?” Regina accused.

Elsa stepped around Emma trying to intercept Regina as she charged forward. “Ms. Mills, it isn’t what you think.”

“I know what I am seeing…I” Regina went silent as she tipped Emma’s face up. The rivulet of blood dripping from her reopened the wound. Her anger evaporated. “I left you with August for only a few minutes. How did…”

Elsa cleared her throat. “Ms. Mills, you don’t know a lot of things. But, be advised Mal hit her once with a rod, and we both know she has a deadly skill few have achieved. I’m going to leave now. She doesn’t need me because she has you. You need to be watching out for Mal; she promised to finish what she started the other day. Whatever that was.” Elsa picked up her purse and left frustration pouring from her as she went.

Emma could feel Regina’s remorse momentarily, but as usual, it went unacknowledged. ‘Always
assuming the worst’ Emma thought to herself, wishing for a little trust. “Elsa came to my rescue when Maleficent cornered me in here.” She needed to offer an explanation as the lack of faith tore at her. She didn’t feel that there was any point in saying more. Regina would believe what she wanted. Nothing seemed to change her perception.

The longer they stood there, the more Emma felt like Regina didn’t really see her at all. Maybe Ingrid had been right, Emma was a slut that required a short leash.

Regina decided it was time they retired to their room. She hadn’t spoken a word to Emma even after they were in the suite. The pent up frustration was finally spilling over with her Queen’s dismissive behavior. “I didn’t do anything wrong!” She yelled at Regina’s back before she could disappear into her bedroom. The brunette halted in her steps; tension flexed over the Queen’s shoulders.

“What do I have to do to show you that I am worthy?!” Emma stalked forward in almost the same demeanor as she had with Robin. This made Regina’s blood boil. “You aren’t giving me a chance.” Stopping right in front of her Queen, Emma studied the stern expression. Letting out a pitiful sigh, she dropped to her knees and captured Regina’s calf in a gentle hold. “I would do anything for you.” Pressing the word into a kiss, she felt the tension dissipate.

“I worship you, my goddess. You are the only person I see.” Emma continued to kiss a trail up her Queen’s leg. Her hands followed shortly behind caressing every detail. “My lips…” She teasingly brushed them over Regina’s knee. “My hands…” Pushing up the hem of the scarlet dress, she tasted the raised bumps along the freshly exposed skin. “My body…” Rolling the fabric over shapely hips, Emma discovered her Queen wasn’t wearing any underwear. She felt her core throb it’s approval, “Everything that I am, is yours.” Kissing her promise into the curve of Regina’s hip, she felt the brunette shiver.

Fighting her better judgment Emma surged up wrapping her arms around the bottom end of her Queen and lifted her up. Regina completely caught off guard by this instinctively wrapped her arms around the blonde’s back. Gasping in shock and concern, she met Emma’s pained features but saw the desire burning in her pet’s eyes. The added weight pulled against her fractured ribs, threatening to steal Emma’s breath. She briefly fought to balance herself before speaking, “If it were a tangible thing, I would give you my soul.”

“Emma…” Regina’s heart betrayed her as it swelled in her chest. Her pet was pushing past their contractual agreement and professing more than her words could. Regina wasn’t sure if Emma knew what she was saying, but she also took a cynical view of the situation. Maybe it was just blind lust
pouring from the blonde’s mouth? She didn’t dare to question it further and stifled any more traitorous words with a bruising kiss.

Emma’s resolve strengthened, numbing the pain that screamed through her body. She needed Regina to know it was only her that mattered. Carrying her Queen into the bedroom she never once broke the kiss; only after she placed Regina on the bed did she remove her lips. Allowing her Queen to untangle from her hold she desperately worked to free the buttons on her clothes. Regina watched in silence. Her legs crossed as she sat back on her hands. She fought to keep her feelings hidden beneath the Evil Queen’s stoic veneer.

With her clothes cast off to the floor, Emma lurched forward stealing another breathtaking kiss from her Queen who was more receptive than usual. She knew this was going to earn some punishment, but she didn’t care. Her deft fingers found the zipper at the back of Regina’s dress and proceeded to remove the barrier of fabric that encompassed her form. Emma slipped the soft material free uncovering the rest of her Queen’s body. She drank in the sight as if it was the first time she saw Regina unclothed, nearly lost in a trance.

Noticing the way her pet was studying her body, Regina knew the cogs were beginning to spin inside Emma’s mind. This was a dangerous direction of thought; real emotions were never meant to be apart of their affair. Scooting further back onto the bed Regina waved a finger beckoning the blonde to follow. She needed to distract Emma from those thoughts. It’s only meant to be sex, and the Queen was going to enforce that in her pet’s mind. But could she?

