

9 - Behind the Scenes

She tossed and turned, stirred, tangling herself in her own hair as she shifted from pillow to pillow. The fact she'd even been moving at all was a sign the sleeping girl had just begun to properly enjoy the luxuries of a privileged lifestyle. When she finally came to, she let out an unintentionally unreserved moan as she stretched, letting the whispers of the waking world call her back from a deep sleep.

When she opened her eyes, she was facing one of the many window panels adjacent to her bed; a slight parting in the curtains revealing a night sky lifted by a bustling skyline. The room was dark, minus for the orange glow that came from the lamp on the nearest nightstand. Getting her bearings, she curiously rolled over to the other side, hearing a crinkle murmur underneath the covers. The clock read 7:27 PM, confirming her view outside.

One hand on the covers, she lifted them up to peer inside, following her shadowed torso, seeing she was now in the same monkey shirt she'd been in from yesterday's play. What was more important though was the obvious medical diaper she was taped into; identical in every aspect as all her other ones had been.

Her heart began to shuffle just from recalling the recent events, remembering the toilet in the bathroom. But where was Joyce? Did she put her to bed? Emily started to recall how exhausted she felt from earlier, and the distant fragments about falling asleep in Joyce's arms. The sleep still had yet to be shaken out of her. Only by moving around would she give her mind some clarity. Her silent thoughts remained unperturbed by the distant noise pollution that countless flights of economic might separated her from.

With a yawn and rubbing her eyes, Emily idly spoke to no one in the room. "Where are you...Joyce?"

Sweeping her blankets to the side, Emily hopped out of bed, mildly attentive of how the diaper conformed to every movement she made. Looking at it reminded her of Joyce...specifically how it made her...*her* baby girl. A strange smile crept on Emily's face just from thinking such things, but she tried not to lose herself in such gushy thoughts. Padding across the carpeted floor and to the nearly closed doorway, it revealed an illuminated hallway that led to an even brighter living room. But in her brisk movements, Emily could feel the slightest breeze kiss the higher parts of her thighs, reminding her she was just walking in a shirt and diaper right now.

Had she really not noticed? Emily's sleep-lingering eyes widened a bit at the unusual discovery. It would probably be for the best if she got some pants to cover up...But then a strange

suggestion popped into her mind. Maybe it would be better if she...didn't? The second voice in her head was just as shocking as her actions right now. Maybe...maybe Joyce would be happier if she didn't put anything else on...Her heart thumped at the thought of doing something so...so...risqué? Then again, such a sexual word didn't exactly sum up wearing a diaper for her authority figure...

Never had she acted out like this of her own volition. It was always Joyce who initiated stuff like this. No matter how much she tried to talk herself out of it though Emily couldn't help but wonder if staying barely clothed like this would be for the better. Maybe this stuff really was rubbing off on her...As scary as it was, it meant she was that much closer to Joyce...

With a slower pace, Emily chose not to turn back and inched closer toward the kitchen. Her nose started to perk up at the sudden smells that teased her. The scent was familiar, and for that reason she knew how delicious the food must have been to permeate such an alluring aroma. Trying to be as quiet as a mouse (or kitten, rather), Emily caught the sight of a busy Joyce, who had changed shirts since the bath and looked to be setting plates.

A sudden sense of mischief entered Emily's mind, already bombarded with so many bold thoughts today. Carefully, she snuck up behind the turned Joyce, growing closer and closer...right until...

“BOO!”

The voice was loud, and unexpected; especially because it was from Joyce, who had made a complete one-eighty. She tricked the trickster.

Clearly not prepared for the counterattack, Emily found herself to be the one jumping with a yelp as her feet dressed in socks slipped across the tile and her bottom hit the ground. The floor was hard and she could feel it too, a little upset over her massive blunder, and for letting the tables be turned so easily.

“How did you know?” Emily tried to hide her aggravation while she accepted the two hands pulling her back to her feet. Joyce could only look down on her (literally) with a loving grin.

“Mommy's intuition?” Joyce suggested, giving her a brief hug. Caringly she patted the diapered girl's bottom. “Does your tushy hurt from hitting the mean floor?”

“No...” Emily said dismissively, finding herself already flustered once more.

Joyce couldn't help but leave a slight giggle to herself. Emily *had* made an honest effort, but she'd already known the diapered girl was nearby for quite a bit. Even amongst the takeout food giving off its smells of chicken, meats and rice, that peach smell she'd spent so long rubbing into the girl was unmistakable. Not to mention her diaper crinkled louder for others than she thought. For the caring mother's ear, at least.

Mother.

Yes, Joyce was a mommy, and it made her giddy to even think about her realized dream. It made her even happier though to share these moments with Emily. Regardless, she wouldn't tell Emily how loud she actually was, lest she leave her feeling even more self-conscious. Speaking of which, Joyce's eyes quickly scanned Emily's figure up and down, who had chosen to stay in just the clothes she dressed her in.

Seeing Emily stay how Joyce had dressed her pulled at the heartstrings in a way she couldn't even begin to describe. It was adorable to think of Emily wanting to be waited on hand and foot, and being only in charge of her emotions; leaving all the rest to her caring guardian. The further things moved along, it would make it that much harder to tear off the band-aid when Sunday night would come to an end, and a week of prohibited intimacy would begin. They'd always have their cuddle moments, of course, but never could it reach this level when they'd be busy all day; almost all week.

She remembered first trying to envision Emily in the underwear she had first gotten her. It wasn't ever sexual, but simply the act of it in how it suggested her shamelessness; willing to parade herself around the house however she pleased, and in whatever clothes she wanted. It was those carefree feelings Joyce would hope Emily could come to learn and love. And watching her now, seeing Emily could put her padded bottom on full display? Well, it made those wishful thoughts of Joyce that much more of a reality. Emily hadn't known it, but her small plan to stay in just a diaper worked masterfully.

It was the delightful subtleties like this that worked to be the nuts & bolts of a contraption that could run flawlessly and beautifully. It was the little things.

"Since *someone* decided to have a late nap today," Joyce spoke with a heavy, yet joking emphasis towards Emily. "Mommy decided to order for the both of us."

