

17 - A Night of Celebration

While the tv continued to play, Emily busied herself with inspecting just how squishy Pip was. Like a diligent scientist, she'd poke and prod him all over, curious to see just how long it'd take for the dents she'd cause to slowly regenerate and erase any trace of her own impact.

Despite being nearly completely naked, Joyce always knew how to keep the apartment regulated. Apart from the occasional shift which would cause her diaper to crinkle, causing her emotions to get a little warmer than she'd have liked, she was overall content. How couldn't she be? Everything today was about her, and even if it weren't her birthday, she'd still feel like the center of Joyce's universe. At times, yes, it could be a little overwhelming, but compared to her initial feelings, when she first walked through her door--correction, when she first woke up in her guest bed, she now had an odd sense of normalcy...

She was in a bubble, as best as she could describe it. Her own little oasis she was just beginning to think of as her own. By large and far, it all belonged to Joyce, but so did Emily, too... Even if it wasn't the most adult and responsible thing to do, nor was her current behavior, someone watching over her had such a positive ring to it.

Then, for no explicit reason whatsoever, what'd been hanging over their heads the entire day suddenly sat atop her shoulder; an immovable weight which pinned her worries and nerves deep into her flesh, and near-snapping her spine. Such a pointless and relatively insignificant fear had grown and festered into an insurmountable monster that glared its teeth at the girl. As inside Emily's head as Joyce's reassurances and she herself was, a person can never be fully convinced unless it's by their own conviction.

The irrationalities always knew just when the big and scary Joyce was scarce, because it was then Emily could feel them breathing down her neck, staring her down like lasers on an ice cube on a hot Summer's day. A poor, and cheesy analogy, she knew, but time after time had proven she wasn't exactly the best thinker...

The first thing they'd think of her was what a freeloader she was. How some stranger could leech off of their hardworking daughter, take advantage of her kindness, indirectly spend her money, be spoiled rotten, eat her food, take up her bedspace, waste gas, take up bath water, breathe the same air as--

The room started to feel a bit hotter than she would have liked, and slipped Pip a little bit forward just to give her face something to bury itself into. Something to cool down her overheated gears. Her feet strained into the cushy, oversized cushions of the couch as she made a

small, apprehensive whimper. Pointless worrying was exactly how it was called: pointless. Even still, it didn't stop her from feeling that way. Maybe from the right perspective their relationship was understandable, but how could you explain this sort of dynamic to rational, everyday people? Something was bound to slip, or be misinterpreted as something that'd sour their image. Her parents had no real control over what Joyce or Emily did, but they could certainly make them feel sore about it.

And the diapers. Oh, the diapers. The nursery, toys, bottles, pacifiers, bibs; all of it. As far as Emily saw it, they were in a war zone right now, and they were supposed to make it look like paradise again in less than 24 hours. She knew the nursery door was lockable, but to even consider the thought at being revealed nearly made Emily want to take off her diaper right then. All that'd protect them from certain demise was a visual obstruction and a block of wood just a few inches thick. Her cushy underwear was starting to feel less than ideal.

That'd disappoint Joyce, though... And as much as she hated the idea, she tried to ignore her constant, inner nagging about how to "better herself." On the grand scheme, Emily'd like to think that she'd never been steered wrong by Joyce before, even if there had been certainly trying times. She truly was an emotional pillar for the girl. Before, she may have considered the gesture fickle, and something she couldn't wholly lean on, but after how she'd been emotionally distraught again and again, and made whole once more by such an unyielding, powerful force, Emily might as well have thrown herself at the safety net Joyce was.

Emily didn't think the feeling of guilt would ever leave her, or would at least take an extremely long time to. The feeling that she could never contribute as an equal. Case and point being her naked self snuggling with her personal stuffed toy on another person's couch. Somehow in Joyce's world though, this equated to probably the thousands of dollars she'd already spent on her. And to top it off, Emily thanked her in wet and messy diapers? A harsh stretch, she knew, but it wasn't framed as a belittlement of Joyce's desires, rather a mocking of Emily's personal shortcomings. Joyce had everything she could ever need, with the money and power to satisfy any other trivial gap. All Emily brought to the table was herself, and even at that she need not forget how the only she table she came near was the one meant for changing diapers, as well as needing to be carried to it.

The worst of it all was how Emily enjoyed it. Certain parts, at least, as she desperately hoped Joyce cleaned her bottom well... But the fact remained that she derived pleasure from everything else. She didn't feel like she was allowed to. She hadn't earned it. How was it fair that she not only got to feed off of what Joyce did for her, but what she also did for Joyce? She was eating three-quarters of a fifty-fifty deal. But of course, that's what Joyce wanted: Emily to be her

happy baby. But the give and take were so seemingly lopsided, it still felt like she was shortchanging the woman.

