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Salt

by [otterlybrilliant](#)

Summary

Freshwater Beach was the most challenging location Emma had ever worked on, the frigid atmosphere quickly eroding her strength and composure. Emma was crumbling and all the tiny pieces of herself fell into Rupert's arms.

Notes

This story was inspired by the fan-shot video of Rupert and Emma's intimate exchange on the shoreline at Freshwater beach in Pembrokeshire.

I would like to thank all the Grintson fans out there for your support! You have been encouraging me to write another Emma/Rupert fic for awhile now; I hope you enjoy Salt.

This story has been generously betaed by JesWithOneEss; thank you a million times over.

Part One

Salt

And I came home

Like a stone

And I fell heavy into your arms

These days of darkness

Which we've known

Will blow away with this new sun

~I Will Wait, Mumford & Sons

The wind raged across the beach; salty fingers wove through her hair and nails clawed at the nape of her neck. Sharp gusts penetrated her clothing, sending chills down Emma's spine that pooled like ice water in her limbs. She shivered as she knelt in the wet sand - which felt more like snow; her legs were numb, and she ached all over.

Although it was late spring, the Pembrokeshire weather was roaring like the cruel lion of March. The only flicker of warmth on the beach came from Rupert, who had his arms tight around her as they knelt in the sand together. She huddled against him, trying to search out his heat, but it seemed distant, buried deep, under more than just layers of clothing. Emma's fingers itched to pull at his jacket, to slip under his shirt and coax the small flame into a roaring fire she could bask in; she longed to feel his skin against hers, a connection she knew would be so hot it would scald. Emma bit her lip, as if to punish herself for entertaining such thoughts, and the pain brought her back to the cold world around her.

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The cast and crew of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows were set up on location at Freshwater beach in Pembrokeshire. Trailers and tents were nestled in the dunes beyond the beach, and Shell Cottage had been erected among the blade grass and blowing sands. The cast had arrived two days ago and the filming of Dobby's death scene had begun. The first 48 hours of filming on location felt more like 48 days to Emma, each plagued by windy, rainy weather that caused

equipment malfunctions and general delays. And, although the beach was absolutely beautiful, she hated it there. Freshwater Beach was the most challenging location Emma had ever worked on and it was wearing on her; the frigid atmosphere quickly eroded her strength and composure, exposing a young woman who was tired, bitter and fed up.

The elements weren't the only uncontrollable forces that tested Emma; her feelings for her costar were, too. Rupert's increased physical proximity during filming made her body feel as if it was being torn apart by polar opposites: on the outside her skin was ice, her fingers and toes constantly numb. But on the inside a concoction of lust and longing seared her lungs, making it hard to breathe.

Even though it was becoming almost impossible to delude herself into thinking she had no romantic feelings for Rupert Grint, Emma was nothing if not persistent. The cork that kept her lustful secrets bottled up was becoming looser as filming of the seventh movie wore on, making Emma work tirelessly to keep it firmly in place. But each time she jammed the cork in and hurled the bottle deep into the sea of her subconscious, it just seemed to keep resurfacing. No longer a singular thought or musing, her feelings had been mounting a small army over the years, and the small feud between her brain and her heart during the filming of *The Order of the Phoenix* had grown into an all-out war, and each year the battle became more treacherous. She had filled her trenches with excuses, lies, and an arsenal of other boys, but still the war was reaching epic proportions. And as she knelt in the freezing cold and wet sand, wrapped in the arms of a boy she longed for, but could never attain, she could feel the weight of it all pushing her, like brutally strong hands on her back, forcing her closer and closer to the brink of composure; she was in danger of falling over the edge.

~o8o~

“Cut!”

The bitter wind scattered David Yates' voice over the grey beach and the crew rushed over to Daniel and the Dobby figure he cradled in his arms. Rupert remained kneeling, his arms still around Emma as he watched the crew mingle around them. He felt her sigh and her body relax slightly as she leaned into him. He didn't want to release his grip on her, but the cameras weren't rolling so he no longer had an excuse. Although the conditions were less than favorable, and he constantly felt like he was standing in a bucket of ice water, cold did not affect him; he was protected by the warmth created by the fact that throughout this scene he got to hold Emma tight. He got to wrap himself around her, smell her, feel her hair on his face and soak in the feeling of her body next to his. He just wished Emma was enjoying it as much as he was.

Rupert knew how hard this shoot was on Emma; being constantly cold and wet, two of the things she hated most, was making her miserable. Yet he marveled at the fact that she was still always very professional, never letting her dislike of the location interfere with her work. She even tried to cheer both herself and the rest of the actors up by initiating general silliness between takes, but Rupert could see through the façade. He prided himself on knowing Emma the best out of everyone in the Harry Potter family, and he could plainly see the strain in her face and the sadness that stole the warmth from her rich, chocolatey eyes. Every time he saw a frown cut across Emma's beautiful mouth he could feel it tear through his heart as well. He constantly struggled with his self-control; his arms fought to reach for her and his lips were desperate to kiss away the sadness

that freckled her face. Although physical contact was something that they often shared, there seemed to be a clearly defined line that encircled their relationship, and what he wanted would be stepping out of bounds.

For the past year it had become increasingly hard to stay within those defined, yet unspoken parameters. The air around them seemed to have changed, as if slowly charging with the electricity of an oncoming storm. It was filled with millions of tiny whispers; heated secrets and forbidden desires that always remained just beyond earshot. Throughout the filming of movie seven, Rupert and Emma seemed to be dancing in the risk of these whispers; gliding ever closer and testing the boundary line of their friendship more frequently than ever before. Every moment, every touch and every glance they shared had an undercurrent, a strong pull into something unknown.

Rupert recalled how yesterday, he, Dan and Emma had been joking around on the beach, and just before they were ready to shoot Emma had snuck up behind Rupert and trapped his arms in a vice-grip of a hug. He froze out of surprise and began to laugh nervously as he heard Emma giggling behind him. Then suddenly the wind changed, and they were caught in the updraft of lucid whispers and tiny hints that injected his heart with a burst of adrenaline. He could feel Emma relax into the hug, her arms loosened but stayed comfortably wrapped around him. She rested her head between his shoulder blades and her hair whipped around them in the wind, grazing his neck teasingly. When she exhaled her breath seemed to permeate his skin and wrap around his spine, shooting light in between each vertebrae. As the glow reached the back of his skull it began to dance around inside his head, illuminating a dark corner of his brain; a closet where he collected, categorized and coveted those tiny whispers, stolen glances, and not-so-innocent touches that he and Emma shared.

It was a closet he fought to keep under heavy lock and key. Here the whispers and secrets calcified; bones and sinew linked together and transformed into skeletons; rattling figures that when fueled by longing, would swarm around his head like locusts, laying waste to innocent 'brotherly' feelings for Emma, and fill his mind with licentious urges if he wasn't careful.