"You could have woken me up to ask, you know." Emily retorted. She was perfectly fine with Joyce choosing the food, but didn't mind being woken up either.

Joyce had already started to pull out the white containers labeled with Chinese characters, acting as a thin barrier to the delicious smelling contents inside. “Nonsense. I expect you to keep to a regularly scheduled nap, which you still had five minutes for by the way.” More like a mother, she spoke in a tutting voice; the kind that put Emily in a small space she didn’t want to crawl out of and only snuggle into. “It’s how you can keep up with such a busy day, you know?”

Emily conceded to Joyce’s absolute words, moving to get her plate until she was denied, having been told to take her place at the table. And of course it wouldn’t be a proper meal without Emily’s sippy cup, already filled with the sweet apple juice that catered to Emily so well.

“You don’t mind Chinese food, right? I know it might not be like what I usually cook around here, but I think it’d be nice for a change.”

Emily immediately shook her head, hoping not to cause a misunderstanding. “No, this is fine! A night when neither of us has to cook is a good night, I’d say.”

“I’ll be sure to cook you something delicious tomorrow to make up for it, okay?”

Trying to comprehend how this could have been a misdeed by Joyce’s thought process, Emily tried to stifle her mental hiccup. She didn’t try to dwell on it too much though, as past experience taught it chalked up to her boundless generosity. Her kindness never seemed reserved around Emily. She’d never exploit the soft spot Joyce had for her, but to know she was that special made her heart beat fast.

Joyce had taken the liberty in serving the both of them as well, fairly distributing servings of chicken, rice, ribs, and lo mein. In a way the slightly sweet and seasoned tastes reminded Emily of a simpler time, when she’d be lounging around her old apartment and couldn’t be bothered to lift a finger in the kitchen, but was just active enough to open a door and hand someone money.

Equally enjoying the meal, Joyce paused her bites to wash it down with her water. Eating like this was nice every once in a while. In a strange way, it almost reminded Joyce of how human she was; if you could even put it to that extreme. Even Joyce thought the reason was laughable, but there was something about indulging in cheap luxuries like this that made her feel like everyone else. A big house, high paying job, limitless vacations, and anything else she could ever want being a few calls away could easily go to anyone’s head. She was proud of herself though for sporting the kind of mental fortitude that would keep her from ever having such delusions. But a reminder like this was still nice.

In an odd way Joyce almost felt a little cruel from pampering Emily like this. Not that Emily would ever become spoiled rotten, but Joyce feared if Emily got too close to her, she'd feel these sorts of feelings from being in high society for so long. It was like going from eating just raw shrimp to being dipped in cocktail sauce: the taste was so good you simply couldn't just stop yourself at a moment's notice. But if Emily allowed her to, Joyce would never let such a fate befall her. She'd do everything in her power to prevent her fall from grace and keep her happy all the same.

"How about we watch a movie after we eat?" Joyce suggested in between bites of food. "A good way to send a little girl off to beddy-bye."

Emily concurred, trying to not get so joyfully hung up on the baby talk. If she had kept doing that she'd be lost in her own thoughts all night. But with each word she could feel the bubbly feelings try to resurface.

"And I want you to stay hydrated for me, okay?" Joyce, to emphasize her point, had already taken Emily's half empty sippy cup and returned it back to her in a much fuller state. "We can't have you shriveling up now, can we? "

Emily by now had figured what she was more loosely referring to; the kind of situations that always left her feeling apprehensive and distraught. But the warmth Joyce always basked her in was starting to feel like it was enough to handle the similar sensation in her diaper. Just the thought alone already had her legs squirming beneath the table. Joyce's attentive ear could pick up on it, but she decided not to call it to attention.

The house could have felt like a glass box at times. Because the apartment fell on a corner of the building, it got the most spots to see the vast city from. Even in the kitchen, a glass panel spanned nearly from the floor to the ceiling across from them both, as the busy and bustling lights unapologetically disturbed the black night. She'd have to take Emily out on the balcony at some point, when one of those rare occasions would come and it wouldn't be so windy. She could see the moment playing out in her head already; being able to expose her to a vast world of dynamic colors that gave off such a fierce glow as they faded into nothing, and the marching armies of cars as they bathed in the orange auras the streetlamps emitted. By day the varying lights from advertisements and buildings went quiet. And by night? Well, needless to say it was a colorful and bright one. Seeing out of one of the windows may have looked spectacular, but being outside and so high up was on a whole different level.

"Mommy's stuffed," Joyce interrupted the silence, finally content with her daydreaming and meal. "And by the looks of your plate, I'll assume you're done too?"

Sheepishly Emily gave her a noise of confirmation, as Joyce already started to clean.

Excusing herself from her seat, Emily took a second to remember she was in a diaper once again now that it was brought back into view, but quickly doubled down on moving to the living room.

“Ah, ah! And where do you think you’re going?” The sudden words froze her in place, and she could feel herself stiffen. What did she do wrong? Emily awkwardly gave a turn, with an unintentionally innocent look on her face.

Turning around, a sudden wet and cold piece of cloth was kissing her lips, or smothering the whole area for that matter. Out of reflex she backed away from it, but the washcloth closed the distance faster than she could make it.

“You know if you let me wipe your face you could be out of here sooner than you think, you know?” Joyce jokingly chastised.

Unable to realize her own foolishness, Emily couldn’t look Joyce in the eyes while her eyebrows were a dead giveaway to her emotions. While she let her carer finish the job, the diaper around her waist suddenly felt much more noticeable. Given how she was dressed, having someone else wash her face almost deemed something like this as appropriate.

“Free to go!” Joyce took Emily by the shoulders and spun her back around towards the hallway, and with both hands made direct contact to her padded bottom with a loving pat. It wasn’t the force of her push that had Emily rushing, but the contact being made with her ever so embarrassing underwear. Joyce could only giggle to herself when she saw the crinkly and flustered rump disappear around the corner. She knew Emily was enjoying this too, which made it feel that much more special.