This is about the time Joyce would come to cheer me up... Passively, she thought, then briefly became wide-eyed over such a thought escaping her. How much of a dependent had she become? She wanted to feel like a big girl--an adult, more than anything right now. Stumbling over the passive effect Joyce's matronly vibe has had on her forced an annoyed smirk. Unashamedly, and not even stopping to question it, she felt herself wanting to be intimate with Joyce, just not in this way. It was all just so...confusing. As if she were trying to shake the verbal ideas outside her head and into the physical plane, she let out a deep, annoyed sigh.

Her hands grew restless, as they fondled Pip's face and pressed into the cushions. Flustered all over, she nearly jumped when a cool, burst of air hit her neck.

A small 'eep' of surprise escaped her when she jumped, and despite being all crinkles, turned her head poutily back to the culprit, the one she'd just been thinking so fondly of. Clearly this'd dock them a few brownie points...

Joyce, known far too well for her mischief merely giggled at the sight, and kneeled by the couch, casually working her hands into Emily's back muscles and shoulders.

"This doesn't mean I forgive you, y-" she was about to say, until an involuntary gasp erupted from a particularly tense spot. A knot in her muscles had just been untied, and the physical fatigue she never knew she had, suspended by a simple cord had been released in one simple stroke. She resigned herself to playfully angry murmurs after that.

"I just finished making arrangements for my mom and dad," Joyce explained whilst she stroked Emily's lower back, with the pinky of her splayed hand just teasing the elastic waistband of her diaper. Emily looked onwards, focusing herself on the sweet sensations exploding from inside her body. Who knew a basic massage could be so euphoric?

"And what time are they coming again?"

"Noon, I think she said." Joyce then looked a bit more thoughtfully at Emily. "Are you gonna be okay with this?"

"Of course," and even if she wasn't, the thought was unthinkable to be a fresh set of eyes in Joyce's life, and already create a wedge between she and her parents. "I'm just..." she always dreaded repeating herself, because that just meant Joyce hadn't done a good job of solving these

problems in the first place. “I’m nervous…” From the cheeks down she was absorbed by Pip’s figure.

“I’ll be there with you every step of the way, okay? You’re my big, strong girl, and you’re also my significant other,” Joyce then laid part of herself on Emily. “You’re special to me, and I want you to be okay around my family.” Maybe it wasn’t so much of even that. Joyce simply saw it as another sign of validation that what they had was genuine. By introducing her parents, it deepened the connection they had; intertwined Emily’s life with hers.

“We’ll get you *all* prim and proper tomorrow,” Joyce gleefully cooed. “They’ll see what a pretty princess you are~!”

Emily knew it was probably teasing, but further emotion was channeled into her back, this time being an uncomfortable chill.

“Joyce!” Emily whined, finally looking back.

“I know, I know. I’m just kidding,” her upbeat tone seemed to have reeled itself in, as she assumed her complacent self. “You’ll be your big girl self tomorrow.”

It wasn’t quite like how Emily would have liked to put it, but it was in the right direction, at least. She tried to find the state of comfort she was in before Joyce’s teasing, but she really didn’t know what to do with herself right now.

“Are we gonna start cleaning up soon?”

“I’ll work at my own pace, sweetie,” Joyce both answered and simultaneously corrected Emily’s question and self-inclusion.

Just the same for Emily, it both stirred positive and negative emotions within her. How Joyce could shoulder so much was completely and totally beyond her, but she never wanted to add to Joyce’s workload if she could help it. Then again, she’d already done that so much already, was she even allowed to feel bad about it anymore?

“Trust me,” came the two-word command that Emily never seemed to not follow, “they won’t notice a thing.”

“And if they do?” Such a worrywart, Emily was.

“They won’t.”

“But still...!”

“Then if that happens, which it won’t, but if the impossible does happen,” finally inching forward to come eye to eye with Emily, “we’ll deal with it then.”

It was a less than fantastic response, and even if it were backed by Joyce’s confidence, the response to Emily felt painfully empty. That’s what someone would say if they weren’t planning for the worst. That always meant the worst *was* going to happen. The House always wins, and fate always knows how to screw a person over in the end. It probably wasn’t true, or so Emily would like to think, but she couldn’t help but feel that superstition would do them in by the end of this visit.

“But let’s forget about the silly stuff,” Joyce ushered, casually dismissing a very not silly and in fact very serious thing. “Did you feel okay about what just happened?” Once and in a long while, just like this time, Joyce looked dreadfully serious, ensuring no misinterpretation of joking could emerge.

Emily knew exactly what she was referring to. She could still feel the smell etched into her nostrils... Poking at recent wounds didn’t feel great at all, but she sorrowfully responded.

“Truthfully...not great,” Emily gave a small frown. “It’s hard, and...it stinks...” both figuratively and literally. It was taking a lot just not to cry from it right now. “Is it like that everytime?” She stared at Joyce, fearing for the worst.

“No, honey, no, it gets easier, I promise,” Joyce soothed. To be honest, she was a little surprised and glad to see Emily take to this so well. Really, she wasn’t, but compared to Joyce’s expectations of outright refusal, this went leaps and bounds beyond that. And now she had Emily’s precious trust and encouragement to move forward with. If she needed to take certain, reasonable steps, that was now expected of her. She’d do anything to ease Emily’s pain.

