

Quentin Llamas  
Michelle Donahue

Fiction Writing

21 November 2021

“It’s ok. Please don’t cry. Everything is going to be all right.”

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A couple of years ago, Emma was contempt with the life she once had. Her father was a soldier who worked for the kingdom while her mother attended to household needs. Emma helped around the house with great enthusiasm. When her mother would go to the market, Emma would come along as well to play with the children at the village square. With her aggressive, yet playful and supportive, she was seen as the big sister of the group, even if she was around the age of 4 at the time. Her one wish was to be a big sister so that she could give love and support to her wonderful sibling. However, her parents could only afford to keep themselves and their daughter fed with the money her father is making.

One day, her father was sent out into a scuffle against a horde of monsters and he was reported to be missing. His whereabouts were unknown as he was chased off from the rest of the group. Emma and her mother were devastated by the news. Her father wasn’t ranked very high in the military, but he has told her many stories of his scuffles against criminals and beasts. He would even show her how to handle a knife, even if it wasn’t ideal to give a child a knife.

Being left without a way to make money, their only option was to live with their uncle on their father’s side, Erwin. Unlike her chivalrous father who prioritized his family’s needs over his own, her uncle was part of the black who sold drugs. Business wasn’t going well for him, so he was hoarding any income he made while leaving his sister-in-law and niece to support themselves down in his basement. It was dusty and filled with the smell of drugs, which made Emma’s head spin with its powerful smell. This type of feeling was entirely new to Emma as she

began to struggle to rise from the ground as she feels like a woodpecker is beating against her skull. Not wishing for her daughter to put up with the poor living conditions any more, her mother asked Erwin if there was anything she could do to earn money, in turn for better living conditions for her daughter. Erwin, taking her up on her offer, takes her up on her offer and takes her out of the basement in the middle of the night. Once she came back from their errand, Erwin took a drowsy Emma by the arm and dragged her into a room upstairs. The living arrangements wasn't much better than the basement, but the lack of additive substances made the living quarters much more tolerable. Once Emma grew more aware of her surroundings, she found herself on a small bed right next to her mother. Emma hugged her mother with tears crawling down her cheeks as she begs her mother to never leave her alone again in the dark basement.

“I’m sorry my little angel. If we want that mon-... Uncle Erwin to accept us, I need to just to do a few small tasks. Mommy is trying her best to earn us a home. Can you promise me that you won’t do anything to upset your uncle?” her mother said in a low hoarse voice. The state her mother was in didn’t make Emma feel any better about how Uncle Erwin was treating them. She wanted to walk up to her Uncle and tell him to be nicer to her Mom; however, he towered over her like a dead tree and she didn’t want to go back to the basement and experience that hell once more.

Evry night was the same as the last. Her mother would be taken away in the middle of the night doing, looking much worse than she did the night before. Their meals consisted of meals left over from Erwin’s friends, barely enough to fill a stomach as small as Emma’s. Her mother would normally skip out on meals as she sleeps through the morning, leaving her daughter alone in the morning as well. Dad after day, night after night, Emma was left all alone in a dark room

with no one around to keep her company. She only wished she could do something for her mother who was clearly suffering.

One morning, as though her wishes has finally been answered, her mother busted through the door with energy that she hasn't displayed for such a long time. Without wasting another second, she reached for Emma's arm and pulled her out of the dark room and down the stairs, looking around the house, she sees two men lying face-down on the floor, one of which was Uncle Erwin. She couldn't tell if they were dead or not, but her mother wasted no time rushing out of the house and onto one of the horses in the stables. Once they were out in the open field away from the village, the thought just hit her that she was finally out of that dark abyss. So many questions coursed through her little mind in a frantic frenzy. "Mom, what happened to Uncle Erwin? Is he finally setting you free?" That likely wasn't accurate as the house looked like a battle was going on in there with the unconscious people and broken boxes.

Her mother continued to keep her eyes forward on the road as she maintained the pace of a frantic animal, never looking back once, almost as though she was in a trance. Her mother didn't seem to hear her questions as her face was as pale as the moon. Growing uneasy, Emma kept calling out her mother's name in the hope of figuring out what was going on.

"Mom? Mom? Mom? MOM?!?"

When her voice finally made it through to her mother, she finally slowed down the horse down as she went to speak to the quivering child sitting right in front of her. "My little angel! I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to frighten you like that." She immediately hugged her daughter so tight that Emma thought her ribs were going to pop. "But it will all be ok now." Her mother

continued to speak in a shaky voice. “We don’t need to go back to your uncle now. We can now live our own life now, away from that man.”

As they rode through the valley, Emma realized that her mother has a pack of food strapped to the horse as well as a pouch of gold attached to her waist. Along with the horse, Emma could tell that everything was stolen from Uncle Erwin. She was always told by her dad that if you were to steal from other people, you would be a menace to society. “*Is Mom a menace to society?*” Emma pondered to herself. She always knew that Uncle Erwin is an awful person who should be arrested for making her mother sad. There is no way this would be led to her being branded a criminal. Right?

Finally coming to an entirely new village, Emma’s mother sold the horse they rode on for so long and took her daughter deep within the village. There they came across a small hut that was much smaller than their previous home. Ever since their escape, her mother has been errirly quiet about their situation. Emma speaks up once more, not wanting to be in the dark any longer. “Mom? What is going on? Are we—”

“EMMA!” He mother suddenly shouts as she lunges for her daughter in a frantic manner. Emma stands frozen in place, unnerved by her mother’s unusual behavior. Realizing what was going on, her mother lets out a huge sigh as though an invisible weight has been lifted off her shoulders. “I’m so sorry honey. I shouldn’t have made you worry like that for so long. In fact, I’m sorry that I have been a terrible mother to you.”

That wasn’t true. Her mother was the only reason she wasn’t thrown out in the open to be gobbled up by nocturnal creatures. Before she could tell her mother that what she did was for the best, her mother continued with the same breath. “But now we can start anew. No uncles, no

midnight jobs, no more darkness. It'll just be you, me, and your new baby sibling." Before Emma could figure out how to put her mother's conscience at ease, her mother's last few words rang through her head, in a more positive way rather than the drugs.