Emily out of sight and with a reluctant hand slightly rubbed the back of her diaper where Joyce had made contact. She touched it as if Joyce had left something there, but of course she didn’t. It only made her face redder though when she fully registered she was touching her own diaper. Feeling the plastic backing taped around her waist made it a bit too real, and could feel herself retreating into her shell again. But she wouldn’t. If she had made it this far...surely she could keep going for a bit longer.

Joyce followed not too long after, throwing away the empty boxes and storing what was left. She could see the black hair that rounded Emily’s head peak just above the couch and could see she draped a nearby blanket over her lower half. Grabbing the remote and sitting right beside Emily,

Joyce started to surf for movies. Nothing struck itself as really unique or special. It was all the same generic movie approaches that had the same, washed-up tropes written all over them. So if that's what it came to, Joyce decided they might as well go all in.

“How about this one?”

The selected movie was clearly a horror film, depicted with a severed hand lying still in a closeup shot. A strange bug was wrapped in between its fingers, as it seemed to compliment the title in some way reading as “Night of the Firefly.”

“Uhm...okay. This is fine.” Emily's words were slightly awkward and off-beat; rushing her tone. She scratched the side of her head out of a sudden, baseless paranoia.

Joyce had given her a look of concern, already putting a hand on her blanketed leg.

“You know we don't have to watch it if you don't want to, right? We could pick something less scary maybe?”

“Wh-What do you mean?” Emily started off in a stammered voice, leveling it out into a partially brave front. “This is fine, really!”

Her efforts to overcompensate were as easy to read through as it was to look through a window. But, Joyce would indulge her if she wanted. Maybe Emily was just getting herself worked up. Maybe she even liked to be scared? Joyce hadn't considered that last part.

“Okay then. Here's your sippy by the way. Drink up, remember?”

Joyce grabbed the sippy cup from the coffee table and put it into Emily's hands, who willingly accepted. She suddenly was feeling thirsty again, and was thankful for the cool drink to calm her nerves.

“Ready to start it?” Joyce had already rented it, so it was only a question of when.

Taking a breath for herself, Emily gave her the nod and Joyce hit the ‘select’ button. Swiping away on her tablet that happened to be nearby, the lights in the living room had dimmed until they were totally lifeless; enveloping the room in darkness except for the glowing tv and the lights from the nearby windows, which really did nothing to illuminate the room. The light coming from the screen bounced off the couch and the two girl's figures as they got comfortable. Joyce pulled a pillow over to support her posture as she partially laid on her side with her torso

propped up. Emily still sat like normal with her legs folded by her side on the expansive cushion, feeling her uneasy feet shuffle as they rubbed together. It was okay. She could do this. It was just a movie!

“Agh! What are you--AHHH!” The poor victim sobbed uncontrollably as she was dressed in cuts and bruises, who had just finished escaping her tormentor after being dealt a nasty gash to the side of her head. She had just escaped, and Emily’s heart cheered for the hopeless girl, but her escape was shortly cut off by the grotesque creature that sunk its pincers into her seemingly fragile neck and collarbone.

The screen had shrunk to half its size; for Emily at least. Her hands that covered her eyes split their fingers ever so slightly to satisfy the small part inside of her that wanted to be brave and keep watching, but it was a downhill battle. She’d given up on her juice at least ten minutes ago since things had become so tense in the movie; too afraid to reveal more of the screen whilst she snuck in a sip.

It was scary, and Emily was swimming in regret right now as her bladder became painfully tense. Suddenly the darkened apartment didn’t feel so safe anymore...who knows what could have been lurking in the dark. Ugh, yes she was an adult, but horror was clearly not her forte! For her entire life she strayed from the unsettling genre, so why did she think she could handle it now? She was a rock stuck in a hard place.

“Emmy,” The girl visibly jumped at the sudden sound of her own voice. The movie had reached a moment of peace, the calm before the storm, and the coincidence was simply too unnerving. But the distress on her face dissipated into relief when she suddenly remembered Joyce was at her side. “Maybe it’s time we stopped the movie?”

Oh so how much Emily wanted it to stop, but she couldn’t chicken out now; not when Joyce had already gone and bought the movie! She wouldn’t be a buzzkill. That wouldn’t be fair. Her needless resolve could only just keep the tears from the fear the movie pierced into her heart from coming out. She was scared. She wanted to feel safe.

A hand from seemingly nowhere then made contact on her lonely shoulder, as Emily yelped from the unknown attacker! The tight pressure she was focused on holding cracked the slightest bit, making the tiniest spurt into her dry pad.

“Relax...” Joyce soothed, taking Emily’s eyes from the movie and stroking her arm. “It’s only just a movie. The monsters aren’t going to get you.” Clearly she’d been wrong about the possible thrill Emily might have been seeking for.

“I know...it’s just...” The words were difficult to express on how she could explain the fear of being caught by something that she knew wasn’t real. The irrational part inside of her for whatever reason *wanted* to make it real, or at least used that as a basis to make her tremble and shake.

“When you’re scared can you at least be a little more honest with me?” The movie reflected off of Joyce’s unwavering eyes, her full attention focused on Emily.

“O...Okay...I’m sorry...” Emily could feel another one of her failures being drawn out into the open, laid plain as day for Joyce to see. But like with each and every vulnerable moment she had, Joyce didn’t act on it. At least not in a cruel way.

The same hand that soothed her shoulder pulled Emily over to the laying Joyce and turned Emily into the little spoon in their positioning. The same arm then locked itself around Emily’s waist after adjusting the blanket she had to cover them both.

“Then at least learn to snuggle with me if you feel scared, okay? Mommy won’t let the monsters get you.”

The movie that had been tormenting her for the past forty-five minutes had suddenly lost its effect on Emily. Being wrapped in the strong, loving embrace of Joyce put her in a bubble that nothing from the outside world could pop. She was back in paradise again and it felt euphoric; just to feel the warmth radiate from the body behind her. As off-putting as it sounded, there was even a certain charm to when she leaned her head against Joyce’s plentiful chest. The mushy feelings inside of her that had started to take shape borrowed her lips for a brief moment, making a small voice just loud enough to hear over the movie’s suspenseful music.

“P...promise?”