“Is there anything we can do to stop the smell?” Emily’s nostrils already twitched in unfortunate memory, given that she was the one who had the thing around her hips.

“Maybe, but I can’t make any promises,” Joyce glumly replied. She didn’t want to say something like ‘you get used to it,’ because even if she might, that wasn’t how she wanted to solve the problem. The diapers themselves already worked wonders on the smell factor, but maybe a little

more powder in the future couldn't hurt as well... And she hated to sound selfish in even her own thoughts, but a foul smell was also a helpful indicator for when a change was in order too...

Then, in a stroke of brilliance, a wonderful idea overcame Joyce.

"Oh! I think I know of a way to help."

Curiously, Emily looked over.

"But it involves when you use the toilet as a grown-up, okay?"

"I'm *not* wearing diapers for when I need to use the bathroom." ...Not as an adult, at least...

"No, no, I don't mean that," Joyce calmed, though she still acknowledged it as a perfectly acceptable avenue. "I was getting at bringing Pip with you to the bathroom."

"P...Pip?" She looked down on the toy, half-expecting his inanimate eyes to stare back up to her in disbelief as well. "What does he have to do with any of this?"

"There's nothing to it," Joyce simply explained. "When you go and use the bathroom," she helped Emily stand on her knees on the couch, then firmly secured the mochi ball in her arms. "Give him a nice, biig squeeze, okay?" As if to demonstrate, she helped her arms squish the little guy firmly to her stomach.

"But I don't get how that..."

"You'll see later on. Don't think about it too much. Just start doing that for me, okay?"

Awkwardly, Emily agreed, though she still didn't get how a stuffed toy played into all of this. She stared at Pip questioningly. What had she done to him? Rather, how much did she pay to buy him off? She side-eyed the seemingly innocent friend. Innocent for now...

"Apart from that," Joyce briefly spoke, taking the remote from the table, then killed the noise from the tv. "We went *way* past your tv limit." She stroked the top of Emily's head. "Your brain is far too sweet to go rotten from stuff like this!" Her tickles inevitably caused Emily to giggle.

"Then what else am I supposed to do?" amidst her giggles, Emily somehow managed to cry in a writhing, wonderful frustration.

“Well, seeing as you’re all tuckered out from your toys, maybe you’ll help me make dinner? Huh? Sound good to you?” Chuckling, letting the excitement rise and fall in her own voice, she didn’t stop her tickles until Emily pleaded yes and yes, begging for her to stop. The larger woman’s strength came into play, as she held Emily firm despite wriggling so strongly, it just proved that Joyce was stronger.

She stood Emily on the ground, who was still wiping away her tears. Tears that were induced for all the right reasons. Then, Pip, who was being used to give her some sense of modesty, was taken from her then set on the couch.

“No pouting,” Joyce said, as if it were a reminder, and every inch of Emily’s body apart from her nether regions were on display. “Mommy needs a special helper, and we can’t have Pip getting dirty.” It was a silly excuse for telling Emily to forget her modesty at the door, but it helped her move along with things.

Watching Joyce in her jeans and sweater was making Emily awfully reminiscent of her own clothes, even if they were just a onesie and a dress... She wasn’t supposed to feel bad about this though. She was supposed to be okay with it. She was supposed to accept the flow of everything. At times it was hard, and others, simply conflicting over how she could go along with it so easily. Was she supposed to resist? She tried not to give it much thought during their walk down the hall. Once in the kitchen, Joyce had Emily stand over by the counter.

“Eyes closed,” Joyce instructed.

Then, Emily smirked, challenging, “Oh? And if I don’t?”

Then, Joyce with a smile responded in an almost deathly serious voice, “Then that’ll be a timeout in the highchair.”

Emily was already holding back a giggle, one that would be sounded as soon as she heard the ridiculous, or funny response. But when it came out and she fully processed the words, nervousness affected her laugh more than anything else.

“Y...you’re kidding, right?”

“Do you want to find out?” Joyce looked back to Emily as if a mama tiger were expecting her cub to get feisty. Then when the fabricated tension finally lingered for a few moments too long, Joyce pulled her in for a hug. “Silly, of course I wouldn’t punish you,” she then slipped an apron over Emily’s neck, then said, “well, only if you do something *really* naughty. But, you’re my

good girl, so I know that won't happen." She walked behind Emily to tie the apron, and while the girl gulped, and tried to focus on avoiding punishment, the apron felt fit and snug around her waist. She felt her hair being bunched into the loose bun, and she twiddled her thumbs while she waited for prep to finish.

Joyce had been looking forward to this since she last thought of it. They both had cooked, but never together, and never as a mom and daughter. She already had her own apron on, and was just finishing the final touches on Emily's hair. No matter how she looked, she was always irresistibly adorable. Emily may have considered it a curse, but Joyce found it to be a bountiful blessing.