Following her Queen’s silent command Emma crawled onto the bed. Removing the stiletto, she kissed the bottom of the brunette’s foot. Her warm lips traveled from Regina’s foot up her leg, leaving pleasant pin pricks in their wake. This was all wrong. Regina’s mind was screaming no, but her heart demanded it to continue. Had she been able to speak earlier when Emma first cut her off she could have defused the situation by telling her pet she didn’t do anything wrong. Regina wasn’t blind, but her jealousy got the best of her before fully assessing the scene with Elsa. She did believe Emma and wasn’t mad at but was furious; she failed to protect her again.

Tracing her tongue over the smooth skin of Regina’s thigh Emma gently parted her Queen’s legs. Teasing the sensitive flesh that defined the gap between Regina’s leg and pelvis, Emma took her time to pay attention to the overlooked detail of skin. Dragging her lips over the soft folds of flesh she breathed in the scent of her Queen’s arousal, stopping briefly to dip them for a taste. Emma elicited a deep moan of approval as the spongy digit traced up the center and swirled around the hardened bud. Once she had sufficiently teased the throbbing flesh, she moved on to pay the same attention to the other side of her Queen’s leg.

Removing the other heel, Emma wrapped her lips around the big toe stealing a surprised moan from her Queen. Pressing her tongue to the soft underside, she drew it back across the minute ridges, drawing out another pleasure-filled moan. Crawling back up, she alternated between the legs with chaste kisses. Regina’s mind raced with unwanted thoughts; she hadn’t been privy to this kind of affection in a long time. Robin was rough, sloppy and selfish; others were never allowed to detour from her commands. Why was she letting Emma do this?
Hovering over the apex emerald eyes connected with Regina’s deep brown. The look sent her heart to a stuttering halt; hope and promise poured from the depths of Emma’s tattered exterior. Regina was captivated, trapped within the green pools she lost her will to fight against her heart’s foolish demands. “Come here.” Her voice faltered into a weak, trembling request.

Emma bowed her head paying one last kiss to her Queen’s delicate folds before tracing her tongue up the smooth skin of Regina’s abdomen. She felt the brunette tremble under her tongue, every gasp that escaped, each subtle flex of muscle as she explored. Emma was savoring this unprecedented time; fearing it may never happen again. Meeting eyes, Emma was shocked to see vulnerability shining through. “Regina, are you--” Her concern was silenced with a gentle kiss as hands tangled in her hair.

The tender kiss rapidly turned passionate, but it was drastically different from any kiss they had ever shared. Free from the bindings of lustful games of control, both were thrown into pure passion. Regina’s lips silently confessed her growing affection for the blonde, delving deeper and exploring Emma’s mouth. It was a scrap of security Regina could hold on to. The Queen’s hands began to explore, finding a firm grip on Emma’s sides. With a little effort, she guided Emma onto her side. Slipping her hand free, she smoothed it down the front of Emma’s waist. Her other hand caressed the back of the blonde’s neck.

Following suit, Emma brushed her palm over Regina’s hip, firmly pressing it against her Queen’s burning center. Regina traced her fingers over Emma’s swollen folds burying two digits between them. She swallowed the blonde’s moan in a desperate kiss feeling Emma’s skilled fingers enter her just a second after. Both found a quick pace that matched the beating of their hearts. The heat radiating from their mingling breaths fueled their rhythm, driving each thrust harder and deeper into clenching cores.

Reaching the verge of her climax, Regina pushed Emma over the edge first before tumbling after. Both held onto each other trembling against the tides that flowed. Regina broke the kiss, resting her temple against Emma’s. She didn’t dare open her eyes. Sitting up, she faced away from the blonde. Feeling more vulnerable than before Regina finally gained control of her thoughts long enough to speak her command. “Go to your room.” She felt her pet flinch. “Now.” She reaffirmed pointing to the doorway.

Emma heeded the command. Making it to the door, she hesitated, “Regina, I’m sorry.” She didn’t fully understand why she was apologizing, or why she was being thrown out. She could only assume the worst.
Chapter Summary

For the love of god, will you bite your tongue
Before we make you swallow it
It's moments like this where silence is golden
(And then you speak)

Go To Hell, For Heaven Sake - BMTH

Chapter Notes

Okay so it's been a month. How's everyone doing? Still alive? Here's the final chapter to this story. I know you have all been left hanging for a while now so an olive branch I offer up the news that we will be posting Chapter 1 of the next story very very shortly. I owe a great deal of gratitude to therottenappleofeducation, without her this story would never continue. Like always feedback is welcomed. Love you all.

