

53 - Up Up and Away

“Thank you, Charles!” Joyce waved off her driver, right by Emily who’s hand did the same. They were shoulder to shoulder, save for the suitcase separating them on either side of Mommy.

No matter the time or place, the terminal dropoff was always busy and congested. Had the timing been better they could have called it Christmas magic, but this time it was the turkey turmoil making the airport seem even busier than it was on a normal day.

Rolling wheels and humming car engines filled and bounced all around the long stretch of road. Concrete walls and ceilings echoed the traffic pulling in and out of temporary places just to let people out, and even double lanes were starting to form.

“Wait, what’s that?” Emily was tugging on something hanging from Joyce’s shoulder.

“Hm?” Joyce slipped the strap just to readjust it. “Another bag I thought we’d need.” It was a mint green backpack. Certainly small in size, but maybe tall enough to fit a laptop in it. “This is gonna be your carry-on, actually,” she slipped the strap down into her palm and offered it.

“Oh, okay,” Emily turned around and let her girlfriend put the bag over her shoulders like a student starting their first day of second grade.

“Looks good with your jacket,” Joyce smiled with approval. Mint and cyan; a wonderful complement that also made Emily an easy-spot in a crowd.

Emily played with the straps until they felt right. It wasn’t heavy so it must have been unimportant. Tid-bits and backups for a bad moment, Emily imagined. Their toothbrushes, light amounts of makeup and one-time changes of clothes were likely stuffed in there.

“Is this the backup bag?” Emily’s thumbs flicked her shoulder straps.

“That is quite correct, Watson,” Joyce looked both ways as she corralled Emily ahead and into the terminal. No matter the airline or the place the entire place was filled. The lines were long and bumper to bumper between backsides and luggage on wheels.

Emily looked over her shoulder at the identically patterned cases Joyce had by the handles.

“What?” Joyce smiled behind her.

“I could’ve just used my duffel bag…” Emily mumbled.

“And then try carrying all this stuff that never would’ve fit in it?” Joyce chuckled in trying to change the tune. “The suitcases I had were getting a little old, anyway, so it only made sense to get matching sets.”

“That *I* couldn’t pay for…” Emily mumbled.

“Excuse me?” A suspiciously sweet, threatening voice towered behind her.

“Nothing~!” Emily forced a smile and a laugh, keeping her eyes forward.

“Besides, if ours look the same it’s a lot easier spotting them on the conveyor,” Joyce nodded to herself, smiling at the matching shells one more time.

The night of the business dinner Joyce could’ve done this already, but she had spares and wasn’t for something as “big” as this.

“Ah– right there,” Joyce motioned to the empty tagging station where Emily took just a few extra steps ahead so she could wait patiently for the pack mule for a grand total of two seconds. Just as Joyce went to type, Emily slipped between her finger and the screen.

“Wait, I’ll do it,” Emily decided on the spot.

“You’ll do it?” Joyce tilted her head.

“You’re carrying the bags, so it’s only fair…” Emily insisted with her fingers already punching in point after point.

Somehow in her mind, Joyce decided amongst herself that it didn’t violate her mommy policies just to let Emily help out a little, so she stayed indifferent. “Oh wait, you might need the–”

“--flight number?” Emily smiled expectantly.

Joyce pursed her lips.

“Hey– wait! I said I was gonna do it!” Emily tried not to giggle as she reached for Joyce’s wrist.

“I changed my mind,” Joyce said simply as she typed.

“You can’t just do that! Let me help!” But all she managed was to get spun on her feet with an arm around her waist.

“Stay put so I can see the screen, please,” Joyce hummed, now back to a smile as she had the lead yet again.

“Was it what I said? Was I being too better than you?” Emily grinned.

“Yes, you were being very ‘too better’,” Joyce couldn’t help but grin. A bit more aptly, and grammatically correct-er, something about...being figured out? They were equals, obviously. That’s how people and relationships worked. But...there was a difference in power between mother and daughter, wasn’t there?

“Here, you can do this part,” Joyce tore off the long stub of information printing from the machine. “These are special stickers that our suitcases wear like bracelets, okay?”

“I think you’re forgetting that I’ve flown here once already...” Emily gave her the side eye, and Joyce couldn’t feel any more fulfilled. *Ah, yes, just as it should be!* “Oh, speaking of which: I want the window seat.”

Joyce paused with a stare off into space. “Well...that shou—”

“--ould be fine?” Emily pressed her luck. “I wanna look out the window when we’re flying. You brought something to read anyway, didn’t you? So it’s only fair,” Emily boldly nodded like the decision was done and decided.

“You’re acting awfully excited...” Joyce raised her eyebrow as if to insinuate something. *Do not be fresh.*

“Come on...! Emily laughed at the look on her face. Please? Can I? What do I have to do?”

And for a bit more insight on Emily’s side, how couldn’t she be excited? Flying back to the west coast for the holiday? She couldn’t remember the last time she took a well and proper vacation. Sure, with Jack there were small and little things, but never as extensive as this. Maybe she was acting out a tiny bit in their little world of play, but that was half the fun. After all, Joyce clearly felt the same way about it too...

Besides, business class? Emily hated being spoiled when she wasn’t allowed to splurge for Joyce or herself, but an experience like this just isn’t something that happens in her financial bracket. It was a treat she wanted to make the most of.

“Anything?” Joyce asked after a quiet second, and Emily gulped before nodding.

“W-within reason...” her eyes started to move the other way.