But he was careful; very careful. He was Rupert Grint: the kind-hearted ginger with a smile as warm as his heart and eyes as pure as glacial water. He was the bloke who raised miniature livestock and drove an ice cream truck. He was Emma's fiercely dependable and loyal best friend who could make her laugh like no one else in the world. He was not someone who thought about taking his best friend into said ice cream truck to slowly peel away her clothing, exposing the sweetest, most delicate milky skin he had ever seen, and then spend hours touching, licking, tasting, devouring her until both of them were filled to bursting...

And that was one of the reasons he and Emma got on so well; when all the boys she met seemed to look at her as a trophy, he didn't. And he was sure she cherished that about their friendship. There was no way he would ever overstep the line and sabotage their relationship; even when the whispers in his head tried to convince him that sometimes it seemed like Emma wanted more as well.

As Rupert felt the cold creep up his legs and bleed into his thighs through his trousers, he subconsciously squeezed Emma tighter. Her body seemed to welcome the restraint; she let out a contented groan as she pressed her cheek into his chest. Rupert could sense the static-filled whispers like a cloud of mosquitoes buzzing in his ears and making his skin itch for her. He wondered if Emma could feel it too. And then a thought bit him; was she the one whispering...?

As David Yates went to review the footage, one of the crew members told everyone to take a ten minute break but to stay close, that David would be back with further instructions. As crew members bustled about them like bees around a hive, Emma seemed to float out of the crowd on wings of melancholy. Rupert began to follow, but suddenly spotted Sarah McKenna, his personal assistant, waving to him as she weaved through the swarm and he was forced to stop. As Sarah babbled to him about the next day's tentative schedule, Rupert consented to watch Emma slowly walk towards the shoreline, taking most of his concentration with her.

Within a few minutes Rupert was able to extricate himself from Sarah's grasp and broke into a light jog towards the water where Emma was standing, her back turned away from the beach.

"Hey," Rupert said as he came up beside her. Her head was down and her hair created a veil, blocking her face from his view, but he heard her take a deep breath and sniff. "Are you ok?" Rupert asked superfluously; he knew full well she wasn't, and Emma's sniff and quick, unconvincing nod confirmed it.

The waves crashed angrily in front of them, sending blasts of sea air across their cheeks. He sidled closer and whispered, "We're almost done," as he breathed her in at the same time. Through the smell of salt and cold he caught traces of Emma; notes of hair-styling product, vanilla and another smell he could never quite name; it was just *her*. It was seductive, beckoning him closer, but he dared not move. "Almost done," he repeated, in a comforting voice. His arms twitched as he tried to restrain them from reaching for her.

Emma looked up and out to sea; she sniffed again and wiped her face. Then she turned and looked behind her at the crew that was now scattered further down the beach, their drone barely audible over the crashing of the ocean. Her gaze then settled on Rupert and he could see her eyes were shimmering with tears as she gave him a sad smile that tugged at his heart. Emma reached out, and his fingers all too willingly intertwined with hers. Her slender fingers were icicles, but her touch sent a wave of heat through his body as she squeezed his hand. His heart reacted immediately, speeding to double-time as Emma leaned into him, and before he knew what his body was doing he found himself burying his nose in her hair.

He was swimming in her. He tried to keep his head above water, but Emma sighed, letting the air out of his raft, and Rupert began to sink. His face was heavy and he let gravity pull his lips down into her tangled locks. He closed his eyes and kissed her on the top of her head.

Bollocks, he thought and his body stiffened with anxiety, *I shouldn't have done that*. His mind immediately began to rationalize his actions; it was just a friendly, comforting kiss - hopefully that's how Emma would perceive it as well. She pulled away slightly to look up at him; her face only inches from his.

Rupert's heart jumped into his throat and he gulped, trying to send it back into his chest but it wouldn't budge. It beat rapidly, a painful pulsing in his neck. Their eyes locked and their gaze seemed to unhinge the clouds; a ray of warm sunlight escaped and brightened Emma's face. He could feel the reflected glow tingle his lips and redden his cheeks. Emma's lips parted slightly and Rupert could swear he heard that faint whisper in his ear again.

"Thank you, Rupes," she said in a small, yet heady voice. She moved in closer and tilted her chin up towards him. Rupert's gaze fell to her mouth and he was transfixed; he licked his lips, suddenly overcome with need for her. She was so close... The whispers that swirled around them were

turning to shouts and the closet door in the dark corner of his brain began to rattle; the skeletons wanted out. Her lips were the key, and they were well within his grasp. He couldn't stop himself from reaching...

Eyes fluttered closed, and his heart dropped into his stomach like a stone. The ocean held its breath.

"Right," David called as he moved briskly towards them. His voice was a rush of cold air that slapped Rupert across the face and sent him reeling back. He lost his grip on Emma as David's presence crashed like an icy wave between them. "So, bad news guys; most of the footage we shot was out of focus. We are going to have to reshoot everything," he said with a frown. "We are losing light and it looks like we've got more rain coming in, so we're going to stop for today and pick up tomorrow. That's going to push us back at least another day, possibly more."

Rupert's eyes immediately searched Emma face; the sliver of light that had graced her features seconds ago had vanished, and disappointment quickly darkened her visage. The skeletons skulked backward into their closet as Rupert tried to composed himself.

"Right then," Emma said quickly, her fingers trembling as she pulled her hair away from her face. "Sorry to hear that," her tone seemed overly cheerful and very forced. "But, no problem." She turned towards the beach and started to walk away, but her eyes quickly found Rupert's, and in the millisecond that they connected he swore he saw not only a look of longing, but a beckoning, an almost desperate invitation that caused a pull so strong in his core he almost lost his balance.

~o8o~

It seemed to take forever to get out of wardrobe that afternoon. All Rupert wanted to do was find Emma. After David had told them they would be spending more time shooting on the beach Rupert had been pulled away by Sarah and then sent to wardrobe immediately after. He had seen Emma heading in the direction of the casts' trailers and figured it was a good bet she was in hers; he had a feeling she would not be up to socializing at crowd services or any of the other common areas.

He wondered if she had called Jay; he was often on set since he and Emma had begun dating, however Rupert noticed that Jay Barrymore was very much a fair-weather boyfriend; he couldn't help but overhear mobile conversations where Emma would ask him to come visit, only to be disappointed when difficult to reach locations, less than convenient shooting times, or unfavorable weather kept him away. He hoped for Emma's sake Jay would be able to comfort her - she needed it now more than ever - but the skeletons currently locked away in that dark part of his brain were praying Jay wouldn't show up. Rupert wanted to be the one to comfort Emma; it was he who knew her better, he who went through the difficult times with her, he who... Rupert didn't want to finish that thought; it was dangerous to trek too far into that dark corner of his brain.

It was ten past five when Rupert finally escaped the wardrobe staff. He walked with purpose, head bent down into the wind, over the dunes and toward Emma's trailer. He wanted to at least see her, to make sure she was ok. *Just to look in on her*, he reassured himself. He knocked on her trailer door, the wind biting at his ears as he waited. He licked his lips and could taste salt on them. The sensation prompted a flash of what happened between Emma and him earlier on the beach; that almost kiss (*Was that really what it was?*) and that look she gave him as she walked away.