Emma walked in and dropped her suitcase on the tile kitchen floor. ‘I don’t remember this place being so small and soiled. What used to feel homey now feels empty.’ There was an inherent stillness. Only, it wasn’t quiet because Graham’s grunts clawed through the walls. In the past, this would not have bothered Emma, but today. Today was different. Yet more proof that Ruby’s lover now outranked her in importance in the woman’s life. Ruby, the one that found her when she was so strung out she had the shakes and had suffered from night terrors because of Ingrid only to give her the first safe home that required nothing from her, she chose to put him first. Sisters to the end and all that. Right. ‘She used to blow up my phone until she knew where I was, now she isn’t waiting to greet me when I’ve been gone for days.’

She lets out a loud sigh, opened the refrigerator and grabbed a beer. She cracked it open and noticed 10:32 am glaring at her from the clock on the microwave. ‘Fuck it. It’s 5 o’clock somewhere.’ She emptied half the bottle in one tug while leaning on the counter contemplating. Her bedroom was too close to the noisy couple. If she walked that way, she was damn certain that it wouldn’t end well. Anger welled in even the deepest recesses of her spirit. No, this would not be the time. She downed the rest of beer number one and happily grabbed number two. Unhappily noticing there were no more of its siblings or cousins to be had.

After spending the morning on the plane receiving the cold shoulder from Regina as she steadily worked, she was not in the mood to deal with anyone else. Fuck if she could guess what she had
done wrong. At some point, the Queen would make it clear, for now, Emma was dropped at her apartment and commanded to stay home.

She took another sip and moved to the dilapidated couch wondering when it was that she became such a snob about the furniture. Flopping back and wincing, she should have been more careful, but the pain helped keep her grounded. Slowly peeling the label and propping her feet on the coffee table she debated her next move. She reached into her pocket and pulled out the bottle Regina had given her. There were exactly four hydrocodone--enough to get through the next 24 hours if she took them one at a time. She popped two into her mouth and washed them down with the remainder of her beer.

Emma tossed the empty into the nearest trash bin and contemplated the next beer, but that required going out to buy one. ‘So not happening today.’ Then she leaned forward and felt around under the couch knowing it was there. Ruby always kept a bottle hidden for ‘emergencies’ so she wouldn’t have to put down the remote. Emma ignored the tug on her ribs as she found the hidden bottle. Pleased to find a brand new bottle of Mr. Walker’s black label, she ripped it open and tipped it back. She wondered how long it would take for Ruby to notice it was missing.

“Welcome back!” Ruby exited her room smiling from ear to ear until she gets through the hallway. ‘Fuck! I thought she might at least enjoy the afterglow for a few minutes. Don’t really want to do this right now.’ Her side view of Emma blocked the obvious damage.

“Not really fuckin’ feelin’ it right now Rubes.” came the terse reply. She took another pull off the quickly draining bottle.

“You do know it’s still morning--OMG, what happened to your face?” Ruby switched from annoyed to concerned mid-sentence.

“Probably the same fuckin’ thing that happened to our friendship. I know you said you wouldn’t lie for me, but what the actual fuck Ruby. Did you actually have to tell Killian where I was? Did you introduce him to Graham? Why couldn’t you just stay out of it?” Emma’s emotional state was on full display with her words. She hated that the cracking voice and increased volume would highlight how hurt she was for Ruby. Their friendship had taken enough wrong turns through the past few years that Emma knew that Ruby could read her easily.

Ruby sat down on the chair next to Emma. Raising an eyebrow at her, she put her hand out for the bottle. “You buy the next one.” She said tipping it back. Emma watched Ruby consider her words, something foreign for her friend. Ruby was more likely to tell you a hard truth straight to your face.
which is why this moment completely left Emma at odds with what to do with her friend. “Emma, it might not have been the right decision, but you didn’t want to go. You were forced to. Someone needed to be on your side.”

“But, I thought that would be you.” Emma let her thought hang in the air. “Not the first time I’ve been wrong about somebody. Just didn’t think it’d be you.” Her words beginning to slur.

Ruby clenched her jaw, muscles visibly rippling. She shook her head at Emma before taking another drag off the bottle. “So, what do you want to do about it? From the looks of you, I don’t think us sparring at the gym will be solving it this time.”

Emma rolled her eyes. “You don’t even know the half of it.” She stood up and grabbed the bottle back. “And, you have forfeited the right for me to bother sharing. I’m going to take a nap. Make sure you and Mr. Grey keep it down.” She placed the bottle back on the coffee table on her way out.

