



Zoom

Ratio

AE Lister

Part I

Exposure

When 23 year-old Jeremy Trask wanders into Martin Lewis' photography studio one bleak October day and requests photos for a modeling portfolio, neither man is prepared for the immediate and intense attraction between them. What follows is a series of progressively intimate encounters that leads them on a scintillating erotic journey together. But Jeremy has a secret. Will his revelation destroy the burgeoning intimacy between them? Or will Martin rise to the challenge of loving a 'less than perfect' man?

Part II

Balance

When Jeremy Trask walked into Martin Lewis' photography studio neither man was prepared for the instant attraction that swept them up and refused to be denied. Three years later Jeremy has fulfilled his dream of becoming a working male model while Martin has embarked on a more fulfilling photography career in nature journalism. Now a world-famous photographer has requested Jeremy pose for him in London. Martin accompanies Jeremy because he can't bear to be apart from the man he loves. When things in London don't turn out as expected, can Martin and Jeremy navigate the hurt feelings and jealousy that suddenly threaten their relationship?

ZOOM RATIO

AE LISTER

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Disclaimer

This story is an erotic fantasy. I have striven to make it as realistic and detailed as possible, however it should not be mistaken as a representation of actual events. In reality, unprotected anal sex embodies risk of disease transmission, even with STD scan protocols in place.

This is a BDSM fantasy. Any involvement in actual BDSM activities should be properly researched and undertaken with extreme caution.

Part I
Exposure

Chapter One

Refraction

Fuck, what a morning. Sometimes I seriously questioned the way I made a living.

I poured myself a cup of coffee and sat at my little kitchen table. I had hastily eaten a turkey sandwich and now my stomach felt upset—from the stress. Coffee was probably a bad idea but I needed it. I still had the afternoon to get through.

Family portraits were difficult, especially with a baby or toddler involved. Trying to get a group shot with them all smiling or even looking somewhat cheerful could be a goddamn nightmare. But I did it finally. They were pleased with the result and ordered a large batch of prints and a CD. So it was worth it. I guess.

But now my head throbbed and the caffeine did nothing to appease it. I had another appointment in fifteen minutes. I needed a cigarette. I got up and found the pack of Dumauriers that I kept in the fridge, took one out and replaced the pack. I lit the cigarette and took a long hungry drag. I intended to quit.

Really, I did. But a morning like this one gave me two choices: smoking a cigarette or calling my doctor for a prescription for antidepressants. An occasional cigarette seemed like the more expedient alternative.

I grabbed my empty plate and put it in the sink, then picked up my coffee. As I carried it through the small, shabbily furnished living room to the front window, I caught my reflection in the big mirror that leaned against the wall in an attempt at chic decorating. My sister had recommended it; it made the room look bigger and gave it some drama. Apparently.

I looked like an average thirty-two-year-old man. Not unattractive, but relatively unremarkable. My faded and wrinkled khaki pants had seen better days, and my black button-up shirt showed wear as well. I didn't usually pay that much attention to the way I dressed. I kept fit, but just barely. I walked and lifted hand weights a few times a week to keep my arms and shoulders looking good. I lifted up the shirt to look at my belly then dropped it down again, the state of my abs a disappointment. If you could even call them abs. At least no one could call me fat. A little out of shape maybe and starting to show my age. My dirty blond hair, a little on the long side, looked good in a messy, carefree way.

Or so I imagined. My blue eyes, often complimented by others, stared back at me with evident fatigue.

I sipped my coffee and walked to the window ledge, looking down on McLeod Street. As per usual, cars were parked all along the road by people who didn't want to pay the fees at the newly renovated Museum of Nature or, at this time of day, patrons of the numerous eateries on Elgin Street. I took a drag off my cigarette. On this cold, gray October day, multicolored leaves covered the ground; the tree branches almost totally bare. The usual bleak November that occurred annually in Ottawa was fast approaching; rainy, cold, and devoid of any beauty. Until snow fell in December, things looked pretty barren.

As I stared out at the dismal day, a person turned the corner from Elgin and walked down McLeod Street in my direction.

It appeared to be a young man from the way he was dressed; black skinny jeans, running shoes, leather jacket, small black knit hat. He strode purposefully in my direction. The closer he got the more alert I became. I don't know what it was, except that he appeared to be quite good looking. Still, I couldn't really tell.

This part of town was frequented by hip young men. What was special about this one? When he made a beeline for my place from across the street I realized he was probably my one o'clock.

I stubbed my cigarette, finished my coffee, and headed downstairs, unwrapping a piece of gum and popping it into my mouth on the way.

Sure enough, the bell rang just as I reached the bottom step.

I paused for a moment and checked my hair again in the hall mirror. Meh. It didn't look great but there was nothing much I could do except run my hand through it a couple of times. I opened the door.

"Hi," I said with a smile.

"Hi," he smiled and looked uncertain. "Is this Martin Lewis Photography? I have an appointment at one."

Fuck me, he was gorgeous up close. I nodded.

He gave me a bigger smile and held out his hand. "Then you must be Martin?"

I nodded again and shook his hand, hoping that the power of speech would return to me soon. It was warm and strong.

I shook it quickly and let go because I really didn't want to let go at all. His deep brown eyes gazed into mine, reminding me of melted chocolate. His auburn hair looked like it hadn't been brushed in days, adding to his youthful appearance.

"Jeremy." He said.

"Come on inside," I managed and backed up as he entered the cramped hallway. He took off his hat and opened his jacket.

His eyes roamed over me quickly, like he didn't want me to notice him checking me out. But his smile widened and he said, "Do you want me to take my shoes off?"

I shook my head. "Just wipe them on the mat, please. The studio's just in here." I led him into my photo studio, which pretty much took up the entire ground floor of the old house where I lived and worked. Inwardly I thought, if I wanted you to take something off it wouldn't be your shoes. God, I'm sleazy.

Or maybe it was just that I hadn't had any action for a long time. I mean, a damn long time. We're talking more than a year—pitiful.

He took off his jacket and was about to lay it on the antique green chaise by the wall when he picked up something off the seat. He held it out to me. "Um, I think a previous client must have left this?"

In his hand was a baby's pacifier. I remembered the mother from this morning having several. I took it from him and realized I hadn't tidied up much from my morning session. Puppets and little toys lay all over the place as the result of my many attempts at amusing the two children. I hurriedly began tidying up. "I'm sorry, my morning session ran a bit late. Family portraits can be tricky when they involve young children."

He grinned and helped me gather toys and put them in the bin in the corner. He shook his head. "Sounds like a nightmare."

I met his gaze. "It can be a bit much sometimes." I watched him lean over to grab a toy dinosaur from the floor and my mouth actually went dry. His ass in those jeans... I felt a tightening in my own pants. Then he straightened and said, "Well, I promise to behave myself," and tossed the toy into the bin.

I felt the breath leave my lungs as I tried to think of something to say.

"So, where do you want me?" he asked, and for a moment I forgot why he was here.

"What?" I said stupidly.

He stared at me expectantly. “I’m not really sure what I’m doing, so I’m going to need your input.” He hesitated. “I’ve never done this before.”

“I’m sorry,” I murmured, “what exactly are we doing?”

He sat down on the edge of the chaise. “Well, I need a modeling portfolio.”

Of course. Hell, he was born to model.

Suddenly, my lack of preparation for this session became stunningly apparent. He must think I’m an idiot. “I’m so sorry, I didn’t have a chance to review my book.” I put a hand to my forehead and rubbed gently. “It’s been a shit day.”

He looked at me curiously. “I guess I could come another time, if this isn’t—”

I shook my head and smiled to reassure him. “No, no, it’s fine. It’s great actually. Much, much easier than all that.” I gestured toward the toy bin. “As long as you can take direction,” I joked.

He looked down and then grinned up at me shyly. “Oh, yes. I’m very good at doing what I’m told.”

Oh God. Don’t even think it. That’s not what he means.

I started fiddling with the camera and trying to divert my mind from its lascivious wanderings. The man needed a quality portfolio. “Do you want just standing poses? Or a combination of poses?”

He put his head in his hands and looked up. The slight blush on his face surprised me. “Oh man, this is so embarrassing.”

“Why?” I asked.

“Well, I’m kind of doing this on a dare.”

I swallowed. “Your girlfriend?”

“Huh? No,” he shook his head. “My asshole roommates.” He paused and looked me in the eyes for a moment. “I don’t have a girlfriend.”

I couldn’t help smiling. He shrugged. “Anyway, what the hell, right? I’ll send out some applications and see what happens. I sure could use some extra money.” He looked doubtful. “Or maybe I’m kidding myself?”

Jesus. Did he seriously doubt his modeling potential? I pulled a dark blue background down over top of the white one I had been using. “Well,” I said, “We’ll have to see what the

camera thinks of you, of course. But you've got the looks, Jeremy." Fucking understatement of the year.

"You think so?"

I stared at him. "You're extremely good looking." Where was this confidence coming from? Suddenly, he seemed like the nervous one. I had switched over to work mode and blocked my inappropriate thoughts; successfully, for the moment. "Let's do some standing poses first, just to get an idea," I suggested, adjusting the lamps.

"Okay." He stood and walked over to stand in front of the blue background. His gray plaid flannel shirt and white t-shirt looked good against the dark blue. So did his auburn hair and pale skin.

I took up my post behind the camera and started shooting and giving him directions. I wanted to stay focused and busy so my mind wouldn't wander. "Just look as natural as you can," I said. He laughed because of the unnatural situation, and I got some good shots of that.

"Can I talk?"

I nodded. "Sure, if it helps you stay relaxed."

"So, how long have you been a photographer?" he asked, hooking his thumbs in his back pockets and shifting his weight.

I clicked away as I answered. "I started doing it professionally about six years ago. I have a fine arts degree, but that doesn't really get you anywhere."

He nodded. "Yeah, I'm sure it's about as useful as my BA in English Lit. University's such a crock these days. It's so damn expensive and then doesn't get you anywhere unless you do your Masters or PhD. And who's got the money or the commitment for that?"

I smiled. "Not me. This is the only thing I've ever committed to."

"You're not married? I didn't notice a ring but that's not really a reliable sign."

I shook my head. "No. I'm not married. I'm not really—never mind." Shit! I'd almost told him I was gay. Christ, I'd only just met him. How did I know what his reaction would be to that little tidbit? Yes, hi, I'm gay and I think you're incredibly hot and I'll be taking pictures of you...

"You're not really, what?"

"Um," I focused on taking the photos and tried to think of something. "I'm not really sure I want to get married. Ever."

Well, that was true at least. Not to a woman, anyway.

He grinned. “You like your freedom.”

I nodded. “Something like that.” Yeah, the freedom to sleep with men. I didn’t even do much of that these days. “How old are you, Jeremy?”

“Twenty-three. How old are you?”

“I’m thirty-two.”

He didn’t say much for a while. I got him into some typical catalogue poses and clicked away for several minutes.

Then he said, “Maybe we should get some with just my t-shirt?”

“Um, sure.” Yes please. I tried to look noncommittal. Apparently I did a good job.

He stopped unbuttoning his plaid shirt. “Or not...”

He thought I didn’t want him to. “No! I mean, yes, take it off.” Dear Lord, he was killing me. Maybe it wasn’t a good idea.

Too late. He shrugged out of the flannel shirt and tossed it to the side. “Phew, it gets pretty hot under these lights.”

You are not kidding. I stared at him in just the white t-shirt, black skinny jeans, and running shoes. Shit, if he wasn’t a thirtytwo-year-old gay man’s wet dream, I didn’t know what was. I cleared my throat and tore my eyes away. But it was torture not looking at him. Luckily, I had an excuse to watch him. “Um, why don’t you lift your arms up over your head like you’re stretching?”

I suggested.

“Like this?” He did as I asked. The t-shirt rode up, revealing a perfectly toned abdomen with a tantalizing trail of light brown hair leading right down to...

“Jesus Christ,” I murmured before I could stop myself.

I froze, staring at him. Shit, shit, shit! “I just remembered I left my stove on.”

I left the room and ran up the steps two at a time, as if I really had left my stove on and wasn’t trying to hide a sudden raging hard-on. Fuck fuck fuck. What is wrong with me? Well, besides the fact that I hadn’t touched another man in a year and a half.

I wandered around my apartment, keeping up the façade of attending to my oven and berating myself for being unable to maintain control. I had to go back down there. My hard-on diminished a bit from the stress of not knowing what to do, but it wouldn’t take much to jack it up again.

I took a deep breath and headed downstairs.

When I turned into the studio, I saw Jeremy standing behind the camera, presumably scrolling through the shots I'd taken. He looked up when he heard me.

"Everything okay up there?"

I nodded.

"I hope you don't mind," he continued, "I wanted to see what you'd got so far."

"I don't mind," I said, "How are they?"

"Fucking amazing. Come see."

Something about his voice did crazy things to me. The sound of it was like velvet. Or chocolate. He was smiling and excited and beckoning me over and fuck me if I didn't want to grab him and stick my tongue down his throat. Instead I carefully approached him, repeating the mantra "I will not touch him" over and over in my head.

He moved aside and let me look. I didn't touch him, but I was so close I could smell him and feel him there beside me. I tried to concentrate on the pictures as I scrolled through. He was right.

They looked fantastic. Obviously the camera loved him.

"Do I really look like that?" he said. I couldn't help the sound that came out of my mouth. But I covered it with a fake cough.

I stared at him. "You look better in person, actually." What am I doing? He looked at me for a long moment and something passed between us, and it became apparent that he knew I wanted him.

He blushed and ran a hand through his auburn hair. "But the pictures are great, right?"

I nodded. "Do you want to see them on the computer or should we take some more?"

He looked at his watch. "Actually, I have to go to work. My shift starts in half an hour."

I nodded, trying to hide my disappointment. "Okay."

"But I can come back tomorrow and see them. And we can shoot some more?"

"That's fine. About one o'clock again?"

He grabbed his shirt and put it on, quickly buttoning it up and grabbing his jacket. "How much do I owe you, Martin?"

I shook my head. "We'll settle up tomorrow."

He nodded and held out his hand. “Thank you. That was a lot more fun than I thought it would be.” I wondered if the look he gave me held a hidden meaning or if I just imagined it? I shook his hand and walked him to the door.

“I’ll see you tomorrow, Jeremy.” I watched him take long strides down the path and along the sidewalk. I closed the door and leaned my head against it. I suddenly realized my headache was gone. Of course, I felt another painful ache in its place, a little lower down.

Chapter Two

Agitation

After he left I didn't know what to do with myself. Actually, I had a pretty good idea what I wanted to do with myself, but it seemed so, I don't know, seedy to go and jerk off to memories of a twenty-three-year-old man who'd just let me photograph him.

Besides, this feeling thrilled me. My body hummed with energy and I felt rejuvenated and alive. I knew there were a hundred or so shots of him that I needed to get onto my computer. I savored the anticipation of going through the high def photos, one at a time, studying each one and selecting the best ones to show him tomorrow.

I tidied up my studio, then went upstairs and attacked the apartment, which was in dire need of a good cleaning. After I finished I made a chicken stir-fry with jasmine rice and opened a beer. I enjoyed every minute of the healthiest meal I'd had in weeks. When I finished I cleaned up the kitchen and washed the dishes. It was only then, at about eight thirty, that I opened another beer and headed down to my studio.

During my cleaning frenzy and the meal, I managed to convince myself that my sex-starved brain had overreacted to the sight of a reasonably attractive young man. I should be able to assess the photographs with a professional and critical eye, thus attaining a more realistic appreciation of Jeremy. This sudden infatuation, although invigorating, frightened me.

When I got downstairs, I plugged the camera into the computer and started uploading the photographs. It only took moments for me to realize that there was no such hope. He was breathtaking. I scrolled through the first few and stopped on one of him laughing at the weirdness of the situation. He looked so relaxed and carefree and unassuming, like he had no idea that he rivaled a mythical Greek god in beauty. Any modeling agency that he sent these to would be falling over themselves to sign him.

I was sure of it. I scrolled through some more until I got to the ones after he'd taken off his flannel shirt.

Holy mother of God! My cock, which had mercifully softened during all the housecleaning, hardened in my pants. He stood there in his black jeans and white t-shirt, looking at me with his

mouth slightly parted, like he was starting to say something. I scrolled through and was startled to see that I had taken some shots when he stretched his arms up over his head, just before

I'd run upstairs. I stared at him. This time I could really enjoy it, without worrying that he would notice the huge bulge in my pants. He was fucking gorgeous. My cock turned to steel as I imagined kneeling before him and undoing his jeans. There had been a definite bulge there today, but I had no idea if his jeans were snug or if he had been hard as well. What if he had been? What if he had been enjoying teasing me, pretending to be unsure of himself and knowing the entire time that he was driving me crazy?

I think I moaned at the thought. My erection had become painful. I knew I needed to do something about it. But sitting there, jacking off to these photos was too distasteful and would be extremely unprofessional. Plus, I wasn't going to risk getting spunk all over my keyboard and ruining it. I was so turned on it felt like I would shoot halfway across the room when I finally climaxed. I rubbed my aching cock once as I looked again at the photo, etching it into my depraved memory. Then I turned off the program and shut the computer down.

Upstairs, I quickly stripped and got in the shower, which, thanks to my earlier motivation, sparkled clean and shiny. I looked down at my poor under-utilized cock. It was huge and red and quite impressive actually. I was decently hung, just not particularly confident about the rest of me, but that didn't matter right now. I poured some body wash in my hand and gripped my erection, closing my eyes and visualizing that last photograph as I stroked firmly back and forth. My breathing quickened and before long I gasped and moaned as I imagined Jeremy in the shower with me; touching me, sucking me, stroking me. I came hard in a matter of minutes, I was so worked up. It felt so good to release all the tension and stress of the past twenty-four hours that I leaned against the shower wall for a bit as I got my breathing under control.

One thing was for sure. My dick would be getting more attention over the next few days, if only from my own hand.

On Friday I only had a nine thirty session booked besides Jeremy's in the afternoon. My morning appointment consisted of shooting an eighteen-year-old girl in her taffeta prom dress under the watchful eye of her overly coiffed and manicured mother. I wondered why I was taking a prom picture in October. It turned out the girl had gone to the prom in June but there had been no "acceptable" pictures of her taken that evening and her mother insisted on bringing her to me. The girl was obviously just trying to please her mother, and so over the whole thing. I felt

a bit sorry for her. She was pretty enough but the dress did nothing for her. I did my best to get some decent shots. The mother made sure I didn't ogle her daughter or encourage any inappropriate poses. If only she'd known I was saving that for my afternoon appointment.

I finished the session by ten thirty so I had some time to prepare for Jeremy's arrival. I went through his photos again, this time in a professional manner, and selected the outstanding shots to show him. Of course, I still got hard doing that, so I finished quickly, had a leisurely lunch upstairs, and went through some mail. Looking at bills calmed my erection and by the time one o'clock rolled around I was presentable.

But he didn't show up at one o'clock. Or one fifteen. When one-thirty arrived and he still hadn't shown, I started to think he wasn't coming. I had his photos so I figured he'd come back eventually, but I really wanted to see him today. Then a scary thought occurred to me. He'd had the photos taken on a dare, a dare that he wasn't particularly comfortable with. Maybe he'd fulfilled the dare and had had enough and wasn't coming back?

But surely he needed the photographs as proof?

As I was contemplating that scenario, the doorbell rang. I rushed downstairs but forced myself to move slower when I neared the door. I didn't want him to know how eager I was.

I opened the door. He immediately started apologizing.

"I'm sorry I'm late. I missed my bus—I hope we can still do something or do you have more appointments this afternoon?"

I couldn't even understand what he said because he had on the same black skinny jeans, black army boots, and a plain black t-shirt under his open leather jacket. He probably noticed me eagerly eyeing him but I couldn't help it. He looked absolutely delicious. But he either didn't mind or didn't care, because he waved a hand in front of me.

"Martin?" he asked, "Are you okay?"

"Yes, yeah," I recovered, giving him a weak smile and beckoning him in. "It's not a problem. You're my only appointment."

"Oh, great. That's great. 'Cause I really want to see what you've got."

I beg your pardon? "What I've got..." I repeated, confused, but hoping...

He laughed. "The pictures. Did you look at them?"

Duh! You pervert. He's talking about the photographs.

“Of course—yes, I did.” He followed me into the studio. “I think they’re really good but it’s up to you, of course. If they’re not what you want—” I opened the program. It opened on the most suggestive photo, the one that gave me immediate wood whenever I saw it. Of course.

“Wow,” he said, staring at the picture. “That’s really hot.”

I mumbled something under my breath but thank goodness he didn’t hear me. I scrolled back through the other shots, pausing at each one. I had chosen about twenty-five out of the hundred to show him. They were spectacular. He seemed to agree.

“Those are so great,” he said in a soft voice when I finished.

“Can we do some more?”

I looked at him. He stared at me and I fancied I did see something this time, something that made my heart stop and my cock even harder. “Sure,” I said, looking into his brown eyes.

He backed up in front of me, holding my gaze and slowly removing his jacket. Suddenly the shy, apologetic young man was gone and this was much, much better. “Why don’t you take some shots of me on that chaise?” he said, gesturing towards it. His black t-shirt outlined the muscles of his chest and arms superbly.

He smiled, but his gaze was scorching.

Fuck. Me.

I didn’t say anything.

I walked over to the chaise and dragged it noisily over the floor until it sat before the blue background. I went directly to the tripod and began making adjustments. “Sit down,” I said shortly, trying to contain my excitement.

He sat down on the chaise and leaned forward with his elbows on his thighs. “Like this?”

I nodded and started shooting. Fuck, fuck, fuck. He was staring at the camera with the most intense, heated look. I wasn’t sure how much longer I could control myself. But I wanted to try something. “Okay, now lean back against the side of it with your hands behind your head and put one foot on the seat.”

He smiled and did as directed. Jesus Christ, he looked hot. I could barely work the camera. He could see how agitated I was.

And I’m sure my hard-on was pretty obvious. He let me take a few shots and then he said, very quietly, “Why don’t you come over here?”

I swallowed and froze, staring down at the camera. Then I looked up at him. He was still in position but he stared at me with a challenge in his gaze. My nervousness made me hesitate. “What do you want me to do?” I asked.

He grinned and raised an eyebrow. “Whatever you want to do.” He leaned back even further, offering himself to me. “I’ve been hard for you since I got here yesterday.”

Jesus. Fucking. Christ.

I knew exactly what I wanted to do. I moved forward until I stood over him. I looked him over hungrily, letting the anticipation build, letting him wonder what I would do. Then I dropped to my knees and in moments had his jeans unbuttoned and freed his erection. There was no underwear to get in the way. We both gasped. I wrapped my hand around him, enjoying the sensation of holding a hot, hard cock in my hand that wasn’t my own.

His cock was beautiful, just like the rest of him. He was uncut, like me. The rosy head jutted past his foreskin and glistened with moisture. I think I moaned at the sight.

“Oh, fuck,” he gasped and covered my hand with his own, stroking up and down slowly. “Martin... fuck...”

That was all I needed. I leaned forward, sliding my other arm beside his hip, holding him firmly, and bent to lick the wet tip of his cock.

He whimpered and rocked his hips. He let go of my hand and stretched out as I stroked him firmly, up and down, and licked flat, wet strokes of my tongue across and around the head. God, he smelled and tasted good, clean and musky and salty and sweet.

It had been so long since I’d done this I’d almost forgotten how much I loved it. “Fuck, you taste good,” I whispered.

He moaned. I took my hand off him and spat into it, then wrapped it around him again, making him whimper as I worked him. He was completely at my mercy and I loved it. I couldn’t wait any longer. I covered the head of his cock with my mouth and sucked.

His hips came up off the chaise and he cried out in pleasure.

“Oh God, yeah, that’s so good. So good...”

I moaned in response, opening my mouth wide and taking him in deeply, then sucking as I pulled up. I did it several times until I had him panting and moaning beneath me. I sped up with my hand and mouth. He groaned and gasped and I stared up at him. Our eyes met. It felt incredibly dirty and hot and amazing.

“Ohhh...fuck...me...I’m gonna...I’m gonna...Martin...fuck...” and with that, he climaxed violently in my mouth.

He groaned in ecstasy as he pulsed and kept coming. I loved giving him pleasure like this. I had no idea if he’d want to return the favor, but I didn’t care. After I let him slide out of my mouth I kissed him on the hip and looked up. His head was thrown back and his eyes were closed as his breathing slowed. He opened his eyes after a few moments and gazed down at me.

“Thank you,” he said with genuine gratitude. “I really fucking needed that.”

