

*Belle looked up at the cold eyes of the Evil Queen with fear, anguish and hate. They were all she remembered of her in this world. In the world before this, the Queen had allowed her no more freedom, but had also starved her in a pointless attempt to extract information she had never known. The Dark One's weakness wasn't something he'd shared with anyone, not even the only woman who'd ever loved him. The hatch in her door closed sharply and the young girl relaxed, left alone now in her cell and bathed in the small amount of moonlight which shone through the barred windows, at the top of the padded white room.*

*A shiver ran down her spine and a pretty smile lit up her tortured eyes as beauty looked up to see her beast. Rumpelstilzchen's smile, both gentle and mischievous, was just visible from the dark corner of her cell. It was a sight that only Belle had ever found comfort in.*

*She hopped off her bed and he walked to meet her in the middle of the cell, his cane hovering above the ground and his leg giving him no trouble at all. He'd always been capable of using a little magic to keep his leg from bothering him but, for appearances sake, above in Storybrooke, he just coped with the pain.*

*Rumpelstilzchen had found her almost a year ago, after following the Queen down to her dungeon. Belle had been delighted at first to learn that she wasn't insane, shortly followed by anger for the way he'd acted in the Enchanted Forest. The fury however, had melted away when he apologized and explained how long he'd thought she was dead, and that the Queen had manipulated them both.*

*Her beast looked down upon her with honest care, and lifted her chin with his hand to look into her piercing crystal blue eyes.*

*"Soon my dear," he spoke softly.*