"All done," Joyce steered her over to the cabinets while she took out a cutting board. "I need you to find me a pot and fill it up with some water, okay?"

With confidence, Emily shook her head yes, and so did the bun of hair behind her head. Joyce bit her lower lip, trying her best not to smother her again. They were stored in the lower cabinets, and Joyce couldn't help but watch her padded rump slouch over while the owner of it searched diligently for such a simple thing. It was the prospect of helping that had Emily so engaged, as well as being able to cook with Joyce. Maybe she could even pick up a thing or two...

While she filled the pot with water in the sink, Joyce grabbed all the vegetables she needed from the fridge, stepping behind Emily, washing them under the stream.

"Is this much good?" Emily asked, eyeing the level carefully. Normally she wasn't so anal about something so trivial, but she felt the need to be so persnickety given she was working by Joyce's standards now.

"That much is fine. Be careful when you move it to the stove, okay?" Joyce suddenly didn't sound so jokey anymore, as she watched Emily move the heavy, jostling pot of water. She nearly let out a sigh of relief once it touched the stove. Not that she didn't trust Emily, but she didn't want her getting hurt on her watch. She needed to remind herself that Emily *was* a functioning adult at times like these. She could get a bit *too* into her role.

"Now come and watch Mommy chop," she brought Emily to her side, making sure she had a good view. Showing her hand to Emily, the tips of her fingers were curled inwards, saying, "Like a kitty, okay? It's a good way to avoid boo-boos." She looked as if she were waiting for a nod, and Emily happily answered so.

Emily knew the gist of proper cutting etiquette, but she supposed a review could never hurt, and truthfully it was a little fun playing the ‘aspiring chef.’ There was no harm in mixing a little fun with the more serious bits, and starting with a bell pepper, Joyce in a few simple cuts had it divided into halves. Emily had to blink for a few seconds, processing what she just had seen. Wasn’t that a little bit too fast?

Clearly it wasn’t as spectacular to Joyce though, as she was still hinged on the much simpler part of the lesson. Either she considered her level of speed insignificant, or something far beyond Emily’s own level. “See?” She showed off her hand yet again. “Kitty paws.”

Emily nodded again, only with a bit more curiosity as she watched Joyce chop. Again, she moved like lightning as the metal blade slipped and sliced through the vegetable, moving by even intervals and leaving uniform victims in its wake. And as a parallel yet synchronized process, she moved her fastening hand down the vegetable as the knife moved, maintaining an even space the whole way.

“Think you wanna try?”

Unexpectedly intimidated, Emily nervously answered, “Uhm, sure...” The other half of the bell pepper was set in front of her, and the bar had been set awfully high. She felt like she was destined to fail.

Slowly, she mimicked the “kitty paw” approach, as Joyce called it, then with much more mindful precision tried to form her first cut. Then when she pressed, it wasn’t nearly as smooth as a motion as Joyce’s was. Instead, there was slight resistance in her cut, and she had to press, then a telltale snap would erupt as the knife hit the board. Then she tried the next, and it was somewhat the same. The next one too, and by now she could see her spacing was off.

Before Joyce could give any input, Emily was the first in a whine, “How am I supposed to do it like you?”

“Ah...well...” Joyce at a near loss thought for a moment. She was starting to think that she may have made something that looked skilled into child’s play, especially to a novice. It was easy, but only when you had years of dedicated experience to back it... It was an innocent, yet broad question, and it had no easy answer.

“Here,” Joyce had taken one hand into each of hers, and positioned the blade. “One step at a time.” Even Joyce needed to pause for a moment, as it was like she had to explain how to breathe. She didn’t put much thought into her technique nowadays, considering the best she

could say right now was to just *do* it, and even if she was above average, she wasn't exactly a master cook. What a spectacular teacher she'd be.

"You need to start with a small cut from the bottom," Joyce helped her position the knife, just so it was slightly leaning into the bottom edge of the pepper closest to the board. "That way when you press down..." She moved her hand down, and consequently Emily's, and further down the line the actual blade, as the small, simple incision they had made expanded across the arch of the pepper with ease and a small clack from the knife hitting the board. "Like that, I guess," Joyce simply stated, whilst Emily stared in awe.

"Is it really that easy?" Emily exclaimed over such a simple thing, admittedly giddy to fully try it herself. Her slight shuffles caused a few crinkles from her bottom, and it warmed Joyce's heart to no end. "...Can you show me again?"

Joyce smiled, then set themselves up for the next cut. It had a little more spacing than she'd have usually put, but she wanted to give Emily a generous area to work with.

"Ready? One more time. So start with a small cut on the other side, then ease it down..." Another successful cut, and Emily was unashamedly ecstatic. She actually felt like a pro, and had discovered a secret that revolutionized the wheel. She'd been thinking about sliced bread all wrong!

"Okay, now it's your turn." Joyce let go of Emily's hands, and after a second went over to the stove to turn on the burner, right underneath the pot of water. She came back to Emily and saw her accelerating into a rapid pace.

