infinites

by ERNest

Summary

So many things can happen in a moment.
Regina sees that her mother loves her and that is all she ever wanted. More than Daniel, more than her father, maybe she wanted this for longer than Henry. For the longest of fractional moments, she thinks that maybe this is what it means to be happy, really and truly. But suddenly it all goes wrong. Gold stops bleeding, and her mother is falling, and she can do nothing but catch her and bring her gently to the ground. This painful eternity lasts so much longer than the one just before it, because it could be her mother’s last. She holds onto her mother like she once held her son after he skinned his knee and it isn’t right that a daughter should have to comfort her mother like this. “This would have been enough,” Cora says wonderingly, “You would have been enough,” and while it hurts her that this should come as a surprise, she is grateful to know that in this last moment her mother cares for her. But then she realizes that before she dies, she has time to remove the thing that is slowly and steadily killing her. This forever stretches out the longest of all because this is the one in which she must make a choice. She can lose this woman just when she is finally, achingly, her mother, or she can save the life of someone who doesn’t love her, now that she’s actually had a taste of something she’s needed for as long as she can remember. Whatever she does, or doesn’t do, she will be losing, and she doesn’t think she can stand to see her mother look at her with such coldness ever again. But whatever choice she might have had, she makes it too late because Cora is nearly gone from her now. She scrabbles at the walls of consciousness and sanity, begging her mother to stay with her, even though it’s so far impossible to be a dream. This ragged grief doesn’t go away and it doesn’t matter how hard she wishes or who she rages at, because it will not bring her mother back to her.
Weakness

Regina is full, finally, of every emotion that ever mattered. She will never be neglected again and they can start a family, and put the world back together. But then the world falls apart, her family is gone, she's never been so alone, nor so empty. "Mommy" her heart is breaking and for once she understands why her mother always went without "Mommy, don't leave me" It's like a weakness that spreads to her lungs because she can't gulp in enough air. "Mommy, come back"

Most days, Regina doesn't know how to do anything but lose, and it happens over and over into forever o'clock. But she is a survivor and so she has learned how to convert the ache between her ribs into the most successful of hollow victories. "Oh look," she smirks, "I can have everything."

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