I was still kneeling between his legs with my arms alongside him. I nuzzled his belly. “I could tell.” I grinned.

He laughed. “I had no idea this would happen.”

I looked at him, not sure what he meant.

“But as soon as you opened the door yesterday, I wanted it to.”

I couldn’t believe it. “Really?”

He nodded and tucked himself back into his jeans, buttoning them up. I stood up.

“Are you kidding?” he said and stood up too. “You think it wasn’t fuck-hot having you take pictures of me and knowing you were thinking of how I would look naked?”

I blushed. “Was it that obvious?”

He moved closer to me. “Well, I’m good at reading people. And, yeah, it was kind of obvious...” He reached out and stroked my hard-on through my jeans. I gasped.

“Holy shit, you are so hard...” He pressed more firmly against my crotch. The fingers of his other hand twined in my hair, guiding my mouth to his. We kissed desperately, hungrily and he pushed himself against me; he was already getting hard again.

He broke away from my mouth and licked along my ear, sending shivers through me. “What do you want, Martin?” he whispered.

“Do you want me to blow you?” I whimpered. “Yeah? Is that what you want?”

I nodded. I gripped his shoulders, kissing and sucking on his neck. “If you want to.” Please, please, please.

He laughed and pulled away, making me look him in the eyes.

His were brown and warm, kind and honest. “I would be fucking honored, Martin.”

A huge breath of air whooshed from my lungs and for the first time I really believed that he wanted me, maybe as much as I wanted him.

He pushed me backwards until I hit the wall. Then he kissed me and pressed himself against me before dropping down and practically ripping open my jeans. He kissed my straining erection through the fabric of my black boxer briefs. Then he tugged them and my jeans down to my knees. My cock bobbed free. I hissed as the cold air hit the moisture at its tip.

“Oh, yes,” he moaned. “Look at it...fuck, that’s glorious.”

He touched me gently, reverently. “Almost nicer than mine.” He winked at me and wrapped his hand around my cock.

I shook my head modestly. “Not even close.”

“Well,” he said, eyeing my erection closely and rubbing up and down. “I’d love to argue with you but...” he licked the precum off the tip, making me groan. “It’s gonna be hard to talk with your gigantic cock in my mouth.”

“Fuck,” I moaned. He was driving me mad. “You really have a way with words, Jeremy.”

He grinned. “Well, it’s nice to know my lit degree was good for something.”

I started to laugh but stopped with a gasp as he took me in his mouth and sucked hard. I almost fucking came right then and had to pound the wall with a fist to focus my control.

But he knew what he was doing. He gripped my hips firmly.

He wanted me to lose control. He did everything he could to make me come with his hand and his tongue and his mouth.

He fucking ate me alive. I’d never had anyone suck me so hard before. In minutes I was shooting down his throat and yelling so loudly I hoped my fucking neighbors weren’t home. I pulsed and quaked through the quickest and most incredible orgasm of my life to date.

My knees gave out as my pleasure waned. Jeremy released me and I fell to my knees before him. He reached out and pulled me to him, kissing me tenderly. The feeling of being wanted and almost cherished left me dizzy.

But it was crazy, wasn’t it? I’d met him yesterday.

As if he were thinking the same thing he pulled away and sat down on the floor, staring at me incredulously. “Wow. That was intense.”

I nodded, desperately wanting him in my arms again but also wanting to understand what was happening here. I struggled weakly to my feet and pulled up my boxers and pants. I suddenly felt shy, like I had let myself reveal more to him than I should have. I mean, for all I knew, he might have just wanted to get his rocks off.

He was sitting in the middle of the floor, his knees bent, leaning back on his hands and watching me. I went over to the camera, took it off the tripod and connected it to the computer.

“How many shots do you want for your portfolio?” I asked, all business. He didn’t answer and I didn’t look at him. “You’ll need at least six.”

“Martin, screw the portfolio.”

I looked at him, surprised.

He shook his head. “I mean, I want the portfolio and the photos you took of me are incredible, and I realize I still need to pay you, but...could we talk about what just happened?”

Okay, take a deep breath. It’s better to find out now if it was a one time thing. I braced myself. “Okay?”

He got up and walked over to me. “Do you want to see me again?”

I gulped. “Yes.”

He grinned. “You like me then?”

I nodded. I couldn’t look away from him. “Yes.”

“For more than all that?” He gestured at the chaise and the wall.

I nodded. “Yes.”

“And for more of that, too?”

“God, yes.” I whispered. Fuck, I was his and he knew it.

He nodded. “All right then.” He looked down at the desk and back up. “What are you doing this weekend?”

Chapter Three

Fixation

That night I could think of nothing but Jeremy's mouth and his beautiful cock. I almost had trouble believing that the afternoon's events had actually occurred, except that I could still feel his mouth on me and remember how his cock tasted. It was hopeless.

I ended up stroking myself to climax again so I could get some sleep. But I was still too excited to avoid waking up several times during the night. He was coming back at ten this morning, ostensibly for another photo shoot, but I didn't know what to expect. Would I actually take any pictures? Or would we just do what we both obviously wanted to do, without the pretense?

I showered and dressed in a pair of faded jeans and a long sleeve, blue cotton t-shirt, my standard weekend garb. I wanted to be relaxed and comfortable. I even decided to leave my feet bare.

I stood at the window, drinking my coffee, watching for him.

My cock hardened in anticipation of what the morning would bring. When he rounded the corner and started down McLeod I dumped my coffee and took the stairs two at a time.

I opened the door while he strode along the street and he saw me and waved. I waved back. He looked as hot as usual, and this time gave me the most obvious eye-fuck when he neared me.

"Jesus, you look great," he said.

I moved back to let him in. He stepped inside, shut the door behind him, and suddenly had me up against the wall, kissing me deeply. I felt his hard-on pressing against me and I'm sure he felt mine. His tongue pushed into my mouth. I moaned and sucked it in.

"I can't stop thinking about you," he said against my lips as he kissed me.

I kissed him back furiously, wanting to rip off his clothes and fuck him right here. He pulled away and took off his jacket, throwing it on the stairs.

"Come upstairs," I said desperately.

He shook his head and took my hand, leading me into the studio. "There's something I want to do first."

I followed him and watched as he started stripping in front of the chaise, which was where we had left it yesterday. Okay, I like where this is going. He whipped his shirt off and bent to untie his boots.

“Do you think I look good enough to be an underwear model?” He pulled off his boots and socks and unbuttoned his jeans.

“You don’t wear underwear...” I said, staring at him, my dick turning to steel.

He grinned. “I did today.” He pushed his jeans down and stepped out of them. Sure enough, he was wearing a pair of grey and blue horizontally striped boxer briefs. They hugged his hips and outlined the swell of his erect cock beautifully.

“Jesus Christ,” I breathed. If I’d thought he was good looking in his clothes, he was a fucking God without them in just the boxers. “And you’re expecting me to take pictures?” I said doubtfully.

He winked at me. He sat on the edge of the chaise, putting his boots back on but leaving them untied. “Oh, come on, Martin.

I can’t wait to see what you can do with this.” He leaned back and rubbed himself through the boxers. “Trust me, you’ll be generously rewarded...”

I gulped. “You’re trying to kill me.”

He shook his head. “I’m not. I want you very much alive.” He leaned back into the position from yesterday and put a boot-clad foot up on the seat. “I just enjoy driving you crazy.”

I put a hand over my eyes, blocking the view momentarily, and tried to calm myself the fuck down. He wanted me to take pictures of him like this and he wanted to drive me crazy. Well, this will do it. “I’ll do my best, but I can’t promise anything.” I put my hand down. “Do you have any idea how hot you look like that?!”

“Well, the way you’re reacting speaks volumes. Do I look that good?” he asked innocently.

“Fuck. Jeremy, you know exactly what you’re doing to me...”

He reached down and rubbed himself again, gazing at me without shame. “Yes, I do...and I suggest you start taking pictures, Martin. Otherwise, it’s going to be a long morning.”

I swore again and rubbed my own aching erection through my jeans. He was going to kill me. There was hardly any blood left in my brain right now. Still, I found his offer of a reward very motivating. I went to the tripod and turned on my camera.

“I’ve never taken pictures of anyone in their underwear before,” I admitted. A good thing seeing as I mostly dealt with families and young children.

“I’ve never posed in my underwear before,” Jeremy said. “But I’m really enjoying it so far.”

I gave him a look and adjusted the focus. Actually, this wasn’t too bad. Concentrating on getting some professional looking shots took my mind off of other things. Until I realized that I suddenly had control of this little adventure.

“Why don’t you get on your hands and knees on the chaise, facing that way.” I gestured to the left.

He grinned. “Yes, sir.” He immediately got into the position I’d suggested.

“Oh, yes,” I murmured, lining up the shot and clicking away with enthusiasm. I might as well enjoy myself. I knew I would get some amazing photos from this session. Would he think it weird if I wallpapered my bedroom with them? “Now, straighten up so you’re kneeling there, and let your arms hang at your sides. Yes. Now look at me...”

“Martin,” he said quietly as I took the shots. “I like it when you tell me what to do.”

I stopped shooting, my heart beating rapidly. “Turn and face the back of the chaise,” I said, my voice even more commanding.

“Stay on your knees.”

He did as directed. I didn’t say anything, just took some shots.

Then I shut the camera off. I could hear Jeremy’s heavy breathing in the quiet of the room. He waited for what I would do. He couldn’t see me and I knew that turned him on.

I stripped off my shirt and let it fall to the floor. I walked slowly towards him. Now I had control and he was vulnerable.

It was a delicious feeling and perhaps he’d planned it all along.

I stopped near him. My eyes raked over his glorious form.

He was breathing hard and trembling in anticipation. I lifted my left hand and laid it on his ass cheek. He started to turn his head toward me. “Eyes forward, Jeremy.”

“Yes, sir.”

I stroked my hand over his ass and down his leg. He really had superb musculature. Not too beefy or anything, but well defined.

“Do you work out?” I asked as I caressed his legs with two hands now.

“Yes.”

“It shows.” I ran one hand up the inside of his thigh to his groin and lightly over the swell of his balls and the curve of his hard cock.

“Shit,” he whispered.

I stroked him gently over the soft cotton of his underwear.

He gripped the back of the chaise tightly as my hands moved over him.

“Mmm. That feels so good.”

I loved it when he said my name. This little game was turning me on so much I had to get him upstairs. I removed my hands.

“Turn around.”

He backed off the chaise and stood up, turning to face me.

His lips parted and his eyes were dark with excitement. I could see how turned on he was and how much he wanted me. All the nervousness and insecurity left me. I took his face gently between my hands and moved forward so that our bodies were touching. “What do you want to do, Jeremy?” I asked, staring into his hooded brown gaze. Our lips were almost touching.

“Whatever you want. I’ll do whatever you want.”

I could barely hear him.

“Will you let me fuck you?” I said. “Because I really want to fuck you. I’ve wanted to fuck you since you walked through that door two days ago.”

He nodded. “You can fuck me until the goddamn sun comes up, Martin.”

I moaned and our mouths came together hungrily, desperately.

His hands wound into my hair, holding me to him. Our tongues dove and danced together as we surrendered to our intense passions. We kissed like that for several minutes. Then I pulled away and slid down to my knees. I kissed his cock through his boxers and bent down to tie the laces on his boots. I looked up at him and winked at the dazed expression on his face.

“I want you upstairs,” I explained breathlessly. “And I am not letting you out of these fucking boots.” I finished doing up one boot and bent to kiss it before tying the other one.

“You look really hot down there,” he murmured, watching as I finished the other one. I kissed it as well. I pushed myself up and kissed him quickly, grabbing his hand. “Come on...”

We almost ran up the stairs, breathless and eager to get on with what we both needed. Once we were inside my apartment, I shut the door and locked it. I turned toward him. God, he looked

unbelievable in the boxer briefs and black boots. I grabbed him and started kissing him frantically again, backing him toward the bedroom. I kicked the door wider and moved him into the room. I was just about to push him gently onto the bed when he grabbed my arms and turned me around. I fell on the bed under him. The balance of power had shifted again.

He lifted my hands above my head and held them there, devouring me with his kisses. I moaned and rocked my hips against him, desperate for friction. He smiled and ground down against me. "You seem," he said between kisses, "a tad...overdressed."

His mouth left my lips and he trailed soft, wet kisses along my chin, down my neck, and over my chest. His hands glided down my arms and sides. He unbuttoned my jeans as he found one of my nipples with his mouth. He sucked on it and the pleasure jolted through me.

"Now look who's not wearing underwear." Jeremy shook his head in mock disapproval. He pulled my cock out of my jeans and rubbed it gently, making me moan and buck into his hand.

He tsked. "What would your mother say?"

I couldn't help laughing and got up on my elbows to watch him. "I don't think it's the lack of underwear that would disturb her."

He grinned and let go of my cock, grabbing my jeans and yanking them down. I pulled my legs free. He threw the jeans aside and crawled back over me.

"Now who's overdressed?" I said as he rubbed his boxer-clad erection against my bare, leaking member.

"Well, you wanted my boots to stay on and I can't take my underwear off over them, so you'll have to figure something out." He moved down my body again and found my cock with his lips, kissing the tip and licking the moisture from it teasingly.

"Oh, fuck," I muttered as it jerked in response. He grabbed me firmly in one hand and engulfed me between his wet lips. I went to heaven. "Oh God...oh fuck...I think I'm in love with your mouth..."

He sucked firmly and slid off with a smack. "That's okay. My mouth is in love with your gorgeous cock." He swirled his tongue around the head, making me groan. "I could do this all day."

I watched him suck and tease me. It was so hot. I couldn't believe that this beautiful man was in my bed. But I didn't want to come in his mouth this time. "Stop," I said. "Jeremy, you're gonna make me come and I really want to fuck you."

He stopped right away, looking up at me with those gorgeous brown eyes, still holding my cock in his warm hand. “Where do you want me?”

Oh fuck yeah. “On your hands and knees on the bed.” I moved over so he could get in position. Fuck me, fuck me, fuck me. I thought I might blow my fucking load before I even got inside him. He looked so fucking good on his hands and knees with the underpants and boots on. I think I whimpered at the sight of him. He turned his head to look at me, his eyes dark and hooded with lust. “Come on, baby,” he said. “I am so fucking ready, you have no idea.”

I moved around behind him, trembling with anticipation. I grabbed his hips and rubbed myself against his muscular ass.

Then I took the waistband of his boxers and pulled them quickly down, letting out a surprised gasp.

“Fuck. Me.” I stared in ecstasy at the shiny flat piece of steel nestled between his cheeks.

“Surprise.” He wiggled his butt playfully.

“You’ve been wearing that the whole time...” I said, hard as a rock and loving the sight before me.

“Mm hm.”

“Cheeky little bastard,” I said with affection. “That is so fucking hot.” I grabbed the base of the plug and moved it gently from side to side, making him groan in pleasure.

“Martin...” he moaned, “I need you...”

I let go of the plug and leaned over to my bedside table, practically ripping the drawer out. I grabbed the bottle of lube and a condom and quickly, hastily prepared myself. When I was ready, I eased the plug out of him, causing him to groan again.

I applied a copious amount of lube to him as well. He gasped.

Since the plug had already stretched him I pressed the head of my cock to his entrance and pushed in slowly.

We both groaned loudly as I eased in all the way. I stopped when I was fully inside him. Even though it was killing me not to move, I knew he needed to adjust to my size and length to be comfortable. “Oh, fuck,” he whispered. “You feel so good inside me...”

I moaned and kept still, though sweat beaded on my forehead.

He shook his head from side to side. “Fuck me...Please, fuck me...”

I straightened up and grabbed his hips. “Absolutely.” I started moving in and out of him slowly. It was fucking heaven. His tight passage squeezed my cock deliciously.

“Oh yeah.” He gripped the bedspread tightly in his fists. “Oh, fuck! That feels so good.”

“You like that?” I moaned, squeezing my eyes shut and focusing on the sensations. “Cause I fucking love it.” He whimpered and pushed back against me. “Touch me,” he pleaded. “I need to come so bad...”

I let go of his hip with one still slippery hand and reached underneath him, wrapping it around his hard cock and pumping back and forth in time with our movements. He was hard as steel.

He had been teased by the plug and our games for so long that after only a few firm strokes he came hard, shaking and shooting all over his belly, my hand, and the bed. The noise he made was something between a groan and a cry. I could feel his passage spasming around me as I pounded him harder, hastening my own release. When his orgasm waned he started pushing back against me again, helping me, milking me, until I climaxed inside him with a strangled moan. We collapsed on the bed, trembling and exhausted.

I rolled off him, pulling out carefully and disposing of the condom. Then I just lay there staring up at the stippled ceiling, dazed and spent and completely mind-fucked by the whole experience.

After several moments, during which we both tried to catch our breaths, I felt his arm snake across my chest. He snuggled against my side, sticky and warm and sweaty. I turned to look at him. He seemed content and sated, smiling lazily at my obviously astounded expression.

“What?” he said, stroking my chest affectionately and kissing my shoulder.

“What are you doing with me?” I searched his eyes for any hint of an ulterior motive.

“Well, right now I’m basking in the afterglow of a deliciously satisfying orgasm.” He narrowed his eyes at me. “What are you doing?”

I blinked. “I’m trying to think of what I could have done to deserve this. To deserve you.”

He laughed, like he couldn’t believe what I was saying.

“What? Don’t you realize how talented and sweet and hot you are, Martin?”

I closed my eyes, unable to believe him. “If that’s true, why has it been a year and a half since I’ve been with anyone?” I asked, embarrassed.

“Um, maybe because you have high standards? I’d like to think that’s it.”

I opened my eyes and stared at him, the simplicity of his statement a revelation. He was right. I could have spent every weekend at the clubs, picking up men and bringing them home to fuck. But, while at one point in my life that had been an interesting pastime, it proved ultimately unsatisfying and pointless.

“It’s been about a year for me too, you know. Does that make me a loser?”

I laughed. “Really?”

He nodded. “I happen to have extremely high standards.

In fact, you’ve only passed the first interview so far.” He lifted himself up on his elbow and winked at me. “With flying colors, I might add. Now, if you’re lucky, I’ll be calling you back for the three-day intensive session.”

“Very funny,” I said. “You really think I’m hot?”

He raised his eyebrows. “Martin. I just had your beautiful cock in my ass and blew a massive load all over your bedspread and myself. What do you think?”

I felt my poor cock twitch. He was right. What other proof did I want?

“Besides,” he said, “Do you think I’d wear that plug all morning for just anybody?”

I stared at him and goddamn it if I wasn’t getting hard again already. “I don’t know you.” I murmured.

He kissed me tenderly and pulled back. “So, get to know me.”

I looked down, then back up at him. “Have dinner with me.”

He grinned. “Okay.” He rolled over and bent to untie his boots. His underwear was still around his knees. He looked adorable. “But first, I need a shower. Join me?”

Chapter Four

Calibration

After a rather lengthy and involved shower, Jeremy had dressed and gone to work, promising to meet me at Genji, a Japanese restaurant on Lisgar Street, at seven. I discovered that he worked at the coffee shop on Elgin and his shift today was from two to six. He admitted it embarrassed him to work there but that he enjoyed it for the most part. Although, I found it pretty funny that he never drank coffee. It became apparent that Jeremy led a much healthier lifestyle than I did. He liked tea, both regular and herbal, ate healthy foods, worked out regularly, didn't smoke, and only drank occasionally. He prided himself on these habits and teased me about the cigarette I smoked after our shower together. He told me I should join him at his gym as his guest for an intensive workout session so I could see what smoking did to my lungs. I gave him a non-committal answer but the idea appealed to me. I had been meaning to join a gym for the longest time.

I spent the afternoon cleaning and tidying and printing out the photos that Jeremy had selected for his portfolio. I may have printed out a couple of shots for myself. I asked him if he would mind and he told me it was okay. He'd also written me a check for the price of my time and the photos, even though it felt a bit awkward to me. He joked that he would have to get some pictures of me to make it fair. At least, I think it was a joke.

At six o'clock I started getting ready for dinner. Genji was a classy, intimate restaurant and I wanted to look good. While I dressed I reminisced about our morning together and the shower afterward.

I insisted on washing him in order to really acquaint myself with every inch of him without the haze of an intense arousal clouding my perceptions. After I cleaned him thoroughly from top to tail, we made out under the streaming hot water. We just couldn't seem to get enough of each other. It was kind of frightening, the intensity of our attraction. I don't think either of us had ever experienced anything like it before. I certainly hadn't.

After two more orgasms under the running water, we were finally able to keep our hands off each other, at least long enough to have a decent, quick lunch of hastily made turkey sandwiches, salad, and fruit. Then Jeremy went to work after giving me a scorching kiss goodbye.

I decided on a pair of black jeans and a burgundy button-up shirt. I didn't want to dress up too much since Jeremy wouldn't have time to go home and change. Just as I was about to leave the phone rang. I froze, not even wanting to answer it. I knew it was Jeremy, backing out on dinner because he'd thought better of being with me or he'd met someone else. I turned around, steeled myself, and answered it.

"Hello?"

"Hey, are you free for dinner tonight?" My sister's breathless voice sent a wave of relief through me.

"Hi, Frankie."

"Hi! So, are you?"

"Well, actually..." I rifled through some mail on the counter, not sure what to say. Normally, I'd be thrilled to meet Frankie for supper.

"I'm at the Rideau Centre. I can meet you at Johnny Farina's in fifteen."

"I have a date, Frankie."

"Really? I mean I'm only surprised because it's been awhile.

Who is he? Where are you going? How did you meet?"

I rolled my eyes. Here we go. "Well, we only met a few days ago but..."

"Yeah?"

"I really like him."

"What's his name?"

"Jeremy." I opened the fridge and poured myself some orange juice, my mouth dry from embarrassment.

"Oooh, I have a good feeling about this! Is he cute?"

I almost spilled the orange juice, but recovered. "Frankie, you would not believe how hot he is. I don't know what he sees in me."

"I want to meet him! Oh, please, can I meet him? Please, please, please..."

"But I don't even—I mean, I just met him."

"Did you sleep with him?"

I barely refrained from spitting a mouthful of juice all over the counter. I coughed until I could speak again. "Um, sleep, no.

Other things, yes."

“Aha. If you’ve been intimate I need to meet him.”

“What? Why?” I put the juice container back in the fridge and leaned on the counter, running a hand through my hair. Man, I was in for it.

“To make sure he’s good enough for you, Martin. I’m your big sister.”

“By a year. I don’t know if I’m ready for this.”

“Oh, come on. Please?”

I carried the phone into the living room and looked out the window. There was no way she’d let this go. “Fine. You can meet him, eat some sushi and leave, capish?”

I heard a gasp. “You’re going to Genji? You must like him. That’s your favorite.”

“Mmm hmm. I mean it, Frankie. You stay for a glass of wine and an appetizer. And then you’re gone.”

“Okay, okay. What time?”

“Now. Seven. I have to go.” I hung up, immediately regretting my decision to invite her. Jeremy and I had been having a wonderful time in our own little bubble. What would happen once another person invaded our space? Especially my overenthusiastic whirlwind of a sister?

At 7:05 I was seated at a table in my favorite restaurant, tapping my foot in trepidation that it was all a mistake on his part and he wouldn’t show, and excitement that he would be here momentarily and the crazy, intense attraction between us would still be strong and undeniable. At 7:09 he walked in the door and looked around for me. A huge wave of relief washed over me when he saw me and smiled, followed by a renewed burst of energy and a surge of arousal.

He hung up his jacket and came over, setting down his messenger bag and greeting me with a quick kiss on the cheek.

He gave me a scorching look when he sat down across from me.

“How’s your cock, Martin?”

I blushed. “How do you think?”

He grinned. “I think you’re hard for me again.”

“I knew you were more than a pretty face.”

He laughed. “Seriously, though, you look great. If this wasn’t such a conservative town I would’ve macked on you big time just now.”

The pretty young Asian waitress came by. “Can I get you something to drink?” she asked, addressing Jeremy.

“I’ll just have some green tea, please,” he said with a smile.

I took a sip of my beer. I needed to warn him about Frankie.

“Listen, my sister called before I left and basically bullied me into inviting her to join us. She’ll be here any minute.”

“Okay,” he said, looking over the menu.

“But she only has time for a starter.”

“Is she older or younger than you?”

“Older, but only by a year. She’s a little hard core.”

“Meaning…”

“She’ll say what she thinks and she talks a lot. She’s kind of opinionated.”

Just as I said that, I saw her come through the doors. She saw me and waved and came right over, not even bothering to take off her corduroy jacket. She was carrying a couple of shopping bags.