Ruby half-laughed at the slight. “Me. Quiet, yeah. Not happening, but he’ll be leaving soon. Duty calls or maybe it was just Regina.” Emma knew that last statement was a verbal knife thrown. Just because it hit its mark didn’t mean she had to acknowledge the damage. Ruby could believe it didn’t matter even if it cut right to the heart of who she was. Regina had her dropped at home. ‘I wasn’t even worth sharing a car. Couldn’t get away fast enough. Guess Mr. Grey will be seeing to her needs today.’ Emma broke a little further on her way to her room. ‘Everyone sees when your body bleeds, but your soul—no one ever notices as it drains away.’

Emma gave her roommate one last glare dragging her suitcase toward her own room. Between pain and alcohol her grace had decided to take its leave, causing her to stumble into the wall a time or two which would have been just fine if Graham hadn’t opened Ruby’s room at the wrong moment. Where she had been leaning on the wall as she went, the sudden gap caused her to fall to the side only to be caught by a strong hand.

“Fuck that hurts!” Emma twisted out of his grip and resumed her way to her door only stopping to open it and tossed in her bag. She looked over her shoulder to see Graham studying her. ‘Fuck, now Regina’s going to know I am getting drunk before noon. Might as well do what needs to be done because that cat’s already out of the bag.’ “Hey, before you leave, I need a word.”

Graham walked slowly towards her only for Emma to step to the side to allow him in her room.
“You work for Regina. I know that. I accept that. I expect you to report everything to Regina and only her. But, you don’t get to tell Killian shit about what I am doing. And, I don’t want Ruby to be told a fucking thing about anything that happens to me from here on. I am NOT her business anymore. Even if I am fucking dead in a ditch on the side of the road, she does NOT get told. Are we clear?”

Graham prepared to argue, but Emma just raised a hand.

“Trust me. Your info that you passed on to Killian has not made her very happy with you. I am not asking you for special treatment. I am telling you to butt the fuck out of my life.”

Graham nodded once and turned for the door. “Just so you know, I didn’t tell him anything. I told Ruby. Turns out, I shouldn’t have. But, I don’t want to keep secrets from her anymore.”

“I am not asking for you to keep a secret. I am telling you not to discuss me. EVER.” Graham looked resigned and irritated. He eventually nodded. “I have to be leaving. You know how much Regina hates to be kept waiting.” Emma nodded her response and let him go.

Before he shut the door, he asked, “Do you need me to pass on any messages?”

Emma glared at him. “I got the impression that she has had enough of me for a while. Maybe for good. Who the fuck can tell?” She didn’t fight the sadness that would be obvious even to a blind man. Without waiting for him to shut the door, she stripped off her jacket and began on her shirt buttons effectively dismissing him. She had learned a lot from Regina over the last day. Orders can be given in absolute silence even without specific directives.

Emma stripped to just panties and tossed on her Black Parade concert t-shirt that had seen too many laundry days. Between the pills and the whiskey, she was certain she could spend some quality time with the Sandman, so she gracelessly tossed herself onto the quilt. She grabbed the other side of it and made herself into the human burrito and hoped slumber would silence her harshest critic, her own mind.

“Stay still!” Ingrid spanked her hard. Emma knew that she would have bruises from her mother tomorrow, but at least she could prove someone loved her. Someone cared enough to correct her when she disappointed. Before Ingrid, she didn’t get corrected, just thrown away like the trash that she really was. Only Ingrid said she had potential to be something more.
She didn’t like being sprawled over the large ottoman with her pants down around her ankles. She considered herself too old for a spanking, but Ingrid didn’t agree. She didn’t have to.

“Repeat the assignment back to me. This time don’t skip any details.”

She concentrated hard. “Neal and I were to sneak in the upstairs window where Lily left it open for us. You wanted us to copy the hard drive on his personal computer. Create an open access point for your future use and get out.”

Ingrid swatted her two more times in quick succession. “So tell me, why were his personal photographs all over the internet this morning. I told you I wanted to take him down my way.” The coldness in Ingrid’s voice went beyond anything she had ever heard before.

“Neal and I were just playing around.”

She halted her words as a sharp pain twisted. Ingrid’s sharp nail had found one of the tears in the skin her ring had created as she spanked Emma. Emma’s breath came out in sharp pants as she tried to get control over her tongue once again. Ingrid twisted her nail in deeper. Emma felt blood trickling down her butt.