The memory shone and glittered inside him, and the skeletons were coveting it like magpies.

“Emma?” He called as he knocked again. There was no answer, yet he was almost certain she was in there. He knocked a third time and opened the door slightly. “Emma?” He repeated. He could hear faint sounds of sobbing floating through the crack in the door before they were caught by the wind and hurled over the dunes. “Emma,” he said again, this time more softly and added, “Can I come in?”

Not waiting for permission, he stepped inside. He immediately noticed how cold it was in her trailer; the only thing distinguishing it from the outdoors was the lack of wind and the smell of the ocean. His eyes fell on Emma; she was sitting on her couch, head in her hands, elbows resting on her knees. His breath caught in his throat when he realised she was crying.

“Hey,” he said softly, almost tripping up the steps of her trailer as he rushed over. He dropped to his knees before her and just barely stopped his arms from wrapping around her. “Emma,” he said with so much concern his voice quivered. She sniffed and hastily began wiping her cheeks with the back of her hand.

“Oh god, Rupert, I feel so stupid,” she said in a voice that barely broke a whisper.

“What? No, Emma,” Rupert sighed, pulling her hands away from her face. He held them in his; they were freezing. He had the sudden urge to kiss away the cold, but he stopped himself. He sat back on his heels to prevent temptation. “Please, don’t say that.” He rubbed her small hands in his, trying to warm them. Instinctively he brought them closer to his mouth and blew on them. He heard Emma take a sharp breath and looked to see her bottom lip relax and her mouth open slightly as she stared, as if in a daze, at her fingers cradled in his.

“But... but, I do,” she continued, abruptly looking down. “Look at me, bawling my eyes out in my trailer because we have to stay here another day.” Emma took a deep breath and picked her head up again; tear tracks glistened like starry trails down her cheeks. “No one else ran away crying when they got the news, just me.” She sniffed again and took one of her hands from Rupert to run her coat sleeve across her face; she was still fully dressed in her costume; wet pants, shoes and all.

“So what? Who cares, Emma? This is hard for you, I know. You hate cold and you hate being wet. And you have to sit in that bloody cold sand all day. It’s horrible; I haven’t felt my bollocks in days.” His joke tugged at the corner of Emma’s lip and she smiled through her tears. Without thinking, Rupert brought his hand up and smoothed her hair away from her face, the back of his thumb brushing her jaw. This gesture was yet another to escape his clutches and boldly traipse over the friendship line, but he was too preoccupied with her sorrow to keep himself in check.

“Yeah, but you’re not crying.”

“Emma, you are one of the strongest, most professional people I know. It’s ok to be soft once and awhile.” He frowned as he stroked her hair again, letting the strands slip silkily through his fingers. “Just please, don’t feel stupid about it.” Emma sniffed again, breaking a short stretch of silence.

“What can I do, Emma?” Rupert asked, desperate for something that could possibly make her feel better. He knew what would make *him* feel better, and thoughts of his lips pressed against hers darted out of the dark corner of his brain; he was having a hard time staying in control with Emma so close. She shook her head and his lips pulled into a deeper frown. “Well, just know that I am here for you if you need anything. I’m always here for you...” And then more words fell out of

his mouth, blatantly disregarding the 'do not cross' tape that decorated their friendship line; "...in any way you want me."

At those words Emma raised her head, and Rupert saw that look of longing glint in her eyes again. Her sadness had painted her lips a candy pink and she looked so sweet and delicate; a beautiful Petit Four that remained cool and protected behind the baker's glass. His mouth began to water.

This is a ridiculously bad idea, he thought as he felt himself rise up onto his knees, bringing his face centimeters from Emma's. His lips were on a collision course with hers and he was desperate to meet his fate; a beautiful disaster in the making.

With eyes closed he heard her breathe in sharply, and then they were connected. Their mouths met in a whisper of a kiss that lingered between them, braiding their breaths together. Her lips were cold and salty, but when they met Rupert's they shot fire into him like a blowtorch; he could feel his face and neck tingle with heat that began to radiate through his entire body.

Fire shone into the dark area in his brain; it began to burn through the locked door, and lustful skeletons began to creep from the shadows, urging his lips and his hands to take her over; something he had been desperate for for so long. But somehow he was able to fight against his need. He pulled away slightly, and felt her exhale on his face.

Rupert suddenly realised what he had done and overwhelming terror took over, causing the skeletons to scatter back into the darkness. He hadn't just crossed the friendship line, he had thrown himself over it and was grasping at its shredded strands as he dangled over a cliff.

Emma's lips moved about a millimeter towards Rupert, but he waited without breathing. His heart was pounding so furiously his whole frame was vibrating. He closed his eyes, willing his body to keep still.

And then their lips met again; a gossamer kiss so delicate it was barely there. But the tiny spark its wisps produced were enough to reignite the fire in his head, and he was desperately tempted once more. *Don't do this*, rational thought screamed as it began to burn. *You are taking advantage of the situation; she is upset and emotional. She needs you to be her friend, not someone who only wants to snog her.* But the skeletons in his head danced around the pyre and rationality went up in a towering flame as he pressed his mouth into hers, parting her lips.

The kiss was real now; Emma's mouth folded over his upper lip and her palms cupped his cheeks, pulling him deeper into her. His tongue delved into depths unknown; exploring, tasting, claiming her mouth. And Emma answered back, her tongue weaving with his, welcoming him, urging him on. Rupert's hands traveled over her knees and halfway up her thighs as he kissed her with as much composure as he possibly could; after years of dehydration he was presented with a glass of water, but was told he could take only drop; it was almost impossible not to guzzle down every ounce of her.

But it was Emma who seemed insatiable; she snaked her arms around his neck, opened her knees and pulled him closer. Rupert couldn't refuse the invitation and wrapped his arms around her back, his body pushing her into the couch cushions.

Her fingers wove into his hair and toured down his neck, underneath his jacket. They were like ice, but burned white hot where they touched his skin. He moved his hands to touch her face; her cheek, her hair, her neck... Although so close, he felt like he was straining for her. *More, more, more*, the skeletons chanted in his head.

He broke away from Emma, panting and breathless, and lifted himself up onto the couch beside her. Their eyes met and he saw the flames in his head mirrored in her dilated pupils. A hunger for her raged within him like never before; it clawed at his chest, tore at his lungs and bruised his ribs. And this time he let it take over; he reached for her hungrily, wrapped his hands around her neck and pulled her into him with a low growl. Their lips crashed together in a gale of passion and heat that seemed to melt the world around them.

But he needed her closer; his fingers were desperate to shred through her layers of clothing to get at her skin. His hands dug into her coat, pulling at her waist. With a deep moan Emma's arms circled his shoulders and she pulled herself onto his lap, her legs straddling him. With newfound leverage she pushed him back against the couch and kissed him with animalistic desire. Rupert sucked it in like a vacuum, his motor in danger of overheating.