“Martin! I found the coolest boots— Oh, hello!” She faked surprise at seeing me with somebody.

“Frankie, he knows you know about him. Knock it off.”

Jeremy stood up and held out his hand. “I’m Jeremy.”

“Hi Jeremy.” She shook his hand and I saw her eyes roam over him. “Holy shit, Martin, you were not kidding.”

“Jeremy, my sister, Frankie. Don’t listen to anything she says.”

She glared at me and sat down in the seat beside Jeremy, sticking her tongue out at me. “Martin sucked his thumb till he was nine.”

Jeremy looked at me and grinned. “Uh huh. Well, that explains it.”

I almost choked on my sip of beer; Frankie shrieked and slapped a hand over her mouth, staring at Jeremy and me in disbelief. We were gazing at each other and the connection must have been palpable.

“Holy hell,” Frankie said, “I’ve never seen anybody eye-fuck my brother like that before.”

I cleared my throat and opened the menu. “Frankie, are you sure there isn’t somewhere you’d rather be?”

She shook her head and opened her menu. “Nope. I’ve got a half hour before I have to head home. Oooh, the Maki looks so good!”

The waitress came by and Frankie asked for a coke and four orders of Maki that we could share, on her. That made me feel a bit more gracious.

“So, Jeremy,” Frankie said. “How did you meet my brother?”

Jeremy looked at me and then at her. “Well, I needed photos for a modeling portfolio.”

“I see,” she said and looked at me. “So I guess you liked what you saw?”

I rolled my eyes. “Okay, Frankie, I know you’re going to ask him all sorts of personal questions so you might as well get it over with.” I looked at Jeremy, who seemed to be handling things pretty well, so far. “Believe me, it’s better this way. Any question you don’t want to answer, say ‘pass.’” I turned back to Frankie. “You get ten and that’s generous.”

Frankie nodded. “Sounds fair. Now, to make this worthwhile, I need to think of things you’d be too embarrassed to ask him.”

Oh, boy, this is going to be painful.

She regarded Jeremy, who was sipping his tea and looking amused. “Hmmm. What do you like best about my brother so far?”

Jeremy appeared thoughtful. I hid my face in my hands and murmured, “Jesus Christ, Frankie.”

Jeremy cleared his throat. “Well, obviously, his big, hard, beautiful—”

I jerked my hand away from my face and glared at him.

“—camera. It takes wonderful pictures. Actually, that’s not it.” He stared at me. “It’s his graciousness, and the fact that it’s so easy to make him blush.”

I felt warmth in my cheeks again, but it was from the feeling his words gave me.

“Nice,” Frankie murmured. “Okay, next question. Are you looking for a piece of ass or a possible relationship?”

Jeremy laughed. “Wow. You are hardcore.” He seemed to mean it as a compliment. “Well, I do love a great piece of ass...but I’m definitely open to something more meaningful.”

“Awesome. ‘Cause I can tell you right now that Martin is excellent relationship material.”

“Frankie.”

Jeremy smiled at me, not disconcerted at all.

“Okay. Next question. How old are you?”

“How old do I look?” He waggled his eyebrows.

She thought for a moment. “Twenty-one?”

“Twenty-three.”

“Where do you work?”

“Coffee shop.”

“What’s your education?”

“I have a BA in English Lit from Ottawa U. Martin knows all this.”

“Hmmm, okay. What’s the craziest thing you ever did?”

He laughed. “Oh. Hmmm. Well, let’s see. Probably getting Martin to take pictures of me in my underwear.”

I put my head in my hands. This is mortifying.

Frankie was nodding. “How very naughty of you both.”

I looked up at Jeremy. “You know you don’t have to answer her questions.”

Jeremy shrugged. “It’s fun actually. I like making you blush.”

“Awesome!” Frankie clapped. “I get four more. Have you ever dumped anyone?”

“Yes.”

“Been dumped yourself?”

“Yes.”

“Been hopelessly in love with someone who didn’t know you existed?”

He sighed. “Alas, yes. I’ve sent so many letters to Tom Holland it’s not even funny, and, so far, no reply. I even sent pictures.” He winked at me.

“Uh huh. And for my final question, do you know what I will do to you if you break my brother’s heart?” She regarded him calmly, but seriously, like a tiger awaiting an excuse to pounce.

He shook his head slowly. “No. But I imagine it would involve something quite painful.”

“You better believe it.”

“Okay, Frankie, you can give the mamma lion routine a rest. You know, I can look after myself.”

She stared at me. “Really, Martin, you can be a bit naïve. I’m just making sure that Jeremy knows you are a valued and precious person, and he’d better treat you well.”

Jeremy nodded. “That’s a really great thing for a big sister to do.”

Now it was Frankie’s turn to blush. “Well, thanks. He’s very special to me.”

The three of us maintained an awkward silence until the food arrived, at which point we all dug in and complimented Frankie's selections. Jeremy was un-phased by my sister and she seemed to have accepted him; I felt much better knowing the inquisition was over and soon Jeremy and I would be alone. I also would be lying if I didn't admit to being slightly stunned by the protective feelings my sister had towards me. And relieved and excited by some of Jeremy's responses to her queries.

But then, as if Jeremy couldn't stand to see me comfortable, because that wasn't amusing enough, he said, "So, Frankie, what was Martin like as a child?"

I froze, a sweet potato Maki halfway to my lips.

"Annoying," she said immediately with a mouth full of sushi. She finished chewing and sipped her coke. She looked at me. "What? What sister doesn't think her little brother is annoying?"

I ate my Maki and kept quiet.

"I mean, he used to follow me everywhere. It was fun dressing him up in my princess costumes though." She winked at me.

"You really seemed to like that."

I cleared my throat. "Do you have any sisters, Jeremy?"

He shook his head. "No. I'm the only one."

"You are so lucky." I glared at Frankie.

"I don't know," Jeremy said quietly. "I'm sure I would've enjoyed playing princess."

"You would have been a beautiful princess, Jeremy."

"Thank you, Frankie."

"Oh, dear Lord." I moaned. "I thought you were leaving, Frankie."

"All right, all right." She threw up her hands in surrender.

"You boys have a wonderful evening." She put forty dollars on the table. "Jeremy, it was lovely to meet you." She leaned over, gave him a kiss on the cheek, and whispered something in his ear. I was astonished to see his face redden slightly and his lips quirk up. She grabbed her bags and kissed me goodbye. "Call me tomorrow, okay?"

I nodded. "Bye Frankie. Say hi to Simon."

She waved and left. I stared at Jeremy, waiting for him to tell me what she'd said. "You'll have to torture it out of me," he said, leaning back in his seat and winking.

And there it was. The erection that my sister had quenched with her presence and inquiries was back with a vengeance. I needed to get him home.

The waitress arrived then and asked if we wanted to order some entrees. I raised an eyebrow at Jeremy. “The butterfish is excellent.”

He leaned forward and I could feel the heat in his gaze. “I’m kind of in the mood for dessert.”

The waitress started listing the desserts. Jeremy interrupted her. “Actually, we have something tasty waiting at home. But thank you. The Maki was delicious.”

I smiled at the waitress as she cleared the plates and went to get the bill. When she’d gone, I looked right at Jeremy. “What have you got in mind?” I whispered, my cock hard as a rock.

“Well, it rhymes with red. And it involves my tongue.”

Fuck.

The waitress brought the check and we left it and the forty dollars on the table and put on our jackets. As soon as we got down the front steps he grabbed me and kissed me hard in the darkness. Then he pulled away and looked at me carefully. “Is it okay if I come home with you?”

“Jeremy, it’s wonderful. You can stay over if you want. I mean I’d like you to stay over.”

“You sure?”

“Fuck, Jeremy. Just shut up and kiss me, will you?”

We made out in the darkness of Lisgar Street for several minutes until we got worried someone might see us. Then we walked back to my place along Elgin, only stopping to pick up “supplies,” as Jeremy called them, at Sugar Mountain. He bought pop rocks, caramel corn, and licorice.

“Geez, for someone who raves about their healthy lifestyle, you sure seem to need a lot of candy,” I teased as we resumed our journey.

“Some of it’s for you.” He grinned.

“What? But I don’t like—”

“You’re not going to eat it, Martin.”

I stopped. “Huh?”

He kept walking but turned to grin at me. “Geez, for someone who’s so creative you don’t have much of an imagination.”

Chapter Five

Candid

The next couple of weeks were a whirlwind of work commitments and dates with Jeremy. We'd exchanged phone numbers and email addresses after our first overnighter and seen each other a number of times over the past few weeks. Each time we were together seemed better than the last. We were becoming more familiar with each other, learning each others' habits and preferences in terms of food and pastimes, and sex of course.

Jeremy's body was becoming very well known to me. I still marveled at his beauty and couldn't believe that he wanted me.

But he certainly seemed to. And I'd never known anyone so comfortable with their own body and so appreciative of mine. I soon realized that he did not consider any part of me off limits to his expert ministrations.

Of course, we spent time together out of bed too. He was so much fun, always joking and teasing and making me laugh.

He kept bugging me about the cigarettes until I finally threw them away and vowed to quit. Then he bugged me about coming to the gym with him until I finally acquiesced. I mean, the idea of watching him work out was very motivating, but I was selfconscious of my own performance. I hadn't been to a gym in years.

I finally agreed to meet him at the gym after his shift one evening. I got there a bit early so I hung around the front doors, waiting for him, my newly purchased gym bag on my shoulder and my stomach in knots. It seemed like everyone who walked past me into the club was as fit and attractive as Jeremy. I hoped for just one or two fat older men or women so I wouldn't stand out as the least fit person in the gym today. It wasn't looking good.

By the time Jeremy showed up I was trying to come up with an excuse to back out. But then that fucking smile lit up his face and I couldn't disappoint him.

"Hey," he said, squeezing my arm affectionately and opening the door for me. "Are you ready?"

I rolled my eyes. "To be completely humiliated? Sure."

He laughed. "Drama queen."

We changed quickly, Jeremy into shorts and a t-shirt that showed off way too much of his fine physique than I was happy with, and me into track pants and a loose t-shirt. Jeremy eyed me critically and said, “Jesus, if you do decide to sign up, we’ll need to go shopping.”

“Nice. That makes me feel so much better.”

He led me over to the treadmills. I noticed several attractive young, and some not so young, women and a couple of hot guys, checking him out, and it made my blood boil. My reaction surprised me a bit—I’d never felt anything so proprietary before.

I’d been jealous, yes, but not with this primal gut-wrenching urge to just grab his arm and pull him out of there. God, what would I do if someone actually touched him?

“Martin?”

“Yeah?” I focused back in on him.

“Have you ever used a treadmill before?”

I stared at him. Of all the... “Yes, Jeremy, I’ve used a treadmill before. I’m not a total neophyte.”

His eyes widened. “Wow, you get bitchy when you’re out of your comfort zone.”

I resisted the urge to stick out my tongue at him and got onto the treadmill. Jeremy stepped onto the one beside me and started punching things into the control panel. Soon he was jogging steadily and I was still staring at the buttons in front of me.

“Press start,” he said with a smirk.

I glared at him. “I’m just trying to decide what I want to do.”

I pressed start and used the arrow buttons to speed it up until I was walking at a brisk pace. I tried not to be intimidated by the pace Jeremy set and continued my warm-up for ten minutes.

Only at that point did I move up to a slow jog. I wasn’t going to hurt myself trying to keep up when I hadn’t really worked out in ages. Besides, I couldn’t exactly push my limits and still concentrate on stealing delicious glimpses of the perfection in motion beside me. As it was, I stumbled a couple of times and was lucky not to fall and embarrass the hell out of myself. But he looked fucking amazing, jogging in place, watching the TV screen before him, wiping the occasional drip of sweat from his brow with the towel he held in his right hand. He was in the zone and barely registered my presence, so I could observe him occasionally without notice. I filed it away with all the other images I had of him in my depraved brain. He was sex on a stick and he was mine, at least for now. I hoped he’d be mine for a long, long time.

Jeremy was still jogging steadily when I shut my treadmill down and stepped off. “I’m gonna do some machines, okay?”

He nodded and gave me a smile before turning back to the TV. He was in shape, that’s for sure. My legs ached and my lungs burned from the effort I’d expended and I hadn’t even kept up with him.

Oh well. My age was a factor and I smoked. Well, up until a few days ago anyway. I spent the next twenty minutes doing the rounds of resistance machines, working my legs, arms, and abs and trying not to look at Jeremy’s perfect ass in his little gym shorts. And trying not to glare at anyone else I saw ogling that perfect ass. I mean, could I really blame them? As far as I knew he was coming home with me, so I tried to relax.

Jeremy finally stopped running after a good sixty minutes of fast jogging, during which he only slowed down a couple of times. I had finished with the machines and was heading for the rower when he came over to me.

“Having fun?” he asked breathlessly. His brown eyes flashed with excitement and pride, his face flushed with the effort of his workout.

I nodded. “Show off.”

He laughed. “Maybe. I’m gonna do some machines.”

“Okay.”

I spent thirty minutes on the rowing machine and really started to feel good. The endorphins coursed through my body and the blood pounded in my ears. Wait, that’s good, isn’t it? Hopefully.

Otherwise I’m having a heart attack or a stroke.

I decided to be safe and call it a day. Now that I had fulfilled Jeremy’s desire of sharing a workout session, there were some needs of my own I wanted to address with him.

After I wiped down the rowing machine I looked around for him. It didn’t take me long to locate him. When I saw him he was standing beside the leg press talking to a gorgeous blond man with facial piercings and a tribal tattoo on his bicep. I got that horrible feeling in the pit of my stomach again, only this time even stronger. By the time I closed the distance between us I could tell that Blondy was flirting with my boyfriend. We’d never actually discussed the status of our relationship, but I considered Jeremy my boyfriend and I’m pretty sure he felt similarly. Still,

the sight of him talking with a younger, hipper, and possibly more attractive man was unsettling. I didn't like it. At all.

I couldn't put my arm around him and declare our relationship in the middle of the gym, so I did what I could. I gave Blondy an icy look and said to Jeremy, "Hey. Are you nearly done?"

Jeremy turned. He surprised me by placing a hand casually on the back of my shoulder and introducing me to the young blond man. "Martin, this is a friend of mine from work. Jean Pierre, this is my boyfriend, Martin."

I think the look on my face mirrored the look of surprise on Jean Pierre's. In an instant, any animosity I'd felt toward Jean Pierre melted away and I nodded and smiled at him. I thought better of offering him my sweaty hand to shake, but I said, "Pleased to meet you," and I meant it. In my head I danced around chanting

"Na na na boo boo, he's mine, baby, he's all mine."

Jean Pierre collected himself and smiled back at me. "Hi Martin. I haven't seen you here before."

"Yeah, I'm not a member. I'm just trying it out today."

"Martin's a professional photographer," Jeremy said. I detected a hint of pride in his voice.

"Oh, yeah?" Jean Pierre said. "What kind of photography?"

His eyebrows waggled suggestively.

Jeremy laughed. "Knock it off, you pervert."

"Portrait mostly. I do some nature photography on the side, for fun."

Jean Pierre nodded. His eyes returned to Jeremy. "So...you coming on Thursday?"

"What's Thursday?" I asked quickly.

"Jean Pierre's band is playing at Irene's. Do you want to go?"

I'll probably go anyway but it would be great if you—"

"Sure, yeah. I'd love to." Fuck, didn't he realize by now? I'd go to the fucking moon with him if he asked me.

He smiled that big, happy smile again and said, "We'll see you then, Jean Pierre. Well, I'm gonna go get a shower. Are you done, Martin?"

We showered quickly and changed back into our street clothes.

As we left the club I asked Jeremy if he wanted to grab something to eat and come back to my place. He said sure. Fifteen minutes later we had a table at Johnny Farina's and were deciding what to order.

"I'm kind of in the mood for pizza," he said, leaning back in his chair. "Among other things."

My cock hardened at the open invitation in his eyes. "Should we get a bottle of wine?" I asked.

He nodded. "Absolutely."

We placed our order with the server and settled in to wait for our food. We were in a quiet corner, one of the few cozy spots in this elegant converted warehouse.

I looked at him and said, "I liked that you called me your boyfriend."

He grinned. "Good. That's what you are, isn't it?"

"Well, we never really talked about it and I didn't want to assume..."

"Well, we're not chicks, right? We don't have to talk about our 'relationship' do we? Let's just be in it and enjoy it." He sipped his wine. "It just felt right, so I said it."

I lifted my glass, grinning widely. "Cheers."

"Cheers."

We clinked glasses and I sipped the cold white wine, a warm feeling spreading outward from my center.

"So, what did you think of my gym?"

"It's nice." I admitted. "A few too many hard bodies for my taste, but..."

"What, you'd rather look at old people with pot bellies?" He laughed.

"Well, at least I'd look good next to them..."

"Fuck, Martin, why are you so insecure about your looks?"

I shrugged. "I think it comes with the territory when you hit thirty."

He leaned closer to me and met my gaze with a smoldering stare. "Are you even aware how horny you make me?"

I stared back at him, my body responding of its own volition.

He continued, "My cock is fucking hard as fuck for you right now, Martin. I don't know if I can even make it through supper."

“Jesus, Jeremy,” I murmured, gulping more wine and trying to ignore the impulse to grab him and pull him across the table.

He leaned back slowly. “Can I ask you something?”

I cleared my throat as my erection throbbed. “Of course.”

He looked down at the table. When he looked back up at me his cheeks had reddened slightly. What the...?

“Would you be open to, um...maybe getting into some kinky shit...in the bedroom?” He regarded me with the most innocent and curious expression. I didn’t know what to say.

My cock reacted before I could get any words out. It twitched and throbbed and I had to shift position for some relief.

“I mean, nothing really hardcore or anything...”

“Like what?” I asked, curious as all hell at this point.

“Um, like...” He looked at his hands again, then up at me with a bashful smirk. “...well, like, some light bondage maybe or...spanking...”

My cock pulsed again and I think I let out a quiet moan. “Um, which one of us—”

He laughed quietly. “Well, um, I kinda like being handcuffed...” he grinned at me. My breathing quickened. “...and spanked.” He shook his head as if he couldn’t believe he’d just said it out loud. “Fuck, do you think that’s weird?”

I could only shake my head slowly and wonder what the fuck I’d ever done in life to deserve this. Here was this hot as fuck younger man, who’d just called me his boyfriend, telling me he kinda wanted me to tie him up and spank him. What the fuck?

“I think that’s the hottest thing I’ve ever heard.”

He smiled and then looked up as the waitress approached with our food. I would hazard a guess that no meal at this restaurant was ever consumed as quickly as this one. The food was delicious, but only sustenance at this point. The real meal would be enjoyed at leisure once we got to my home. I couldn’t fucking wait.

Chapter Six

Density

Once we got to my place he admitted that he knew Jean Pierr had been flirting with him and that I might be jealous.

“You should’ve seen the look on your face!” He broke out laughing. “I could see the wheels spinning.” He mimed gears turning beside his ears.

I glared at him and locked the door behind us. “Oh, you are such a naughty boy, Jeremy.”

He stopped smiling and stared back at me as I walked toward him. “Jesus fuck...” he whispered as I neared him. His chest rose. “What are you going to do?” He asked, the excitement apparent in his voice.

I stopped very close to him and leaned in to whisper in his ear. “What do you deserve?”

I felt him shiver even though he still had his leather jacket on.

He breathed heavily a couple of times then said, so quietly that I almost didn’t hear, “A spanking.”

My cock pressed against my jeans painfully. I pulled back to look at him. His eyes were closed and I had finally gotten a genuine blush out of him. He opened his eyes and searched mine, presumably for any judgment or disapproval. He found none.

“I deserve a spanking,” he said, slowly and deliberately, challenging me with a scorching gaze.

We ripped off our jackets at the same time and let them drop. I grabbed his arm and pulled him into the living room.

“Lean over with your hands on the back of the couch.” My voice was breathy, but authoritative.

He immediately did so. I walked up behind him. “Jesus, you look so good like that...” I grabbed his hips and pressed my denim-covered erection against his bottom. I could see us in the mirror; we made an arresting tableau. He moaned and pushed back against me.

“Stay still,” I commanded and he froze.

“Yes, sir.”

Fuck. This was making me so hard already. I could feel wetness in my pants from my leaking cock. I reached around him and unbuttoned his jeans.

“Where’s your underwear, Jeremy?” I said softly as I pulled his pants down and his big hard cock sprang free.

He gasped. “P-probably still in your bedroom.”

I was surprised. I hadn’t seen them when I’d tidied up.

“Where in my bedroom?”

He started to turn his head.

“Eyes forward.” I slapped his ass gently. He moaned and did as he was told. “Where in my bedroom?” I repeated.

He breathed heavily for a moment. “Under your pillow.”

Holy shit. This kid continued to surprise me. “That was very naughty of you, Jeremy.” I met his gaze in the mirror and he could see my half smile. His lip quirked up too. I knew he loved this. I moved so that I stood beside him and smoothed my hand over the curve of his firm behind at the same time that I pressed my hard-on against his hip. Then I thought of something.

“Where’s the plug?” I asked breathlessly.

He whimpered. “Shit…”

“Is it in your bag?”

He nodded. “Side pocket.”

I had washed it thoroughly after our earlier games and given it back to him, so I knew it was clean. “Stay here and don’t move.”

I found his messenger bag in the entryway and quickly located the stainless steel butt plug in a leather pouch in the side pocket.

I grabbed the little tube of lube as well and walked back to the living room. The sight of him leaning over, holding onto the couch with his jeans down around his thighs, watching me with excitement and trepidation, was sublime.

“Eyes forward,” I instructed as I neared him. I leaned down and whispered in his ear as I touched the cold metal of the plug to his thigh, “You look so unbelievably hot, Jeremy. You have the most beautiful ass I’ve ever seen.” I trailed the plug over his naked ass and he gasped. “I’m going to put this cold, hard plug in your ass and then I’m going to spank you.”

He moaned and trembled. “Fuck, Martin, you are really good at this.”

I met his gaze in the mirror. I stepped away and squirted some lube into my hand, spreading it over the plug. Then I moved behind Jeremy and ran my lubed fingers along his crack and around his opening, sliding two of them inside him gently.

Jeremy whimpered again and I knew he was ready. I placed the cold tip of the plug against his entrance and pushed it slowly into him.

He groaned and whispered, “Fuck...” as it slid in. It was a beautiful sight. When it was completely inside him and nestled comfortably between his cheeks, I wiggled it back and forth playfully.

“Oh, God,” he moaned, “You’re gonna make me come...”

“Not yet, Jeremy. Don’t you dare come unless I say you can.”

“Yes, sir,” he said. A jolt of excitement shot through me.

“Are you ready?” I asked, smoothing my hand over his trembling ass.

“Yes, sir.”

I drew my hand back and brought it down on him, a little harder than before.

“Oh,” he gasped. “Fuck yeah.”

I did the same thing again.

“Oh, fuck,” he said. “That’s perfect, Martin.”

I spanked him a third time and I could see his skin pinking up deliciously. He moaned. “Do you like it?”

I let a heavy breath out, not even realizing I’d been holding it.

“Yes,” I whispered. I spanked him again.

“Every time you do that,” he gasped, “the goddamn plug moves inside me...and it feels so fucking good...”

I spanked him again and he moaned. “Oh fuck! Stop or I’ll come— I can’t help it...”

I did stop. “My hand’s getting sore anyway...”

He laughed and groaned at the same time. I smiled at my admission. He’s the one with a rosy ass and I’m complaining about my hand.

He straightened up and stroked his cock a couple of times for some relief, closing his eyes. He opened them and stared at me as

I rubbed myself through my jeans. “What now?” I said.

He reached down and pulled up his pants, without doing them up, since his cock was way too big and hard to stuff back in them. He grinned. "Now it's your turn."

I must have gone quite pale.

"I'm not going to spank you, Martin." He reassured me. "I know it's not for everyone." He moved slowly toward me. I couldn't help taking a step back. "I have some other ideas." He grabbed my wrist and spun me around so my back was to him.

He grabbed my other wrist and pressed his cock against my ass.

"Bedroom. Now." He gave me a shove and I obeyed, because whatever he was going to do to me would be glorious. I just had to relax. He closed the bedroom door behind us and stared at me.

"Take off your shirt."

I did so, quickly.

"And pants."

I kicked off my shoes, peeled off my socks, and pulled off my pants, tossing everything in a pile by the dresser. I stood before him, naked and hard and waiting for him to tell me what to do next.

His eyes raked over me, stopping at my straining cock. "Wow," he murmured, "Look how hard you got from spanking my ass."