“Nope. Nuh-uh. *Anything*,” Joyce repeated and Emily was already regretting her actions.

Had she asked as they were boarding, Joyce probably would have let it go on a whim. But because Emily the poor fool was sounding so desperate and so excited from the early onset, now Joyce knew she had something to leverage. What a cunning girlfriend she had...!

“A-an...” Emily frowned at the expectant smile. “Anything...”

“Okay~!” Joyce declared with a simple smile. “The window seat is all yours.” She started smoothing out the bands over their luggage. “Is this on good enough...?”

Emily watched her skeptically, awaiting the punchline or whatever mysterious conditions she just preemptively agreed to. And yet, of course, Joyce still kept her in unknowing suspense.

All the way through check-in. All the way through waiting in the line to get through security.

“Oh, actually, hang on,” Joyce quickly stepped behind Emily and unzipped the bag over her shoulders.

“What?” Emily tried to look over her shoulder, but the most she could hear was probably the plastic bags with their toiletries.

“I was keeping my tablet in there,” she dropped it into the tray. “Don’t want you getting pulled aside for that.”

And as a reminder, the nearby TSA agent called out to the long and winding line of over a hundred heads behind them the same exact rules Joyce was just practicing.

“Are you sure there’s no other electronics in there?” Emily, somewhat nervous now, asked as she felt the bag rise with a zip.

“Positive,” Joyce patted her head. “You can send it through.”

The whole time now after going through the body scanner and to the other side Emily was second-guessing Joyce’s best efforts. A run-in with folks possibly suspicious of her mystery bag

was now the only thing on her mind because she wasn't the one who packed every single thing in there. Were they going to call for her? Flag her down?

But the bag rolled out freely and without issue. Hm. Maybe after the first and hopefully last fiasco with Joyce making mistakes before airport trips Emily had been perpetually on edge from thereon. Apparently there was no cause for concern this time.

"Hey," Joyce playfully scratched behind the girl's ear, "grab your bin, we're gonna get our stuff back on by the bench over there."

"How often do you travel?" Emily asked as they sat down.

"A fair bit, but not so much toward the end of the year, usually," Joyce supposed as she zipped her boot. "Why?"

"Mmm," Emily shrugged, "you sorta just seem to know what you're doing." *What else is new, though...*

"Lots of practice," Joyce explained as her lust seized the moment of opportunity. While Emily was tying one shoe, her unfinished other was perfectly ripe for the taking. Suddenly Emily's other foot was on Joyce's knee so she could tie it. "I don't really go through TSA so often, though. There's a few reasons I wanted to come a bit on the early side and that was one of them."

"Wait, what?" Emily blinked. "You don't?"

Joyce casually shook her head and Emily looked fearful. After looking each way for any eavesdroppers, Emily leaned in with a whisper.

"J-Joyce... isn't that illegal?"

"Huh?" Joyce laughed. "No, it isn't! I have a special sort of 'pre-check-in' status. I did a special interview and background check so airports know I'm safe."

"Th-that's actually a thing...?" Emily still sounded skeptical, still trying to imagine what kind of wealthy underworld allowed for such things.

"Yes, it is. So much of a thing we could probably get it for you too if you did enough flying," Joyce stood after running her hand through Emily's hair.

“Wait,” Emily beckoned from the metal bench. She pinched the end of her shoelace and swung out her foot, undoing the knot completely. “Do the other one too.”

“The one you *just* did?” Joyce gave her a wise grin as she slowly took a knee.

“You’ve gotta tie them both or they’re gonna feel different!” Emily groaned. “If you think about it, it’s *your* fault for helping out.”

“Dare I say it; I might be dealing with a little bit of a brat today?” Joyce taunted, and the sound of footsteps all around them finally registered in Emily’s brain, shutting down the game completely.

“A-actually, I’ll do it...” Emily mumbled, but Joyce did not reciprocate.

“Ah-ah. If I’m gonna start then I’m gonna finish,” Joyce wagged a finger with just her words. She tried to stay oblivious, but glancing slightly up was easy enough to see the emotions written on her partner’s face. “It’s okay, you know?” Joyce whispered. “Everyone’s so busy that they’re not gonna notice a cute little girl being a little bratty...”

Wherever people were flying to or from. Far or nearby. A new place to be always trumped whatever small happening there might be in the place that was between point A and B. It was fun and Emily was getting drunk off the destination to come. The sense of adventure in going someplace else. Maybe using the ‘B’ word was just a little too real for her, though. Bratty was usually a word they used at the house...

“Hey, tell you what,” Joyce laced her fingers between Emily’s while she stood up. “Finish your *whole* lunch and *maybe* we’ll find some room for ice cream before the plane. Deal?”

“Really?” Emily perked right up and Joyce’s smile couldn’t hide her teeth when she nodded.

“Yes, and *only* because I’m in a good mood...” she hoisted Emily off the bench. “I’m excited *too*, you know?” So why not? Let loose and have some fun!

So like the world wasn’t watching and no one really didn’t care, hand-in-hand Emily giggled just slightly as she swung their arms like a swing.

Joyce honored Emily’s choice for sandwiches and that’s exactly where they went. One of the slightly more expensive spots to eat; an airport restaurant with its own quartered space on the open floor. Half-walls with hedges and pillars sprouting from a bar that was moderately filled, though they had opted for a table in the corner.