~o8o~

She was like a child who had been staring through a sweet shop window for years, nose pressed against the pane, breath fogging the glass, until finally, the door had been unlocked. Emma was free to enter; to explore, to touch, to taste. And she was ravenous, frantic to savor every part of Rupert, and in turn be tasted- no, consumed by him.

Emma's thighs were a vice grip as they straddled his legs and her torso pushed Rupert deeper into the couch. Her hands knitted through his hair, and the pads of her fingers scraped his scalp as they tried to pull him into her, her lips greedily demanding more. Desperation escaped with her breath in a whimper as she felt Rupert's hands cup her bum and squeeze gently.

She was lighting up like a Christmas tree for him; her core pulsed and glowed with so much pent-up lust it shone out of her every pore. Her body's immediate and intense reaction to Rupert's touch contradicted all the times she told herself she wasn't attracted to him; that she didn't want him, that she was happy with the person she was currently calling her boyfriend. But Emma couldn't deny it any longer: She wanted Rupert desperately, and her mouth and hands were scandalously broadcasting her secret all over him.

Emma had never kissed anyone like this in her life: Her first kiss had been horrid; a mangled concoction of tongues and far too much saliva. But they had gotten progressively better since, and they were always nice, lovely really. But this... this was not nice, this was not lovely. This kiss was *raw*; frenzied tongues, burning lips and frantic breath, all fueled by unabashed need. She wanted to kiss Rupert for eternity. The world could dissolve into the sea and she would be happy to drown with him, their mouths tangled together, desperately consuming each other to the very last breath.

"Oh god, Rupes..." she breathed into his mouth; her voice was so heavy with lust she barely recognized it. Rupert's hands made her moan as they groped her thighs and bum, then traveled underneath her jacket. His fingers were like sparklers on her skin, exciting each nerve ending and making them scream for more. He answered back with a low growl as his lips traced a moist path across her cheek and down her neck. Emma's eyes were shut tight, all her senses focused on the path his mouth was taking over her flesh. She bit her lip and tossed her head back, allowing him better access to her throat. Rupert kissed and sucked; his mouth so hot it branded her.

“Emma..?” Rupert’s lips painted her name across her neck. If he was asking her a question she hoped he would find the answer in her mouth; she cupped his face and pulled his lips back to hers, her tongue penetrating deeper, but it still wasn’t enough. Emma’s hands raced down his chest, fingers desperately seeking out the fastenings of his coat and, shaking with exuberance, they began to unbutton.

~o8o~

“Emma..?” Rupert’s lips spoke her name unwillingly; they were far more interested in exploring Emma’s soft neck. He could feel her heart racing beneath his lips as he delicately sucked at her throat. The rational part of his brain wanted to ask her what was going on, ask her if they should stop, but the skeletons had managed to trick his brain into entering their dark closet and they were currently trying to shut the door on it. Emma seemed to be on their side as well, and the door slammed shut completely when she thrust her tongue deep into his mouth. And when her hands began to unbutton his jacket Rupert realized he was fighting a losing battle. His tongue eagerly intertwined with Emma’s as he willingly surrendered.

A knock on the trailer door froze Rupert’s lips in mid-kiss and he pulled away from Emma slightly. They stared at each other, a look of surprise mirrored on their faces, as if they had just woken up in an unfamiliar place. The knock came again, prompting Emma’s bewildered expression to transform into a look of utter defeat. An exacerbated groan escaped her lips and cooled Rupert’s face. She seemed lost, making no attempt to acknowledge the person outside the door.

“Here, Emma, let me get it,” Rupert said as he tucked a strand of loose hair behind her ear. Without a word Emma shifted off his lap like a jelly mould slowly sliding off a tipped plate, her body crumpling into the couch cushions.

Rupert stood; he was grateful to be still wearing his knee-length oilskin jacket, and he smoothed it down to conceal any hints of what they had been engaged in. As soon as he opened the trailer door a strong gust of evening wind blasted his face, sending the scent of salty sea air up his nostrils and into his brain, clearing the lustful haze that was dominating his thoughts.

“Hiya,” It was Christy Watson, one of the wardrobe assistants who greeted him. She didn’t look at all surprised to find Rupert on the other side of Emma’s door - the two were constantly in each other’s trailers - but Rupert couldn’t control a guilty look that began to creep over his face. “Sorry to bother, but Emma didn’t check in at wardrobe this afternoon. She needs to turn in her costume from today’s shoot.”

“Err... Emma’s really not feeling well,” he began, scratching the top of his head, as if the lie made his scalp itch. “Can she turn it in tomorrow morning?” He asked, adding a pleading smile. Christy frowned.

“Rupert, you’re going to get me into trouble, yeah?” She crossed her arms, thinking it over. Rupert waited as patiently as he could for her answer, all the while trying to stop his brain from purging all thoughts that did not contain Emma’s lips from his head. He tugged at his jacket again.

“Please Christy,” he said in a school boy voice. “I promise she’ll bring it tomorrow morning.”

“Well it’s your arse if she doesn’t,” Christy wagged her finger at him. “Tomorrow before seven, I don’t care what her call sheet says.” She was trying to sound harsh but she was never the type to pull it off.

“Sorted,” Rupert said with a crooked grin. Then added; “Thanks, Christy,” as she turned and headed away from the trailer.

Rupert closed the door, sending the trailer into shadows; the sun had set without their notice. The air was still ripe with passion, but it quickly began to crystallize into ambiguity and the particles prickled between them like static. Emma stood only a few feet away from him, but his eyes had to work at bringing her into focus as they adjusted to the darkness. She was a wonton picture painted with conflicting strokes of sex and innocence: He could see where his mouth had left crimson splotches along her ivory neck, her artery pulsing furiously beneath, sending blood to her face that was already flushed and glowing. Her lips were the colour of over-ripe strawberries glistening with dew, and her hair was wild and tangled. But her eyes remained stoic; they gave him no hint as to what thoughts hid behind them, or how she wanted proceed.

“Right,” Rupert breathed out, the word barely filling the silence that was slowly constricting his chest. “I should go then...” It was a statement, but the rise of inflection in his voice turned it into a question; a question he only wanted one answer to. He was waist deep now, sinking in a quagmire of lust, and he didn’t want to fight it.

“Do you want to go?” Emma asked. Rupert felt like she had handed him a time bomb, and he had to properly defuse it before it blew up in their faces.

“Do you want me to go?” Rupert lobbed the bomb back at her, not trusting his trembling fingers to be responsible for an outcome so volatile. It was on her now, and so be it. The pause between them felt like years.

And then Emma’s strawberry lips parted, and the sweetest of words oozed from them like nectar;

“No.”

~o8o~

“I should go then...” Rupert’s words stung like salt in a wound, but she tried not to flinch. *He most certainly should go*, Emma chastised herself, her thoughts grinding the salt in deeper. She deserved the pain; she had just derailed two relationships in a moment of weakness, and now the carnage of the crash was staring her in the face.

“Do you want to go?” Emma heard the question as if someone else was speaking it; her heart seemed to be buying time while it pleaded with her brain to bypass the wreckage and continue on course, no matter the consequences.