"Easy now," Joyce warned, placing a hand on her shoulder to slow down. "It's not a race, okay?" She chuckled over Emily's slight remorse.

"I just wanted to do it like you, that's all." Emily spoke earnestly, already trying to elevate herself to the heights of the greats. But apparently she was flying too close to the sun.

"You'll get there, but only if you play it safe. Mommy's being very generous letting you use a knife you know," Joyce spoke sternly, but with a joyful smile as Emily laughed in return. Again, it felt strange to be worried by Emily handling a tool she was more than capable of, but the kid's diaper around her hips spoke differently...

"What're we making, anyway?" Emily asked while she finished up her final chops.

“Stir fry. Quick and easy,” she answered while grabbing the package of noodles from another cupboard.

“What time is it though? Isn’t this a bit early?”

“Maybe, but it should work right about to dinner time. Besides, if we need to turn in early, so be it. Tomorrow’s probably going to be busy.” She spoke with equal parts simplicity and dread. She had no idea what tomorrow would be like, and even if it went well, that still meant there was another whole 48 hours for something else to go wrong. But for the sake of being positive, she tried not to think that way.

Emily had already had her fair share of worry, so she did her best to shrug it off and watch Joyce work, while also moving onto the next pepper.

“Hey Joyce?”

“What is it, sweetheart?”

“How long did you say that you were cooking with your dad for?”

“Umm...At least 10 years, I guess?”

Emily nearly collapsed from the nonchalant mention of her titanous level of experience.

“Er, how long might it take for me to cook like you?”

Joyce simply snickered as the water began to bubble, and she took a moment to admire Emily’s progress.

“Why’s that? Is Mommy’s cooking suddenly not good enough for you anymore? Huh?”

“N-no!” stammering, Emily retorted.

“Emm-” she paused for a second, “Emily,” the same, typical smile overcame her face, and the corners of her lips rose just slightly, and the smallest sliver of teeth peered between her lips.

“Baby steps, okay? If you really want to, you can practice with me more in the kitchen, if you’d like.”

“Really?” Emily responded as if she’d been told she was getting a puppy. Such a simple gesture had her eyes glistening, and she looked to be over the moon.

“Of course,” Joyce spoke while filling the pot with noodles. “What’s got you wanting to cook so badly, though?”

“W-well...” Emily started, then quickly reeled back into her shell. “I kinda like to cook, I guess...”

“Uh-huh?” Joyce asked half-seriously. Not that she doubted her, but Emily tended to be a pretty bad liar in front of her.

“And...and I don’t know...” She leaned slightly from side to side, crinkling to and fro. “It’s nice being able to do stuff together...”

Mildly surprised, Joyce blinked simply as she looked back to her busy bee. “We can always do more stuff together, Emm, but don’t we already do that now?”

“Kinda, I guess...” It was one of those responses initiated by her raw emotions and feelings rather than intelligent thoughts and words. The perk to being so understood by Joyce was being able to skip the translation process. She could throw her messy self at Joyce and she could decipher her very being in just a few glances, pokes, and prods.

“Is my little one feeling a little hungry for some more attention?”

“...”

“Emmy,” Joyce started to laugh, “when you want something, don’t be shy and ask for it! Besides, the worst that’ll happen is I say no?”

Emily was suddenly out of things to chop, so she looked over to Joyce, with a bashful blush and smile, then nodded her head.

“What can I do now?”

“You...” Joyce trailed her voice as she looked about the kitchen, searching for something. A look of clarity came over her though when she left the kitchen, then came back with a familiar item.

“You’re on break,” she handed the adult-sized baby bottle to her. “All gone, you hear?” She

waited for Emily's answer, which came right after. With some positive reinforcement, and a pat on the head, she then had the girl busy nursing watch as she seasoned the vegetables.

"Hmm..." As if with a fine-toothed comb, Joyce scanned over Emily's handiwork. "If I hadn't known any better, a master chef could have been in here?" She held up a finely sliced piece of onion. The obviously exaggerated praise had Emily looking anywhere but at her biggest fan, yet the stream of juice didn't stop one bit.

"Oh, actually," gently, Joyce removed the bottle from Emily's mouth, and placed the knife back in her hand, adjusting the pink apron slightly. "Hold the knife up a little bit?"

Puzzled, Emily listened as she looked at the knife herself, unsure of how to pose it. But pose it for what? She turned over to Joyce, just about to ask a question, but then the audible snap from her phone said plenty.

"J-Joyce!" Partly frantic, Emily set the knife down then rushed over to her. "What're you doing!?"

"What?" Joyce spoke defensively, happily admiring the picture. "You look great! I don't get to see my little girl in an apron very often, you know..."

"But I'm wearing...!"

"Diapers? So?"

"What do you mean, 'so?'" Emily continued to whine, and after pulling Joyce's arm down the slightest bit, she could see the screen as well. It was herself, from the waist up, looking at a kitchen knife with the same level of obscurity as she was feeling a second ago. With her bun tied back and wearing an apron, it was certainly a different look for her...