“And you’re sure you won’t need anything for the flight...?” Joyce cautiously asked. They still had some time to go, but it never hurt planning a brief session of drinks just to loosen up any nerves...

“No?” Emily shook her head. Clueless. “Why would I?”

“Well, Em...” and now the comment about the window seat was concerning. “I thought you didn’t like high places?”

“Yeah?” Emily didn’t seem to disagree, hence even more confusion from her partner.

Somehow Joyce tilted her head out even further. “Sweetheart,” she was far more blunt with her words and unintentionally sounded a bit condescending, “planes go up really high...”

Emily opened her mouth. Then she made a sound. “Oh. Uhm,” the answers were somewhere in the green bush right next to her. “I dunno,” she shrugged. “Planes don’t bother me?”

If only the logic translated for Joyce, but she sighed without trying to dissect. Better to leave a can of worms closed right before trying to put it under pressure. If Emily could be afraid of high altitudes but not be afraid of riding in a plane, so be it.

“Well I’m bringing some stuff that can help you sleep if you want it. Six-and-a-half hours doesn’t go by quickly, you know? You could think of it as one of your—”

“I’m not taking a nap.” Emily stared down her girlfriend until she looked ready to laugh with how adamant her twenty-something toddler was being.

“Two waters? One with lemon.” The waitress was back with two ice-cold glasses. “Have we decided on an order, or should I come back in a few minutes?”

“Now’s perfect, actually,” Joyce handed her the menus while she squeezed her yellow slice into her glass. “Two chicken melts, please.”

“Absolutely,” the staff scribbled a note. “Anything else?”

Nope, Emily recited in her head. She was paying enough attention while she sucked down a cold stream from her straw. Come to think of it, she didn’t get to see their dessert menu...

“And a beet salad as well.”

Emily blinked. Whatever water was going up the plastic tube and into her mouth promptly fell back out and down into her glass. Wordlessly, she watched Joyce's professional smile finish the exchange, like she hadn't just used the god-awful word. The *real* 'B' word that wasn't allowed in Emily's book.

"Perfect. The food shouldn't take long!" The waitress left with their menus, leaving them just their glasses, silverware and Emily's unsettled mood.

"What?" Joyce giggled. "What's with that look?"

"N-nothing... Uhm...uh, a salad? I didn't know you wanted one?"

"Hm? Oh, yeah," she waved her hand dismissively. "Just a last-minute thing. I thought it'd go well with what we're getting."

Good. Joyce acknowledged it as *her* salad and not Emily's. By now it was a mystery why she hadn't written Sheila a 'thank-you' card yet for purging such an unholy ingredient from their fridge the last time.

"So Frank and Mary are gonna pick us up?" Emily moved to a topic she was a bit more comfortable with. Her eyes were drinking in the rich atmosphere of travel all around her.

"Yep. I think by now my dad is almost done with Thanksgiving prep. He'll be doing more tomorrow before everyone gets there, but I imagine I'll be helping out a little bit."

"I could help?" Emily offered.

"Yeah?" Joyce raised her eyebrows. "Let me guess: you'd like to taste-test some of the dishes?"

Oof. Back to a sore spot again.

"Uhm...no, that's okay. I mean like cooking and stuff."

"Emily," Joyce was back to giving her a weird look, "you're being awfully silly today. I know my girlfriend didn't just turn down the opportunity to try some food, so what gives?"

"Uhm...it's just that..." her voice started to go quiet, but Joyce didn't drop her expectations. So finally in a mumbling whisper she said, "I'm not...really big on Thanksgiving food..."

The reaction was slow, but the momentum was strong. Joyce's eyes slowly opened. Wider and wider until downright shock was beside herself.

"You're not?" Joyce didn't quite sound like she believed it.

Embarrassingly, Emily shook her head. "I'll eat it! It's just...bland? I don't know..."

"And you're telling me the day before Thanksgiving?" Joyce was half-ready to laugh. "S-so wait. Turkey. Stuffing. Gravy. Mashed Potatoes. Cranberry sauce. Casseroles— none of that sounds appealing to you?" Now her mind was racing for some kind of objection or counterpoint. She had seen her little treasure nibbling on so many different things, and now she was trying to think of a time she was eating something from tomorrow.

...*Nothing?*

"It's all okay, I guess, but it sort of makes me wish I was having something better... But yeah, it's bland."

"Awfully bold of you to be judging the food before you've even tried it?" Joyce couldn't hide her playful disapproval.

"I will, but I think I know how I'm gonna feel..."

"And why wait until the last second to tell me?" Joyce drilled a little bit more. "It's easy enough to make something special for you."

"No. Don't do that," Emily said quite adamantly. "I don't want anything special."

"Why not?"

"You know why not."

I absolutely do. "No, Emily, I don't. Why can't I spoil you?"

"That—!" Emily accused with a finger and Joyce had to mask her mouth just to hide the smile. "You *do* know! I don't want you making a scene!"

"A scene over my cute, little picky eater?"

"I'm not picky!"

“No, you aren’t,” Joyce finally agreed with a small laugh. “But given that it’s taken me *this* long to find out this information, it certainly seems like you were trying to hide it from me?”

“Th-that’s...I was...it wasn’t important because I’m still gonna eat it.”

“We could always get a sandwich platter or something? It can be for everyone,” Joyce openly mused.

“Stop. Don’t.” Emily pouted. “You’re making me wish I didn’t say anything at all...”

“Could I get them if *I* wanted them?” Joyce smiled. “You can have stuffing and I’ll have ham and cheese?”