“Do you want me to go?”

Emma almost laughed; the torture was maddening and Rupert seemed to be prolonging it. But when she looked in his eyes it was plain to see he was wrestling with his own demons. Emma closed her eyes and took a deep breath, her lungs swelling until they barely fit within her ribcage. The blast of oxygen dissolved the salt that festered in her open wounds and her muscles began to

loosen. And as they uncoiled they released a tiny word that had been trapped within the tangles of her tendons. It floated out of her mouth and popped like a soap bubble in the thick air between them.

“No.”

It was amazing how those two letters, when paired, would change the course of Emma’s life. She let the consequences spill out of her along with the word, focusing only on the now empty space left within her; a space she wanted filled with nothing but Rupert. Because truthfully, it was only Rupert that she wanted: all of him, everywhere, inside and out.

She took a step towards him; this tiny movement was all that was needed to tear the ropes that had been restraining them. They rushed into each other with such passion that they lost their balance and Rupert grabbed her to steady himself as they teetered on the spot. They were a storm of fingers and tongues lashing at each other; forcefully parting lips and thrashing at fabric.

Emma pulled at Rupert’s coat, successfully freeing it from his body. Her hands were underneath his shirt before the jacket hit the floor, fingers racing up Rupert’s back, desperate to explore and touch every part of him; the sensation made her core pulse and her legs tremble.

She relinquished her grasp to let Rupert unbutton and push her coat off her shoulders. As the heavy fabric slid off her body, a deep chill penetrated the shield of heat they had created around them and suddenly she was shaking all over; lightning fast tremors took over her arms and traveled deep into her torso. She ignored it, and tried to bury herself in Rupert’s chest as she kissed him. But Rupert must have felt her shaking, and he pulled away from her.

“Blimey. Emma, you’re shivering,” he said, his voice full of concern.

“I’m fine,” she breathed, trying to reconnect her lips with his – seconds apart was too long.

“No, no you’re not,” Rupert disagreed. He ran his hands down her arms and grasped her trembling hands. “We have to get you warmed up.” They both stopped and considered the accidental innuendo hanging in the air. Rupert’s embarrassment escaped in a wispy chuckle as he shook his head. “Come on,” he said as he pulled her towards the tiny loo in her trailer.

Emma stood in the door frame of the bathroom and watched Rupert pull away the shower curtain and lean down to open the taps. Her body convulsed with shivers and she wrapped her arms around herself to try and stop the shaking. The cold stabbed at her insides like sharp knives and she realized she couldn’t remember the last time she felt her toes. But she didn’t care about any of that; her mind was busy racing through possible scenarios of what would happen once Rupert got the shower going. Would he leave her? Would he wait for her? Would he join her...?

The last thought made her face glow scarlet and she bit her lip. The idea of her and Rupert together, naked, with hot water coursing over their skin as they explored each other’s bodies, pulsed like a heartbeat between her legs and she shifted and rubbed her thighs together, amplifying the sensation. Desire began to take over, quickly sweeping doubts and concerns out of her brain like sawdust into a bin. The fact that she had a boyfriend, that cast members were not allowed to fraternize, and that she shouldn’t be thinking about her best mate like this, were all chucked away and a singular thought remained: She had Rupert right where she wanted him, and she couldn’t let him go.

Steam began to billow around Rupert as he stood up. Emma gathered as much courage as possible and, with her body shaking from more than just cold, made up her mind to get exactly what she

wanted.

~o8o~

Rupert reached for the tap and turned the handle in the direction of the red line painted above it. As water spat noisily from the spout he realized that his road had become forked, and he too had to pick a direction to proceed in. Did he adjust the shower for Emma and then leave her in privacy? That was the clear, logical and safe path. However, the skeletons in his head were quickly hacking away at branches and carving out a new route; one that traveled over Emma's soft, wet frame. He was thoroughly baffled at how he got to this point in the first place, yet here he was...

He adjusted the temperature of the water to just past his own comfort level – Rupert knew Emma preferred her showers quite hot – and steam immediately began to cloud the small space. He reached behind him and pulled at the shower curtain; the rings caught on the bar and Rupert had to tug a few times, as if it too wasn't quite sure of its journey. He could feel Emma's stare, cool and uneasy on the back of his neck, making the tiny hairs stand at attention. It was a sharp contrast to the heat on his face; the steam causing beads of sweat to form on his forehead and upper lip. The temperature was almost unbearable on his skin - he had to face her.

When he stood up and turned toward her, he noticed that Emma immediately stood taller, blocking the doorway. When he met her gaze he saw that same look she had given him on the beach: a look of deep longing, with flecks of desperation making her irises glint in the low light.

A tiny thought nagged at him: *This is wrong*, it whispered. *She is your best mate; she has a boyfriend; she is off limits*. But he had come this far. Their safe haven of friendship was nothing but a pile of ashes after the heat of their intense snog-session burned it to the ground. There was nowhere to turn back to, and the skeletons were desperate to build a new city; a landscape of tangled limbs and constricting muscles, goosebumps texturing the peaks, and streams of sweat and hot breath flowing through the valleys.

Rupert moved toward her until their faces were only centimeters apart. He recalled the taste of her and his hunger almost overwhelmed him. He shifted on the spot, trying to prevent himself from slamming her into the door frame and ravaging her. But Emma must have taken it as a movement to leave because she grabbed his arm, her fingers holding fast at his elbow.

"Wait," Emma whispered. "Stay, please..."

The words were like razor blades slashing at his composure. His jaw clenched and he balled his fists as if desperately trying to hold onto his sanity. If Emma had asked him to jump off a cliff right now he would have willingly plummeted to his demise. But he needed to be certain, for his own sake, that this was what she really wanted.

"But, Emma..." Rupert's throat felt like sandpaper, turning the rest of his words to dust before he could speak them. Her grip tightened on his arm as her lower lip relaxed.

"Don't make me beg, Rupert..."

He took that as a yes...

Author's Note: Please don't throw rocks at me for stopping the chapter here. Part two will be posted soon. Please leave a comment if you enjoyed the chapter, feedback is always appreciated. Thanks, and Happy Valentines Day!

Part Two

Chapter Notes

I have to apologise for the extreme lateness of this chapter. I suffered from excruciating writer's block for a very long time. There was a lot of head-bashing-the-keyboard and cursing Emma and Rupert, but it is finally done! Now to write some Romione...

Thanks must go to my ever-fabulous beta JesWithOneEss for putting the finishing touches on this story.

Please follow me over at Fanfiction.net to find my Romione stories, my pen name is Hedwigshero.

Thank you for waiting, i hope you enjoy!

“Don’t make me beg, Rupert...”

Emma’s voice was deep and placid as it rolled out of her mouth, giving no indication of the currents of adrenaline and desire that churned just beneath the surface. She felt confident to the point of audacious; she was a seductive bombshell from one of those old black and white movies, luring an innocent, unsuspecting fly into her web. She had never said anything more sexy or provocative in her life.