Joyce could feel even her heart skip a little from hearing her. Leaning in a little close with an enchanting and hypnotic whisper to Emily’s ear she spoke.

“Promise.”

Combined with the pressure Joyce applied to her abdomen, the bursting pressure she already felt down below synergized into an unstoppable force as she could feel the pent-up stress inside of her suddenly leak out of her in a bodily-liquid form. Emily couldn't hide her exasperated gasp blended with a sigh as the hot stream of urine flooded her diaper. She tried to squirm; afraid of leaking on the couch no matter how much the thing could absorb. A life majorly lived in panties told her no matter what she'd stain the couch, but Joyce wasn't letting go.

“Just let it happen. I'm here, so don't worry...”

Emily silently cried for real this time as she sorted her difficult emotions. The scary movie was the least of her worries when she was so conflicted already; happy to be loved by Joyce, but shocked to lose control of her still very-adult bladder. But as embarrassing as it was and unnatural it felt, consciously aware of the pee following the flow of gravity and seeping to one side of her diaper, the tiniest most minuscule and insignificantly small part of her knew it wasn't *as* bad as last time.

“Good girl...” Joyce soothed when she could feel Emily start to settle down. The end of their Sunday night was nearing its end, and Joyce wanted to spend the last of their waking time interlocked together just like this. With the hand around Emily's waist, she pat the front of Emily's warmer-than-before diaper, making Emily feel even smaller on the inside. Her submissive instincts were writhing in joy and pleasure right now; a side Emily never knew existed within her, and was still unsure of it herself in these moments now. It was hidden away; behind a brick wall that Joyce brought a sledgehammer to every time they experienced some new form of intimacy together. It was only a matter of time until the bricks would collapse completely and the two could truly be enveloped in each other's warmth.

In mere moments the atmosphere changed from horror and a thriller into a field of rosy flowers and shining sun; basking anything within its infinite gaze in a shower of positivity and reinforcement. The cherry on top was when Emily could feel a pair of lips press themselves against her upturned temple. Had Joyce seen Emily's face, it probably would have been one of the widest, most bashful smiles she'd ever seen on the girl. But the growing outline of her exposed cheek told Joyce enough.

“There's my sleepy girl,” Joyce cooed as she held the bundle in her arms, able to see the slight discoloration in her diaper. The tv was off and the night they wanted to last forever had finally come to an end.

Emily quietly stirred but the kind-hearted words made her gush.

“No more scary movies for you, missy. Got it?”

“Mhm...” Emily sluggishly moaned. Joyce was right. She suddenly didn’t feel the need to be so brave around Joyce anymore, because being scared gave her an excuse to confide in her protector.

“Now it’s time to get someone some shuteye,” Joyce explained in a motherly tone. “We need *all* our energy tomorrow to be a big girl.” The words made even Joyce feel sad to say.

Joyce carried Emily into her room, setting her down on the bed with care as she looked at Emily’s diaper with a sad expression. It was probably for the best if she took it off; eliminating any possible unpleasant surprises in the morning. It’d be better to start Emily off in an adult mindset for tomorrow for when she goes to work. Curse the weekends for not being longer! Against her maternal judgment, the room suddenly sounded with the noise of adhesives tearing from plastic.

“Try and stay awake for a little bit longer, Emmy. I just need to slip some big girl underwear on you...”

Grabbing her a pair of the luxury panties Joyce bought her so long ago, she snaked them up the drowsy girl’s legs, who was too tired to worry about being naked. From a force of habit her fingers ran along the pantie’s waistline as if they were a diaper a doting mother would make sure fit.

“Goodnight Emily...” Joyce lowered her voice, trying not to disturb the sleepy woman who was fading fast. Pecking her on the cheek she made her exit, opening and moving to close the door.

“Goodnight...Mmm...oo.....mmm...” Joyce had frozen in place from hearing Emily’s drunken mumbles. Between her murmurs, Joyce’s ears desperately wanted to hear what they think they did; believing Emily had just tried to call out to her. Not as Joyce, but as mommy. Trying to keep herself reserved, she moved into her office trying to not let her assumptions influence her emotions. Regardless of what she did or did not hear, it hardly changed the fact that this was one of the best weekends she’d experienced in a long time. In fact, it was undoubtedly the best.

The alarm buzzed rudely into Emily's ears, who wanted to drop herself off the face of the earth and bask in the darkness she knew as sleep forever. Trying to put coherent thoughts together, her first order of business was sitting up to get her eyes open and stir the first embers of energy within her. There could never be "Five more minutes" with her on a weekday. Five would become ten, and ten would become twenty. Sleep was a dangerous game she didn't want to gamble with, because whether it was with cards or Z's, the house always wins.

"I get it, I get it!" Emily bitterly spat as she silenced the blaring noise trapped inside the tiny box. She could see she kicked the blanket off herself last night, and with a bare leg and half her crotch on display she was still in the pink monkey shirt and now a pair of mismatching bright blue & white-striped panties.

They were much thinner and felt relatively soft as well, but the same benefits weren't as great to these as there were admittedly with diapers. Aside from the comfier cushioning (which she was still ashamed to admit), panties, unfortunately, didn't come with the motherly Joyce that loved to fawn over Emily so much. Not that Joyce was ever distant, no matter what she wore. But when in her more childish underwear, both Emily and Joyce assumed a respective role that knew just how to satisfy each other's urges in the most pleasant ways. That being said, one of the two were certainly much more honest with themselves, but to temporarily forget the past and focus on the present, there was a more important issue at hand.

Coffee.

"Ms.Summers!" John Holland stood from his seat with an open hand. His hair showed the slightest signs of graying, as he fixed the collar to his fitted button-up, tucked into the waistline of his black slacks. "I'm glad you called me here for a meeting! But I have to say, you did catch me off guard when I heard Frontier wanted to do business with our company, BabyCare. I suppose the best way to put it is how we cater to a much more specific demographic!" He laughed.

"Mr.Holland, the pleasure is mine." Joyce returned his shake while she was in a blouse, business skirt, and heels. "I didn't want today to be *too* formal," She gestured to the near-empty restaurant they were in, basing it off of the professionally dressed bartender and diverse array of alcohol to be an expensive establishment. "Admittedly, I was hoping to relay a special order through you. For a client of mine. While it's not through Frontier it's still business all the same."