He stripped off his shirt and moved toward me, still with his jeans and those goddamn orgasmic boots on. He closed the distance and wrapped his hand around my cock, rubbing it gently against his own erection, making me groan and close my eyes.

Then he released my cock, his hands coming up and grabbing my head, guiding my mouth to his. We kissed deeply, hungrily, our cocks pressed between us.

Then he pulled away and pushed me down to the bed. I lay back and he climbed over me. "That was a great idea about the plug. It felt so good. It still feels incredible...I love having hard things in my ass."

I moaned. "You are entirely shameless," I murmured as he licked and kissed my neck.

"Mmm hmm. Do you like it when I say dirty things like that?"

He moved down and tongued my nipple.

I hissed. "Yes."

He tongued it roughly a few times then pulled back to look at me. “Has anybody ever fucked you, Martin?”

I blushed, embarrassed by the subject and also embarrassed to admit that no one had. Yet. Honestly, until Jeremy had come along I didn't really have any interest in it. But I would let Jeremy do whatever he wanted to me.

“No,” I admitted, “But you could. I mean, if you want to...”

He smiled. “Oh Martin...I would love to fuck your ass so hard...” He closed his eyes as if he were imagining it. I felt my cock grow immeasurably harder. “But I don't think you're ready for that just yet. It takes time to prepare for that.”

“Oh, right.” I knew that, but I was kind of disappointed. This man had turned me into a brainless sex machine. I loved it.

“But, Martin...” Jeremy murmured and reached a hand down to my cock. “Preparing you for full on fucking is going to be...”

He wet his finger with the moisture on my cock. The next thing I knew he was rubbing it very gently against my opening in tiny circles, until he pressed gently and the tip slipped into me. “...so much fun.” I gasped at the surprise and the pleasure of it. He wiggled his finger gently back and forth. I moaned. “Oh fuck...”

Suddenly his mouth closed around my aching cock and his finger pushed further inside me. I cried out wildly at the intensity of it. His mouth, his beautiful, hot, wet mouth, felt heavenly on my cock, and the sensation of his finger in my ass was amazing.

I imagined what it would be like to have the plug inside me—or, even better, his long, hard, slippery cock. I groaned and shuddered; I was getting close. As if he sensed it he released me and stood up, leaning over to unlace his boots and kick them off, followed by his pants. Then he kneeled over me, pulling me up to my knees. He kissed me crazily, passionately, and moaned into my mouth.

“I need your cock inside me.” He was breathing heavily.

“Fucking now. Fucking right now.”

He was desperate, shaking and trembling. I turned him around and pushed him forward, grabbing the lube and a condom from my bedside table. I prepared myself and slowly eased the plug out of him. I pushed into him, groaning at the ecstasy of it and marveling at the heat and the tightness. Once I was all the way inside I slid my arm under his chest and pulled him up against

me so that he was sitting on my lap. I held him there and nuzzled his neck as I gently rocked against him. His hands grasped my forearm. He let his head rest against my shoulder, giving himself over to me completely.

We rocked back and forth together, our passionate sounds mingling and bursting forth in a luscious symphony of pleasure.

We moved like that for a long time, slowly and deliciously and tenderly and, dare I say, lovingly? When I knew he wouldn't last much longer I wrapped my wet fingers around his cock and stroked him, faster and faster as I pumped more quickly inside him.

"You...are...so...beautiful..." I whispered in his ear as I fucked him with my cock and my hand. "I...love...fucking...you..."

I almost, almost, left out the word "fucking," but I knew it was way too soon to tell him how I really felt. I didn't want to scare him away. So I used my body to show him how I felt about him.

Soon he cried out and trembled in my arms, coming all over my hand and himself. His orgasm seemed to go on and on, and I kept moving inside him and pumping his cock until it played out.

Then I grabbed his hips and pumped my own cock in and out a few times until I climaxed explosively inside him, groaning and grunting in complete abandon.

We collapsed on the bed and held each other close as we tumbled back to earth. After a little while I pulled out of him and disposed of the condom, then turned and pulled him against me.

He closed his eyes and a lazy smile lit up his gorgeous face. "That was...I can't even describe it," he murmured tiredly.

I grinned and kissed him gently on his cheek. "You're incredible."

He opened one eye. "You liked the spanking part."

I rolled my eyes. "So did you."

"Fuck, Martin. I liked all of it. A lot. A whole lot."

After we recovered ourselves we showered without too much distraction. We were both pretty tired. I lent Jeremy a pair of pajama pants and a t-shirt. We cuddled in front of the TV and ate the candy that Jeremy had bought. I'd never been crazy about candy, but when Jeremy was

with me, everything tasted good. So we shared the caramel corn and the licorice. Jeremy had already demonstrated to me the various uses of pop rocks and there were none left.

We watched one lame TV show after another, making fun of everything and everyone, laughing and joking like kids. Jeremy's cell phone rang a couple of times but he let it go to voicemail. At about eleven we got into bed. I pulled Jeremy against me into a spooning embrace.

"I feel like I just made you up in my head and you're going to disappear," I said.

"I'm not going to disappear. Although I will have to go home tomorrow."

"I know. But please have breakfast with me first?"

"Breakfast, breakfast? Or euphemism breakfast?"

I laughed. "I'm so fucking tired I can only think about actual breakfast. I make very good omelets."

"Sounds wonderful," he murmured, and we both fell asleep.

Chapter Seven

Distortion

In the very early morning I woke up, reached for Jeremy and felt nothing. I was alone in my bed. My stomach clenched in dread as I sat up and searched the room. When I saw his messenger bag against the wall and a light coming from the kitchen, I felt a huge sense of relief. I glanced at the clock. It was 4:41.

I got quietly out of bed and padded into the living room. In the moonlight I could see Jeremy sitting cross-legged before the big mirror, staring at his reflection. I wasn't sure what he was doing so I stood still for a minute and watched him. When I saw him inhale a shaky breath, I realized he'd been crying.

"Jeremy," I said. Shit, what's wrong? "Jesus, did I hurt you?"

He turned to look at me, his face pale and wet with tears. But he shook his head and tried to smile. "It's nothing." He said. "It's nothing, Martin. Go back to bed."

But it was so obviously not nothing that I couldn't leave him there sitting on the floor. "Tell me I didn't hurt you...I didn't mean to..."

"You didn't hurt me, Martin." He stared at me, his voice calm, his face full of pain.

"What is it? You have to tell me. I'm freaking out over here!"

He shook his head and started to get up, but it seemed like he had hardly any strength in his legs all of a sudden. He couldn't get up.

"Jesus Christ, Jeremy." I rushed over to him. "What the fuck is going on? Are you okay?"

He nodded. "I'm okay. But do you think you could drive me to the hospital?"

"Of course, but...what is going on?" Now I really started to freak out. It could be a stroke or something. "Maybe I should call 911."

"No, just...just help me up." I grabbed hold of him and helped him stand, which he was able to do, thank God. But he leaned on me heavily. "Thanks. Man, this is so embarrassing. Just, help me to the couch, okay?"

I helped him over to the couch. He sat down, leaning his head back against the cushions and closing his eyes. I saw a couple of tears pool at the corners. "Why the fuck did this have to happen now?" He opened his eyes and looked to me for an answer. I didn't have one. I didn't

know what was going on. “I mean, I finally happen on a really good thing, I mean an amazingly good thing, and I’m having the time of my life and—fuck!” He brought his fist down on his knee and grimaced. “I’m sorry. I sound like a whiny geriatric patient.”

“Jeremy, tell me what’s going on right now or I’m calling 911,” I said with all the authority I could muster.

“Well, I guess this is a good time to tell you I have Multiple Sclerosis.”

What? “You do?”

“That would be why I can’t stand up right now.”

I stared at him. It seemed like he was trying to make a joke out of it. I wasn’t laughing. I said, very quietly, “Why didn’t you tell me before?”

“Because I was fine and I figured I’d give this relationship some time before I dropped the bomb. Obviously, God had a different idea.” He put a hand to his forehead, as if he had a headache.

I took a deep breath, trying to assimilate this new information.

“Does it hurt?”

He shook his head. “Only my pride. Do you know anything about MS?”

I shook my head. “Not...really.”

“Well it can be dormant or in remission for a long time. Then it surprises the crap out of you and you wake up with weird symptoms. That’s called a relapse. Right now I’ve got some numbness and weakness in my legs that wasn’t there yesterday.”

I didn’t understand. “But—is it permanent?”

He shook his head. “Probably not.”

“Probably not?”

He shrugged. “I’m not upset that it happened. I mean, it’s partly my fault because I stopped taking my meds. I’m just pissed that it had to happen right now.” He looked up at me. “Martin, for God’s sake, sit down. I can’t stand you hovering over me like that.”

I sat down beside him, my tired, stunned brain trying to take it all in.

“I was hoping to have some time to ease you into all this.” He closed his eyes again. “That is, if you want to be involved in it at all.”

I stared at him and all I wanted to do was gather him into my arms. But I didn’t.

“I am involved in it,” I said quietly. “I’m involved with you. I mean,” I put my head in my hands. “I think I’m falling in love with you...so could you please explain to me why we don’t have to call 911 but you want to go to the hospital?”

He didn’t respond and I lifted my head to look at him. He stared at me with the weirdest expression on his face. “What did you just say?”

Oh no. “I said, could you please explain why you—”

“No. Before that,” he said.

“Fine. You want me to say it again? I think I’m falling in love with you. I know it’s only been a couple of weeks, but they’ve been the best weeks of my life. I think about you all the time. I can’t get enough of you.”

When he spoke, it was in a soft voice. “I don’t think I need to go to the hospital. Not yet, anyway. I just kind of panicked a bit.”

I looked at him. “But your legs!” I didn’t understand.

“Martin, it’s probably a pseudo-relapse. I’ve had these symptoms before.”

“You have?” I didn’t know what a relapse was, let alone a pseudo-relapse.

He nodded. “About three years ago, my legs went numb and I lost the use of them. I had to use a wheelchair for three months.”

I just stared at him.

“They gave me steroids and I went on medication. I got better. But I stopped taking my meds about six months ago because I thought maybe I didn’t need them anymore. It was stupid.” He ran a hand through his hair. “I mean, I guess I was in denial.”

It was hard to believe any of this but the evidence was right in front of me. He’d seemed so healthy, so energetic. I’d never in a million years have guessed that he had any kind of illness.

“What’s a pseudo-relapse?”

“It’s when some of the residual symptoms come back, or get worse. It might last a couple of days. An actual relapse involves brand new symptoms, like if I woke up and couldn’t talk or see properly or something. I mean, I think that’s how it works. It’s all very confusing.” He paused. “An actual relapse can last several weeks or sometimes months.”

“That could happen to you? I mean the trouble speaking or seeing?”

He nodded. “It could. But I’m not going to worry about it. There’s nothing I can do about it anyway.”

I sat there, stunned. Here was this beautiful man telling me he wasn't sure he'd be able to see or talk someday and he wasn't going to worry about it.

"I'm really tired. Do you mind if I just lie down and try to go back to sleep?"

I'm sure I looked terrified.

"Hey, I'm okay. Sometimes these symptoms just mean I need to take it easy for a bit. If we go to the hospital now I'll just end up sitting in Emergency for six to eight hours waiting while they try to call in a neurologist to see me. I might as well wait until Monday and go directly to the MS clinic."

"Okay. Just promise you'll tell me if you change your mind about going to the hospital."

He nodded. "Promise."

I stood up. "Come on, I'll help you back to bed."

I helped him stand up and walk back to the bedroom. He could walk, thank goodness, but he was limping and definitely needed my assistance. I helped him lie down and then crawled in beside him.

"Is this okay?" I asked as I slipped my arm around him and held him close. "I mean, can you sleep with me here?"

"Mmm hmm," he murmured. "Don't go anywhere."

I nuzzled his neck, listening as his breathing deepened and he drifted off to sleep.

Unfortunately, even nestled against his warm, relaxed body, there was no chance that I was going back to sleep. I thought about everything that had been revealed to me over the last forty-five minutes and considered the impact it might have on our very new relationship. He said that he hoped to have more time to "ease me into" the knowledge of his disease and I could understand why. It was a lot to take in. I'm sure he worried it would be too much for me and I'd bail.

Once he fell into a deep sleep I very carefully extricated myself and slipped out of bed, tucking the blanket around him so he'd stay warm. I left the bedroom and closed the door most of the way so my movements wouldn't disturb him. I went into the kitchen and made a pot of coffee. It was 6:10 am. Since it was late October and the time hadn't changed yet, the sun had not yet risen. When the coffee finished brewing, I poured a cup and sat on the sofa, looking out at the darkness and hoping that Jeremy would be somewhat better by the time the sky lightened.

I was sitting on the sofa reading *Outside* magazine about two hours later when I heard a sound behind me. I turned to see Jeremy standing in my bedroom doorway, leaning against the frame.

“Morning,” he said quietly and smiled.

I stood up and walked toward him. “How are you feeling?”

He shrugged. “Better. My balance is still off and I’ve still got the numbness. But I made it this far on my own, so some of the strength is back.”

“That’s good news?”

“Yep. It’s not getting worse. If I rest up over the next few days, hopefully I’ll be fine.”

“I’ll help you to the couch.” I held out my arm.

He shook his head. “Thanks, but I want to see if I can do it. Just be ready to catch me.” He winked at me and I felt a familiar tightening in my loins. I moved aside but stayed nearby. I wouldn’t let him fall.

He let go of the doorframe and walked carefully forward. He wobbled a little and there still seemed to be some weakness in his right leg, but he managed all right and seemed very happy to close the distance to the sofa on his own speed. He sat down with a sigh of relief. “That’s a definite improvement.”

“Yes, it is,” I agreed.

He looked at me. “I’m sorry for freaking you out last night.”

I shook my head. “Don’t apologize. I’m just glad you’re feeling better.”

There was an awkward silence. Then Jeremy said, “I seem to recall something about omelets?”

God, I’m an idiot. I was just standing here and he needed some breakfast. “Of course. How about a cup of tea?”

He seemed surprised. “You have tea?”

I nodded.

“Well, well, how civilized. I’d love a cup of tea.”

“How do you take it?”

He grinned at me and it was the Jeremy I knew. “Anyway you like.” And I knew he wasn’t talking about the tea.

“Jesus, Jeremy, don’t get me worked up. You need to rest.”

He laughed. "I'm sorry. I like my tea black."

"And what would you like in your omelet?"

"Surprise me."

"Okay." I knelt down in front of him. "I meant what I said last night."

"I know you did." His gaze was honest and unafraid. "I'm developing some pretty strong feelings for you too." He reached out and pulled me to him. I slid my hands around him and rested my head against his belly. He smelled so good.

"Anyway, let's not worry about that yet. Let's just keep having fun. I'm having so much fun, Martin. If it's meant to be we won't be able to stop it."

He was right.

His stomach suddenly rumbled. I moved out of the embrace and stood up. "One omelet surprise, coming up."

After Jeremy ate his western omelet and finished his tea, he changed back into his clothes and I drove him home. He lived in a townhouse in Blossom Park with two roommates who tended to party and were not very tidy.

He almost fell as we climbed the steps to his front door but he grabbed onto me and I steadied him. I took the opportunity to ask him if his roommates knew he was gay. He told me they did and were cool about it, but that we probably shouldn't "mack" in front of them.

"I'll try to control myself," I said, rolling my eyes. I stayed close as he opened the door and moved inside. He used the doorframe and the wall of the entry to keep his balance.

"Jeremy! Que pasa?" A scruffy looking, bearded young man in sweat pants and a t-shirt lounged on the living room sofa, eating what looked like pizza from a box on the coffee table.

"Hey, Kurt." Jeremy greeted him. "Charlie still asleep?"

Kurt nodded. "He had a gig last night. Didn't roll in until three am." He noticed that Jeremy was leaning on the wall. "You okay?"

Jeremy shrugged. "Just a bit unsteady today." He gestured to me. "Kurt, this is Martin. Martin, Kurt."

Kurt put down his pizza and came over to greet me and get a better look at Jeremy. He wiped his hand on his pants and held it out to me. We shook briefly. "Nice to meet you." He looked at

Jeremy. "You look tired."

“I’m fine, Kurt,” Jeremy said firmly. “But would you mind grabbing my cane for me? It’s at the back of my closet.”

Kurt nodded and glanced at me before heading down the hallway. I suddenly felt guilty, like Jeremy’s current condition was my fault.

Kurt returned and Jeremy took the polished wood cane from him gratefully. “Thanks, man.”

It made all the difference. Now he didn’t need help as he moved forward into the living room.

He turned back to look at me. “Wanna see my room?”

I nodded and followed him down the hall. He turned into a room on the right. It was small and sparsely furnished, but clean and neat. A large rainbow flag hung on the wall over his bed next to a poster from the After Stonewall bookstore. Jeremy’s “out and proud” status became stunningly apparent at that moment.

“It’s a lot tidier than the rest of the house,” I observed. “Are you going to be okay?”

He leaned against his dresser and nodded. “I’ll be fine. I’m going to call the MS Clinic today and my mom to see about ordering more meds. I’m on her insurance so she handles it for me.”

“How much do they cost?”

“They’re fifteen hundred a month.”

“Jesus. They’re not covered by OHIP?”

“Not yet.” He shrugged.

“I guess I should go. You need to rest.”

“Thanks for everything. I had a really good time. Except for waking up with gimpy legs.” He shrugged, grinning shyly.

“Yeah, that wasn’t my favorite part either.”

“What was your favorite part?”

I grinned. “Not telling. You’ll have to find out later. Call me okay? Let me know how things are going.”

He nodded. “Okay.”

I really didn’t want to leave, but I needed some space and some time to think about everything. I moved toward him and kissed him softly on the lips. “Bye.”

Chapter Eight

Fog

When I got home I put some beer in the fridge, then sat down on the sofa and turned on the TV. My brain was spinning and I really needed to mellow out a bit. I was still reeling from the revelation of the previous night.

Why hadn't Jeremy told me about his disease? Sure, we had only been seeing each other a couple of weeks, but he'd called me his boyfriend. I should have known about something so important. We shared so many personal and intimate things it seemed like a purposeful omission.

On the other hand, my present reaction proved that he had a valid concern. He didn't want me to know because he didn't want that knowledge to alter my feelings for him. I didn't want it to.

But it would take some adjustment at the very least.

I had a sudden urge to call Frankie. Simon answered the phone.

"Hi Simon, it's Martin. How are you?"

"Hey Martin. I'm good, I'm good. How's the 'hunkilicious' new boyfriend?"

I scratched my head. "Uh, that's kinda what I need to talk to Frankie about."

"Okay, I'll get her."

"Thanks."

It didn't take long for Frankie to get to the phone. "Martin? What's going on?"

"Hi Frankie. Can you meet me for coffee? I really need to talk to you about something." I shoved my free hand in my pocket and fiddled with some loose coins.

"Oh, Martin. He didn't dump you did he? I swear, I'll—"

"No Frankie, it's nothing like that."

"Then, what—"

I walked over to the window and looked out at the overcast sky. "I can't talk about it over the phone."

"At least I know you're not pregnant."

"Very funny. I'm not laughing."

"Sorry. Yeah, I can meet you. Is Jeremy okay?"

"Not really." I turned back into the room. "I'll meet you at the coffee shop on McLaren."

“Okay. Give me twenty minutes.”

I walked to the coffee shop, figuring the exercise would do me good and I had twenty minutes anyway. My legs, arms, and abs were sore from my workout, so it helped to get moving.

I got a coffee and sat at a table to wait for Frankie. I glanced at the young women working at the coffee bar and wondered if they knew Jeremy. He didn't work at this location, but maybe they had events and stuff, I don't know. Did his coworkers know he had MS?

Frankie showed up on time. She had a worried look on her face when she caught sight of me. She came right to my table without bothering to get a drink.

“Don't you want a coffee?” I said.

She shook her head as she took off her coat and sat down. “What's going on?”

I hesitated. “Jeremy has Multiple Sclerosis.”

She stared at me for a moment. “Okay. He told you he has Multiple Sclerosis?”

“Not exactly. He stayed with me last night. He woke up in the night and he could barely stand.” I leaned forward. “Frankie, it was terrifying.”

Her face reflected my fear and panic of last night. “Oh, Martin...is he okay?”

I shook my head. “I don't know. I wanted to take him to Emergency but he didn't want to go. He went back to bed and when he woke up later on, he was somewhat better. But he still can't walk properly. He needs a cane. He has a cane, Frankie.”

She stared at me. “He does?”

“Yeah, he said he was in a wheelchair three years ago, but got better and needed a cane for awhile.”

“Oh, geez.”

“I took him home and he's going to try to see his doctor on Monday.” I put my head in my hands. “It was just such a shock...we had the best time yesterday—” I suddenly remembered our workout at the gym.

“What?”

“I wonder if that's why his legs are bad...we went to the gym together and I think he was showing off. He jogged on the treadmill for an hour.”

She nodded with the hint of a smile. “That's cute.”

I blushed and shifted in my seat. “And then we...” I couldn't look at her. “...we did some kinky stuff when we got to my place...”

“And I need to know this because?”

I looked at her and I knew my face had gone pale. “Frankie, I thought I’d hurt him. When he woke up later in such bad shape I thought...I thought we’d taken things too far and...”

She held her hands up. “Whoa, Martin...I can’t believe I’m asking but...what exactly did you guys get up to?”

Holy shit, this is so embarrassing. But I had to tell her. I had to tell somebody. I had to reassure myself that I hadn’t done anything wrong.

“Uh, well, he told me he liked to be spanked...” My voice was barely above a whisper.

She stared at me. Then she put a hand over her mouth to hide a smile. “Wow. That’s kind of funny. And kind of hot.”

She shook her head. “That little devil. Corrupting my innocent vanilla brother.”

“What?”

“Nothing. Never mind. So you...spanked that pretty boy’s ass. Is that all?”

God, I loved Frankie. I blushed but at least I could meet her gaze now. “Well, things got pretty intense after that...”

“I bet.”

I think she was trying not to laugh, but I gave her a stern look and she composed herself. “But not rough or anything. I didn’t spank him that hard. And he really liked it.”

“Martin, I’m sure it had nothing to do with what happened. I mean, that’s pretty ‘small k’ kinky. We’re not talking whips and chains, right?”

“Of course not. I would never...”

She raised her eyebrows. “Never say never, Martin.”

I rolled my eyes. “I can’t believe I just told you I spanked my boyfriend and got off on it.”

“Feel better now?”

I thought about it. “Yes, actually. But I’m worried about Jeremy.”

“Me too.”

“I’m kind of upset that he didn’t tell me about this before he was forced to.”

“Oh, Martin. New relationships are hard enough without laying all your cards on the table.”

“I knew he was too good to be true.”

She stared at me with a weird look on her face. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Well, he’s so damn good looking and sweet and smart and into me. I knew there had to be something.”

“Nobody’s perfect, Martin. Y’know, he’s still all those things. The fact that he’s dealing with this just makes him that much more interesting.”

“I guess.”

“Don’t make this about you and your insecurities. This is your chance to step up and show him that you really care, that you’re not some wimp that can’t deal with the more difficult things in life. Right?”

“I think I’m falling in love with him.”

She smiled. “Oh, Martin. I knew it. He seems like such a wonderful guy.”

“He is wonderful.”

“You know, Simon knows someone with MS.”

“Really?”

She nodded. “Yeah, this woman in his office. Maybe you could talk to her.”

I nodded. “Yeah, that would help. I don’t really know what I’m dealing with here. But I can’t just call her up.”

Frankie shook her head. “No, of course not. Let me talk to Simon. Maybe we can have you both for supper this week.”

“Okay. That would be great.”

She looked at me sternly. “Call him tonight, okay? And then call me. I’m worried too. I really like him, Martin.”

I nodded. “Okay.”

We stood up and I gave her a big, warm hug. “Thanks Frankie. I love you.”

“Y’old softy, you.” She kissed me on the cheek and I walked her to her car. “Please call me after you talk to him tonight.”

“I will.”

The rest of the day passed pretty quickly. Of course, I couldn’t stop thinking about Jeremy for a number of reasons and by seven-thirty I picked up the phone and punched in his number.

One of his roommates answered; presumably Charlie, since I didn’t recognize his voice. I heard loud music and laughter in the background.

“Hi. Is Jeremy there?”

“One second.”

Several moments later he came on the line. “Hello?”

Just the sound of his voice made my cock harden and at the same time sent a wave of relief through me. “Jeremy.”

“Martin! Just a second, I’m gonna close my door.”

He did so and then I heard him settle back on his bed. “How are you?”