“He had a huge stack of photographs. And, I was snorting and sorting files for you so that his downfall could be fast. We had almost all the properties’ GPS locations connected to the monies paid. We didn’t do anything else.” Emma gulped loudly. She was lying. She knew it. Ingrid knew it. But, she was sick of this game. At least this time she didn’t feel dirty from who she had to touch, but even though Bae said the man’s lifestyle was sick, she couldn’t help but notice that at this moment her hands were tied. Her legs were spread, pants down and her ass was bright red. How is this different? Less leather? No ball gag? No sex afterwards?

Ingrid grabbed her by the hair and pulled the girl until they were nearly nose to nose. She wrapped one hand around her throat and squeezed. “I told you what would happen if you failed me you worthless piece of crap.” White spots flickered at the edge of her vision. As a syringe was shoved in a vein, her heart pounded.
She fought her way free of the quilt only to try to draw a complete breath. She remembered the first time Ingrid literally stopped her heart intentionally. Emma remembered being revived laying on that floor a crying mess. That was the day she knew she was expendable. All talents aside, Ingrid didn’t really need her at all. She could go find another orphan and teach them the same skill set. She had done it before, and Emma was sure she had done it again after her departure. Ingrid had been very clear about how replaceable they all were. None of her ‘‘children’’ had any more importance for her than a repairman might have for his hammer. They were tools be used, not loved.

It was the day she realized Bae wasn’t her boyfriend; he was doing what Ingrid told him to do--make sure Emma stays. It was also the day she knew she had to run. Her survival required it. It took another six months of planning and making Bae believe a lie, but then she became a ghost.

Her tongue felt like it was glued to the roof of her mouth as she made her way unsteadily down the hall for a glass of water. She missed Regina’s smell. The way she played with Emma’s curls when she thought she was sleeping. And, her kind smile as she made sure Emma stayed medicated and hydrated and it had only been half a day. ‘‘God, when did I get so fuckin’ pathetic.’’ She grabbed a glass from the cabinet and filled it. She drained it almost as fast and repeated the process. The refrigerator contained leftover pizza still in the box which would have been better with more beer, but of course, there wasn’t anymore. She shuffled slowly to the couch carrying her water and the pizza. Netflix and chill solo style appealed to her.

Two pieces later, and her water had been ignored to spend more time with her good friend Mr. Walker. She had been worried Ruby would remove the bottle, but good old Rubes didn’t feel like changing habits that much. Another hydrocodone later and she was too numb to care to put on pants so she could open the door to whoever the asshole was that wouldn’t quit banging on it.

Without bothering to look, Emma knew her molester. “Killian, I don’t fucking want to talk to you. Leave.”

“Come on Swan. You know this isn’t my fault. If you would have just answered your damn phone. What do I have to do to prove to you that I am crazy about you? I could have saved you.”

‘Crazy. That might not be that far off.’ Emma tiredly swayed in place thinking. “How could you have saved me? It’s not like you know Mal, right? She is just a stranger to you, isn’t she?’’ She shouts through the door knowing the truth. He doesn’t even have to confirm it for her. He’s the snake she didn’t see.’

His silence confirms her suspicion.
“Go away. We can do this when I feel up to dealing with you.” She makes sure the deadbolt is still in place and walks off. Emma turns her head thinking she hears his footsteps retreating. She stops in the kitchen to get another hydrocodone and washes it down with some more Jimmy. She lets Black Mirror resume and hopes her day would just disappear.

Emma isn’t sure how much time has passed, but the ‘are you still watching’ box has appeared on the screen. She tries to determine what had woken her when she hears keys being pulled from the door followed by the door closing.

Wiping a little drool from her face as she struggled to right herself she said, “Hey Rubes, I hope you didn’t want the rest of the pizza.”

“No thanks love, I already ate. Unless, you are on the menu.”

Emma rocked forward alarmed that Killian’s voice responded. Her head swam a little with the motion. ‘Maybe the HC and Jimmy wasn’t the best idea I’ve had of late.’
“What the fuck are you doing here?” Emma hated that it sounded like a drunken teenager was speaking.

Killian’s grin turns ugly. “You’ve been totally ignoring me for days. Weeks even. I think you owe me some facetime.” Killian stalked toward the couch angrily. Emma disliked his attitude; she liked the way his gaze devoured her naked legs even less. “The Evil Queen can have you, Mal can have you, but somehow the nice guy isn’t good enough. How is that fair? I held you when you asked. I took you out. I gave you friends. I did so much for you. And, what do I get in return? I get friend-zoned.”

Emma pulled the blanket from the back of the couch over her legs. “How do you expect to compete if you have to demand my attention? Would it, could it ever be fair?”