"See?" Joyce's words pointed to the picture. "It's a harmless picture. No diapers, and nothing naked." *Nothing we can see, at least.* There wasn't any need to add that though. Unnecessary nerves were the last thing Joyce wanted to stir.

"But..." Emily wanted to find some sort of fault with it, because she wanted to believe there was. If she knew what she was wearing underneath, of course her paranoia assumed others would think the same upon first glance.

“But nothing.” Joyce calmly, yet firmly ended it there. “The picture stays, and I won’t hear anything else about it, understood?”

At a loss for words, Emily mumbled an ‘okay’ and continued to be quiet. It wasn’t that Emily was easy to manipulate, but she was simply more trusting of Joyce now. Maybe if she had really pushed, and even if Joyce felt uncertain about it herself, she’d have considered deleting the photo. But over something so small? Not a chance. Not when she was explicitly given permission to be a shot-caller. To be a mommy.

“I’ll need one of you smiling at some point though,” playfully, she warned. “Either that or I’ll need to tickle one out of you...” the minor way she spoke to herself scared and stiffened Emily to no end. When it was a clear joke she knew to take it in stride, but from the outside looking in, it sounded like she was genuinely forming a plan... It didn’t take long for the bottle to be back in her mouth.

“Well? How did my special little birthday girl like her num-nums?” Joyce fawned and gushed as she dabbed the washcloth over Emily’s face, barely able to move in her highchair.

“Good as always!” Emily complimented, still relishing in the wonderful warm feeling she felt in her stomach. Though, a growing tinge in her bladder somewhat dampened the mood. Figuratively, of course. This was starting to feel oddly repetitive.

Joyce had kept to her word though, and after being relieved of her apron, the only clothes Emily had on other than a diaper at this point was a bib just covering her breasts. Thankfully Joyce didn’t use that as an excuse to take away her silverware... It had been a wonderful night though, and what a special treat to finish it off on it was. Being her third time in the highchair, the feeling wasn’t too terrible... The security to it all was kind of alluring, in a way.

Happily, and dumbly, because she knew it was okay to let herself go, Emily patted her hands on the plastic tray, swinging her legs, anticipating the release from her confines.

“What’s gotten into you?” Joyce curiously nudged, washing their dishes. “You’re awfully cheery?”

“I don’t know,” Emily giggled. “I’m just happy, that’s all...” she looked thoughtfully around the kitchen, soaking in all the love, care, concern and comfort she’d been given. “Thank you...”

On a similar wavelength, past the jokes and simple banter, Joyce repeated the same back to her.

“Now who’s ready for a bath?” Joyce looked around the room, curiously, opening cabinet after cabinet, and even lifting a candle for something that didn’t seem to exist. “Who is it? Hmm...I wonder who...” The simple charade was beyond ridiculous, but it was exactly why the absurdity had Emily cracking a smile. She couldn’t help but give a noise of approval once one by one her arms were lifted, and her armpits were analyzed like footprints.

“Where is she?” Earnestly, Joyce continued the little game.

“I’m right here,” Emily tried to say plainly, but it was obvious the silliness was infecting her voice as well. She tried to lean her head into Joyce’s, but just as she was going to make contact, Joyce leaned back like something else’d caught her attention.

“Hey!” Emily swung her feet from the chair, and the tips of her toes just brushed the jeans of her mother figure.

Then, just as she made contact, it looked to Joyce as if it were a fleeting thought, and she passively looked towards Emily with disinterest, then shifted rapidly to ecstatic surprise.

“There she is!” after a small gasp, Joyce cooed.

“What’s gotten into you?” Emily countered in a jokingly mockful voice. She repeated the same words with an artificial tone that nowhere near resembled her own, or Joyce’s.

“Oh?” Joyce sounded in an almost offended surprise. “Is that what you think I sound like, missy? Maybe I should’ve resorted to the tickling, after all...”

Immediately Emily’s mouth was tripping over itself, begging and pleading for her not to. It was all too wonderful, to see her little girl have the fear of God be put into her by mere tickles. It made Joyce feel a way she never had before. It was like trying to describe why you called blue, blue. There wasn’t any explicit reason for it other than it simply was that way because it was. It had no beginning chain of logic, nor an end. It was one of the many qualities of life you accepted, and celebrated its existence rather than questioned.

“Well, you *were* being so good earlier, that I thought a little dessert was in order. But I’m not so sure now...”

Dessert? Emily perked at the sound. Never once had dessert been on the menu here. Smoothies were one thing, but that came from a tangent, not an orderly sequence. And she'd just threatened the balance of this unknown, but likely delicious treat! She stared worriedly at Joyce, trying her best to seem apologetic. She didn't even know if she was pretending right now, as the mention of sweets blurred the line between fiction and reality to such an intensifying degree. She was a mess of emotions and sensations, and they all screamed for deliciousness.