“I’m fine. How are you?”

“I’m okay. About the same, I guess. I left a message at the MS Clinic so they can call me first thing on Monday.”

“Good.”

There was a pause. “Listen, I’m sorry I didn’t tell you about all this sooner,” he said quietly.

“It’s okay.”

“No, it’s not. I’m a pretty up-front kinda guy, as you know. I should have told you. You were pretty freaked out.”

“I didn’t know what was going on. I thought it was something I did.”

He laughed. “Oh, Martin. Like what? Like you spanked me a little too hard? I’m not that delicate. And, honestly, you didn’t spank me very hard. We’ll have to work on that.”

Oh my lord. My cock got harder. “Do you think maybe...at the gym? I mean, do you always work out with that level of ...intensity? Or were you trying to impress me?”

“Yeah, that might have something to do with it. I was a little hardcore, wasn’t I?”

“You don’t have to go out of your way to impress me. Believe me, I’m impressed already. I’ve been impressed since I met you.”

There was a pause. “So what do you think about all this?”

I hesitated. “I don’t really know.”

“Okay.”

“I mean, I’m not gonna run, Jeremy. I just need some time to get used to this.”

“Okay. That’s fair. Just...”

“What?”

“Don’t stay with me out of pity. If this changes things between us, tell me now, okay?”

“Jeremy, I don’t pity you. I think you’re incredible. I can’t imagine having to deal with what you’re dealing with.”

“Does it change the way you feel about me?”

“A little. But not the way you think.”

“What do you mean?”

“Jeremy, my cock got hard the second I heard your voice. But I’m starting to feel...I don’t know...protective or something.”

“Oh, yeah? Your cock is hard?”

“Are your roommates having a party?”

“No, they’re always this noisy. Could you do something for me, Martin?”

“Sure.” I thought he was going to ask me to get him something from the grocery store. I should have known better.

“Could you take that beautiful cock out of your pants and stroke it for me?”

“Oh, fuck...”

“Since I’m not there to do it for you?”

“Jesus, Jeremy.”

“Please, baby? I’m doing the same thing over here.”

“Holy shit. Really?” I unbuttoned my jeans and pushed my underwear aside.

“Are you holding it?” His voice was breathy.

“Yes.”

“Good...now stroke it, baby...start slow...”

I groaned and did as he asked. “Wait, I’m gonna get some lube.”

“Good idea. Me too.”

Once we were ready he started talking to me again. “Did you like spanking me, Martin?”

“Yeah...”

“Will you do it again some time?”

“Yeah.”

“Harder?”

“Maybe. If you ask me nicely.”

“Fuck, yeah. Are you leaking for me yet?”

I groaned. “Yes...”

He moaned and his breathing got harsh. “Tell me what you’d do to me if you were here,” he said.

Oh Jesus. He was going to make me talk. My hand was flying over my dick now. This wouldn’t take very long. “I’d...I’d put my mouth on you...”

He chuckled. “Where?”

“You know where.”

“I want to hear you say it, Martin.”

I moaned again. “On your...fuck...on your beautiful, hard cock...”

“Oh yeah,” he groaned, “then what?”

“I’d tease you with my fingers.”

“Where would you put your fingers, Martin?”

Holy fuck. I was going to come in a minute. I stroked myself even faster. I was whimpering now. “In your...your...” but I couldn’t finish the sentence because I was groaning and spurting over my hand.

“Oh, baby...that sounds so hot...keep talking...I’m so close.”

I took a deep breath when the spasms died down. “I came so hard for you, I made a mess.”

“I bet you did, naughty boy.”

“You make me come so hard... you turn me on so much I can’t even stand it.” He was whimpering now and I loved it.

“I’m gonna fuck you so good when I see you again, Jeremy...I’m gonna make you come hard for me...”

“Oh fuck...oh fuck...oh, yeah...”

I could tell he was coming and I wanted to reach through the phone and pull him to me, hold him close while he trembled, but all I could do was whisper, “That’s it, baby, that’s it...I love you.” It was out of my mouth before I was aware of it and I froze, clutching the phone to my ear and listening to my heart rate speed up. And then I said it again. “I love you, Jeremy.” What the fuck am I doing?

There was a loud, drawn out moan, then I heard him laughing on the other end of the phone. I didn’t know what was going on.

“Jeremy?” Maybe he hadn’t heard me.

“Oh fuck...oh, Martin, I’m sorry, I heard you, I just...I just fucking jizzed on my rainbow flag...it’s just so fucking poetic...”

“That flag that’s on the wall over your bed?”

“Yep.” He could barely talk he was laughing so hard. “It’s pretty damn high too.”

“Wow.”

He seemed to be calming down now. I listened to his laughter get quieter and his breathing even out. After a few moments he said, “Martin?”

“Yeah?”

“I love you too.”

I cleaned up and called Frankie.

“I just spoke to Jeremy.”

“And?”

“He’s okay. He’s going to see his doctor on Monday. He’s still having issues but he seems okay.”

“That’s great, Martin. How are you?”

“I told him I love him.”

“No way, really? Did he say it back?” She was breathless with excitement.

I grinned from ear to ear. “Yep.”

I had to hold the phone away from my ear, she shrieked so loud. I heard her telling Simon and then she said, “That’s so great! I’m so happy for you!”

“Did you talk to Simon yet?”

“Yes. He’s invited his friend to supper on Monday. She’s pretty sure she can make it. Is Monday okay?”

“Monday’s fine. Can I bring anything?”

“Just yourself, sweetie. About seven, okay?”

“Sounds good.”

Chapter Nine

Clarity

Monday evening found me at Frankie's place a little late; the result of my spontaneous decision to buy her some flowers as a thank you for all her support.

"Martin, come on in," Simon ushered me inside. "Frankie, your brother's here. And he brought flowers."

"Oh, Martin, you didn't have to do that...but they're gorgeous! Thank you." She took the bouquet and kissed me on the cheek.

"Did Jeremy see the doctor?"

I shook my head. "He couldn't get an appointment until tomorrow."

She frowned. "Okay, well, come on in. Miriam's here already."

I took off my shoes and coat and shook Simon's hand. "Good to see you, Simon. And thanks for setting this up."

"No problem at all." Simon was a bear of a man with a beard and warm blue eyes. He was sweet and kind and sexy in a domestic sort of way.

We wandered into the living room where Frankie had lit some candles and put out some cheese and crackers. An elegantly dressed woman with a young looking face and short silver grey hair turned from where she was examining Frankie and Simon's wedding portrait, a glass of white wine in her hand.

"Martin, this is Miriam Cole."

Miriam smiled and held out her hand to me. "I'm pleased to meet you, Martin." Her expression was welcoming and friendly. I warmed to her immediately.

I shook her hand. Her grip was firm and steady. She was wearing leather boots with high heels and didn't seem to have any balance issues. She appeared as healthy as Jeremy had a few days ago. "Thank you for coming," I said.

"Can I get you a drink, Martin?" Simon asked as I sat down on the sofa.

"Sure. Do you have red wine?"

"Of course."

Miriam sat in an armchair nearby. She asked what I did for a living and we spoke about photography and a few other things.

Then she said, "I hear you're looking for some insight about a friend of yours."

I nodded. "I'm not sure what Frankie told you."

She smiled. "Well, she said you'd found out recently that a close friend of yours has MS."

I debated whether or not to be completely open and honest with her or hedge around my relationship with Jeremy. I decided that if I wanted her to be up front with me, I needed to extend her the same courtesy.

"My boyfriend actually," I said, watching her reaction.

"Oh?" She seemed surprised but not shocked.

"We've only been together a couple of weeks."

"And he told you he has MS and you're not sure what that means?"

I shook my head. "Not exactly. He woke up Saturday morning at my place and he could barely stand up."

"Oh, Martin, I'm so sorry. And you had no idea?"

"No."

"That must have been quite the shock."

"It was awful."

"I'm sure it was. How is he now?"

"Not so bad. But he needs his cane to walk. He has an appointment with his neurologist tomorrow."

She nodded. "Good. He's had problems with his legs before?"

"I think he said about three years ago. He was in a wheelchair for a couple of months. And then he recovered. I mean, is that even possible?"

"Yes. Totally. With MS, the nerves develop inflammation and become damaged, but the human body can repair itself up to a point. The more relapses you have, the less likely you are to recover completely. Then the residual damage adds up and you can have a permanent loss of function. How old is he, if you don't mind my asking?"

"Twenty-three."

"Wow. That's young. I got lucky. I was diagnosed at the age of thirty-eight. I'm forty-one now. I think the median age at diagnosis is twenty-nine."

“I can’t tell that there’s anything wrong with you. Then again, I couldn’t tell with him either. He’s the most beautiful, healthy seeming guy...”

“I do have issues; fatigue, difficulty concentrating. I’ve lost some permanent sensation in my fingertips but that only affects my typing speed. It’s the nature of the disease, Martin. It hides in your brain and spinal chord until the inflammation is severe enough that it shows. The disease is always there. It’s just a matter of controlling it. What therapy is he on?”

“Pardon?”

“Sorry. I mean, which medication is he taking?”

“I think that’s part of the problem. He said he stopped taking it.”

She nodded and sipped her wine. “Ah.”

“I think he regrets stopping.”

“The medications are so important.”

I nodded.

“My older brother was diagnosed with MS at the age of seventeen. Back then, there were no long-term treatments, just short-term mega doses of steroids to help with relapses.”

“How is he doing now?” I almost didn’t want to ask.

She smiled and raised her eyebrows. “He’s doing well, however, he uses an electric wheelchair. He can no longer stand on his own. He gets confused easily and his memory is terrible.”

I must have gone pale.

“Martin, there have been so many advances in the treatments for this disease in the past fifteen years. My outlook, and your boyfriend’s outlook, is much better than my brother’s ever was.”

“Can’t they treat your brother at this point? Fix some of the damage?”

She shook her head. “Once the disease has progressed that far, the medications don’t work. They’re preventative. They reduce relapse rates quite a bit. The fewer relapses you suffer, the less overall damage occurs. They are doing research on using stem cells to repair some damage in MS patients, but it’s inconclusive.”

She laughed dryly. “Sorry, I’m sounding like a doctor. The first thing you do when you get an MS diagnosis is research, research, research.”

“I’m sorry about your brother,” I said. I couldn’t even imagine.

She shrugged. “Me too. But I’m very happy there are treatments now. Even if it means I have to give myself a needle every day.”

I raised my eyebrows.

She nodded and smiled. “All the available treatments are injectables. But you get used to it.” She leaned back and regarded me carefully. “I’ve never been tempted to stop my medication, but that’s because I’ve seen firsthand what can happen when you leave this disease alone. I can understand why a younger person might wonder if they really need it. But they do.” She shook her head. “Anyway, if you’re contemplating a long term relationship with this young man, don’t let this scare you. If he goes back on his meds and stays on them, and takes care of himself, he’ll do great. You know, there are so many worse things.”

I nodded and smiled at her. “Thank you so much, Miriam. Your insight and knowledge is invaluable to me.”

“I’m glad I could help.” She looked toward the kitchen then back to me. “Do you think they’re deliberately neglecting us?”

“No doubt.” I stood up. “I’ll let them know we’re getting hungry.”

Dinner, when it eventually made it to the table, was delicious.

Simon was an excellent cook and my sister had the wisdom not to interfere with his genius.

Miriam had a dry sense of humor and a charming personality. I wanted her to meet Jeremy.

When I got home I went to bed feeling much better, and looking forward to speaking with Jeremy tomorrow.

I kept myself busy the next day and tried not to worry about what Jeremy would tell me about his visit to the clinic.

The information that Miriam provided me, and her laid back, positive personality, reassured me greatly. The shock of Jeremy’s revelation had worn off. I began to just accept it as a part of who he was. And that protective feeling grew. I wanted to take care of him.

It was after noon when the phone rang. I answered it quickly.

“Hello?”

“Hi.”

His voice comforted me every time I heard it. “Jeremy. Where are you?”

“I’m at home.”

“Did you see your doctor?”

“Yep.”

“And?”

“Do you want the good news or the bad news first?”

My heart sank. “There’s bad news?”

“Well...he thinks it’s an actual relapse.” He hesitated. “But, he said it looks pretty mild and he’s pleased that I’m already improving.”

“Okay.” I let out the breath I’d been holding.

“He doesn’t want to put me on steroids, which I’m happy about. He wants me to go back on my meds and try to take it easy.”

I nodded.

“But it could take awhile for everything to get back to normal,” he continued.

“It won’t get worse?” I whispered.

“He doesn’t think so, since it’s improving now, especially if I start the meds again. He gave me quite the lecture about stopping them. They should be ready by Friday.”

“Which medication?”

“Pardon?”

I cleared my throat. “I did some research. I know there are four different drugs.”

“Oh. Well, I was doing a weekly intramuscular injection but I’m going to try the daily subcutaneous injections this time.”

“Glatiramer acetate.”

“You have been doing your research. Anyway, there it is. I’ll have to hang onto my cane for a little longer, that’s all.” His voice was quiet. For the first time I sensed a tiny bit of embarrassment about everything.

“I like your cane. It keeps you from falling.”

“It didn’t.”

“What?”

“It didn’t keep me from falling in love with you.” He paused.

“Ba-dump-bump.”

“That’s pretty cheesy, Jeremy.”

“Isn’t it? But it’s true. Are we still on for Thursday?”

Thursday? I didn’t know what he was talking about. “Um, Thursday?”

“Jean Pierre’s band, remember?”

“Oh, yeah. You still want to go?”

“Yeah. I am so fucking bored, you have no idea. And, um, I really miss you.”

I smiled. “I miss you too.”

Chapter Ten

Aperture

Thursday evening seemed to take forever to arrive. I couldn't decide what to wear and eventually settled on my black jeans and a cream colored button-up. Not exactly club wear, but it would have to do.

I offered to pick Jeremy up, so at seven-thirty I knocked on the door of his townhouse. My palms were sweaty and my heart pounded. I heard loud music so I looked for the doorbell and rang it when nobody answered my knock. Finally, the door opened and a tall, lanky young man with purple hair and a lip piercing said "Hi."

"Hello, is Jeremy here?" I asked.

The young man grinned. "Sure. Come on in. Jeremy's in his room."

He walked over to the stereo and turned the music down slightly. It still seemed loud to my ears though. The place was an absolute mess, as it had been the last time I'd seen it. How did Jeremy walk around without tripping?

I walked down the hall and knocked on Jeremy's door. After a few moments it opened and there he stood. He had on dark brown leather pants, a black form-fitting long-sleeved tee, and his boots. I barely had time to take it all in before he grabbed my jacket and pulled me into his room, slamming the door shut.

"Jeremy, I—"

"Shut up, Martin." And we were kissing. I lost myself in the heat from his mouth and the feel of his body pressed against me.

He was delicious and the smell of him was enough to drive me mad. Our tongues danced and probed. His hands on my cheeks held my face steady. My hands drifted down his back to his perfect ass and pulled him firmly against me. Our desperation for each other was obvious, but I couldn't fuck him with his roommate in the living room.

I moaned. "Jeremy...we can't—"

"I know..." he murmured against my lips. "I just needed to taste you."

We forced ourselves to stop and move apart. But our eyes stayed locked.

"Jesus," I muttered, leaning against the door.

“I know,” he said and a slow grin spread across his handsome face. “Maybe we should just go to your place.”

“Okay.” I grinned back at him. Lord, I’m so easy.

I glanced over his head at the rainbow flag above his bed. He saw me looking and chuckled. “I washed it.”

“It’s pretty damn high, Jeremy.”

He laughed. “I’m twenty-three. What can I say? I’ve got reach.” He seemed suddenly shy and looked down at his feet.

“Do you think...could I stay over tonight?”

I nodded. “I’d love it.”

We packed a change of clothes and I grabbed his messenger bag. He was walking okay as long as he used his cane. He told Charlie that he wouldn’t be back until tomorrow.

When we got in the car I asked how he felt.

“Well, I’m feeling pretty horny right now.”

“Ha ha. I mean, otherwise.”

“Why don’t you tell me how I feel...” he murmured, taking my hand and placing it on his lap. I felt the hardness of his cock under the leather of his pants.

“Fuck. Me.” I whispered.

“That’s the plan, baby.” He pressed my hand against his erection and moaned. Then he looked at me. “I feel great, Martin.”

“You certainly do.”

He grinned and moaned again as I rubbed him gently. “I had a nap.”

I smiled and reluctantly pulled my hand away, turning the keys in the ignition. “Put your seatbelt on.”

He followed close as I walked to my front door. Even though he needed his cane he seemed to have no problem moving quickly.

While I fumbled with the lock he leaned in and whispered, “Your ass looks good in those jeans.”

I shoved the key home and turned the handle, opening the door and moving into the warmth of my house. Jeremy followed closely, his free hand roaming over me. I turned and kissed him then, as I closed and locked the door. His arm wrapped around me and he pulled me

against him. We kissed softly, tenderly this time; now that we were here, there didn't seem to be a huge rush anymore. I had an idea...

"Jeremy, would you do something for me?" I said against his mouth.

"I'll do anything for you."

I grinned. "Go upstairs and wait for me on my bed."

He laughed. "Absolutely."

"But don't get undressed yet."

"Why not?" he almost whined.

"Because I want to undress you, baby."

"Okay." He pulled away and looked at me sternly. "Don't be long."

I shook my head as he put his hand on the railing and started up. Shit! "Do you need some help?"

He looked back at me with an indulgent expression. "No, Martin. I'll be fine."

"Okay. Sorry."

I resisted the urge to stay and make sure he made it to the top without falling. I went into my studio, hesitating and contemplating my plan. I had meant to grab my camera off the tripod and get some quick and casual shots of Jeremy in his hot outfit before I took his clothes off. But the photographer in me had a better idea. We had all evening, after all.

I took the camera off the tripod and connected it to the computer. It didn't take long to clear the memory card. I reconnected the camera to the tripod and folded it up, tucking the whole thing under my arm. Then I unplugged one of the smaller, portable lights and carried both up the stairs.

When I reached my bedroom I saw Jeremy sprawled out on my bed, still dressed and with his boots on—he knew how much I got off on those boots. His hands were behind his head and one leg was bent. He regarded me with a hooded gaze and a lazy grin.

"Shit..." I whispered, putting my gear down and quickly setting everything up. "Don't fucking move."

"Okay," he said. "I love watching you work. You're so good at what you do."

I shrugged. "It's not rocket science."

"It's sexy."

"You're sexy, Jeremy. I could come just looking at you."

"Jesus, how long is this going to take?" He rubbed his hand against the bulge in his pants.

“It’ll take as long as it takes. I told you not to move.”

He raised an eyebrow at me and put his hand back behind his head, his grin getting bigger. “Yes, sir.”

The side of my mouth quirked up and I finished with the camera. I put the light beside the bed and adjusted it. He watched me but stayed in position.

“Perfect,” I said.

I went back to the camera and made a few adjustments. Then I started shooting.

Jesus Christ. He is so goddamn beautiful. The brown leather pants clung to his long legs and showcased his lean musculature. His black cotton long-sleeved tee did the same for his chest, flat belly, and long arms.

“Oh, yes...these are going to be amazing,” I murmured, my cock getting harder in my jeans. “Why don’t you roll over onto your stomach?”

“Good idea. My ass looks great in these pants,” he said coyly, doing as I instructed.

I almost groaned at the sight of him laid out before me. His ass looked fucking amazing. I took picture after picture and he started moving around in front of me. He reached his arms out before him and arched his back, like a jungle cat stretching. Then he looked over his shoulder, igniting an inferno within me, but I kept shooting. My breathing came harsh and quick. I wasn’t sure how much longer I could keep from touching him.

Then he slowly turned around so that he faced me on all fours. He stared at me with the most intense, heated look as he rose up on his knees and rubbed his hand against the huge hard bulge of his erect cock.

I did groan then and I stopped taking pictures. I let go of the bulb and moved forward onto the bed until I was on my knees before him. I grabbed his shoulders as our mouths came together hungrily.

His hands cupped my ass and pressed my groin against his own. He moaned into my mouth and I ran my fingers through his soft, messy hair as I groaned and trembled against him. He pulled his mouth away for a moment. “Are you okay?”

I nodded. “Yeah...I just...I missed you.”

“Undress me,” he said.

I stared at this beautiful man asking me to undress him and my heart swelled as much as my cock. My hands came down from his head and slid under his shirt, caressing the smooth skin there before grabbing the hem.

“Lift your arms up.”

He did so. I peeled his black shirt up over his head and threw it onto the floor. My eyes raked over his naked chest, my fingers reaching up to touch one puckered nipple, my mouth finding his again. We kissed slowly this time, deeply, and it was so hot, like he was sucking my entire soul out of me and into him. I gave myself completely to what I felt for him, worrying about nothing except how long it would take to get him out of his jeans. I needed to be closer. I needed to be inside him.

My fingers found his buttons and wrenched them open. He laughed and helped me push his pants down, his cock bursting free and whacking against my jeans. I felt his hands on my shirt, unbuttoning it. I undid my jeans and pushed them down, laughing with him and kissing him desperately. He pushed my shirt back off my shoulders and let it fall to the bed.

“Oh my God...” he gasped. I could hear the tremor in his voice. His hands were everywhere. I clutched his hips, moaning into his mouth, unsure what to do first.

His hand came down between us and wrapped around both our cocks, holding them together and sliding his against mine slowly. It felt incredible.

“Oh, yeah...shit...” I groaned.

“Jesus, I can’t wait till I can fuck you...” he murmured. I made a noise in my throat. “Until then, well, we’ll just have to make do with having your cock in my ass.”

“Oh...fuck...” I could barely breathe, so busy kissing his lips, his chin, his neck, then his lips again. My kisses were frenzied and needy. I wanted this so badly.

“You want to fuck me, baby?”

“Yeah, oh God, Jeremy...please...please...”

He chuckled at my desperation and let go of our cocks, pushing me over and pulling my pants off the rest of the way before getting rid of his boots and jeans. I lay there watching him and rubbing myself until he lay down and pulled me on top of him. “Where’s the lube?” he whispered.

I reached over to my bedside table, pulling open the drawer and grabbing the lube and a condom.

I made love to him then, face to face, sliding into him and watching his expression. It was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. As I rocked against him and touched him deep inside, he watched me with eyes that widened and then closed according to my gentle movements. The noises he made as I fucked him were killing me. I was already close to coming.

Suddenly he moaned and gasped, "I love you." I felt him spasm beneath me; hot wetness oozing between us as he came.

It sent me over the edge. I made a noise somewhere between a whimper and a moan as I pulsed inside him. I found his mouth with mine and poured all of my love into him. He was mine now and I wasn't letting go.

In the morning we showered together. I washed him clean and sucked his cock while the hot water coursed over us and he held onto the side bar for balance. Over omelets we talked about his roommates and how he dreaded returning to the mess and the noise.

I put my fork down. "Why don't you stay here for a couple of weeks?"

He stared at me. "Really?"

I nodded. "It's clean and tidy and quiet. And I'll try to keep my hands off you, so you can rest."

He raised his eyebrows.

I blushed. "I can be good."

"What's the fun in that?"

"So you will?"

"Are you sure you want me here?"

"Jeremy. Fuck. Yes, I'm sure."

"Okay." He smiled at me and I thought I would burst with happiness.

Chapter Eleven

Perspective

I drove Jeremy home to pack a bag and let his roommates know of his intentions.

When we got to his room he threw a duffle bag on the bed and said, “I’ll pick, you pack, okay?”

He opened his drawers and started throwing stuff onto the bed, which I proceeded to pack carefully in the duffle bag; a couple of shirts, a pair of sweatpants, two pairs of jeans. An image flashed in my head of Jeremy’s ass in those jeans. I felt my cock harden; four pairs of boxer briefs—okay, even harder—then a funny looking red leather hoop with beads on it.

“What is—” I looked up to see him watching me with a funny half smile on his face.

“It’s a cock ring, Martin.”

“Oh.” I blushed, immediately picturing it wrapped tightly around Jeremy’s gorgeous cock. “Jesus.”

Then he threw something else on the bed; a long, copper colored silicone string with bumps along its length that started small and gradually increased in size. “Are those—?”

“Anal beads,” he said with a molten look. “They’re for you.”

I stared at him, my cock a steel rod in my pants now.

“And last but not least.” He threw a pair of black leather wrist cuffs onto the pile.

I stared at them, my breathing quickening. “Those are for you, right?”

He limped over to where I stood by the bed, staring down at the toys. He reached out the hand that wasn’t holding the cane and rubbed my straining hard-on through my jeans. I whimpered and grabbed his hand, pressing it firmly against me and closing my eyes.