“Then you’ll be the picky eater...” Emily puffed her quiet counterattack aloud.

“Don’t forget I could just as easily say the same about you,” Joyce warned as she spun her straw with her finger.

“No you won’t.”

“I won’t?”

“Nope.” Emily sounded adamant.

“And why’s that?”

“Because you like me.”

And as astoundingly blunt and simple as it was, there wasn’t much room for argument.

“Very true,” Joyce sighed as if she finally conceded. “I don’t embarrass you to be mean.”

“So you admit that you try to?” Emily frowned.

“Would you look at that, I think our food is here!”

Two plates of delicious and warm sandwiches were set in front of them, but an uninvited guest also came with them. Emily tried not to grimace at the salad set right next to Joyce’s plate.

Just a sandwich with a few fries was plenty for Emily. Whatever room she may have left was filled by the disgusting thought of eating the one thing she truly wouldn't ever compromise on. Again, she tried to keep her eyes away from what Joyce was currently scraping from her bowl onto her plate.

"Is the sandwich good?" Joyce asked.

"Mfhmph, it ish," Emily mumbled through her chewing and unperturbed expression.

"Good," and Joyce made Emily avert her eyes yet again once she plunged a fork into some of the salad on her plate. "Hey, missy, another thing," she lowered her voice. "Since my mom and dad are picking us up, I'm thinking we should take care of things before we get on the plane?"

"Things?" Emily frowned.

Joyce scooped her chair forward, sounding a bit more pointed. "Get *you* ready, hon."

The gears were turning until finally her sideways look said that she figured it out.

"A...already...?" she couldn't have sounded more upset.

"Either before we leave or as soon as we get to the house," Joyce laid out the options, but her voice was clearly implying which one she thought better of. "I think it's better we just rip off the bandage." Or much more aptly, lay down the diaper tapes.

"Mm..." she quietly nodded with her eyes staring down at her plate.

"But hey—" Joyce lifted Emily's chin with a finger. "Who do you think is gonna be with you the whole weekend? *I'm* the one who's gonna take care of everything. Just focus on having fun, okay? No one's gonna notice anything." Joyce assured as she rubbed the top of Emily's hand.

"Did...how much did you pack...?" Emily sounded a bit worried, but also hopeful. What if they weren't bringing a lot? In theory, if she went through all of them, didn't that mean there was nothing left but to go back to panties? No diapers left meant grown-up underwear, naturally.

"Don't worry about that. We'll be all set," Joyce assured, much to Emily's dismay. When Joyce said something, usually she meant it and made good on her promises. As long as it had nothing to do with keeping kinky secrets...

More importantly, Emily could practically see the evil aura radiating from Joyce's purse now. It sat in the chair between them and the shrinking girl could feel the sinister vibes seeping through the leather flap. She packed them...in her purse? The one that went through security? And yet she looked as calm and collected as could be, thinking absolutely nothing of the sheer embarrassment she must have put herself through.

As insane as it was, there was almost room for respect.

But she lost all her respect the moment she heard Joyce crunch a leaf of lettuce between her teeth. It wasn't the greens that got her uneasy, though. It was the slice of purple poison she was chasing right alongside it.

"Oh, that's right," Joyce spoke up and Emily fell out of her own beet-hating trance.

Emily watched Joyce's hand reach for something on the table. A napkin? No. Her half-empty bowl. Okay. And then she...shoved it. Or slid it. Moved it away from herself. Not on the floor, no, but in the direction she was looking. And by some unforeseen and unfortunate circumstance, there Emily was, sitting right across from her.

Funny, right?

Emily, in quiet surprise, thought to do what only seemed natural: get out of the way so Joyce could continue pushing it off the table and onto the floor. After all, who was Emily to get in the way of taking out the trash?

But there must have been some kind of misunderstanding, because what Joyce said and Emily heard obviously couldn't have matched up.

Without even looking, busy with her phone, Joyce (allegedly) asked aloud,

"Sweetheart, could you finish the rest of that for me, please?"

With both palms around the bowl, Emily gently slid it back.

"No thank you."

Finally Joyce looked up from her phone and down at the bowl. While it may have been half-empty, Emily on the other side of the aisle saw it as dreadfully half-full of her least favorite food.

“Oh, are you already full?” Joyce already started reaching for the good plate of food Emily had, who was now protecting it like her firstborn.

“No, I’m not full. I just...don’t want salad.”

“Please, honey?” Joyce asked again with her stupidly sweet voice. The kind that Emily always managed to fall for, despite knowing there was ulterior intent.

But Emily stood firm. “S-sorry...I’m all set.”

“Okay,” Joyce let it go but she didn’t take the bowl back. There was an uncomfortable silence aside from the white noise of the airport itself– an atmosphere they weren’t participating in. Slowly, as if waiting for something else that never came, Emily took a bite from her sandwich.

“So...” *It’s a stupid question. Don’t ask. You know what’s gonna happen...!* “Wh...where are we gonna get ice cream?”

“Hmm...” Joyce turned her head. “I think I know one place nearby.”

“Are you gonna get some too?” Emily asked.

“I think I would...” Joyce sighed like she was admitting to a guilty pleasure.

Another loud crunch of beet and lettuce. *Blegh.*

“But,” Joyce popped with her lips, “that’s only if you finish all your lunch, right?”

“I didn’t forget,” Emily answered with a mouthful of sandwich. “I’m finishing it right now.”