Her facial expression gave away her thoughts--he had officially achieved pathetic.

“Dude, in order to get friend-zoned, we have to fucking be friends.” Emma’s voice cracked as the truth came through. She tried, but she never really thought of him except when he was right in front
of her. He didn’t leave her begging for more, and he didn’t command respect like her Queen. “Friends warn you about psycho bitches that want to tear you apart.”

She stops for a moment waiting for an excuse or defense. He doesn’t even look remorseful.

“Friends don’t share private information without permission. Friends don’t spend your entire relationship playing you. Friends don’t expect anything in return that is why they are friends. Real friends can read you. They know you. And, you fucking well don’t know me.” Emma stared straight into Killian’s eyes looking for confirmation.

As the steel walls went up in his eyes, she knew she had hit the nail perfectly. She stepped unsteadily toward him poking him in the chest to emphasize each word “So, how long have you worked for the psycho bitch?”

“I bet you never even chose me. I was a god damned fucking assignment. You didn’t care. You still don’t. You're just pissed that I chose her.”

He backhanded her across the mouth causing Emma to drop the blanket and land backwards on her butt like a toddler. Killian then stared incredulously at his own betraying hand.

“Is that all you got Mr. Nice Guy, beating up on an already battered woman?” Emma started laughing hysterically. She couldn’t stop the horrible guffaws as they ripped from her throat. Crying from the pain in her ribs escalating, but the longer she stared at this weak excuse for a man the more she wondered how had she ever been fooled. She now saw the falseness in every motion. He was an actor; she should be able to recognize one since Ingrid had taught her to be one of the best. She could hear Ingrid’s words loud and clear, ‘Always be the strongest in the room. Even when you’re not, act like it, and they will believe it. Strength is found in standing up to the perceived strongest. Grab them by the balls and demand respect. You can convince them that you are stronger–always.’ That lesson came with her first concussion. Ingrid had her beaten until she was unrecognizable, but then she had done what she was told and destroyed the man. Literally.

Killian snapped his fingers in front of Emma’s face bringing her back to the here and now. “Swan let me help you. Emma, please just let me explain. Let me show you how good we could be. Won’t you just give me the same chance that you are giving Regina? I can be everything you ever wanted.” Sincerity rang through in his words, but Emma just shook her head at him. She wasn’t buying any more of his bullshit. The costume of Sweet Little Emma had been permanently dropped. She couldn’t be her anymore.
From her vantage point she heard the door opening again, but she again wrongly assumed it was Ruby.

“Fuck it all, Killian. You could never be what I want. And you for damn sure can’t be what I need if you were I wouldn’t have bowed before the Evil Queen who turns out to be more than I ever hoped for. She is everything. And so much more than I deserve, but maybe just maybe I will learn to be better. So, get the fuck out of my home. And, it would be great if you could fucking stay out of my life.” She said wiping the blood from the corner of her mouth as she struggled to get her feet back beneath her. Still, unsteady, but less embarrassed by her insufficient clothing.

“She can’t fuck you like I can.” He tossed at her.

“You would believe that. Dude, I have never tried you. But, she satisfied every craving I have. There is no point in me trying someone else. She ruined that for me. She’s perfect. She fucked me like the fucking goddess she is, so leave me the fuck alone.” Emma fell back to the floor again, and then her giggling began again. “You know she really is a god damned Evil Queen in all the best ways.” The sweetest drunken smile plastered to her face as she started sliding closer to the floor.

Emma barely registered a small scuffle while she allowed her eyes to slowly close. Her head grew heavier. Gravity pulled her down as sleep once again tried to claim her.

“Pet. Sit up precious.” Her Queen sounded warm, comforting even.

Emma’s eyes opened seconds after having slammed closed. She struggled up to her knees. If Regina had truly wanted her in her submissive pose, this was a sad attempt at best.

Her Queen walked closer taking a hold of her chin and using it to straighten her posture.

“Now, Miss Swan, what am I going to do with you? Is this proper attire for guests?”

Emma drunkenly shook her head no. “I didn’t let him in. He had keys?” She narrowed her eyes trying to regain her coordination that seemed to be worsening. “But if it’s for you, I can wear less.”
She gave an impish grin while trying to remain balanced.

Emma’s vision blurred as she fought hard to stay awake. “This is the second time you’ve rescued me, my Queen. I can’t wait to show you how grateful I am when I’m all better.” Emma attempted coyness, but Regina’s facial expression showed only relieved humor leaving Emma a little disappointed.

As the smile fell from her face, the realization that Killian knew about what happened on the plane between her, Regina and Mal finally filtered through her inebriated mind. “He knew. He fucking knew.” she raged to herself.