Holland's smile shifted partway into a tilted expression of curiosity. "Oh?" It seemed the misleading invitation didn't have him annoyed or bothered on the surface, which was hopefully a good sign.

"I wanted to take this to the top of the chain because the order is so unorthodox, to say the least," she explained. "They were hoping you would be able to put some furniture together for them?"

"Baby furniture? We already sell anything a parent could need, though?" Mr.Holland, a wise businessman, was still missing the point. Not that it would have been expected of him *not* to. This really was unorthodox.

"Right, of course. But I suppose they were looking to get what you had except in a bigger form? To support someone of a bigger size maybe? If you understand what I'm getting at?"

"For...adults, I presume?"

"Precisely."

"Ms.Summers," He cleared his throat. "I can't exactly put a one-time order through for anyone that asks; even if they're someone represented by a company head. As much as we are providers for consumers, focusing company resources for selfish reasons isn't something I really do; especially if it won't be turning over a long-term profit."

This was expected of course. Even Joyce knew it wouldn't be that easy.

"And I wouldn't expect anything less from you, or anyone in your position, which is why I was wondering if you might have a prototype team on hand that could maybe carry this order out for my client?"

"Ms.Summers," Mr.Holland began. "Although this meeting has caught my interest, and I would like to help you on a personal level to help this friend of yours out, my business can't satisfy the needs of a single person."

"Even if price was no issue?"

"Even at that." He sighed. He did want to help Joyce, regardless of it being a strange request. He didn't want to worsen relations with a potential business partner that managed a sphere overlapping his.

It's okay. This was accounted for too. Money would still entice the man, but that was only a warm up to her true offer.

“Mr.Holland, Frontier from our long-term care beds alone we have experienced a widespread consumer response across the country from homes, nursing care units and hospitals. Internationally, even. Without going into detail, the figures we experience annually from that alone turn profits over nearly fivefold what it takes to make them. Hasn't BabyCare always been looking for an opportunity to expand itself into markets similar to the ones you already operate in?”

That was natural for any business; the aggression of capitalism itself, and the things Joyce was mentioning were beginning to truly pique the man's interest; the company's interest.

“Many of our medical care products receive countless awards and customer feedback as top of the line, pristine, and high-quality manufacturing for anything we sell. As it should be. A fun thing the design team has been thinking of though is including a bit more ‘color’ to some of our products. Medical beds, crutches, walkers, braces--I won't make it a secret that all those things we sell can look relatively bland. Wouldn't you agree?”

Mr.Holland already saw where this was going, but it wasn't an unwelcome direction. Out of respect for her company, despite her calculated pitch to downplay its own product, Mr.Holland remained silent but was still just as curious.

“We've already been having talks with the board, you know. But off the record, you didn't hear it from me.” It wasn't a risk to leak information like this; they'd be able to manage just fine without BabyCare's helping hand, but the prospect of business was even exciting to Joyce. “Our statistics returned unsurprising results on how many of our customers that are in the younger age group and need these sorts of products we manufacture are often disappointed by not the functionality, but the look to them.” The parents of course did most of the talking for stuff like that, but there was a voice among the kids as well. “And who can complain? Getting to the point, we were already preparing to come to you with an offer and buy an exclusive license for some of your company's more popular mascots and characters.”

So that's what it was. They wanted BabyCare's already established designs and logos; their motifs, characters; everything.

“Whether I came to you now, or the board approaches you formally later, this was still a plan in the works. However, I wanted to come to you now with my own little request as a sign of good faith and the prospect of a healthy relationship. If you're able to help me now for my friend, I

will be more than happy to not only compensate you out of my own pocket, but also get some gears turning a bit faster back at Frontier.”

The deal was enticing. BabyCare had always thought of outreaching to other companies, but many of the larger shareholders wanted them to manufacture medical equipment from the ground up. But now they were the ones with a potentially viable offer on their front doorstep, and from a titan of a company, no less. Details would certainly have to be hashed out and final figures be decided, but Mr.Holland could feel himself falling for the bait.

“Ms.Summers, if you need furniture to care for someone bigger than the size we retail to, wouldn’t your own company be a much better idea? Assuming this deal does go through, you could even use our designs for added effect. Maybe hire a freelancing carpenter, or something? I’m not trying to dissuade you, or your client, but it’s just...curiosity?”

Joyce almost wanted to gag from the disgusting thought. Seeing Emily nap in a hospital bed with added rails shattered the fantasy, and even mocked it. How was Emily supposed to feel small if she were being treated like a health patient? There was nothing wrong with anyone who needed those sorts of things, but in no way did it establish the atmosphere Joyce wanted. It seemed cruel; to both herself and Emily. For it to truly work they needed to be as genuine as possible. Superficial knockoffs with some cutesy designs on them almost sounded like an insult. Mr.Holland wasn’t at fault for suggesting something like that, though. He just had no idea how deep the rabbit hole went.

“I tried to explain the same thing,” She lied, “but my client was pretty adamant on it coming specifically from your company, or at least for it to be as genuine as it’d be for a normal child.” The illusion was fragile, how Joyce was ‘asking for a friend,’ but she reserved the right to deny any direct accusations and she figured Mr.Holland wasn’t in a position to. The last thing he’d want is to upset a potential partnership. “And as for a carpenter they considered it, but they were afraid they might not be able to meet all their needs...”

“I see.” Mr.Holland looked to be considering something. Joyce tried not to get her hopes up; there were always alternatives if he refused.

The more Mr.Holland weighed his options, the more it felt like it was possible to meet Joyce’s demands. He did certainly have a few experimental teams at his disposal, and he could always see to them being paid a little extra for their efforts if they kept quiet about what they were working on...Not that the contracts they had already signed wouldn’t cover that. The blueprints for the basics like a crib and presumably a changing table need only be upscaled, maybe switched out for some higher quality materials. He wanted to get off on the right foot with Joyce.

Some other things might take some modifications...but it was starting to look more and more doable.