“And as soon as you finish that and your salad, we will.”

And again, something just didn’t sound quite right.

“Salad...?” Emily repeated.

Joyce tapped the bowl. “This one right here, honey.”

Emily finally didn’t hide her frown as she looked down at the bowl. “But I...didn’t ask for that.”

“Emmy,” Joyce briefly glanced to the side. No one was there. *Perfect*. “What kind of mommy would I be if I let you have sweets and junk food all day?”

“You can’t say—!” Emily tried, but Mommy was simply stronger.

“--If I’m willing to get us ice cream then I’d like for you to have something healthy, sweetheart.”

Just like that Emily was backed into a corner faster than she could have ever realized. Why was a salad being forced on her? Normally she wouldn’t have minded, but what terrible coincidence was it that it had the *one* thing she didn’t want to eat?!

“C-can...can I get a different one?” Emily asked in a small voice.

“A different one? You’d rather have a *whole* other dish instead of just eating a few bites of this?” Obviously the mommy in Joyce didn’t sound like she approved, yet Emily was still sheepishly nodding. Although, she was hardly being forthright about why she was so desperate to dodge the meal. “What’s wrong with this?”

Don’t make me say it...!

“I-I just...want a different one. I’m in the mood for something else,” Emily tried to deflect.

“Honey, we’re not ordering anything else right now.” She even had the audacity to lean forward just to grab Emily’s fork and set it in the bowl. “See? Just a few bites.”

“I don’t want to eat it,” Emily blurted a bit less politely.

“Even if it means no ice cream?” Joyce raised her brow.

“Y-...” *I’m so sorry, ice cream!* Emily grit her teeth. “Yes...”

And before she even had half a second to process the grief over the death of her sweet frozen dairy, Joyce immediately followed up with, “Even if no window seat, either?”

“What? No!” Emily kept her voice down, but she was certainly upset. “That’s not fair!”

“But we made a promise, didn’t we?” Joyce continued to calmly speak like a mom talking her toddler down from a tantrum. “You behave and do as you’re told. Emily, baby, I’m not asking for a lot?”

But she was, and Emily wanted her to understand that so desperately without betraying her own cowardice. A small fraction of her true childish self. The kid that never grew out of thinking certain foods were yucky or off-limits.

All of this, including her window seat and a tasty treat was now being put at risk because Joyce decided on a whim to give her something she absolutely didn't want. How bad could her luck possibly be?

"Th-that's..." Emily tried to find the words or the argument, but the clock was ticking and Joyce was staring right at her. She wasn't being forceful in the physical sense, but Emily could feel the pressure to perform in every other possible way.

"It doesn't have germs, you know?" Joyce laughed as she plunged the fork into the bowl. She pulled out lettuce, tomato, and beet, all at once. Then she extended her arm for Emily's mouth. "Here, one bite. Say 'ahhh'~!"

But Emily narrowly dodged the fork like it was a speeding bullet.

"Emily? What's the problem?" Joyce had a small frown. "It's yummy?"

"I..." her lips quivered and even contemplated pushing back her chair. Walking away? Well...probably too drastic. "I don't want to."

"Emily, I think you're being a bit picky right now..." Joyce teased and Emily wasn't smiling.

"I don't like beets." She couldn't look Joyce in the eyes, but the admission of a very real quirk of hers had her feeling some discomfort. Maybe it would have gone easier if she didn't have to do it in the moment with her back against the wall, or her chair, but she said it anyway.

"No?" Joyce looked surprised. "*My* Emily has a vegetable she doesn't like?"

Emily was quiet, expecting a trap to be sprung or something. So just to be safe she shook her head quicker than most would have.

"Wow...! And when did you decide you didn't like them?" Joyce asked while her hand still held up the forkful of food. Hanging it there. Threatening her with it just from its sheer presence...!

"I...I don't know...as a kid? Joyce, please, can I eat something else?"

“Did you give your parents as hard of a time about it as you’re giving me right now?” Joyce smirked and Emily tried not to squirm.

This really was the dinner table all over again. Parked in her seat until she finished what was on her plate. Whether it was rice, green beans, radish, steamed carrots or even the occasional beet, Emily was held to a standard. At least long enough until she pouted or threw a legitimate tantrum.

“I...I said I don’t like it...!” Emily tried to keep the whining to a minimum, but her current mommy was inclined to disagree.

“And I have things that I don’t like either,” Joyce seemed to agree, but only until she didn’t. “But that doesn’t mean I only get to do the things that I *do* like.”

“Can’t...can’t I just eat everything else? I’m fine with the rest of it!” Emily tried to bargain, but Joyce’s immovable demeanor made her far less than hopeful.

“But there’d still be beets in your bowl?” Joyce softly argued. “Come on: let’s be big for a little and eat our veggies, ‘kay?”

Be big. The way she phrased it was like Emily was making the conscious choice to act like a kid. If Emily didn’t eat her vegetables she wasn’t being an adult. She was continuing to be the diaper-wearing baby that she so often was. Christ, babies didn’t have to do difficult things, right? So why was Joyce making her?!

Let it be known that Emily liked Joyce. Like, a lot. Some might even say love. Emily would say that, in fact. But even loved ones can have horrible timing and situational awareness. It was because of that Emily was wishing with every fiber of her being that Joyce wasn’t changing chairs just to sit right next to her.