Her Queen looked worriedly at her pet. “Language pet. Curtail your tongue.” She sighed knowing that she would hate what she hears next. “Who knew what dearest?”

“About the fun, we had on the plane, he knew both of you had me. I didn’t tell him. And, you wouldn’t tell him. So, how could he know that unless she told him?” Emma tried to be articulate, but she was fairly certain everything she had said came out as an elongated slur.

Emma blinked back tears as sobs tore at her body words still coming out garbled. “She wants something from me. She is after me for something I did in another lifetime.” A rather confused Regina tried to console her pet wrapping arms around her shaking body, still on her knees.

Emma very carefully spoke “I used to be a very, very bad girl. And, I was so good at it until I got lost along the way. I couldn’t be who mother wanted.” Regina looked doubtfully down at Emma. “Now, I am doing it again. I’m not what you want either.” Emma began curling in on herself. Turning the loathing of Killian inward. ‘When will I ever be good enough’

“Darling. Look at me. I promise you that you are not bad.” Regina waited for bleary, sad eyes to focus on her face. “We need to put some pants on you, so we can get you out of here. It obviously isn’t safe if he was able to get in without you opening the door. You need to be some place with security and a doorman. You need protection if even half what you say is true. I promised you I would take care of you. I want to take care of you. So, let me fulfill my end of our contract. Let’s get you dressed. Graham will collect your things. You can stay with me until your new condo is ready.”

“Condo?” Emma stood on wobbly legs trying to comprehend what she was just told. “I thought
after our flight that you were getting tired of me, and you find me a condo?’ ‘She wouldn’t even look at me on the plane, but now she’s giving me real estate.’

Regina took her by the hand like a child, “You are going to have to show me where your room is; I have never been here before.” Emma nodded nervously never loosening the grip on her hand. When she came to the open door to her room, she stepped back and motioned for Regina to enter first secretly thankful that she had given it a thorough cleaning when she should have been packing. Her travel clothes could be seen at the top of the laundry hamper, but other than the quilt being disheveled her room was at its cleanest.

Emma thrilled at Regina’s facial expressions. She felt approval more than anything. But, for now, it would be enough.

The following morning a sore and sober Emma left the guest room precisely at 7:50 dressed in tailored pin stripe slacks, french cuffed button down and a matching vest as she had been told to do. When Regina appeared at the bottom of the steps 10 minutes later, Emma knelt on the floor as any good pet should; her hangover secreted away. Her Queen should not have to tolerate her stupidity. Emma maintained her position to perfection. Regina straightened Emma’s collar and brushed a few errant strands of hair to better positioning. Emma knew the adjustments were unnecessary. Her Queen showered her with affection without having to call it that. Neither were ready to address their growing attachment verbally.

“Come precious, you haven’t eaten yet.” Regina led her by the hand to a small dining table that already had breakfast dishes and coffee prepared with two places set. Immediately Regina went to her chair at the head of the table. Emma waited for a moment again trying to discern her place. She dropped to her knees at Regina’s side and waited.

Her Queen turned to look at her pet. She tipped Emma’s chin higher so their eyes would meet. “I appreciate that you know that this is your place, but that chair is yours. It only belongs to you. If you wish to eat at this table, I would like you to sit in it.” Emma fought tears as she stood and took her place at Regina’s side. Feeling overwhelmed and confused, she kept her head down and began to eat methodically cutting her omelet. ‘She finds me stoned and drunk off my ass, and yet today I have a place at the table. I don’t think I will ever understand this woman.’

Regina cleared her throat. “Today is going to be interesting for us, you more so than me. When we
were at the banquet, Mr. Hyde made it be known that you are being promoted. You are going to be the Assistant to the Director over August and company. Mr. Hyde hasn’t created the title yet. The position was created specifically for you so that you could not only manage the team, but fix the software. I believe he intends for you to streamline the process so that next time there is a glitch in the code it doesn’t take six months for someone to notice.” Emma sat thunderstruck at this news not knowing how to react. This was far better than she could have hoped, but now she works directly under Regina. How is this going to look in the office?

Emma looked up into Regina’s eyes uncertainty shining clearly. “Killian should be removed from your floor before we get there, but realize he still works for the company. He will be transitioned back to Maleficent before too long. But, for now, you shouldn’t have to deal with him.”