Joyce had her arms crossed, and she looked reluctant, as if it were against her better judgment.

"I don't know..."

"Please?" Emily was back to her innocent self, and it was a single word that could make Joyce cave. She planned to from the start, but Emily sure knew how to dish out the big guns...

Joyce turned over to the fridge, opening the door after giving Emily's most recent artwork an affectionate glance, then moved a few larger items to the side so she could pull out what she'd been hiding this whole time.

"Ta-dah!"

Covered by a thin layer of cardboard, with a plastic window etched into it, Emily could recognize the simple, yet elegant pattern printed around the display box in a pale orange and pink box. The front of it was a slew of cursive that Emily barely cared to read, but she recognized the logo immediately. It was a bakery, and a terribly expensive one at that. Lowering it just enough for Emily to see, inside was a plump square of marble cake, topped in a fluffy, light-looking frosting, crowned by a small centerpiece of banana and strawberry. Two small mocha sticks stuck out at an angle like an abstract hat ornament, and small shavings were lightly sprinkled about the top. The cake itself looked to be an enchanting gradient, as the dark chocolate core lightened into a vanilla hue at the top. It was a generously sized slice of cake that had Emily's mouthwatering to no end.

"Is that for me?"

Joyce nearly rolled her eyes. "Of course it is! It's *your* birthday! Did you really expect me *not* to get you cake?"

Emily blinked her glossy eyes, and Joyce moved over to the counter with the box, already setting out a plate. What Emily hadn't seen was the small piece of white chocolate mounted to the top with her name illustrated in a thin chocolate sauce. The finishing touch was the slim stick candle

slipped on top, and Joyce lighting it with a match. Emily eyed it temptingly, almost wishing it were within her power to burst free from the chair. The lights in the kitchen started to dim, to the point where the only lights were the glow from the apartment windows looming over the streets, and the orange radiance from the symbolic flame.

“Happy birthday to you,” in an angelic voice, Joyce began to sing as she moved the plate closer and closer to Emily. “Happy birthday to you!” The rise and fall in her voice was perfect, and pure lyrical ecstasy to Emily’s ears. Her voice was complete and total serenity to Emily, and if it were a drug she’d already be an addict.

“Happy birthday dear Em-mily!” She made a small, satisfied squeal as she rubbed noses with Emily.

“Happy birthday, to you!” With the only light in the room illuminating Emily’s wonderful, adorable face, Joyce looked on with immeasurable satisfaction.

Taking a moment, Emily puffed up her cheeks, then unleashed a small gush of wind upon the poor, defenseless flame. The wave killed the flame almost immediately, and marked the first milestone she’d ever shared with Joyce. It made her so happy, Emily even against her adult will pushed heavily on her bladder, and the tight stretch finally snapped as the strange, yet acceptable stream flooded her diaper.

Potty face. Joyce sighed with a smile as she watched, but could see she was still focused on the pastry. Plucking out the candle, Joyce also snagged the chocolate sign too and gave it a bite. Sweets weren’t her all-time go-to, but even she was curious to how the cake tasted...

Just as Emily went for the fork, Joyce halted her with an “Ah-ah!” Emily paused, looking sorely cheated out of her special gift. Joyce looked stern for a moment, but then went back to an immediate smile, knowing she’d teased her for long enough.

Emily wasted no time, plunging the fork into the fluffy, spongy substance, and was overwhelmed by a wondrous sense of stimulation the frosting was a smooth, airy cream that only added to the perfect mouthfeel, and she couldn’t help herself but already include the banana into her first bite. The strawberry would come later, and it’d be just as spectacular of a combo to the rest of the cake as was the concoction in her mouth right this moment. Had her mouth not been full, she’d have been making ‘oohs’ and ‘ahs,’ but because it was, she resigned herself to muffled, content noises. Emily was too caught in a drunken pleasure for her to care when Joyce took the fork from her, stealing her own bite. She kept hers a bit smaller though, just so Emily’s stomach had more to look forward to.

Though maybe a bit more reserved, Joyce was as equally pleased as well. Clearly this had been the right choice, and she was happy to see her efforts had paid off in full.

No words were exchanged when Emily repeatedly opened and closed her hands, begging for her eating utensil to be returned to her. Joyce happily complied, and while she was eating, Joyce needn't force a smile out of her for a picture, because the cake'd already done so for her. You could see a bib around her neck, and the high cushion to the back of her chair was questionable...but... She slipped the phone away, going back to admiring the spectacle.

It was a never-ending gravy train as flavorful bite came after flavorful bite. She never wanted the mouthgasms to stop, and the only times they did was when she needed to wash it down. At some point her juice turned into milk, not that she cared, and went back to happily munching her food. But in the end, the simple mention of such a state was indication enough of disappointment. Not that the cake was bad, no, but because there was none of it left. Granted, Emily felt like she'd easily overeaten, and her stomach strained to the point of a very mild pain. Punishment for her gluttony, she supposed.