The words worked perfectly; they were the key that unlocked him, and Rupert unraveled before her. All the tension in his face washed away, and she watched the wave as it continued through his body, his muscles unclenching under her grasp. Emma relaxed her fingers and her arm slipped away. She leaned back slightly and let her eyes skim down her own frame and then back up Rupert’s to meet his unfocused gaze; a deceptively airy gesture that carried heavy undertones; *take me*, her pupils screamed.

Rupert lifted both hands and smoothed the hair from her face, then delicately cupped her cheeks. She could see excitement and anxiety rippling in the ocean of his eyes as he pulled her face to his.

“Emma...” he whispered as he kissed her lightly on the lips, then on the corner of her mouth, her jaw, her cheek, her forehead. His lips crossed her face like the hands of a clock, marking each hour with a kiss that made her insides chime.

Everything went in slow motion as Rupert’s fingers traveled down her arms to her waist and gripped the hem of her beige wool jumper. Emma lifted her arms up and Rupert slipped it over her head. He dropped it on the ground without breaking eye contact with her, his stare so piercing it made her both shy and dauntless at the same time.

His fingers twisted a handful of Emma’s light cotton t-shirt and she heard him swallow before he pulled the fabric completely off her frame. His hands caressed her midsection before they tiptoed up her arms and over her shoulders. And then his lips were on her skin, scalding hot, and she

relished the burn.

Emma's eyes fluttered closed and she let a moan roll lazily off her tongue as Rupert kissed up her neck, and when she felt his lips tease the delicate skin behind her ear she clenched her fists, trying hard to contain her pulsating arousal. And then she felt a release as elastic contracted and fell away from her skin; the clasp of her bra had come unhinged. Rupert eased back so he could slip the dainty straps off her arms. Emma's eyes hit the floor, suddenly scared to meet his gaze as she stood topless in front of him. Her heart was straining against her ribs like a caged animal.

She could feel his eyes crawling over her silhouette; from the hem of her jeans, over the dip of her stomach and up to the peaks of her breasts they slowly traveled, leaving shivers in their path. Their journey seemed to take years, and when they finally made it to Emma's eyes she ached for more than just Rupert's gaze on her body. She reached out, and he obediently moved into her. Emma held his face in her hands while she kissed him drowsily. The steam from the running shower billowed around them like so many years of pent-up desire, making the air thick and heavy, and her limbs felt sluggish as they began to thaw; she was melting in Rupert's arms.

Then everything came into sharp focus and Emma felt a sudden jolt of excitement as Rupert unbuttoned her jeans and pulled down her fly. She gasped into his mouth when, after pushing her jeans down her thighs, his hands traveled up over her bum to tease the hem of her knickers, the pads of Rupert's fingers tripping tentatively over top of the silky fabric, tickling the soft skin at her hip bones.

His hands, his lips, his scent- they were almost overpowering and Emma was breathing heavily as she pushed him back, giving herself a second of reprieve before she launched herself head first into his intoxicating seas. She grabbed for the wall as she stepped out of her jeans and then into the shower; the hot water felt only luke-warm compared to the heat of Rupert's touch. Tension continued to mount in her core, an almost painful throbbing that made her thighs ache and the muscles in her stomach clench with desperation. Lust bubbled up from her womb and fizzed in her brain.

Her lips tingled as they curled into a seductive smile "Are you coming?" She asked.

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~o8o~
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Rupert's fingers trembled, making it difficult to grasp and unbutton Emma's jeans. Undressing Emma was a fantasy he had played over in his head so many times his hands should have had no trouble following through in reality, but they were awkward and clumsy as they pulled down the fly and stumbled over the waistline of her jeans.

The fact that an almost completely naked Emma Watson was snogging him madly while his hands were unabashedly groping her silky, knicker-clad bottom was creating such a fever in his groin it was taking him over. The salacious heat made his hips thrust and grind against her, searching for some relief from the torrid pressure that had been building since their lips first met.

Emma moaned, and the throaty sound seemed to only amplify his need for her. But she pushed him away slightly, and as she stepped out her jeans Rupert's eyes feasted on her. It was like seeing a sunrise after living in perpetual twilight, the sight almost burning his retinas. He scanned her body, from her delicate ankles, up to her butter-cream thighs. His gaze lingered on the hemline of

her knickers where it made a V, and the small mound between her legs sent a jolt to his core so powerful it was almost painful. He licked his lips as his eyes trailed over her stomach; her bellybutton begged to be kissed, her midsection desperate to be drawn on by his tongue. And her breasts... her nipples were pink rosebuds that adorned two handfuls of utter perfection. Rupert gulped, his fingers twitched, and the skeletons were setting off fireworks as if it was Guy Fawkes Day in his head.

She stepped into the shower and with a stare that could be only described as carnal, asked, "Are you coming?"

Rupert immediately started tearing off his clothing like they were on fire. He had to grab the wall for support as he stumbled sideways, trying to remove his trousers with his trainers still attached to his feet. He could hear Emma's giggle over the rush of the shower and it made his ears glow a cherry red. He regained his balance and finally freed himself. He stood on the bathmat in his pants - his ears burning even brighter as he realized they concealed none of his excitement - wondering if he should take them off. Nervousness suddenly flooded him, a flash-freeze that turned blood to ice in his veins, and he froze on the spot. The skeletons in his mind frantically began to rebuild the fire, tossing logs of doubt onto the smoking pile and using guilt as kindle. But when Emma reached for him her touch was the can of petrol that caused the flames to erupt, dissolving his anxiety, and his blood flowed hot like lava.

Rupert eagerly stepped into the shower, and water coursed over a tangle of arms and lips as he and Emma intertwined once more. The contact of skin on skin was euphoric and Rupert's fingers danced over Emma's silhouette in celebration. Their tongues reunited like long lost lovers, welcoming each other into their mouths, and leaving oxygen on the doorstep. Rupert didn't need air any more, he only needed Emma.

He kissed and kissed and kissed her like there was no possible way he could ever get enough. He was a bucket with a hole in it, trying frantically to fill himself up with her but never reaching the brim. He wanted to taste *all* of her.

Rupert's lips broke away from Emma's and traveled down her neck. His tongue traced the ledge of her collarbone, and then he took a deep breath and followed the rivulets of water as they flowed down her breasts. First, his hands delicately cupped them; the feeling of her hard nipples against his palms sent a flaming arrow right to his core and he let out a low groan against her skin as his mouth slid down between them. Then his fingers delicately squeezed her soft flesh, and it was as if someone was squeezing all the muscles in his groin. He couldn't help but let out another moan, but it was drowned out by Emma's voice as she let out a delicious, "Ohhhhhh..." that was followed by a barely-audible curse.

Spurred on by her whispers and the feeling of her fingers weaving through his hair, he allowed his mouth to explore her breasts; his tongue ran up her peaks, teeth grazed nipples and lips tantalizingly sucked. Emma's grip on him became tighter and her moans became more desperate as his hands and mouth began to lose their reserve and boldly satiate their hunger.