“Half a salad, Em, and then ice cream and the *best* window seat you’ve ever ridden in. All I want is for you to finish your lunch...!” she chuckled, as if she wasn’t asking for a lot.

But Emily was reeling. Cringing at the feeling of her own upset stomach starting to churn over her own anxiety. The last time she dealt with these horrible veggies was when Sheila unexpectedly visited. Thankfully it was a narrow escape, but it was the closest to death Emily had come since over a decade as a kid.

Of course she didn’t want to miss out on ice cream or the window seat, but was there really a choice?

“No?” Joyce quietly asked, leaning in just to take one step further into Emily’s headspace. “Is that too much?” And she softly exhaled. “I didn’t realize I *did* have such a picky eater.”

“I am picky...” Emily admitted without a second thought. Whatever humiliation she had to endure was worth it if she didn’t have to eat the things that she didn’t like!

“But being picky is a bad habit that cuties like you shouldn’t have,” Joyce coolly corrected. “So here, how about this. I’m not gonna make you finish it.”

Emily’s eyes lit up a lot brighter than they should have. After all, she obviously had the choice to not eat what she didn’t want. In reality, she was an adult. But reality wasn’t where Emily was. She was somewhere far more remote and orchestrated by powers far higher than herself.

She was small and demure with her feet held over the fire as she was held hostage at the dinner table all over again. Mom was right next to her, parked on the chair with Emily’s own silverware trying to force down her throat what she didn’t want.

“One bite. That’s all I want.”

And that was too much.

The look of disgust was immediate. All the girl’s body language said was to run. Run from food? Could she hide until the last few minutes when the plane arrived? Avoid Joyce and this stupid bowl of beets?

“Come on...!” Joyce softly cooed. “Who’s my good girl? Don’t you wanna start this weekend on the right foot?”

“J-Joyce...! What if people are listening...?” she spoke so close to Joyce that she was nearly hiding in her shoulder.

“Don’t worry about that,” Joyce was still hushed. “*One* bite. That’s *all* I want. Think you can do that for me? Huh?”

Emily wanted to bite her own tongue just to get out of there. Joyce inched closer and closer until they really were touching shoulders.

“Just one...teeny, tiny bite...” Joyce whispered as the fork came closer and closer. Emily thought to pull away, but again, her chair had her stuck in place and somehow Joyce, the tricky minx that she is, kept her from going anywhere. “Can you open up for the airplane? Huh?”

It was quite a stressful moment, which is why Emily chose to inject some humor.

“J-Joyce, we’re supposed to fly in planes, not ea—!”

“But you’re eating one right now?” Joyce couldn’t help but laugh.

The silver plane carrying illegal cargo had hit warp drive and flew straight into Emily’s mouth, crashing in a fiery blaze. The dressing was sweet. Savory with a slight bit of tang. The tomato was juicy and the lettuce was fresh. But something else... Something horrible... It was gross. Tough and disgusting. The texture was different and off. It didn’t have the right kind of mouthfeel. It was sweet, but the wrong kind. Nothing savory nor like the kind of confectioneries Emily preferred.

“And...keep it closed, keep it closed!” Joyce cheered as downright discomfort was written all over Emily’s face. She pulled out the spotless fork, and the moment she did Emily’s hands shot forward. Her hands wrapped around the cold glass of water and immediately flooded her mouth.

She swallowed and swallowed trying to force the food down and sterilize whatever bacteria the vile food must have certainly left behind all around her sacred mouth. A few seconds later she was finally gasping for air.

“*Good job!*” Joyce beamed, despite being completely cut-throat. “I bet that wasn’t so bad, right?”

“I hated it...!” Emily mumbled between mouthfuls of continued water. How her gag reflex didn’t completely win was beyond her, but her tongue felt permanently stained.

“Awh...” her girlfriend giggled, and Emily couldn’t bear to watch Joyce effortlessly finish what was left all on her own. “That’s okay, once was enough. You can be little again~” Joyce planted a kiss on her cheek.

She felt cheated and humiliated, but at least Joyce wasn’t making her take another bite. Before she was done washing the taste out of her mouth Joyce already made the remnants cease to exist. Meanwhile, Emily was still making faces at foods she didn’t like in her late twenties. At least she was dating someone willing enough to indulge her...

“...Can we get ice cream now?”

“Okay, in you go,” Joyce bumped the handicap stall door open with her hip.

Emily took the lead, but as she did so she was stripped of her backpack and jacket.

“How are we gonna do this...?” Emily reached the center of the stall then stood awkwardly in place.

“Go potty first,” Joyce motioned to the toilet. Never in a million years would she suggest it, but diaper changes on airplanes sounded like they had complications she didn’t want to get into.

“I-I’m all set...” Emily murmured. They checked for others in the bathroom first, but luckily they had at least a few minutes of privacy.

“Nuh-uh,” Joyce shook her head. “Try for me, please. It’s gonna be a long plane ride.”

“Can’t I just wear one when we get to your house?” Emily asked. The time was nigh and she was getting cold feet. Being diapered in public as strange as it was went down much easier only hearing the suggestion than actually acting it out.

“Are you feeling nervous?”

Bashfully, Emily nodded.

“Good. That makes it easier to go pee-pee,” Joyce walked her up to the toilet and even went as far as undoing the button on her pants for her. A hand on her back held Emily upright while Joyce traced the rim of the seat with a wipe “Okay, it’s clean now. Bottom down.”

“W-wait!” Emily complained, but she didn’t resist. “I said I don’t have to...!”