Regina pushed her chair back and stood. Emma wanted to follow suit, but Regina held out a hand stopping her. Emma, unaware of what Regina was doing chose to take a sip of her coffee and let Regina’s words sink in. Moments later she heard the distinctive click on the floor behind her. Cool hands slipped around her neck putting a tight cold piece of metal that Regina clasped behind her neck. “I thought this might help remind you that you are mine.” Regina buried her nose in the hair at the crown of Emma’s hair placing a gentle kiss there and taking a deep inhale.

Emma’s soft “thank you” went unacknowledged.

Regina paused and cleared her throat. Anxiety danced across her face for a moment. “Today and every day are going to be difficult for you. Please understand that Mary Margaret will not be your friend. She and Maleficent have been friends since before I knew either of them. Killian has known Mary Margaret for at least five years. You will be the odd man out. I suspect an enemy.”

Emma didn’t argue. She had begun to believe MM to be a good friend after the advice she had given her. But, then again she had been forceful and demanding about how she expected Emma to handle the situation. She was having a hard enough time trying to imagine MM as an enemy. Then again, poodles are better attack dogs than dobermans. Who would predict that?

Upon arrival to the offices, Regina commanded Emma to go fix their coffees while she made a quick phone call. Leaving Regina in the atrium at the entrance level, Emma stepped onto the first elevator and headed for the executive level break-room. If Regina wanted a double macchiato, she would have one. Emma laughed to herself. Who knew all of that ridiculous training Ingrid gave her would have found a use? Emma had often thought Ingrid instructed them on how to do too many things that would never be of use. The older she became, the more she realized she had used almost every single one of those “trivial” lessons.
As she expected, the break room contained only the secretaries and assistants of the executives, not a single executive in sight. Emma found the appropriate coffee cups. They were precisely where Regina had said they would be. Emma wondered, not for the first time, how Regina had time to see to so many minute details.

“So the rumor is true.” Mary Margaret’s voice held no warmth. And, for the first time Emma realized that the sugary sweet woman she had known didn’t really exist. Yet another actor to be found in the Neverland Financial Group, land of the fake friends.

“Mr. Hyde was impressed with my presentation on what was wrong in customer service. So, yes it is true. I have been promoted.” Emma smirked knowing that was not what MM had been implying.

“Right. Congratulations.” MM sounded doubtful at best. “Look Emma. I just want to apologize. I know I helped push you toward Killian. I have known him for a long time. He has always been a bit of a ladies’ man. I had no idea he was becoming so obsessive. I heard that he had hit you, but I didn’t realize you had to get stitches you poor dear.” MM continued to blather on as Emma finished their beverages tuning out most of her words. ‘At least I know her sources aren’t all that accurate.’ She only caught the vague promises to run interference and that MM would keep that ‘vile man’ away from her until he returned to Chicago. Internally Emma was biting back the thoughts that wanted to level MM where she stood.

“Well, thanks for everything Mary.” Emma cringed inside wondering what this woman had ever actually done for her. She picked up the coffees and headed off toward the elevator, unfortunately, MM continued to talk at her back the whole way.

“Emma don’t be a stranger even though you don’t work for me anymore, but since you and Regina are...ummm. What I mean to say is that these office romances aren’t completely frowned on. Just look at Belle and Mr. Gold.” Emma nodded uncomfortably hoping to escape faster rather than listen longer

She pushed the button for Regina’s floor and relaxed in the empty cube thankful to have one more box checked. MM won’t be dealing be a severe issue, or at least she doesn’t seem so. She quietly sang along with the muzak of the elevator; appropriately it was playing a rather loathsome version of Queen’s “Another One Bites the Dust.”

Less than an hour later when they entered the floor together, Emma could feel the stares and hear whispers which may or may not have existed. Emma walked passed her old cubicle that had been emptied prior to her arrival. She floated just behind the Queen headed straight for the door that led to
her space and her new people. As much as she hated the quiet that announced her arrival to her old section of cubeville, nothing prepared her for the round of applause as she entered her new work zone. August stood at the forefront.

“Guys, I told you she was different. We are finally going to get the software out of the beta version into something that works!” August declared with a huge grin.

Regina stepped forward as the daytime team of 45 surrounded them. “Ladies and gentlemen, as I am sure you have heard we have created a new position. Ms. Swan is who you will directly report to. If you have any software concerns that seem to be repeating, bring it to her immediately. At this time she will spend a few days going over the code to fix the current flaw. But, as you and I both know, there will be more than one. Every update seems to create a new glitch. Please take any concern for our software directly to her. I cannot tell you how proud you have made me. Mr. Hyde asked me to congratulate you on the work you have done. Thank you.” With that, Regina gave Emma a small wink and walked out leaving her standing in front of a newly glassed-in office and a lot of expectant workers with no idea where to begin.

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