“That depends,” he said breathlessly.

“On what?” I asked, my eyes still closed.

“On how well you can follow instructions,” he whispered, leaning in and licking my neck.

On the way home we stopped at his pharmacy to pick up his medication. While we awaited our turn I grabbed a box of condoms off the shelf.

“I’m running low for some reason.” I smiled.

“Don’t buy more,” he said.

“What?”

“I hate condoms. I know I don’t have anything and I’m not worried about you.”

I stared at him. “Are you sure?” Jesus, he was getting me worked up in the goddamn pharmacy.

He nodded. I put the condoms back.

When it was his turn the pharmacist got a blue cardboard box from the fridge and placed it in front of us. “That’s one fifty-two, forty-seven.”

Jeremy handed over his Visa.

“I thought your mom’s insurance covered it.”

“Well, it covers ninety percent. She wrote me a check for the rest.”

“Oh. Good.”

The pharmacist put it in a bag and handed it to Jeremy.

“Thank you. Make sure you keep it refrigerated.”

On the way home, Jeremy had explained that the company that made the drug was going to send a nurse to teach him how to do the injections. “They’re different from the ones I was doing before. It should be easier and hopefully less painful. But I have to do it every day, which kind of sucks.”

When we got to my place he called the drug company, telling them he had the medication. Twenty minutes later, the nurse called and told him she would be here in two hours.

“Crap, that was fast,” I said.

The nurse arrived right on time. She was a pretty little thing with black curly hair, green eyes, and a friendly smile.

“Hi there. Which one of you is Jeremy?”

He smirked and pointed at me.

“Very funny,” I said. “That’s Jeremy.” I nodded at him and shook her hand. “I’m Martin.”

“Nice to meet you, Martin.” She shook Jeremy’s hand. “Hi Jeremy. I’m Kelly.”

“Hi, Kelly.”

She took off her coat and boots and we went upstairs.

“Can I get you a coffee or anything, Kelly?” I asked.

“No thanks. I’m good.” She smiled and placed her bag by the sofa in the living room.

I started to move away and they both looked at me. “Where are you going?” Jeremy asked.

Kelly said, “You should probably watch, Martin, in case he ever needs help with this.”

“Okay.” I sat down nearby.

“Have you ever given yourself an injection before?” She asked Jeremy.

He nodded. “I was taking the intramuscular shot for awhile.”

“The once-a-week one? And why did you stop?”

“Well, it hurt like hell and I felt like I had the flu for the whole day after.”

“Usually those side effects diminish after a few months.”

He shrugged. “Yeah, well, they didn’t.”

She smiled. “Well, this is subcutaneous, so it won’t hurt as much. It will sting though, especially at first. But you won’t get those flu-like symptoms. There is a very small chance of an immediate post-injection reaction.”

“Yeah, I read that. What exactly happens?”

“Right after some people have the shot, they get tightness in their chest, heart palpitations, sweating, dizziness. It can be frightening but it generally only lasts for ten or fifteen minutes. It only happens to about ten percent of people and it doesn’t happen after every shot. It never happens with the first shot—usually about three or four months in for some reason.”

“Okay.”

“After the intramuscular injections, this should be a piece of cake.” She smiled. “Did you take one of the needles out of the fridge when I called?”

He nodded.

“You’ll probably want to take five at a time and put them in the travel case in your cupboard. Then you’ll always have a needle ready to inject. Never inject one right from the fridge. The medication needs to be at room temperature.”

“Okay.”

“I have a whack of stuff here for you...” she took some leaflets out of her bag, what looked like a placemat, an ice pack, a couple of small blue cases, and a funny looking square rubber thing with straps on it.

“That’s so you can practice first. I have a needle with saline in it that we can use.” She showed us. “Jeremy, attach that thing around your thigh so the square bit’s on top.”

He did.

“Okay, so you want to pinch a bit of skin between your thumb and forefinger, about an inch.” She demonstrated. “And then in one smooth, firm motion sink the needle in quickly.” She did so.

“Ow,” Jeremy said.

She looked at him like he was crazy.

“Kidding.”

“Smart ass,” I muttered.

He stuck his tongue out at me. I just shook my head.

“Then release the skin and depress the plunger in an even motion.” She finished. “Okay, Jeremy. Your turn.”

He took the needle from her and repeated her actions.

“Good. Martin?”

I moved closer and took the needle she offered me. I sat beside Jeremy and took the fake skin of the practice injection site between my fingers.

“Oh, baby...” Jeremy murmured and I glanced quickly at Kelly. She seemed to be trying not to laugh.

I glared at Jeremy. “Knock it off. I’m trying to concentrate.”

“Just stick it in, Martin,” he said innocently, looking at me with his big brown eyes.

I jabbed the needle into the practice rubber and he said, “Oh, yeah.” and I wanted to deck him. But now I was trying not to laugh.

“Good,” Kelly said. “You can take that off and get me your needle.”

He took off the pseudo injection site and gave it back to Kelly.

“Oh, wait, I forgot.” She looked at her list. “I have to go over injection sites with you first. And I need to check your skin.” She glanced at me, then back at Jeremy. “We can do it in private...”

“He’s seen it all before.”

Kelly grinned.

“Nice,” I muttered, settling back on the sofa.

“You’ll need to take your pants and shirt off, Jeremy.”

He quickly stripped to his black boxer briefs and I'm pretty sure Nurse Kelly enjoyed the show as much as I did, although she pretended not to look. Her cheeks flushed and she cleared her throat when he sat back down next to her.

"It's very important, since this is a daily injection, that you rotate sites. Otherwise you can get hard masses under your skin or dimpling on the surface."

He nodded.

"There are seven sites, one for each day of the week. That gives each site a full week to recover before the next injection.

And within each site there are different areas. Make sure you rotate sites each day and areas each week." She turned to Jeremy.

"So, upper arms, from here to here," She showed us. "Upper thighs, here to here." She moved the cotton of his boxer briefs up to show how far up the injections could go. Jeremy and I exchanged looks. "Belly..." she touched the skin around his navel. "Not too close to your belly button but you can go all around here." She glanced up at him and smiled. "You don't have much fat here, or anywhere for that matter. Might make it a bit tricky. But you have great skin."

"Thanks." He looked at me. "Martin, I have great skin."

"I know."

"Could you please stand up, Jeremy?"

He did. She stood behind him and lowered the waistband of his briefs to expose the tops of his buttocks. "And here and here." She touched the area on his hips just above. "Where most people have saddle bags. You're in great shape, Jeremy. Which is great, but a bit of extra fat helps with the injections."

"Is that permission to eat more steak?"

"Absolutely." She laughed. "Okay, ready to do your first shot?"

"Sure." He went to the kitchen and brought Kelly the needle.

"Where should I do it?"

"It doesn't matter. Thighs are probably the easiest to self inject." She went through the pile of handouts and lifted up a DVD. "This is a great teaching tool. It shows you techniques for self-injecting the more difficult areas. Or Martin could do those."

Jeremy nodded and sat down on the sofa.

“There are alcohol pads like this with your needles.” She ripped the packet open. “Clean the area first. Make sure you have a cotton ball for after.” She held one up.

I paid close attention as Jeremy removed the needle from the package.

“Okay so pinch about an inch of skin between your fingers...”

He did so, and before she said anything else he jabbed the needle in perfectly.

“Good, now release the skin and get that good stuff into you.”

“Expensive stuff,” he muttered as he depressed the plunger.

“I’m sure you’re worth it,” she said quietly. “Withdraw the needle and apply the cotton ball for a few moments.”

He did as instructed.

“Is it stinging?” She asked.

“Yeah.”

“That’s normal. You’ll want to put an ice pack on it for five or ten minutes.”

“I’ll get one.” I went into the kitchen and brought one wrapped in a tea towel to him. He and Kelly were looking at the injection site, which had begun to redden and swell slightly.

“That’s normal,” she said. “Hold the ice pack on it for awhile and it’ll feel better.”

“Feels like a bee sting.”

“Mmm hmm.” She looked at him. “Oh, geez, you can put your shirt back on now.”

He shrugged and I swear to God he winked at the poor woman. “I’m not cold.”

She cleared her throat again. “Okay, well, I need to hang around and check you in about twenty minutes. Is there a washroom I can use?”

While Kelly was using the washroom I sat beside Jeremy and kissed his bare shoulder. “So?”

“Piece of cake.” He grinned.

After the twenty-minute check, Kelly seemed satisfied that he wasn’t going to have an allergic reaction and gathered her things.

“Good luck, Jeremy. Martin.”

“Bye, Kelly. Thank you,” I said.

“You have very soft hands,” Jeremy added and she almost dropped her bag.

“Okay, well, take care...” She blushed.

Oh, baby, I know.

Zoom Ratio, AE Lister

We burst out laughing after I closed the door.

“What a sweetheart,” I said.

“She did have really soft hands.”

“Go put your shirt on you little tease.”

Chapter Twelve

Alignment

After lunch, Jeremy went to lie down for a while. I put his bag in the bedroom.

“I’ll make you some tea and a sandwich when you wake up.”

“Careful, Martin. I may never leave.”

“Perhaps that’s the plan.” I closed the door and left him to himself.

I decided to go downstairs and put together Jeremy’s portfolio.

I finished printing out the pictures and brought them upstairs to examine at leisure. I wanted to look it over again before I gave it to him; partly to check the professional quality of the prints, but mostly for selfish purposes. The knowledge of his disease gave me a different perspective.

He seemed even more beautiful in the pictures now. I suddenly had an image of him, standing before me with his cane, confident and so sexy. I wondered if I could show that in a photograph. I was sure I could. But I didn’t know if he would like the idea or be pissed at me for suggesting it.

And, yes, looking at the photos still made me hard. But I had to leave him alone, at least for a while. He needed to rest. My thoughts wandered back to the toys he brought with him. They tempted me to no end, but I thought we should save the game playing for after he made a complete recovery.

I was just putting on another pot of coffee when I heard him calling me from the bedroom. Crap! I dropped the coffee scoop, spilling grounds everywhere, and rushed into the bedroom, terrified that he couldn’t get out of bed or he had reacted to the shot.

“What’s wrong?” I said, entering the bedroom.

When I saw the lazy grin and relaxed look on his face, I realized I overreacted.

“I didn’t mean to scare you. I’m sorry.” He rolled onto his side and the sheet slid down, revealing his lack of clothing. “I just missed you.”

“Jesus Christ, Jeremy. You almost gave me a heart attack.”

“Come over here and stop being a pussy. I’m fine.”

“Don’t you want some tea?”

He shook his head very slowly and stared at me. I could see that tea was the last thing on his mind.

“Come here,” he said again, and there was no fucking way I could resist. His auburn hair was mussed from sleeping and his brown eyes were dark and full of mischief.

I peeled off my shirt, pushed my jeans down and stepped out of them, leaving on just my navy boxer briefs. My cock was already at attention. I crawled across the bed and put my lips to his. His mouth opened and I slipped my tongue inside. God, his mouth! His mouth could do things to me that no other man’s mouth ever had. I mean, kissing, just kissing, another man had never, ever been like this. Call it chemistry or whatever, but his mouth on mine felt right, perfect. We pulled apart and stared at each other.

“Wow...” he whispered, and he seemed suddenly vulnerable and open and taken aback at this intensity between us that just kept getting stronger.

“I know,” I said. I kissed him again and it was the same. His hands came up and wove into my hair, pulling me against him.

My body aligned with his. I reached my hand down beneath the sheet and felt him, hot and hard and wet for me. I groaned into his mouth and pressed my own erection against his hip. I pumped his cock with my fist a couple of times, making him groan. Then I moved down his body, kissing and licking him on the way. He ran his fingers through my hair, saying my name softly, his eyes closed and his mouth open in anticipation. I pulled the sheet aside and bent to kiss the tip of his cock, licking the moisture away and causing him to groan loudly. God, I love that sound. I licked and kissed all the way along his firm shaft until I had him shivering and begging.

“Please...Martin...stop...teasing...”

I laughed. I took him in my mouth, wrapping my lips around him and sucking, hard. He moaned and bucked up against me.

“Oh, yeah...fuck!”

I moved up and down over him, one hand holding the base of his cock firmly, the other gripping his thigh. He took his hands off my head. When I looked up I saw that he had grabbed onto the bars of the headboard behind him. He watched me with excited eyes. “Oh God,” he whimpered. “Fuck, don’t stop.”

He didn't have to worry about that. Seeing him like this, knowing that my actions caused him this pleasure, exhilarated and aroused me. I pressed my own cock into the mattress as I worked him with my mouth and tongue. He completely abandoned himself to my ministrations, groaning and writhing and thrusting up against me. I took his entire length into my mouth. When his tip hit my throat he cried out, "Jesus!" and moaned loudly, his breath coming in little pants.

I moved back up his length, swirled my tongue around the tip, and plunged back down, groaning deep in my throat. He must have felt the vibration; he thrust into me, panting my name. He was close and I wanted him to come in my mouth. I wanted to taste him and swallow whatever he could give me. I took my mouth off him for a moment while I dribbled some spit onto my fingers. I knew what would send him over the edge. He saw this and inhaled a sudden breath. I resumed sucking him and carefully pushed two fingers slowly inside him.

He gasped and couldn't keep still. "Oh, fuck, oh, yeah..."

Jesus...Jesus...Jesus..."

I looked up. His head was thrown back, his hands gripping the headboard so hard his knuckles were white.

I took him all the way in, moaning so my throat would vibrate against him, and I pushed my fingers deep, rubbing his prostate again and again. He yelled out loudly and exploded in my throat.

His cock pulsed and twitched, shooting his warm liquid into me.

I swallowed it all, moaning and keeping his orgasm going for as long as I could. It was so unbelievably hot, his giving and my taking. When he rode out the pleasure he grabbed my shoulders and pulled me up to kiss me with gratitude and awe. I kissed him back fiercely, my own passion barely contained.

"Mmm, you taste like sperm," he said against my lips. "Jesus Christ, coming in your pretty mouth is...beyond incredible." He reached down and slipped his hand under the waistband of my now wet boxers, making me gasp. "Looks like you enjoyed it too." He wrapped his hand around me and pumped my cock a few times.

"Keep doing that..." I said. He grinned and rubbed the copious pre-cum along my length, stroking me. This wouldn't take long. I braced myself on my arms over him and closed my eyes, thrusting gently into his hand.

“Jesus, you’re gonna come so hard in a minute,” he said, the words and the tenor of his voice so erotic. “I can feel it. You’re almost there, aren’t you?” I whimpered and nodded. His hand felt so good on my cock, slippery and warm and moving a little faster now.

“Fuck...Jeremy...” I moaned. One, only two more strokes and I came. I opened my eyes and stared into his beautiful brown gaze as I groaned and quivered in his hand, releasing over and over into his firm grip. He pulled the orgasm out of me, staring at me, watching me come like it was the most fascinating thing in the world. When I finished and he let go, I whimpered at the loss of his touch.

“Jeremy,” I murmured. “I think I love your hand as much as your mouth.”

He laughed and pulled me into a tight embrace. “Just wait until you feel my cock in your ass...” he said in my ear. I trembled as my dick gave a little twitch.

“Oh fuck,” I said.

After we cleaned up, I made a pot of tea. We sat at my little dining table, drinking tea and enjoying the companionable silence. Then Jeremy said in a quiet and sincere voice, “Thank you, Martin.”

I looked at him curiously. “For what?”

“For letting me stay here. It’s so quiet and calm and...I don’t know. I just feel comfortable here.”

I smiled. “I’m glad. I like having you here.”

“Really?” He looked as though he didn’t believe me.

“Sometimes, people who’ve lived alone for awhile prefer being alone.”

“I like having you here,” I repeated.

He smiled.

After lunch, he sat on the sofa and got out his notebook. I finished reading the newspaper and then realized I’d never given him his portfolio. I went and got it and sat down beside him. He looked up from his writing.

“I finished this.” I held it out to him.

He put down his notebook and took the folder from me. He opened it and started going through the photos. About midway through, a wide smile emerged on his handsome face. He looked up at me.

“These are fantastic. I picked the right photographer.”

I nodded, embarrassed. “Thanks. Why did you pick me?”

He smiled. “I liked your name.”

“Really?”

He nodded. “Also, your studio is close to where I work. Speaking of which, I need to call them and get my shifts switched around again. If I can take a few more days off, I’ll be able to really rest up.” He pulled his cell phone out of his messenger bag and started pressing buttons.

I got up and left him alone, taking my laptop into the bedroom.

But I left the door open. I spent some time looking over some pictures I took in the Gatineau Hills a few weeks earlier when the fall leaves were at their peak. Nature photography was my hobby and joy; I indulged in it whenever possible. After a little while, I heard footsteps and the light thump of Jeremy’s cane. He peeked into the bedroom.

“Looking at porn?”

I rolled my eyes. “Not unless it’s tree porn.”

“Okay, this I’ve gotta see.” He came in the room, leaned his cane against the wall and crawled onto the bed, sitting close beside me. We seemed unable to bear having any distance between us.

We were physically drawn into each other’s orbit and couldn’t, didn’t want to, fight it.

“Did you take those?” he asked, examining the photos on the screen.

I nodded.

“They’re beautiful.”

“Thank you.”

“You really have an eye for beauty, don’t you?”

I looked him over from head to foot, deliberately obvious, and nodded. “Mm hmm.”

“Fuck. Me.” He whispered, his eyes widening.

I laughed. “Jeremy, I’m not making a pass at you. But I do think you’re beautiful.”

He looked confused. “Why aren’t you making a pass at me?”

I stared at him. “Jeremy. You need to rest. You said so yourself.”

“I had a two hour nap.”

“Jeremy.”

“Okay, okay. I won’t jump you till after supper. Anyway, I want to do some more writing.”

I watched as he grabbed his cane and started to leave. My eyes drifted to his perfect ass as I asked, “What are you writing?”

He stopped and looked back at me. “Erotic poetry. About you.”

He turned and left me sitting there with my mouth open and my cock hardening in my pants. Again.

Chapter Thirteen

Luminosity

We ordered pizza for supper; Jeremy's vegetarian and mine with sausage and pepperoni.

"Do you know how much sodium is in that stuff?" he asked.

I shook my head and took a big bite. "Never thought about it."

He shrugged. "Okay, well, they're your arteries."

I picked up my beer. "Cheers."

He laughed and bumped it with his glass of water. "Cheers."

After we finished we lounged on the sofa. I flicked through channels for a while and suddenly felt self-conscious. I looked over to see Jeremy watching me with a look in his eyes I knew well.

"What?"

"I was just thinking how hot it would be to handcuff you to your bed."

I stared at him, my dick turning to steel. "Um..." I didn't know what to say. Obviously, my eyes and the bulge in my pants spoke for me.

He grinned. "Hmm. You like that idea, don't you?"

I took a shaky breath as he moved toward me. "Jeremy, I don't think...we should do that right now."

He stopped. "Why?" He looked confused.

"Well, it sounds kind of intense, you know?"

"Exactly."

"Well, maybe we should just do something a bit more traditional, until your legs are better."

He looked taken aback for a minute. Then profoundly disappointed.

I continued, "I mean, they're improving, right?"

He nodded. He sat down next to me and looked at his hands.

His lengthy silence made me nervous.

"Jeremy..."

He looked at me with an expression of such sadness and regret that my heart dropped into my shoes.

“You’re telling me that we can’t play games and have fun with each other because my legs are numb and a bit weak?”

“Well, I just thought it would be better...”

“Only a hundred percent healthy people can have kinky sex?”

“No, I just—I don’t know, I thought it might be too much for you.” I could hardly speak with the fear of losing him. “I just want you to be okay.”

“So do I. But I’m not going to postpone all the things I enjoy until my legs are better. And, it’s just, if you’re gonna handle me with kid gloves from now on, this just isn’t going to work.” He went on. “I feel great, my symptoms are improving, and there is nothing better than a huge, motherfucking, explosive orgasm to send endorphins and positive energy through my brain and my body. Not to mention that I might wake up tomorrow with no feeling in my dick.”

My eyes widened.

“You didn’t think of that, did you?”

I shook my head.

“Listen, Martin.” He spoke quietly, as if to a child who had trouble understanding. “The most important thing this disease has taught me is to enjoy the fuck out of what life has to offer, every day. I do take care of myself. I eat well and I get as much sleep as I can. I’ve started this new medication and I swear I will take it religiously. Beyond that, I will not let this disease dictate how I live my life.”

I couldn’t say anything for a moment, the look he gave me so determined and strong. Then I took a deep breath and said, “I want you to handcuff me to the bed and do whatever you want to me.”

He looked at me and his eyes widened. Then his lip twitched.

“I want you to enjoy the fuck out of me.” I finished.

He smiled, and the tension and the heartache vanished, relief flooding through me.

“Are you sure?”

I’ve never been more sure of anything in my life. “Jeremy, handcuff me to the goddamn bed.”

“Okay.” He looked me over hungrily. “Take off your clothes.”

I started to do so.

“No. Slowly, please.” He directed. “And look at me while you do it.”

Holy fuck. I was so his bitch right now and he knew it. I finished unbuttoning my shirt and slowly peeled it off, letting it drop to the floor behind me. My erection, scared away by the prospect of losing him, came back with a vengeance. I slowly unbuttoned my jeans and pushed them down, staring into his darkening gaze with an intensity to match it.

“Shit,” he whispered. “Do you even realize how hot you are?”

I pulled off my pants and stood there in my boxer briefs. I blushed. “Only when you look at me like that.”

He grabbed his cane and stood up. He held out his hand. I moved closer and took it.

“I want to show you something.”

He led me over to the mirror that leaned against the wall and made me stand in front of it. He stood behind me, to the side. I was embarrassed to look at myself. I averted my gaze, making a slight sound of protest.

“Shhh,” he quieted me. “Eyes forward, Martin.” And that directive, the one I’d used so often in our interactions, caused a jolt right to my cock. I obeyed, taking in the sight of myself in the big mirror.

“Put your hands behind your head,” he said and I did so, not even thinking about resisting.

He leaned his cane against the wall and stood behind me. We were almost the same height.

“You can close your eyes for a minute,” he suggested and I did so with both relief and a surge of excitement. Then I felt his hands on my own. He ran them lightly over my biceps, my shoulders, and down my back. He skirted them around my waist and slid them up to my chest, resting them over my pectorals. He must have felt my heart and its rapid staccato beats.

He kissed the back and side of my neck as he stroked his hands flat across my nipples, once, twice, causing them to harden and me to moan quietly. I could feel moisture leaking from my cock into my underwear.

All I could feel were his lips at my neck and his hands as they glided slowly down over my belly, his fingers slipping under the waistband of my boxers. I inhaled a trembling breath as he freed my erection and pulled my boxers slowly, oh so slowly, down. My eyes stayed shut but I stepped out of them and waited with held breath for his next move.

“Jesus,” he said. His warm hand wrapped around my aching cock. I moaned and he placed his other hand flat against my belly as he pressed his body against me. “Open your eyes, Martin,”

he whispered in my ear. I could feel the excitement in his voice and his own hard cock pressing against me through his clothes.

I opened my eyes and stared in wonder at the image before me. There was a tall, fairly slim, very attractive naked man before me, his skin flushed and his eyes dark with lust; his large, erect penis jutting beyond the grip of another man's hand and the man's other hand splayed possessively across his abdomen.

"How fucking sexy is that?" He murmured in my ear.

I shivered and he stroked my cock as I watched in the mirror.

"That is...really...fucking...hot..."

He suddenly let go of me and backed away, taking his cane from the wall.

"Okay, first lesson over. Now get your beautiful ass onto that bed, Martin, and I'll see what else I can teach you."

I trembled in excitement, and a tiny bit of fear, and headed for the bedroom.

"I'll be there in a minute," Jeremy said and ducked into the kitchen, for what I could only imagine.

I crawled onto my double bed, my whole body humming with desire. What position did he want me in? I had no idea.

So I waited there on hands and knees in the middle of the bed, breathing heavily and trembling. What was he doing? Why was it taking so long?

The longer I waited, the more agitated I became until I realized this was part of the exercise. He knew my desire and need would increase with the anticipation of his next action.

I suddenly realized that, for all I'd done to him and with him during previous encounters, he was master at this game and I was nothing. I was absolutely his slave and I would do anything to please him. The thought forced more moisture from my aching shaft. I whimpered at the agony of waiting and wondering what he had planned for me.

"Now, that is a sight to behold."

His voice came from close by. It startled me. I turned my head to see him lean his cane against the wall and move toward me. He had removed his t-shirt and undone the top button of his jeans.