But apparently her body knew something that she didn’t. It was far from much, but muscle memory sent some kind of signal that broke into a tingle, and finally a tinkle.

Emily was blushing at the floor, but Joyce was simply satisfied. She walked over to the stall hook where her purse and Emily’s backpack was, then started unzipping.

“What’s in there...?” Emily mumbled up at Joyce. She was looking inside the backpack for some reason.

“Your stuff.” Joyce’s hand came out and a folded diaper was right between her fingers.

“Wh-what?!” Emily stammered. “Wh-why is that in there? That’s the backup bag...!”

“It is?” Joyce nodded, seeing no fault, but Emily was feeling retroactive embarrassment.

“W-wait...b-but I...I walked through the TSA with that!” she sprung from the toilet just to look inside herself. There it all was. Or rather, all it wasn’t.

There wasn’t a toothbrush or dental floss in sight. Minus the one in Joyce’s hand, two thick diapers, just like her nursery’s brand, were nestled in one of the folds. A thin plastic package of already-opened wipes were in a different pocket, and more. A travel-sized bottle of baby powder, a silk set of pajamas Emily would sometimes wear, a pacifier, and even a small bag of banana chips...!

“Why did you make me carry all this stuff...?!” Emily whined with red cheeks. She had been carrying all of this the whole time? She thought she was helping! In reality, all she was holding was her own maintenance kit. A baby bringing her own nursery on the go...!

“I had to carry my purse, honey,” Joyce didn’t see the harm. “And I took my tablet out so no one would stop you to check your bag?” Joyce explained, but with very poor timing made Emily yelp at the touch of a cold wet wipe against her crotch.

It was still hitting Emily in waves just what she was doing without even realizing it. She was carrying her own diapers...her own changing supplies. Totally oblivious and carefree to the harmful, humiliating reality...

“Besides, you know if they pulled the bag aside I would’ve said it was mine?” Joyce reminded her as she knelt down to finish wiping. “Also,” Joyce strummed Emily’s panties around her legs like a banjo, “please let Mommy wipe you before you stand next time. Getting up from the potty like that is how you dribble into your big kid undies, sweetheart.”

And why do you have to talk like that right now...?!

Joyce would have tickled her chin, but that didn’t seem quite so sanitary now. She sighed instead as she stood back up. “I wish I could’ve found a good changing mat for you...”

“What?” Emily’s flustered trance was broken.

“I’m gonna diaper you while you’re standing...” Joyce looked her up and down like sizing up an art piece. “We’ll make it work.”

So with her pants and panties down to her ankles, Emily awkwardly spread her feet apart as best as she could.

“Can you lift your shirt for me, please?” Joyce asked and Emily did so. It was quite the embarrassing position to be in. Effectively she was flashing her naked front from her stomach to her ankles, yet Joyce was about to censor it all with some signature padding.

She unfolded and fluffed the diaper as best as she could before feeding it between Emily’s legs. Once it was even on both sides Joyce lifted and the soft pad started to press against Emily’s underside, quickly involving the front and back as well. Joyce was firm with the tapes and even with gravity against her she seemed to do the impossible with unmatched prowess.

Before Emily knew it, she was diapered all over again. Although, it felt a little different than usual.

“Does it feel the same?” Joyce stood back to admire her handiwork.

“Yeah...” Emily took a step, but with her former undergarments and pants chaining her feet together, her waddle felt awfully pronounced.

“A little tougher to walk?” Joyce giggled.

“Yes...” Emily agreed again.

“I guess that’s to be expected,” Joyce murmured with a sheepish smile. “Boosters will do that...”

“B–booster?” Emily blurted, then proceeded to press her hands on the front of her diaper. It was tough. More rigid. More durable? But above all else: thicker.

“It’s a long plane ride and we’ve still gotta wait a little to board,” Joyce apologetically explained. “I think we can both agree that we’d like to avoid joining the mile-high club?”

“I think we’d be joining a different kind of club...” Emily sulked as she looked down at her pronounced bottom. How much did a booster even hold? She hardly leaked as it was... Was this really necessary? “Are my pants gonna fit back over this...?”

“Probably not,” Joyce bluntly stated, much to Emily’s disappointment. “That’s why I packed your jammies in here, too…” she started rummaging again.

“I don’t wanna wear my PJ’s, though,” Emily disapproved.

“Well, it’s either your pajamas over just a diaper,” Joyce offered the ultimatum, but clearly there wasn’t really a choice. “Emily, nobody’s saying you have to take a nap…”

“That’s not the point…!” Emily groaned.

“Right,” Joyce nodded, but she hardly sounded like she believed her. “But no, really. No naps. Whatever you wanna do to pass the time. These are to give you some modesty though? Here, let me take these off of you,”

And finally Emily said goodbye to her panties for the longest she would ever go without them in over twenty years. She didn’t know why it hit her in such a weird way, but Joyce’s deliberate decision to stash her panties in her purse rather than the diaper bag didn’t go unnoticed.

“Wanna wear your PJ shirt too?” Joyce stretched the bottoms over Emily’s hips.

“No.” Emily had her arms crossed.

“Okay, grouchy-pants,” Joyce laughed right before kissing her. She put Emily’s jacket back on and taking the glare in stride, she put Emily’s backpack back on her too. “Let’s go wash our hands.”