The skeletons in his head continued to forge a wide path through the dark uncertain forest and with each taste of her skin he became more confident on the trail they were blazing. Rupert's knees hit the hard porcelain of the tub floor as his mouth proceeded south over her taut stomach, and his fingers drizzled down her sides and cupped her bum, pulling her into his mouth as he kissed along the ridge of her knickers.

He momentarily pulled away and gazed up at her through the downpour of the shower as his hands toyed with the waistband of her underwear. Emma briefly made eye contact with him and bit her lip seductively before leaning her head back against the tile. Her hips twitched slightly toward him, giving him all the permission he needed to slide the sopping wet fabric down her

trembling thighs.

Rupert closed his eyes and descended upon her. He tasted the very essence of her, delving deep into her core and releasing the most pleasure-filled and sexiest noises Rupert had ever heard; gasps, pants and wonton moans spliced with his name injected him with fire, revving him on as his tongue burrowed deeper, lapping and sucking until Emma's body began to shake and tremble, like a volcano ready to erupt.

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She wasn't cold, nor was she hot; she was a live wire in water, shooting pure electricity from every pore. Her body convulsed and surged as wave upon wave of pleasure assaulted her. Rupert's mouth was an eruption of agony and bliss as his tongue carved deep into her, hollowing her out and replacing painful yearning with utter satisfaction.

His lips and tongue played a maddening symphony between her legs; booming drums, clashing cymbals and strings pulled so tight they were ready to snap. Her whole body pounded with savage rhythm until she reached an unbearable crescendo.

And then the earth cracked in two, and Emma began to fall; layers of earth, stone and ice rushed past her until she was plunged into a sea of magma. She ignited; flesh, bone, nerves and skin became liquid fire before they crystallized and scattered, like salt in an ocean wind.

Five fingers dug into his shoulder while Emma's other hand desperately tried to grasp the slippery shower wall. Her legs were as weak as wet grass and she was slowly sliding down the tiles. But just before she completely lost her balance she was in Rupert's arms. She felt a million miles away as he lifted her limp body and Emma's legs quivered as they wrapped around his waist.

"I need you, *now*." Rupert's voice was hoarse with urgency and it slapped Emma back to reality, pulling her body from calm into chaos once more as he carried her out of the shower and into the tiny bedroom of her trailer.

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Rupert felt Emma's muscles relax as his lips traveled up her thigh. He ran his nose over her hip bone and across her stomach while inhaling deeply. Her scent was everywhere; the hot water seemed to intensify her aroma as it rolled off her in beads and evaporated into the air. She was on his lips, his skin, and in his lungs; all his senses were taken hostage.

He could hear her labored breathing; fast shallow breaths that seemed to be coming closer; Emma was sliding down the wall. Rupert slowly got to his feet, dropping kissing on Emma's skin as he rose, his lips unable to pull away from her body completely.

Emma's eyes fluttered open when his face became level with hers; her pupils were fully dilated,

their expression foggy, like she was fighting to regain her sight. Her cheeks were flushed a deep crimson and they creased as her mouth stretched into a wide grin; Emma bit her lip as if trying to contain it. The tiny gesture was the flick of a lighter too close to a fuse, and his spine was made of dynamite. There was chain effect as each vertebra exploded; shooting sparks through his body, making every nerve ending burn for her.

“I need you, *now*.” The skeletons in his head were frenzied, they pushed the lust-soaked words out of his mouth so forcefully they scratched his throat. He felt Emma’s body almost hum in response as he picked her up and gingerly stepped out of the shower.

He had been in Emma’s trailer hundreds of times, but he had never ventured past the threshold into her small bedroom. Although they had ripped their friendship line to shreds in the past hour, this felt like an ascension to yet another level. Her bed, her sheets; where she slept, where she dreamed. This seemed almost more intimate than what they had been engaged in in the shower. And for years he had wanted inside; he wanted to wake up next to her, and feel her breath on his cheek. He wanted to be tangled in the soft linens with her as the morning sun streamed through the window. He wanted to hold her close, feel her hair tickle his chin as their legs intertwined and their toes play hide-and-seek. Rupert wanted everything, and dared to hope he could have it. But right now he only wanted her, he only wanted *this*.

Rupert was jarred back to the present when his shins bumped the edge of the bed. They cascaded onto the sheets; a boiling waterfall of desire and excitement. They kissed madly, almost desperately, as if every kiss was a gasp of air and they were being trapped underwater. Emma’s fingers were white hot on Rupert’s skin; they raked his shoulders, traced over his wet back, and gripped his arse before traveling around to his hips.

“Oh fuck...” He breathed out, almost choking on the words as Emma’s hands snuck under his pants and explored him before pushing them down his thighs.

Everything was building, reaching a torturous apex, and Rupert couldn’t restrain himself any longer. Wild carnality took him over; it split and multiplied like cells of a virus and his body was completely consumed by it. Muscle fibers tore and tensed as he pulled himself off Emma and crawled backwards to the edge of the bed. He hastily kicked off his pants and, with feet planted firmly on the floor, he grabbed her by the waist and almost roughly tugged her to the edge of the mattress. She let out a startled cry, as if caught off guard, but she readily tilted her hips and locked her legs around him.

And with a thrust that was packed with the power of years of pent-up sexual desire, he was inside of her, buried in her, and he never wanted to be anywhere else ever again.

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She was finally underneath him, a place she had secretly fantasized about for years. She would never admit it, but more often than not, when she was in Jay’s arms, images of Rupert would pop up and lather in her head like soap bubbles, washing away all other thoughts. And now it was finally real, and better than she had ever imagined.

She was barely recovering from the earth-shattering explosion Rupert had caused in the shower, yet she still wanted more; she wanted to be haphazardly pieced back together just so he could tear

her apart again.

Emma let her fingers trace down his silhouette until they met the wet fabric of his pants. Her heart leaped into her throat when her hands pulled the elastic away from his hips and caressed the velvety skin beneath.

“Oh fuck...” Rupert moaned as she ran her hands over him, her own core pulsing painfully, demanding connection with him. She pressed her mouth hard into his, her tongue forcibly persuading him to take her; to storm her castle, break down every barrier she had left, and leave her in beautiful ruins.

Rupert pulled away from her abruptly and stood up, and before she had time to be disappointed he grabbed her by the waist, his large hands dug into her skin and he roughly pulled her toward the edge of the bed. Emma cried out in shock and a searing mixture of fear and adrenaline was injected into her veins when she saw an extremely serious and almost crazed look in Rupert’s eyes. But the fear quickly evolved, coursing through her body as nervous excitement, causing shivers and gooseflesh to erupt on her skin. This was a side of Rupert she had never seen before; intense, demanding, aggressive...

And she loved it.

Emma eagerly submitted; she wrapped her legs around his waist and tilted her hips, essentially begging him to demolish her. He took a firm hold on her, his hands wrapping around to cup her arse cheeks, and then he was inside her; one commanding thrust that rocked her body so violently she let out a tortured, “Ahhhhhhhhhh! YES!” so loud that her voice penetrated the trailer walls and was swept out over the salty waves.