“We’d need the measurements of whomever this is for to adjust to the right size and weight. I *should* have a group capable of pushing something like this out, depending on what your client might be looking for. It won’t be cheap, though.”

Joyce limited her smile to one that reflected the content feeling of a successful deal, and not that of a doting mother. She could already imagine the countless things in her head that she wanted, how she could indulge in her fantasies the most, and share them with the most special person in the world. All the bits and pieces she’d need to get offhand would be more than doable, but BabyCare was the heart of it all, and she’d just gotten the keys to the kingdom.

With her hands in her lap she maintained her outward composure. “Absolutely. I’ll be sure to send you the details. And be sure to let me know what it comes to. Payment won’t be an issue.”

“The pleasure is all mine, Ms.Summers.” Mr. Holland shook her hand once more. “I look forward to doing some more ‘typical’ business with you and your company. And for simplicity’s sake have your client choose from our already available designs, please. The goal is just to make a larger version of what we already have, correct?” The business they did would be good, but none of it would ever compare to this moment.

“I’ll be sure to,” Joyce replied. “I’m glad we could come to an agreement, Mr.Holland.”

“I could say the same to you, Ms.Summers.”

Mr. Holland backed out his chair and stood up, getting ready to leave.

“Oh!” Joyce moderately exclaimed. “I know I invited you here for business, Mr.Holland, but you didn’t expect me to send you on your way with at least a free meal, did you?”

Being in these professional situations often made Mr. Holland disregard the setting they were in, forgetting their original purposes. It had been a bit since he’d actually been invited out to lunch and actually would eat. The gesture was appreciated nonetheless.

“Sorry,” He tried to laugh it off. “Old habits tend to repeat themselves!” He politely sat back down. He didn’t have anywhere important to be, or at least didn’t want to go to. Some part of him wanted to stay and invest time into this relationship, as despite the professional talk Joyce

felt more like a friend even if she looked much younger than he was. The feeling was mutual though, as Joyce both appreciated him as a businessman and hopefully a contractor of sorts.

“But,” He interjected. “Forgive me if I’m being rude, and choose not to respond if you want. But why is it that your client wants baby furniture for an adult?” The question had oddly been nagging him, and he couldn’t figure out why.

“Mr.Holland,” Joyce took a sip from the glass of water a waiter delivered. “You should know better than to pry on one’s more hidden lifestyle.”

There was a moment of silence until Joyce laughed off the unneeded tension in the room, indicating that the mood was still intact.

“More importantly, I’m starving,” Joyce gave a relaxed sigh. “What looks good on the menu to you?”

Over forty-eight hours had passed since Joyce’s meeting with Mr.Holland, and she now found herself in a new setting that wasn’t unfamiliar. Parking the car and stepping out she closed the door and couldn’t help but feel excitement as her eyes sparkled with anticipation. It was Wednesday and they were halfway through the week. Emily and Joyce were as close and social as they always were after working hours, but Joyce had been cunningly quiet about these errands she’d been running. Each and every box that would arrive at the apartment she was sure to hide away in her storage room and keep locked away. She never figured Emily to go snooping, because she likely had nothing to be suspicious of, but Joyce was still determined to keep things hush-hush. Emily knew Joyce would be returning to this stop at some point, but she didn’t know when...

The bell’s ring filled the room when Joyce walked inside, and could see her friend dealing with a different client at the moment. In the middle of their conversation at the front desk, Joyce could see her eyes shift from the person she was talking to her for just a moment and then back.

“It was good seeing you, Michael. I hope the suit works out well for your party!” Amy waved as the man with his new set of clothing politely excused himself from the store. Until the opening and closing door finally came to a rest, Joyce and Amy eyed each other wildly in an impatient manner.

“Oh! Joyce!” Amy started to happily shout once it was just the two of them. “My head was just, *bursting* with ideas ever since you and Emily left on Sunday!” The limited capacity for imagination in her vocabulary showed as she bustled about, possibly forgetting the pen she had positioned behind her ear. “I’ve rarely ever done something like this before and to revisit these kinds of designs was so much fun!” Joyce couldn’t muster a word when her hands were suddenly joined to Amy’s. “*Please* tell me you want to make more outfits for her!”

Joyce, taken aback, blinked her eyes in simple shock. She’d never seen Amy be so forward with a simple order like this; so expressive over almost anything. Sure it wasn’t run-of-the-mill, but Joyce didn’t know business like this could have such a secondhand effect on her!

“I take it you had fun making them?” Joyce asked, thinking outside a few moments earlier that *she* was the one who was excited. How wrong she was.

“Definitely! Now, come, come! You didn’t come all this way to hear me boast, did you?” Amy hurriedly ushered Joyce into the back room where they always did their business. The setting was similar to when they were here a few days ago, only now there were five mannequins lined up sporting...simply adorable clothing!

“This is...?” Joyce could feel her joy lagging behind the disbelief in her voice. Taking in the wide array of dynamic and colorful outfits.

“Each and every outfit I made was too much fun! Thinking of how I could emphasize this,” she tried to verbalize her masterful creation process. “*childish*, feeling in each and every small and little detail!” Her emotions were overflowing with excitement, and the only thing she could do to seem from bursting was verbalize it in concentrated doses.

Sneaking glances at each and every outfit, all too stunning to take her eyes off of, Joyce wanted to weep tears for her well-placed trust in Amy’s handiwork. They looked perfect!

“Let’s go through them one by one,” Amy started along the end of the line and debuted the first one, which was unmistakably a pink and white striped onesie.

“I wanted to go for a material that didn’t feel thin, but was soft and can stretch pretty well,” Amy explained. “There’s an additional lining on the inside, but this way she’ll feel nice and soft on the outside.”

Joyce was already gushing just from trying to imagine Emily in it, whilst she toddled and moved around the apartment. It would make their playtime into a reality, and there'd be no mistaking what role Emmy was in. It looked authentic because it was. It was beautiful!

There was a splayed out collar to it, interestingly enough, which Joyce made an observation of. There wasn't anything wrong with it and in fact somehow made it even more adorable. Each and every stitch looked as if it were imbued with the sole task of emphasizing the child within whoever wore it. Her eyes were sparkling as the fantasies played in her mind like a movie projector.