After a loud flush they emerged from the stall and marched onward to the sinks. Emily scrubbed and scrubbed, trying to ignore the mismatch between her red shirt and baby-blue pants, hoping her PJs were as loose as she wanted them to be. Although, the crinkle she made with every step had her heart beating faster than normal.

Unlike the bathroom though the main corridor leading to all the gates was far less quiet than the toilets were. Conversation, echoing steps and intercom announcements easily drowned out a crinkly disposable coming from one grown adult. Nevertheless, between extra waddling and overstimulation, Emily already felt winded. As they sat down outside the gate, Emily’s head immediately fell against Joyce’s shoulder.

“Wanna nap while we wait for the gate?”

“No.” Emily groused, still selfish enough to snuggle a bit closer anyway.

Without a word, Joyce had her phone out and Emily was quietly watching whatever went on her screen. Whatever her jacket didn't cover Emily was using her backpack and Joyce's purse to mask the rest. A suitable solution to wait out the remainder.

And then about forty minutes later...

"Emily...?" Joyce softly whispered. "Wake up, hon. We're boarding."

"H-huh?" Emily shot up with open eyes. "Why did you let me fall asleep?"

"I never remember you asking me not to..." Joyce gave her a helpless, but unconditionally loving look. "Come on, you can nap on the plane. We're up. Take your ticket."

Being one of the first few allowed on meant few eyes to ogle a big booty that Emily may or may not have had, which is why her exchange with the greeting stewardess at the entrance was extremely brief.

The plane was spacious for what it was and Emily followed Joyce past the first-class seating and straight for business.

Single seats. How nice, yet how unaffordable. Thousands, likely? Compared to probably the few hundred it would cost when flying on the lowest tier ticket. Business was nothing to scoff at either, given that too was far outside Emily's own price range. If only she ever did anything on her own dime anymore.

"Okay, that's you," Joyce pointed at a seat. A singular seat. A big chair huddled by its own mini cubicle with a table to the side and a monitor installed into the back of the chair in front of her. There was even a door to give her privacy...?

"Th—" Emily turned around in place. "Isn't this first class?"

"No, those are the ones back up ahead," Joyce grinned. "Should we have upgraded?"

"N-no, but..." the surprise was obvious and even Emily was trying not to smile.

"Sit your bum down so we don't block the aisle," Joyce laughed as she guided Emily into her seat. "I'm in the one right behind you." She briefly huddled inside with Emily. "I'm gonna leave your backpack in here with you, okay? If you didn't see it, there's a snack in there in case you get hungry. If they come by offering drinks and you want one, just ask them. I'll take care of it."

“Is this really business...?” Emily couldn’t stop looking around the space. It was small, yes, but for a plane’s standards she may as well have had a penthouse.

“Yes, it is,” Joyce kissed her with a smile. “Now I’m sitting right behind you, but *behave*, understood? When they say put your seatbelt on, please do it.”

“And if I don’t?” Emily laughed. Joyce didn’t.

“Then I’ll be getting out of my seat to check you myself.”

“I...” Emily tried to make another joke. “I will...” she mumbled.

“Good. And also,” she leaned in to whisper, “I left your paci in there for a reason, okay?”

“I-I won’t need it...!” Emily crossed her arms and started to gaze out the window.

“Uh-huh,” Joyce nodded indifferently as she stood. “If you need anything just get out and get me, but *only* when you’re allowed to, okay?”

“Yes, I will,” Emily answered as she stuck out her chin, sounding like some prim and proper princess. “L-love you!” Emily called with a bit more seriousness as Joyce closed her mini cubicle door.

“Love you too,” Joyce blew her a kiss, but she wasn’t going very far. Just a few feet far, in fact.

But Emily sighed with a dumb grin, soaking in an experience she was far from expecting. She squirmed just from enjoying the couple extra inches of seat she never could have imagined. Her own mini room! *And* she got a window seat! All she had to do was take a bite of some stupid beet– She proceeded to make a yucky face. A single bite, and on top of ice cream, she got this!

How lucky, and also how smart she was. Did she play Joyce? Certainly not. She just...tilted the scales in her favor. She hated to admit it, but being spoiled could be quite nice...

And it’s not like Joyce was far. She was sitting right behind Emily in an identical seating booth. One Emily would’ve been the one sitting in had she broken the promise they made each other. In that reality there wouldn’t have been a window seat. She’d be sitting in the aisle one that...

Emily looked to her right, staring at her privacy wall. She looked to the left, over her small table and out the window looking over tarmac and grass.

Single seat.

Joyce was right behind her, sitting in an identical seat.

Joyce, who was already skimming through her tablet, caught two cute and curious eyes staring down at her over the seat.

“Miss me already?” Joyce grinned.

But Joyce was hardly what Emily wanted to see. She was scanning everything else around her. Identical cubicle. Identical seat. Identical privacy. *Identical window...*

“...Joyce?”

“Mhm?” Joyce had her suspicions, which was why she was trying not to grin.

“Was...was I ever *not* getting a window seat?”

Joyce’s long lashes fluttered before looking out to her left where the midday sunlight still got through. Then she looked back up at Emily.

“No, not really.”

“Oh.”

She looked lost in thought for a moment, but that was in part to breaking her new diaper in. Forty minutes was enough time for all the water after the restaurant to catch up to her. She was wet, but the feeling went away fast, save for the warmth she was now feeling.

“Anything else?” Joyce patiently asked.

“No.... As you were...”

Quietly, Emily slumped back down into her seat.

...

...

Like a fiddle.