“Good, I take it?”

Almost sluggishly Emily nodded yes, and Joyce could only chuckle.

“I'm glad,” Joyce finally cleared off the tray, and even stole a swab of frosting from Emily's bib, slipping it into her own mouth. She undid the straps, then gave the suddenly blushing girl a testing squeeze on the crotch of her squishy diaper. She hoisted her off the seat, then slipped the tray back in.

“Ready for bath time?”

Satisfied on all imaginable fronts, Emily nodded her head.

Slipping the bib off, Joyce then took her by the hand and to the bathroom.

“You've done so much for me today, babygirl,” Joyce spoke soothingly as she laid Emily down on the bathroom tiles, announcing the loud noise of tearing adhesives. The faucet to the bath currently gushed a hypnotic noise as the room slowly heated to a relaxing temperature. A small amount of steam rose from the water, and it was the perfect setting to watch the night sky through the window, whilst surrounded in warm, yellow colors whilst getting ready to hop into the blue, clear water. Everything was clean and shiny, and soon Joyce would do the same to

Emily. She'd be refreshed in a sweet aroma of scent and smell, and go back to being her perfect self. Not that she never wasn't.

The diaper was only wet once, and it had a long way to go. Joyce thought about it for a moment, but tabled the idea for later. She wanted to focus much more on what was about to come. After removing Emily's one article of clothing, she undid the bun in her hair and had her ready to be bathed.

Still intoxicated by the atmosphere and everything it entailed, Emily stood dully as she watched the water rise, and feel the steam brush her skin. She could almost fall asleep to the noise, but did her best not to.

"Someone's looking a little sleepy, huh?" Emily turned her head to the source of the noise, and was stunned out of her sleep-induced state.

"J...Joyce?"

In a muffled reply, Joyce said, "What?" The reason it was muffled was because her shirt was covering her face, namely because she was taking it off. Setting it to the side, Emily wordlessly watched Joyce's enchanting figure slowly unravel itself from the cruel confines known as clothes. Why was her body of such interest? Seeing her breasts suspended by the purple, patterned bra, the panties which complimented them came on display next as the simple stroke of her fingers slipped the denim flap from underneath the button. Lowering her pants, it displayed the rest of her curves, while Emily's heart was in a shocking and unexpected tizzy, beating fast and heavy as she watched.

The simple shake of her head to fix the state of her hair made Emily's blood-pumper yet again skip another beat. She watched nervously as she felt herself grow hot from more than just the steam. Joyce paid her shameless ogling no mind though, as she unclasped her bra and her beautiful breasts were a spectacular sight to see as well.

She's a woman, so why am I... Emily tried to question further, but the feelings in her heart were telling her to stop, just so she could spend that much more time focusing on the one thing she could take her eyes off of. They were both women, though, right? So why did Emily feel the need to feel so...so flustered? It was strange how natural it felt to Emily though. She'd recognized this feeling with countless other people, but never to someone like Joyce. She'd never considered it, or at least she thought she hadn't. Maybe Joyce was just that special? Again, questions were the last thing she wanted to entertain right now. Regardless, the feeling was undeniable.

Attraction.

Much like Emily, the last thing to come off of Joyce was her underwear as well, and suddenly she was just as naked as her baby girl. Emily stared at choice with reddened cheeks, and a face ridden with personal bewilderment. Her innocence only furthered the passion Joyce was feeling however, as unlike Emily, she knew exactly how she felt, and it was the perfect mix of motherly and partnerly affection towards her charge and partner.

“Mommy needs a bath, too, silly. Is it okay if I join you?”

Meekly, Emily nodded her head yes, trying not to be so fixated on Joyce’s figure. It was funny in a way, thinking how Joyce’d become so casual to Emily’s naked figure, whereas the first sign of Joyce’s for some reason had Emily registering her as drop dead gorgeous.

Skin-to-skin contact came into play once Joyce had Emily in her arms again, and Emily wrapped her legs around Joyce’s waist. Emily pressed her smaller chest to Joyce’s easily larger one, and Emily locked eyes with the one person she couldn’t get out of her head.

The water swished as Joyce stepped in, and very slowly she came to her knees, submerging Emily’s body soon as well. Emily wasn’t sure of the body’s melting point, but she was sure she was dangerously close to it. Too many factors right now were pushing her close to a fever induced by sheer pleasure. And partly in the water, with Joyce sitting against the rim of the tub, Emily turned her head sideways so she could keep her face unobstructed while using Joyce’s breast as a pillow.

“I hope today was very special for you, Emmy. I love you so much, I want to wish you a very happy birthday.”

Not a sound was heard, other than the bathroom fan, and the slight stirs of water.

Joyce could feel Emily’s arms squeeze a little bit tighter around her, and her head nuzzle further into her chest.

Then, she heard it.

“I love you too...Mommy.”

So not to disturb the moment, Joyce brought a hand to her mouth as she winced, and her eyes blurred with tears.

Emily could feel herself be hugged tighter.