His cock strained against them. I gasped and looked up at his face. I noticed he was holding the leather cuffs in one hand and a bottle of honey, the liquid kind in the little bear-shaped bottle, in the other.

As he knelt on the bed beside me, he asked. "Is the bedspread machine washable?"

I nodded, eyeing the cuffs and the honey with barely contained excitement. He looked me over again, shaking his head in amazement.

"As great as you look like that, Martin, I actually want you lying on your back with your hands at the headboard."

"Okay." I got into position.

He reached out and ran a hand along my neck and down over my chest and stomach, stopping just before he got to my cock.

"That's perfect." He leaned over me and attached one of the cuffs to my right wrist. Then he threaded the other one through the bars and attached it to my left wrist. While he did so I stared at his gorgeous chest and inhaled his clean, musky scent, closing my eyes briefly in pleasure.

"How does that feel?" he asked, looking down at me and pulling on my restraints. "I think there's enough give for you to turn over when I need you to."

"Fine," I murmured. The cuffs were padded and very comfortable, the feeling of being restrained delicious. "Good," I admitted.

He backed off and picked up the jar of honey. "Well, it's a good thing you can't escape. It would be pretty hard for me to outrun you."

My lip twitched at his joke. "I don't want to escape...but don't we need a safe word or something?"

He looked at me funny. "Martin, I'm holding a bottle of liquid honey, not a cat o' nine tails. Although," he eyed me carefully. "That's something we could get into later on, if you want." He wagged his eyebrows. He leaned in close to me, his face inches away. "Look, just tell me to stop and I'll stop. But I think you're gonna like it." He kissed me sweetly and all my nervousness vanished as it always did when I was with him like this.

He pulled away finally, so slowly, holding my bottom lip gently in his teeth and then letting it go. I moaned and pulled at the cuffs. Fuck, why was everything he did so sexy?

He held up the bottle of honey. "Ready?"

I nodded.

He tipped the bottle upside down over my chest and started speaking in a strange voice with a weird French accent. “So, first we drizzle ze honey onto ze naked man’s chest, ooh la la...”

The honey dripped from the nozzle onto my skin before I realized he was trying to channel Julia Child.

“Zen we make pretty designs and curlicues and, woopsie, oh oh, dear me, I’m getting it all over...”

I started laughing he was being so ridiculous. He drizzled it onto my hard cock and I gasped as the syrupy liquid hit and dripped along my length.

“Oh, dear me, I must clean zis up...” he tossed the bottle over his shoulder and bent over me, his tongue suddenly on my cock. He licked and sucked the honey off of me.

I groaned and pulled at the cuffs, bucking into his mouth as he slowly licked all the honey off. He moved up and licked it off my belly and chest. When he sucked one of my nipples into his mouth I gasped. He bit it gently and sent a jolt of pleasure right to my cock. He did the same to the other one. I moaned softly and whispered his name.

By the time I was divested of all the sticky sweet honey I was a quivering mess, my cock hard as steel and my nerves singing.

When he told me to turn over onto my hands and knees I could hear the breathless excitement in his voice. As I got into position he pulled off his jeans and boxers and stroked his own aching erection a couple of times, looking at me.

“Oh man,” he said, his eyes dark and filled with desire. “Where’s the camera?”

I blanched.

He laughed shortly. “Just kidding. There’s no time for that. Where do you keep your ties?”

I had to think for a minute. “Top drawer of my dresser.”

He opened the drawer and selected a wide silk blue one. He knelt on the bed beside me. “Is it okay if I blindfold you? It will heighten the whole experience.”

I nodded. “Okay.”

He slid the silk over my eyes and tied it behind my head.

“You are being so good, Martin. And I’m going to make you feel so good,” he whispered in my ear and stroked his hand over my head and neck, along my shoulders and down my back.

He moved and the same hand stroked the skin of my bottom teasingly and slowly slid down my thigh.

I trembled and moaned. Being unable to see turned me on. It put me entirely at his mercy. I loved it. And the silk felt soft and cool against my skin, giving another dimension to my pleasure.

“Jeremy,” I whispered, unable to keep quiet anymore. My heart filled to overflowing as my body quivered beneath his touch. “Thank you.”

His hand stilled. “For what?”

“For finding me...and for wanting me...” my voice broke but I willed myself not to cry. I hadn’t even realized how lonely my life was until he came into it.

I felt him close beside me. His hand turned my face toward him and his lips touched mine softly. He kissed me tenderly and passionately.

“Shhh,” he said then pulled away. “Just feel me...”

He ran both his hands along my body this time, the hot, hard wet tip of his cock against my hip. Suddenly, his fingers, slippery with lube, slid along the crack of my ass, touching me so gently, so tenderly, in that most sensitive of places.

“So soft, like velvet.” He rubbed his fingers over me in tiny circles.

I was panting now, so aroused and pulled so tight, that when he finally pushed a long finger slowly into me, I groaned loudly.

My cock surged and dripped onto the bedspread. “Jesus,” I moaned again. “Why does that feel so good? It feels so good.”

“I know.” He rubbed his cock against my hip and slipped another finger inside me.

“Fuck,” I groaned again. “Stop...stop...” I gasped.

He stopped moving his fingers but left them inside me. “Does it hurt?”

I shook my head. “No...I’m gonna come...don’t move...I don’t want to come yet...it feels so good...”

I felt his lips on my back and I could tell he was grinning at my distress. But he kept very still, letting me get myself under control, as much as I could.

“Okay...” I whispered when I was ready.

He wiggled his fingers minutely to gauge my reaction. I moaned softly but he could tell I was in control of my body, at least for now. He pumped them in and out gently. It burned a little

but mostly felt incredible and I wondered why I'd never before let anyone do this to me. I had totally missed out. Now that Jeremy had busted my cherry, so to speak, I looked forward to much more.

As if reading my mind, Jeremy removed his fingers and soon after, I felt the cold hard tip of the steel plug against me.

I trembled slightly in trepidation, but I wanted it.

"Is this okay?" Jeremy murmured, his voice breathy with desire.

"Yes..." I said quickly, trying to relax.

He had lubed the plug well and I felt the tip slide in, then he slowly and gently pushed all of it inside me. It hurt a bit but I took deep breaths and let my body adjust. It felt huge in me, even though it was a relatively small plug.

"How does that feel?" he asked.

"Amazing," I said. "Fucking amazing."

"Yeah? Well it looks fucking incredible. I could come just looking at that plug in your tight hole."

Fuck, that dirty mouth of his alone could make me come. I moaned and he chuckled.

"Martin, I want to put the ring on you if you don't mind. It will help you stay focused and hold back your orgasm."

I nodded. Fuck, I would agree to anything at this moment. He moved away and soon came back. But I wasn't sure what he was doing.

He had turned onto his back and slid between my legs, so he was under me, his face just forward of my straining cock. I resisted the urge to grind down on him. And then he circled a firm hand around me and slid the plastic ring down over my length until it wrapped around behind my balls. I moaned and panted and tried not to move, although I ached to thrust. He tightened the ring and it felt good. It did make it easier to hold myself back, thankfully, because then Jeremy wrapped his lips around me and tongued the head of my cock.

"Oh, fuck..." I groaned, bucking and pulling on my restraints, feeling the hard plug more than ever. "Jeremy," I gasped. "Fuck!"

He let me go and slid out from under me.

Suddenly I felt the hard plug sliding out of my ass. I groaned at the bereft sensation. Then he slid something a bit smaller, but bumpy, into me. I moaned at the feeling as he pushed each of

the beads inside me slowly and gently. It felt amazing, different than the plug but just as nice. “Oh...” I gasped.

“You like that?” He pulled them out slowly and I groaned with pleasure. What an odd but completely heavenly feeling. He pushed them in again.

“Jesus, Martin, I wish you could see this. This is making me so hard...” He pulled them out once more and my cock pulsed and dripped.

“Fuck...fuck...” I panted. He did it again and again until I was shaking with the effort not to come from it. “Jesus...” I said, gasping.

Suddenly he pressed the plug into me again. It felt so big and hard compared to the smaller beads that I groaned as it went in.

He fumbled with the cuffs and my wrists were free. He pulled the blindfold off me.

I stared at him dazedly, still poised on the edge of orgasm, my eyes adjusting to the dim light. He kneeled there beside me, stroking his cock desperately with one hand and gripping the tie in the other.

“I want you to put this blindfold on me and fuck me with that plug inside you,” he gasped, his cock leaking moisture on his hand. “Please, Martin.”

And then I moved. In no time I had him blindfolded and in position. I rubbed the lube on him. “I don’t have any more condoms.” I so wanted to bury my naked cock inside him.

“I know. Go for it.”

“Oh fuck,” I said. I pushed two fingers inside him, stretching and preparing him for me.

He whimpered and in no time at all I was pushing my cock into his tight entrance. We both cried out at the raw, delicious sensation, no barrier between us, nothing except heat and wet, warmth and ecstasy. I had to stay still for a few moments to regain some control.

I fucked him then, so gently and slowly he didn’t know what to do with himself. Each slow stroke was torture for him. I knew he wanted me to pound him and jerk him but I refused. I wanted to draw this out, extend this rapture until neither of us could take anymore. He was at my mercy and I was merciless. He moaned and whimpered and cursed and trembled.

“Don’t come,” I said as I gasped out my own pleasure. “Not until I say.”

He let out something between a sob and a moan. “Martin...please...I can’t...”

“Hold on,” I ordered, reveling in the power switch and knowing that he loved this even as it drove him mad. I leaned over him, supporting myself on one arm beside his and holding him

steady with a hand around his waist. I kissed and gently nipped his neck before straightening and grabbing his hips in my hands.

“Ready? Do you want to come?” I said shakily.

He moaned. “Yes...”

I pulled back and pushed into him hard, listening to him cry out. It took only three hard, fast thrusts and he came; his cock, without the aid of direct stimulation, shooting jizz all over my bed. I kept going and he cursed and trembled and whimpered as the pleasure coursed through him. It was a sight to behold.

I came violently moments after, groaning, cursing, and gasping frantically as the pleasure took me over.

We finally collapsed together, our mingled panting breaths the only sound in the room.

I pulled the silk tie off his head carefully and pulled him against me, refusing to break our connection even as I started to shrink and soften.

“Jesus Christ, Martin,” he whispered, his eyes closed. “I have never come so hard in my life.”

I smiled and kissed him behind the ear. “You said something about a ‘huge, mother fucking explosive orgasm’ being good for you.”

“Jesus, I think you just cured me.” He sighed contentedly. We lay together quietly for several minutes. Then he said, “How’s that plug feeling?”

“Actually, it still feels really good. I should leave it in all the time.”

“Aha, a convert to the mysteries of anal pleasure. My work here is done.”

“Oh no, it’s not. How do I get it out?”

He laughed. “How do you usually get stuff out?” He raised his eyebrows.

“Could you please...?”

He rolled his eyes and reached around, grabbing the base of the plug and pulling it out of me. I groaned as it slid out, my ass tingling with aftershocks of pleasure. He put it on my bedside table and pulled me against him. We kissed, tangling our legs together. At the same time I realized how sticky we both were, and the bedspread too.

“Come on,” I said, “Let’s shower. And then I am putting you to bed. You need a good night’s sleep after that.”

“No argument there,” he said and followed me to the bathroom. “I have a feeling I’ll sleep very well.”

Afterword

Completion

It took about six weeks for Jeremy to fully recover from his relapse. During that time, he lived with me, got lots of rest, and was the recipient of, I'm proud to say, a ton of healing orgasms.

He started back at work. His manager let him do half shifts for a few weeks, which really helped. I had nothing but respect for his manager and co-workers, who did everything they could to ease the workload for Jeremy so he could recover. By the time his legs got better and he went back to work full time, we decided there was no way he was going anywhere and he officially moved in with me. I was over the moon. We had our moments, as any cohabiting couple did, but we seemed well suited to live together.

I introduced him to my parents and he introduced me to his mom. He never spoke about his dad and I never brought it up.

That was a conversation for the future. And our future together looked bright. Jeremy sent out photos to some modeling agencies and received positive responses. I knew that he'd be able to earn money from modeling in no time at all. Inspired by his success, I sent some of my nature photographs to Outside magazine. They hired me to photograph an article about Ontario wildlife.

December arrived and we decorated the apartment. I'd never put up a Christmas tree here before, not wanting to waste the effort on just myself. But Jeremy insisted that we go out and get a real tree. Despite all the annoying aspects of doing this, once it was up and decorated and emitting its sweet odor into the apartment, I had to admit, it was beautiful.

On Christmas Eve we had dinner at Frankie and Simon's house with Jeremy's mom. During the meal I kept looking over at Jeremy and feeling starbursts explode in my chest. How did I get so lucky?

I woke up early on Christmas morning because Jeremy pushed on my shoulder and asked, "Are you awake, Martin?" at six am sharp.

"Jesus Christ, Jeremy. Couldn't we at least wait until the sun comes up?"

"No way. It's our first Christmas together. Get up, lazy bones."

I dragged myself out of bed and made coffee while Jeremy did his injection. It was part of his morning routine now. He never missed a shot. After breakfast we sat on the couch by the tree and opened our stockings.

Jeremy pulled out the DVD I'd gotten him.

"Hey, thanks, Martin. That's awesome." He looked over at me.

"So, what did Santa put in your stocking?" he asked innocently, like he didn't know exactly what was in it.

I reached in and pulled out some kind of leather strap with a red plastic ball attached in the middle. It looked like some kind of weird dog toy. What the hell is it? Then, realization sank in.

"Jeremy...is this a ball gag?"

He looked worried. "Oh, Martin, you must have been very bad. What else is in there?"

I glared at him and put the gag on the couch beside me, reaching into the stocking again with trepidation. This time I pulled out a small black leather paddle.

Jeremy shook his head. "You must have been very naughty for Santa to give you that."

"I'm going to use it on you," I stated, putting it aside and reaching into the stocking again. This time I pulled out a gigantic, very realistic looking, black dildo. I mean, it was huge. I held it before me, my face paling before its intimidating presence.

"Jeremy, what the fuck?"

"Well, now that your ass is used to my cock, maybe we can have some fun with that?"

I stared at him. "This thing is not going inside me," I stated firmly.

He held up his hands in surrender. "Okay, okay. I guess you'll just have to use it on me, then." He winked and I rolled my eyes.

I put the dildo on the couch, far away from me.

I fished my hand into the stocking. All that was left was a bottle of high quality lube. I breathed out a sigh of relief. "Thank God. Why don't you finish your stocking?"

"Okay." He pulled out a two-pack of underwear, a chocolate bar, a can of shaving cream, a toothbrush, and a couple of pairs of socks. "Well, I guess we know who the practical one in the relationship is."

I looked offended. "Hey, I got you a chocolate bar. And a movie."

"I'm just joking, Martin. I'd rather get a toothbrush from you than, say, a bottle of Bailey's, from anyone else." He winked.

“Thanks for all of it. Thanks for letting me move in here and for sharing Christmas Day with me.” He took a sip from the cup of tea on the side table.

“Wait, I want you to open your present.” I reached under the tree and passed him the flat rectangular parcel addressed to him.

He put down his tea and took it, looking it over. “I’m guessing it’s not a sex toy?”

I shook my head.

He unwrapped it carefully, putting the paper aside and looking at the brown leather portfolio case. “Wow, Martin, this is beautiful.” He ran his hand across the smooth leather.

“Open it.”

He looked at me, then at the portfolio as he opened it. It contained a picture of him, but not from the first couple of sessions, for which he paid me. This was from a later session that we’d done, when he still needed his cane.

He wore my favorite black skinny jeans and those wonderful boots with just a white t-shirt on. He stood beside the chaise, leaning against it for balance, and held his cane out, pointing it at the camera with an accusatory but amused look on his face, his eyebrows raised. One side of his mouth was quirked up in that typical expression of his.

“Martin, that’s fantastic.” He flipped it over to see the next shot.

In this one, he sat on the chaise, leaning back and staring at the camera with the look I knew so well. His cane, held casually in his right hand, rested at an angle against the floor; there if he needed it but otherwise, an afterthought.

“Wow.”

“There’s one more.”

He flipped it over.

For this one I’d gotten him to take the shirt off and unbutton the top button of his jeans. He stood before the camera, partly leaning on the cane, but pressing the curved head of it against the large bulge in his jeans. He gave the camera a scorching look full of restrained power.

“Fuck me,” he whispered.

“I know,” I said

He looked at me and his eyes glistened with moisture. “Thank you,” he said. Then he closed the portfolio and laughed softly. “Okay, now I feel like a jerk.”

I stared at him. “Why?”

He reached under the tree and handed me a large rectangular parcel. “You’d better open your present.”

I swallowed and cautiously unwrapped the box. I didn’t recognize the name of the store. “Should I be scared to open this?” I asked him.

He shrugged but he looked a bit guilty.

I took a deep breath and opened the box. I could see black leather. I pulled the item out of the box and held it up.

“Jesus, Jeremy.” I sighed as I stared at the leather chaps.

He blushed. “Sorry. I couldn’t help it.”

“But how could you know that I’d always wanted a pair of chaps?” I grinned over at him, teasing.

He stared at me with sudden desire. “Yippee ki-oh ki-ay...”

I stood up, letting the box fall off my lap. I held them up against me.

“You know, they’ll fit me too.” He said slowly.

I looked at him, my cock springing to attention. “Oh, Jeremy. I just thought of the best Christmas present you could give me.”

“So did I,” he murmured, standing up and grinning wickedly at me.

I picked up the leather paddle from the sofa.

“Upstairs. Now.”

He laughed and took off running up the stairs. I was right behind him.

Part II

Balance

Prologue

“Martin?”

Jeremy’s voice lifted something inside me, as it always did. Something that had lain dormant for years but woke up three years ago when he walked into my studio.

“Martin? You home?” he asked, as I heard him bound up the stairs two at a time.

“In here,” I replied, gazing down at the clothes I’d put out on the bed. I had no idea what to wear. Thank goodness Jeremy was home.

He came into our room and skidded to a halt. Any signs of disability were gone now that his Multiple Sclerosis was under control, thanks to the daily injections he administered himself. He’d been relapse-free for a couple of years now, despite the fact he’d needed to use a cane for a couple of months shortly after I’d met him.

“Hey, guess what?” Jeremy glowed with barely contained excitement as he waited for my answer.

“Um, you found your long-lost twin?”

“Eh, no,” he grinned, waiting.

“You finally realized that chocolate is not worth it?”

He frowned, scratching at his stubbled chin in puzzlement that I could even propose such an idea. “Fuck no.”

“Just tell me. I’ll never guess and you know it.”

His grin returned as he shoved a piece of paper toward me.

I took it from him. “What is this?”

“It’s an invitation to model for Felix Kureck in England. He wants me to come to London so he can shoot me for his coffee table book, *The New Man*.”

I stared at the letter, reading the invitation.

Felix Kureck had made a name for himself photographing beautiful men and women. According to this letter he had personally requested that Jeremy’s agency send him to London for a photo shoot. The agency would pay half of Jeremy’s expenses and Kureck had agreed to pick up the tab for his flights in exchange for Jeremy’s time.

I tried to match Jeremy's obvious excitement with a similar enthusiasm, even though I hated the thought of him being away for that long. We hadn't been apart for more than a weekend since we'd met.

"This is a huge opportunity for you, Jeremy."

He sat down on the bed, shaking his head back and forth. "I know, right? I mean, he wants *me*. *Me!*"

"Everyone wants you, Jeremy. You're a wet dream. Men *and* women have your magazine ads pinned to their walls. Trust me."

He laughed. "Oh, come on. You're a little biased, Martin."

"Huh."

Sure, I was biased. I also knew what it was like to take his photo; to see him come alive under the lens of my camera; to see his image on my computer screen teasing me with what I thought I couldn't have; to see him look at me with scorching heat in those brown eyes and proposition me finally, letting me know that he wanted it just as much as I did.

I still had a hard time believing it.

"I want *you* to come," he said then.

"What?" My mind was still wrapped up in erotic memories and I wasn't sure what he meant.

"To London. Come to London with me, Martin."

Chapter One

“I can’t just take off for two weeks,” I said, trying to wrap my head around what he was asking.

“Why not? It’s not like you have a regular nine-to-five job. Do you have anything booked for June yet?”

He was practically bursting with excitement and optimism and I couldn’t blame him. This was a *big deal*.

“Well, I—”

He stood up and approached me, grabbing my shoulders and staring into my eyes with an intense, contagious, energy. “Come to London with me. Please.”

My head filled with excuses as to why I couldn’t or shouldn’t, but my mouth said, “Okay.”

He let out a whoosh of air that smelled like cinnamon. Perks of working at Starbucks. “Really?”

I shrugged, my head in a bit of a daze. “Sure, why not? I can just take out a second mortgage on this place.”

His face fell and I felt like I’d kicked my pet dog.

“I’m kidding, I’m kidding.” I took his chin and kissed him softly. “It’s going to be expensive, that’s all. But I’m just about to pitch a spread to Hikes and Trikes magazine. If I can convince them a story about the New Forest would be timely, this just might work.”

“Oh shit, I forgot you had that meeting. What time?” His smile was back.

“An hour. Can you help me get some information together?”

“Of course.”

“And tell me what to wear?”

“Always.”

* * *

Jeremy and I spent thirty minutes printing pages of information on the New Forest in England—weather patterns, indigenous animals and fauna, acreage, human encroachment. It would be a hastily put together pitch, but one I hoped would at least pique their interest enough to tell me to go for it. And pay some of my way.

After dressing in the outfit Jeremy picked out—dark jeans, leather oxfords, a white button up and casual blazer—I kissed him at the door and left him to dream about modelling for a famous artist in one of the biggest metropolitan cities of the world while I walked the three blocks to the Lieutenant’s Pump.

My gut clenched with anxiety because I had prepared a completely different pitch and now I needed to beg them to send me to England. I’d only been doing gigs for this magazine for a couple of years and I didn’t know if I had enough of a reputation yet to snag myself an overseas trip.

But the thought of spending time in London with Jeremy motivated me.

Mr. Clarence Twomes, the executive editor for Hikes and Trikes, a hiking and bicycling nature periodical, had already found a table in the corner of the pub. He stood when I approached.

“Hey, Martin, it’s great to see you again,” he said, shaking my hand enthusiastically.

“Mr. Twomes.” I smiled.

“Call me Clarence. I loved your piece on Gatineau Park, by the way. Very comprehensive and your images were stunning.”

I blushed, not used to so much admiration and respect. It bode well for my mission. “Thank you. I’m so grateful that Outside Magazine was interested.”

Clarence flagged the server. “What’ll you have, Martin? It’s on me. Well, it’s on Hikes and Trikes, that is.”

“Oh? Great. Guinness please.”

While we waited Clarence and I made small talk about the weather until he asked what I’d been up to lately.

“Well, actually, that’s why I called you. Thank you for agreeing to meet with me.”

“Anytime, Martin. Do you have another spread for us?”

I fiddled with the edge of the coaster. “Well, that’s the thing. I have an idea for one. But I don’t know if it fits your mandate or what kind of advance you can offer me.”

Clarence sat back in his chair. “Hit me.”

All right. Here goes.

“I want to do a piece on the New Forest in England.”

One, two, three, four—I counted silently to ten before launching into a rambling justification as I reached for my satchel. “I mean, there are—”

“I like it. The New Forest. That’s near London, isn’t it?”

Had he figured out this was all a ploy to go to London?

“Well, yes, but—”

“I’ll check with the executive editor but I don’t see a problem. What’s your timeline and what do you need?”

I stared at him, my mouth opening, then closing again. How could it be this easy? I had expected to have to convince him. I left my satchel leaning against my leg and took a quick sip of beer in order not to look like a fish out of water.

“Um, well, I think, I’d like to go as soon as possible. Maybe the end of the month?”

Jeremy’s photo shoot was on June 9th. Only a few weeks away.

“Okay. If you can submit something by the end of next month we can probably fit it into the fall issue. You’ll want your flight and accommodations taken care of I assume?”

I nodded, still a little out of it. This was not how I’d thought the meeting would go.

“I can email you the forms and we can get this started. If you fill them out and get them back to me by tomorrow or Wednesday I can probably get you something by the weekend—either an advance or a travel voucher.”

I blinked. “Thank you. I really appreciate it.” I didn’t really know what to say.

He seemed suddenly to be aware of my surprise. “Martin, you’re very talented. We’re interested in anything you want to put together, as long as it goes along with our mandate. A story about the New Forest falls perfectly within our interests. If it costs us a bit of money to get you over there, we’ll pay it.”