"The shoulders are also fitted to be pretty close to her arm size, so they won't look baggy," Amy tugged at the mentioned area. "As for the leg openings I rounded the edge off with something a bit more durable. There won't be any chafing and it's actually a little squishy if you feel through the fabric, but it'll hug her thighs well."

Joyce gave it a test squeeze and confirmed Amy's words; imagining just how content Emily would feel in these. What caught her attention next were the white pouches, one sewn on each side at the waist level. They were just large enough to maybe fit a hand in each of them.

"Are these pockets?" Joyce curiously asked. She had no objections to them but they were completely white unlike the rest of the design.

"Mhm! I figured Emily might want to have some way of holding on to a few things. Not much of course, since that's your job," Amy playfully jabbed, forgetting the restricted composure she had the last time they met, causing Joyce to blush when her face was out of sight, still smiling. "And at the same time she might just want somewhere to put her hands. So, do you like it so far?"

"It's amazing." Joyce could barely put the words together from how only one of three different outfit styles left her already star-struck.

"Good, I'm glad." Amy was always happy to see the joy of her works rub off on someone else. "But I know you're still probably wondering how you're supposed to get this on and off of her. Well look no further and take a look at the back!" Finishing her mini speech, Amy spun the mannequin on its pivot to reveal the backside, which had four medium-sized white buttons arranged on the back, holding the flap in place.

"I made sure to leave some room in there beyond your normal panties, and the stretch factor should account for anything that might get larger. Emily shouldn't ever feel uncomfortable when she lies on her back, which is why I went with the smaller buttons, but if she's on a hard surface

like tiles or wood you might hear some scraping.” Amy warned. “Snaps would have been rounded off on the end to better combat this, but the buttons offer much better support.” Amy demonstrated as she stretched open the slits and pulled them out from behind the buttons, whilst Joyce watched with fascination. Eventually she’d be doing the same thing, only for Emily.

“So, any questions, comments, or complaints so far? If anything I’d like to get Emily to try some of these on before they leave the shop...But I understand they’re a gift.” The perfectionist inside of her was starting to show. “They’re fitted exactly to my numbers, but a tiny margin of error can always be pesky like that. She should be fine though.”

“No, this is perfect! You’ve done more than you needed to and the results are stunning! Are these all ready to take home?”

“Yep! I worked through day and night to see all these finished,” She sighed as the slight bags under her eyes became clear now. “But it was worth it,” She smiled. “It was a rush order, after all. And I couldn’t just let these things sit. I was just too driven to make them! I have a lot of excess ideas; some stuff tamer than others...It all went in my sketchbook though. There’ll be time for that some other day. But come on, there’s still four more outfits to show you!”

Joyce had already been getting ahead of the fashion show by looking in advance at the green alteration. It was identical in every way except for the button stitching and pink factor, which had been swapped with a mint green. Here Joyce had no complaints at all either, but it was the next double set that things started to look different.

“And these,” The two walked over to stand right in front of them. “Are her sleepers!”

Rather than stopping at just the upper half of the body, the sleeper occupied its entirety. Amy had stuck to a similar color scheme to match the duo, as Joyce stared at the light pink adult-sized sleeper that stopped itself at the hands, feet, and crept slightly up the neck. On all the ends their material cuffed as it hugged the wrists and just above the ankles on the end, allowing for a slight bit more freedom on the inside. It wasn’t baggy though, as at the waist the sleeper seemed to hug nicely around the mannequin’s curve and provide structural integrity. Joyce could also notice that at the legs it didn’t look like a V-shape but seemed a bit more of an outward curve as if it supported some more ‘pronounced’ underwear.

“I designed it to hug just all the right parts. I even kept in mind that she might not be wearing panties in this, like all her outfits, so I gave her a little extra space in the crotch area so the ‘V’ at the legs wouldn’t press into her.”

Joyce couldn't be thankful enough to have a seamstress as attentive as Amy, and would be sure to tip her on top of her already paid efforts. She knew all the areas to focus on and never cut corners in her craft. She wasn't cheap, but she was well worth the money. Never once had Joyce gone wrong through Amy, and this time was no different either.

Directly down the middle Joyce could see a zipper track buried behind the slightly bunched fabric to hide the seam. A fat plastic white zipper hung symmetrically though, emphasizing the most infantile aspects about the outfit in all the right ways.

“Not much else to say about this one, other than how I kept it thin and made sure the material was breathable. I remember you saying she didn't want to be too stuffy, but I made sure it didn't feel like she was wearing a bag either.”

Once again Amy was always tactful in her approach and left no stone unturned. Which is why Joyce was even more delightfully surprised with the next mention.

“And, I remember we had talked about it which I think was my personal favorite touch to this outfit,” Amy had flared the neck up a little, showing that there were snap inserts lined along the sides and the back of the neck. No, she couldn't have!

“Ta-daa!” Amy cheered as she produced an attachment from behind the mannequin. Holding it out so Joyce could see better, it was an attachable hood that matched the sleepers color, minus a dark pink line that ran just along the edge. But most importantly, and most adorably, it donned an irresistibly cute pair of large cat ears on them! Amy had listened! Joyce almost forgot about them completely!

Amy couldn't hide her excitement either as she gave a toothy smile, already snapping it into place. She then draped it over the model's head and gave Joyce a good look.

Joyce was starting to feel antsy, almost wishing she postponed the pick-up date until the weekend. How was she supposed to wait *this* long knowing she had such an adorable wardrobe for Emily? Curse Amy! She had done far too well for her own good. It was going to be torturous trying to keep these things under wraps. She had half a mind to beg Emily to try these on immediately when she got home! But she wouldn't, of course. That'd spoil everything.

“And the next sleeper is exactly the same, with its own special hood,” Amy gestured to the next one over, which was the same mint green as the onesie but without the stripes. “But the alteration you wanted is this one.” It was clear just from looking at it what Amy was referring to. The zipper seam that was on the front of the pink sleeper was nowhere to be seen on this one, and

was in fact on the back. Turning the display, the zipper was on the back and ran up to the neck as well, but the zipper was buried away within an insert Amy used two fingers to fish out.