Emma could only see white; blinding lights popped and faded on a glittering backdrop that burned her retinas. She shut her eyes tight, arched her back, and tore at the bedclothes as Rupert drove into her, pushing desperate cries of ecstasy past her lips and into the thick air around them.

As with their first kiss, this was like nothing she had ever experienced before. They were volatile chemicals that needed to be kept apart because when they combined, the explosion was devastating.

Rupert toppled forward, bracing himself on his elbows on either side of her head and began kissing her neck and sucking on her ear as he slowed his pace. Emma took advantage of his closeness and wrapped her arms around his neck. Then his hips slowed even more, and he almost pulled out of her entirely, teasing her with shallow, agonizingly slow thrusts. It was almost unbearable. Emma pressed her heels into Rupert’s lower back, trying to push him deeper. She began to claw at his back and squirm and pant underneath him. Her nails raked over his shoulders as he began to pull away from her. Then he took her wrists, pulled them away from his neck and pinned them to the bed above her head before he quieted his body completely.

The restraint was delicious agony. Emma whimpered and opened her eyes. *Please don’t stop, please...* she silently prayed. A wry smile tugged at the corner of Rupert’s mouth and he bit his lip as he gazed down at her. It was as if he was waiting for her to ask him - no, beg him - to continue. He was taking total control of her and she relished every second of it. Her pride had floated out into the windy evening like so many of her moans and cries; she was stripped bare, completely debased, like she never knew she wanted to be, and never could be, with anyone else. But this was Rupert Grint; the boy she felt the most comfortable with in the entire world. So she said it, in a voice that was so heavy with surrender it barely passed her trembling lips:

“Rupert, please... oh god, *please..!*”

They say that when you finally get something you have been wanting for a long time, it's never as good as you think it will be.

They couldn't be more wrong.

It was better than a thousand wishes and a million daydreams. Better than all his fondest memories wrapped up together and presented to him on Christmas morning:

Emma was everywhere, and he was *inside* her...

He didn't care that he wasn't her first, wasn't thinking about being her last. All he knew was the sound of her whimpers and breaths, the smell of sweat and sex, and the feel of her all around him.

Rupert wanted it to last forever, but everything was so intense, and his body was overwhelmed. He was rapidly losing control, trying to quell a raging fire with a handful of sand. And Emma's moans and cries were doing nothing but dousing him with petrol. She was clawing at him, as desperate as he was for more - he couldn't bare it. He gripped the sheets beside Emma's head and pulled the speeding train in his hips to a grinding halt. Breathing heavily, he grasped Emma's hands from around his neck and pinned them over her head.

He gazed down at her; Emma's face was flushed and glistening beads of sweat dotted her upper lip and neck. The sight of her trapped underneath him brought on a new surge of desire. He watched her squirm, breasts heaving, arteries pulsing with lust in her neck. And although the torture would have a boomerang effect, he wanted to wait; he wanted to watch her writhe... He bit his lip and pulled himself almost completely away from her.

Milliseconds passed at an excruciating pace as they both suffered through the stillness, tormented by inaction.

"Rupert, please... oh god, *please*..!"

Emma's voice crashed into him with a tidal wave of emotion, almost drowning him. He couldn't deny her - or himself - any longer. The skeletons were tearing at each other in hysteria; rib cages were being smashed, bones breaking like twigs, as they tried everything to restart the boilers and drive the locomotive deeper and faster. But Rupert wanted to go slow...

He released her wrists and propped himself on one elbow as he traced her jaw line with his free hand. As his thumb brushed across her lips Emma opened her mouth and Rupert felt her tongue scald his skin as she closed her lips around it and sucked. He had to shut his eyes to quickly put a lid on his composure, before it escaped and exploded all around them. Then he felt her hands on his cheeks, pulling him down on top of her; his mouth met hers, and their hips ground against each other, fusing their bodies together once more.

Emma moaned into his mouth as his rhythm quickened, his cadence becoming more powerful. He pulled his mouth away and rested his damp forehead on hers. A droplet of sweat rolled off his nose and anointed Emma's upper lip; she licked it away and whispered his name:

"Rupert... Rupert..." she repeated over and over in a gossamer voice, as if she was trying to

convince herself it was actually him above her.

Their pants became heavier, their cries even louder; names were exchanged and dusted with soft curses. Pressure was building to an almost unbearable level, causing Rupert's eyes to squint. His face, fingers and feet were going numb; all his nerve endings were racing to congregate in his core for a celebration that was imminent.

His legs trembled as his hips thrust harder and faster, trying to keep pace with his heart. He couldn't hold back any longer, the tension was excruciating, and every muscle was on fire, burning with the intensity of an exploding star.

Just before he dared to plummet into an abyss of pleasure, he locked eyes with Emma. In a second that seemed to last an eternity, a thousand silent confessions were released and mixed with a million tiny promises that sprinkled over them like salt, amplifying the already intense flavor of the moment and binding them together in a unspoken oath.

And then he let go... With a final push, Rupert erupted; blinding white heat doused his body, finally absolving him from the torment that had plagued him for years. He felt free, yet utterly enslaved, and completely whole.

He let out a huge breath that seemed to deflate his entire body, and with quivering legs he collapsed onto the bed, rolling over and pulling Emma on top of him, keeping himself lost in her - he never wanted to be found.

Looking up into her warm brown eyes, Rupert could finally see clearly. And with their jaded forest of insecurity and doubt finally destroyed, the skeletons built a picket fence with the fallen branches, surrounding the moment, preserving it, safeguarding it forever. A sanctuary Rupert wanted to reside in permanently.

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Emma's limbs draped over Rupert's body and her lips trickled down on onto his neck, cheeks and then mouth. They kissed lazily, savouring the taste of utter gratification; a dish on the menu they had both been staring at for years, but never thought they could afford. But whether or not they would be able to pay the price was irrelevant; they were too busy digesting the most delectable meal they had ever had.

"So," Rupert whispered, his voice still had a slight quiver to it. "Feel a bit better?" Emma's smile was so wide it began to slip off her face and splash down onto Rupert.

"Much," she let out a tiny embarrassed laugh, the apples of her cheeks glowing red. "Thank you, Rupert."

Emma bit her lip, and as she brushed a stray hair across Rupert's forehead her face became serious, and specks of sadness seemed to bleed into her sparkling eyes. "I just-" she began, but Rupert cut her off, placing a finger over her lips to quiet them.

"Emma, please don't," he said as he brushed the pad of his finger across her mouth. Emma's eyebrows knitted together, perplexed by his interjection.

“No,” she shook her head slightly as she took Rupert’s fingers in hers and kissed the tips of them. “I was going to say, I just hope it rains tomorrow, a lot...” And the wanton look that kindled their fire on the beach hours ago returned with a warmth that melted the last remnants of their old friendship. The colours of their past were mixing with the vibrant shades of what they just experienced, and before their eyes sparkling strands of something new began to form. And as they lay together, hands, breath and words continued to braid together, reshaping their relationship, weaving them together, tightening their already intricate bond.

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