“I was thinking of how to restrict the wearer from being able to take it off very easily, and I didn’t think you’d want a lock on here. Those things can be a bit dicey....” Amy started having flashbacks from previous clientele. “So I took a much more softcore approach. There’s a small space in between the fabric the zipper fits in, and anyone who has full use of their arms, AKA not the wearer, the zipper only takes a couple fingers to get out. But if you’re in the sleeper then good luck. It’s one thing to bend your arms but another to move your fingers, and especially so far in.”

This had Joyce imagining countless scenarios as well; encouraging that feeling of dependency in Emily, and helping her learn to rely on others more. So many key items were essential to reinforcing this feeling of infancy Joyce wanted to convey and foster so desperately, and she already knew Emily might get a little excited by these outfits too.

“And the next and final outfit is her play dress! I’d have to say this is probably my favorite...”

Joyce couldn’t help but agree with her, taking in the stunning sight. Like denim, it was a dark blue dress with shoulder straps that were topped on the edge with fat, white buttons, sewn on with a thick, light yellow thread that accented the custom-made yellow shirt underneath. The dress fanned out into a skirt that only stopped a little halfway past the thigh, meaning a twirl or gust of wind would put what’s beneath on full display. Joyce’s favorite addition she could see though was the obvious front pocket sewn on the stomach; large enough to stick both hands in. Large, thick stitches ran along the outside of it, obviously intended to be noticed, including the large pink paw embroidered on the front of the pocket, simplified with three small circles along the edge of a much larger one to signify the palm.

“Because the material is so sturdy it can take some punishment if she likes to be energetic, and that shirt underneath actually functions more like a onesie. Take a look.”

Curiously, Joyce lifted the front of the skirt to see the yellow shirt extending below and wrapping around the crotch, connected by three white snaps below. She then also took note of the material lining inside the skirt, glad to see Amy had made sure it would at least feel comfy for Emily when she wore it.

“Amy...” Joyce found herself hugging the longtime companion, who brought her tears of joy to no end. “Thank you so much for what you’ve done! You don’t know how much this means to me.”

“I’m glad I was the one you came to for this,” Amy returned the hug. “Like I said, orders like this don’t come very often. It’s been a while since I could work on clothes as cute as this. Do you think Emily could be brought in for a fitting next time? I honestly would like to see how they fit...” Emily was the target audience in mind when she designed these clothes after all. While she knew herself the creations were cute, they’d look even better if she could see them on someone in the flesh.

“I’ll see if I can warm Emily up to it. I can’t make any promises though...” Joyce did want to share Emily’s debut with the very person who made it all possible, but respecting Emily’s privacy came first. Once she saw these clothes though, it wouldn’t take long to connect the dots and learn Amy helped collaborate to make these clothes. Then the secret would indirectly be out. But Emily would probably be okay with it, once she explained Amy’s stance.

“I suppose I’ll have to let it go with that.” Amy partly spoke in a glum voice. “But! I made a few small additions to all of them that I think you’ll appreciate.”

Bringing Joyce up to each and every one of the neck holes, not only could she see a loop to hang on a hook if need be, but there was a tiny label on the inside of each of them with Emily’s name etched in thread along all five outfits.

“Now we know who they belong to!” Amy joked, resulting in profuse thanks of gratitude from Joyce. “But if you’ll notice with the other four,” Amy motioned to the onesies and sleepers. “That same signature mark is on all of them.”

Bringing Joyce around to the back of all of them, right where the left buttcheek would be on its wearer there was that same four circle paw like on the pocket of the dress. Only now did Joyce start to associate it with a cat’s paw. Amy had really gone in on the tiny unifying theme, and Joyce could only find the entire set that much more exquisite. It almost reminded her of the mark Amy put on all of her clothes...

Amy’s craft was like that of an artist, and she always liked to hide a personal mark for her long-term clients as a sign to prove it as her work and to be part of a collection. Amy’s personal signature for Joyce was a series of three small circles or dots, cleverly hidden somewhere in the interior. But for Emily’s set she’d taken a much more bold approach and proudly displayed them somewhere on the front. It was cute, and fitting in a way. These clothes were meant for a person who was completely dependent on another and only knew how to be happy, play, and sleep. They only knew how to be the most adorable baby they could possibly be. So to take such a contrast

and print her signature on the outside of Emily's baby clothes, it reflected a sentiment that Emily could come out of her shell and be herself when she wore these. As it should be.

"All of these are safe to wash, but it goes without saying they're going to be at their best if you get them professionally done," Amy advised.

"That won't be an issue," Joyce said dismissively. "I'll just send them off with the rest of my outfits whenever I get the cleaning service." Again, it was a no questions type of deal where they simply took your clothes and washed them. Nothing need be talked about or mentioned.

Before the two had gone their separate ways, they made sure to leave time for coffee first, setting themselves up at the couch where they had a splendid view of Emily's new infant wardrobe. Assuming everything moved along smoothly, this certainly would not be the last time Joyce had Amy make clothes for Emily. She was simply too talented not to do business with. Seeing how spectacularly well she pulled off these designs, it would only pronounce the simpler things and draw her and Emily that much closer to the more genuine acts.

Grabbing five individual boxes, Amy slipped off the covers of each one and carefully folded and placed them in the boxes, putting the covers back on. To ensure not even the slightest mishap occurred, Amy even tied each in a ribbon and helped Joyce load them into the trunk of her car, and they both gave each other a final hug before Joyce departed.

Back on the road, she sighed longingly as the fashion show came to an end, and it would be a long and excruciatingly painful wait until these ever saw the light of day again. All in due time, though. All in due time.

She missed riding in the backseat with Emily already. Charles was busy now with driving Emily; not that Joyce minded, but she still wanted the girl's company. Joyce couldn't help but sneak a little peek on the surveillance, watching as the girl lounged on the couch like it was nobody's business. Content with the sight and respecting Emily's privacy (to a degree), she quickly closed the display and turned on the ignition. The lonely car ride home was boring, but she occupied herself with formulating a plan to sneak the clothes in the back room without Emily noticing...