* * *

When I got home, after a great chat with Clarence about the prospects of my trip and my excitement to shoot overseas, I keyed open the door and raced upstairs. Jeremy, in faded skinny jeans and a t-shirt, turned from the stove, where he was stirring something in a pot. The scent of tomatoes and herbs filled the room with a comforting aroma.

I stopped dead, experiencing a strange, surrealistic moment of gratitude and disbelief. How was it possible that this man was waiting for me, cooking for *us*, and looking sexy as all hell while he did so? When I saw him like this, after a brief or a long absence, in all his laid back,

sexy splendour, it was always a bit of a shock. I stood there dumbly, my eyes raking over him as if I'd forgotten what he looked like. Which was ridiculous because the way he looked, the way he smelled, all his little habitual gestures, and every nook and cranny of his body was indelibly etched in my memory.

"Hey. How did it go?" he asked.

"Good," I said, walking into the living room and putting down my satchel. "Great."

He raised his eyebrows, pausing his stirring. "You mean—"

I smiled. "They're paying me to go to England with you."

"Really?" He released the spoon and walked over to me, eyes wide, lips moving into a grin.

I nodded. "Well, I'll have to take some pictures."

He stopped in front of me, raising his eyebrows and teasing up his t-shirt to reveal his abdomen with its soft covering of hair. He moved his other hand teasingly across the skin of his belly. "Oh, yes you will, Martin. Lots and lots of pictures."

I laughed. "Of the landscape, dumb nuts," I said with affection, although my eyes appreciated his nakedness. So did my cock. "Of trees and greenery and ponies."

He smirked. "I can be a pony. I'd make a cute pony."

My cock twitched. "I don't think that's what Hikes and Trikes magazine is looking for. However," I said, assessing him, "I'm not dismissing the idea out of hand."

He grinned. "Seriously? We're going to England together?"

I nodded.

"For two weeks?"

"For two whole weeks."

He reached out, grabbed my shirt and pulled me in, kissing my neck and ear and finding his way to my grinning mouth. I tasted his excitement and that particular flavour that was Jeremy. After a few lovely moments he pulled back.

"We have to fly you know."

I swallowed down the flare of fear that lit inside me. "Uh huh."

"You're scared to fly."

I cleared my throat, looking down. "I'm not scared. I just don't like to."

"But you'll do it for me."

I looked back up, gazing into his brown eyes. "I'll do anything for you."

* * *

By early the following week we had plane tickets and a hotel room booked for eleven days on the magazine's ticket, opting for a luxury king suite and agreeing to pay any extra fee out of pocket. Then I booked us a campsite in the middle of the New Forest for the remaining four days. Jeremy's shoot would be over and we could spend some time immersed in nature where I would take as many photos as possible. It looked like we could rent everything we'd need for the same price as staying at a hotel.

I also booked an appointment with my doctor.

"Martin, what's the problem today?" Dr. Acevitos asked in his usual, *get-to-the-point-I-have-other-patients*, way.

"I, uh, I need something for my nerves," I said, rubbing my hand on my pants. Just the thought of boarding that plane in a week sent me into a panic.

He raised his eyebrows. "Sit down. Let's talk."

I sat in the chair beside the examination table. "I'm going to England next week," I said, looking him in the eyes. "And I'm terrified of flying."

His expression softened. "Ah. I see. Will you be travelling alone?"

I shook my head. "No. My partner's going with me."

"Jeremy," Dr. Acevitos said, and I remembered that Jeremy was his patient as well.

"Yes. But he doesn't know how fucking scared I am."

Dr. Acevitos nodded, straightening up. "You're not alone, you know. A lot of people are afraid to fly. Especially these days, what with all the terrorist atta—" He stopped talking abruptly when he saw the look on my face. "I mean, it's a common thing."

"Is there something I can take before I get on the plane? Something that won't knock me right out but will make me kind of forget why I'm scared? Or something?"

He smiled reassuringly. "Absolutely."

He keyed something into his computer and the printer spat out a paper. He handed it to me. "This is a script for Xanax. Please read the information packet carefully and take only the recommended dose and only on the morning of the flight. Too much of this stuff is going to make you really loopy, and you don't want that."

Oh, hell, yeah, I did.

I wanted to be looped out of my fucking mind. I didn't tell him that.

“Thank you,” I said with real gratitude.

“And think about telling Jeremy how you’re feeling. Sometimes talking honestly with someone who cares can help just as much as the meds.”

I doubted that. Jeremy loved to fly. He wouldn’t understand my fear at all.

He was the bravest person I knew.

* * *

On Monday morning, four days before our flight, I watched Jeremy sit down at the kitchen table and unzip the blue nylon bag that contained his daily needles. He took one out and examined it, checking for tiny particles before removing it from the plastic and setting it on a clean towel in front of him.

“I guess you’ll have to remember to pack enough of those,” I said, nodding toward the syringe.

He gave me a reassuring smile. “You bet. I’m not risking even a day without taking this stuff.”

“Good boy.”

The daily injections contained an expensive medication to manage Jeremy’s Multiple Sclerosis. It wasn’t exactly a cure, but it made his relapses less severe and they occurred less frequently.

He hadn’t told me about the disease when we’d first gotten together, or that he had stopped taking his medication. He’d been so young and naïve enough to think that maybe he didn’t need the injections. But when he’d woken up at my place a couple of weeks after we started dating, unable to walk properly, he’d been forced to tell me. Well, I’d forced him to tell me, because I didn’t know what was going on and I completely freaked, thinking he was having a stroke and we needed to call 911. When he’d calmly told me that he was having an MS relapse and there was really nothing the doctors could do for him, I’d been shocked and suddenly thrust into a world with which I had no experience. But my feelings for Jeremy were already strong enough that I didn’t let his condition scare me away. I learned what I could about it, supported his recovery, and learned to love a man who might need to use a cane or a wheelchair occasionally.

I watched as he injected himself in the upper thigh, without a wince or any small sign of distress because he was used to it. Afterwards he stood up, disposed of the needle in the sharps container under the sink and threw away the cotton ball.

When he saw me looking he quirked his lip. “What?”

“I love you.” It was a simple statement of pride and affection. I shrugged, because my love for him was so ordinary by now.

He smirked and pulled out a Star Wars reference. “I know.”

I cleared my throat, becoming aware that Jeremy was in nothing but a pair of white boxer briefs that outlined his ass and thighs and showed off the bulge in front.

“When do you have to work today?” I asked, running my finger along the counter, affecting nonchalance.

“Not ’till four. You?”

“I don’t have any bookings today.”

Our eyes met as Jeremy straightened. “Well. Isn’t that interesting,” he said, pretending to stretch in a way that caused my mouth to go dry.

“You, uh, wanna go back to bed?” I asked with a hopeful smile.

“I should probably shower,” he said, sniffing at his pits.

I shook my head. “Uh uh. No point getting clean just to get...dirty.”

Jeremy couldn’t help but smile. “Well, if you say so.”

I gestured to the bedroom. “I’ll meet you on the bed in a second.”

After I’d ripped off my t-shirt and sweatpants and collected a small bottle of liquid honey from the kitchen, I joined Jeremy in the bedroom.

He lay on the bed on his belly, still in his boxer briefs, looking at one of my Photo Lens back issues. I took a few moments to admire him before placing the honey on the bedside table with a soft *thunk*.

He looked at it, then back at the magazine. “Hungry?”

I gulped. I loved the way he teased me. “Famished.”

I got onto the bed on my knees between his spread legs and placed a hand on the sole of each foot, tracing up his legs very slowly as his breathing hitched and quickened. My fingers inched closer to the edge of his white boxer briefs and pushed underneath, finding the cleft of his buttocks.

He turned a page of the magazine to cover a gasp, as if my actions hardly affected him.

I stroked my fingers along the soft crevice for a few moments, then withdrew them and reached for the waistband of his undershorts.

“Martin,” he said calmly.

“Yes?” I breathed.

“I like where you’re going with this.”

I grinned, pulling his boxer briefs slowly down over the twin globes of his perfect ass. “Me too.”

He made a small noise when I bent my lips to kiss one, then the other. He smelled of soap and water.

“Jeremy. Did you wash your *ass*?”

“Maybe.”

“That’s a bit presumptuous, isn’t it?”

He snorted. “Not really. I know you can’t resist it.”

“Maybe I have other ideas.”

He glanced back at me, eyebrows raised.

“Turn over,” I said.

“But then I can’t keep reading.” His lips quivered with a held-back grin.

“Good. Turn over.”

“Fine.” He pushed the magazine away and rolled onto his back, stretching his arms up over his head and pretending to yawn. “Maybe I’ll have a nap.”

“I don’t care what you do as long as you stay still and let me play with this.” I pulled the waistband of his boxer briefs down, revealing how pleased he was to see me. “I hope you washed this too.”

He did grin this time and it lit up his face like a ray of sunshine. “I covered all my bases.”

I pulled his briefs down and off his legs, tossing them to the side. “So considerate of you. Knowing I might want to put it in my mouth.”

“Always hoping.”

God, he was adorable. I just wanted to eat him up. Completely. But I’d start with his cock.

I wrapped my fingers around the base of his erection and angled it toward my mouth. Jeremy’s eyes flew open and he lifted up onto his elbows. I licked my lips, gazing at him hungrily.

“Martin,” he breathed. “You’re killing me.”

I darted my tongue out to lick a tiny bead of moisture from the tip.

Jeremy gasped and thrust upward. “Fucking tease.”

I chuckled, then licked up the entire underside and over the top, digging gently into his slit while he writhed under me.

“Oh, fuck, Martin!”

I did it again, and a third time, before plunging my mouth down over him.

Jeremy moaned and panted, unable to keep still. I held him down while I sucked and licked, driving him mad and knowing I wouldn’t be able to wait much longer. I ground my erection into the mattress to ease some of the ache while I worked him.

Finally, he said, “Martin, you need to fuck me. Like, *now*.”

I glanced over to the bedside table and noticed the bottle of honey I’d placed there. “Oh shit.”

“What?”

“I forgot about the honey.”

“Fuck the honey, Martin. There’s no time.”

“But I had plans.”

“It’s too late now.”

“No, it’s not. Stay still.”

He moaned when I released him and reached for the bottle of honey. I’d brought it all the way in here, goddammit, and now I wanted to taste it on him. He could wait. He’d have to.

“Aww, Martin,” he whined, shifting his ass against the bed.

I held his dick in one hand and tipped the bottle of honey over it, watching as the amber liquid dripped down over his swollen flesh.

“Fuck!” He groaned, watching it pool in his slit and slide down the side. “That looks hot.”

I nodded. “Yes, it does.” The honey coated his reaching prick and dripped down to the trimmed hair at its base.

“Holy shit, Martin, that’s enough. I’m not a bowl of ice cream.”

I grinned wickedly. “You’re even better. You’re a dicksicle.”

“Pervert.”

I raised my eyebrows. We both knew who the “pervert” was here. He rolled his eyes. “Fine. You win.”

I nodded and eyed his cock as I replaced the bottle on the side table. “To the victor go the spoils,” I said, as I bent to lick the sweet honey off him.

“Oh my God,” he moaned, letting his head fall back on the bed. “You’re killing me.”

“Mmm,” I said. “Just wait.”

I dipped a finger into the honey that had collected at the base of his dick and reached under him, finding that sweet spot quickly. Jeremy stiffened as I pressed against it, then relaxed, letting me push the tip of my finger inside.

He growled softly as my tongue and finger teased him, giving himself up to me and my plans.

“Why won’t you fuck me, Martin? Don’t you want to?” he panted, trembling and taut as a wire beneath me.

“I want to see you come like this. I want you to come in my mouth.”

He smiled and rolled his eyes. “Fine. But at least use *two* fingers, yeah? And don’t be gentle.”

I grinned widely at the specifics of his request. Jeremy was not shy about asking for what he needed and I loved that about him.

“I love it when you talk dirty, Jeremy.”

“Pfft. That wasn’t talking dirty.” He sat up on his elbows to look me in the eyes as he said, “Give me your hand.”

I blinked, taking the hand I had wrapped around his dick and holding it toward him.

“Not *that* hand.”

“Oh.” I put it back and gave him the other one, the one that had been inside him.

“That’s right.” He grabbed the honey off the side table and tipped it over my hand, coating all of my fingers with the gooey liquid. “Okay.” He replaced it. “Now do me a favor? Slide these long fingers into me and fuck me with them until I come down your throat.”

I gulped, nodding wordlessly. Oh, fuck yeah. I could do that. I could do that all day. It would make a mess of the bedsheets but I didn’t care.

Jeremy spread his legs wider and laced his hands behind his head, watching me with half-closed eyes. “And hurry the fuck up, would you?”

“So demanding,” I breathed.

“You know it.”

Once I had three fingers inside, fucking him with them as if I were balls deep, he could barely contain himself. The noises he made sent shocks of desire through me. His cock twitched and swelled in my mouth as I worked him over.

“I’m close, fuck, I’m close!” He bit out, just before he exploded and flooded my mouth with semen. His limbs locked and tensed until with a sigh, his whole body relaxed.

I coughed as I pulled off him and tried to catch my breath, sliding my fingers out of him and collapsing on the mattress by his side.

“Jesus, that was hot.”

“Ooooh, Martin, that was...that was...I don’t even know.” His eyes closed and he smiled blissfully. “I think I’ll have that nap now.”

I tried to calm my breathing but the fact of my own arousal was literally staring me in the face. My dick pointed straight at my chin as I lay there. I could see it pushing against the black cotton of my boxer briefs, and a wide circle wet cotton near the tip.

“Jeremy,” I said softly. “I hope you don’t mind if I jerk off all over you.”

Grabbing the lube, I poured some into my clean hand, then wrapped it around myself and started stroking. It wouldn’t take long.

“Just clean up after yourself, dirty boy. I may not stay awake for it.”

“Fuck!” I said. The thought of painting him with my come while he drifted off to sleep turned me on more than it probably should have.

When I was close, which only took a few seconds because of what I’d just witnessed, I kneeled up on the bed and watched the white fluid spurt out of my cock and land on Jeremy’s perfect belly and chest. I couldn’t help the soft grunts I made.

Jeremy’s eyes remained closed, his breaths even and deep. But a sly smile formed on his lips and his left elbow bent as he found the evidence of my pleasure with his fingers.

“Love you,” he whispered just before he drifted off to dreamland.

Chapter Two

Two days before our scheduled flight I started to panic. I actually couldn't believe I'd been okay up until this point.

I hated flying. Despised it. Didn't really believe that humans should be up in the air at all. But, I *did* live in the 21st century and air travel was a necessary evil. Which I avoided whenever possible. Which is why I hadn't stepped onto a plane in over fifteen years.

I'd always been an anxious flyer but as a child my parents had been able to reassure me and I'd never believed anything bad would happen. As an adult, I was less sure. I despised flying alone and never would do so again, after the experience I'd had in my early twenties when I'd unwittingly booked myself aboard a puddle hopper from Fredricton to Halifax and had a massive panic attack mid-flight. One that I'd expended enormous amounts of energy to hide from the other passengers in what felt like an OC Transpo bus with wings. Thank God the flight had only lasted fifty minutes or they'd have had to give me a sedative. I almost fainted when we deplaned and I realized I was on solid ground again. Although my return flight was direct and involved a massive jet airliner I still found myself clutching the armrests with white knuckles the entire time.

Jeremy knew nothing of this. I didn't want to tell him because it seemed so stupid and silly compared with what he had to deal with on a daily basis. Multiple sclerosis was an unpredictable disease and even on medication he could still wake up one day with a numb leg, or a blind eye, or a deaf ear, or any number of horrifying possibilities. But he didn't let it scare him. He didn't worry about any of it because he was living his life to the fullest. Now, if I could just do the same.

Dr. Acevidos had told me not to use any of the Xanax until the day of the flight, which I'd thought was a good idea at the time. Now I wasn't so sure.

I did what I did whenever there was something I was worried about that I didn't want to bother Jeremy with. I texted my sister, Frankie.

Martin: Can you meet me for lunch today?

Frankie: That depends...

Martin: On what?

Frankie: Who's paying?

Martin: Fine. Me.

Frankie: Let's go to Ciccio's!!!

Martin: Very funny. How about the Manx?

Frankie: Fine. What time?

Martin: Twelve.

Frankie: Is J coming too?

Martin: No.

Frankie: Oh o. What's wrong?

Martin: We're fine. I'll explain at lunch.

Frankie: You'd better.

* * *

The Manx pub, a popular lunch spot, was already quite crowded when I arrived. There was no sign of Frankie so I found a small table near the back and ordered a pint. My fingers drummed nervously on the table while I waited and drank, and drank and waited. I ordered another beer and got out my phone to text her when she finally showed, waving at me from the entrance and making her way through the crowd to get to me.

“Phew. I guess this place is a hidden gem no more.” She put her purse down and slipped into the chair opposite me. “How are you?”

I ignored the question. “Do you want a beer?”

“Sure. Whatever you’re having,” she said, taking off her thin scarf and leather gloves. Even in late April Ottawa could surprise you with very cool weather. “Okay, Martin. Spill.”

“Hold on.” I motioned to the server who came over and took Frankie’s drink order. After he’d left I gulped some of my beer and put the glass down. “Here’s the thing. You know that Jeremy and I are flying out to London on Friday.”

She nodded. “Yeah, you lucky bastard. Simon and I haven’t been anywhere in ages.”

I nodded. *Yeah, yeah, yeah.* “Frankie, I’m shitting my pants about boarding that plane.”

Her eyes widened. “Like, literally shitting your—”

“No! Like metaphorically shitting my pants. Although when it comes time to actually board the plane there might be real shit involved. I am *that* fucking scared.”

She stared at me, surprised. “What does Jeremy say?”

I looked down at my beer and shrugged.

“You haven’t told Jeremy! Oh, Martin, come on. He’d be the first to reassure you.”

“Frankie, I can’t tell Jeremy how fucking scared I am. It’s embarrassing. And ridiculous.” I took another sip of the comforting amber liquid. “Look, I know the statistics. I know that flying is safer than driving and all that jazz. I can’t explain why it scares me so much except that I really don’t want to be up there at all.”

The server brought Frankie her beer and she took a few sips while she silently assessed me. “So, tell Jeremy you don’t want to go,” she said finally.

“I can’t do that. I *do* want to go. I’m getting on that plane if it kills me,” I said, silently beseeching her with my eyes. “Problem is, it feels like it’s going to.”

Frankie shook her head. “Oh, Martin. Did you talk to your doctor? There’s probably some medication that would help.”

I nodded. “I have a prescription for Xanax.”

“Okay. Well, that should work. Right?”

I shrugged. “I hope so. Problem is, what do I do in the meantime? Dr. Acevidos said not to take any until the morning of the flight.”

“What does the package insert say?”

I stared at her blankly.

“You didn’t read the package insert? Oh for Christ’s sake, Martin. I always read the package insert. Doctors and pharmacists don’t have the time to give you all the info about the drugs they prescribe.”

“Thanks, you’re making me feel so much better,” I said dryly.

“Okay, okay, I’m sorry.” She reached into her back pocket and retrieved her phone.

“Luckily, I’ve got Dr. Google in my pocket.”

After several moments of searching, Frankie passed me the phone. “There. You can take some now. Not too much—I’d even go half the regular dose for now. Just something to take the edge off. It’s safe.”

I read the information that Frankie had found from the manufacturer of Xanax, advising on the use of the drug. It did comfort me to know I could take some tonight. The relief must have shown on my face.

“Better?”

I nodded. “I think so. I mean, I will be.”

“I still think you should talk to Jeremy about this.”

“Maybe. But it’s not his job to take care of me.”

Frankie stared at me like she wanted to slap me. “Not his job to—Martin, he loves you. He’d be more than happy to help you with anything, you know that.”

Of course I knew that. But I shouldn’t need help. I was a grown man for Christ’s sake.

* * *

Jeremy was out when I got home. He’d texted me that he needed to pick up a few things for the trip and would grab supper on the go. So I reheated some of the stir-fry I’d made the night before and then popped half a milligram of Xanax, washing it down with a healthy glass of milk.

I hopped into the shower and let the warm water relax me while the drug had its desired effect. By the time I’d dried myself off and put on pair of PJ pants and a t-shirt I felt unbelievably better about everything. *Thank you, Dr. Acevidos!* And sleepy. But I didn’t want to go to bed yet. Now that I was feeling good I wanted to see Jeremy and talk about our trip.

He wasn’t home yet so I settled myself on the living room sofa and flipped channels until I decided on one of those home renovating shows with the annoyingly handsome host and his equally annoying wife. But I think I only watched it for five minutes before nodding off.

I woke up to someone pushing my shoulder gently and warm breath on my face. “Hey, sleepyhead. Wake up.”

Jeremy kissed me as I emerged from my nap and pressed his jean covered hard-on against my hip.

“Mmpgrf?” I mumbled, still in the throes of a drug-induced sleep. But nothing woke me up quicker than my horny twenty-six-year-old boyfriend.

“Oh, Martin. You should see what I bought.”

My eyes flicked open and I brought them into focus. Seeing that familiar cheeky grin caused my dick to twitch.

“Hmmm?” I hummed, my hand finding the curve of his perfect ass. “What did you buy, naughty boy?”

Jeremy liked toys. Butt plugs, vibes, cock rings—you name it, he had it. And he was always adding to his collection. *Our* collection.

He held something in front of my face. It looked like a stainless steel kitchen implement but I knew better.

“What is that?”

His grin widened. “That, Martin, is a beautiful as fuck shiny new cock ring with a prostate ball attached.”

“You should really be on the home shopping network.”

He laughed, swinging the device on his finger so that the steel ball at the end of the crooked shaft swung back and forth, back and forth.

“I want you to put me in it,” he said hoarsely. His forehead crinkled. “Or put it in *me*. Or, I guess, both.”

I stared at him, my cock now fully hard. But we had a problem.

“How am I supposed to get that on you when you’re erect?”

Jeremy frowned. “Good point.” He sat back a bit, away from me. “Hmm. Well, I could take a cold shower.”

“Go for it. Get nice and clean for me.”

He grinned. “Kay. Wait here.”

“I’m not moving.”

I didn't move and I didn't fall back asleep, even though I felt so perfectly blissed out on that tiny amount of Xanax I could kiss Dr. Acevidos. Maybe I would, next time I saw him. Maybe I'd just needed some reassurance that the medication would work. Now I could genuinely feel more relaxed about the upcoming flight, even when the Xanax was out of my system. I was so glad I'd talked to Frankie and decided to take some.

By the time Jeremy returned, all soft and steamy from what seemed to have become a *hot* shower after the cold shower had fulfilled its requirement, I was ready for business.

I stood up and took his hand, eyeing him in his black boxer briefs. "Come to the bedroom, Gorgeous."

He took my hand. "Okay, but you'd better get the damn thing on me soon or I'll be hard again. Just the thought of it..."

"Okay, down boy. Give me a second."

I led him to the bedroom, grabbing my phone on the way. I plugged it into the speaker and closed the curtains as the soft sounds of smooth jazz filled the room.

"Take your briefs off."

He watched me as he stripped off the cotton boxer briefs and settled back on his elbows. His cock, mostly flaccid now, rested alluringly against his thigh.

"Here," he said, with a wink, passing me the steel toy.

"How much did it cost, dare I ask?"

He raised his eyebrows. "It was on sale."

"I see."

"I'll make it worth every penny," he promised.

My cock throbbed as I grabbed the lube and kneeled beside him on the bed. "I'm sure you will."

For some reason that should be obvious I had become an expert at getting cock rings on Jeremy. I got his prick through with a minimal amount of touching in order to keep him soft and then pulled each of his testicles through the ring until it nestled comfortably around his package. The steel ball had bounced against him as I'd positioned the ring and he slid down a bit and spread his legs, ready for the rest. Our eyes met and he lifted his chin, as if in challenge.

"Hold your horses," I said, squeezing some lube onto my fingers and applying it to the ball and shaft of the device.

“How about I hold my cock instead?”

“You can do that too.”

He wrapped his hand around his already hardening prick and stroked it lazily while he waited.

“Look at you, all business,” he commented. “While I’m lying here waiting for you to sex me up.”

“Shhh. I’m trying to concentrate.”

He laughed, spreading his legs even more and watching me with a hooded gaze. I applied more lube to his puckered hole, making him moan.

“Ready?”

“Fuck, Martin! Yes.”

I gave him a stern look and pressed the steel ball against him. Our eyes met as it sank into his eager ass. He hissed with pleasure and my mouth went dry.

“How does it look?” he asked. “Does it look hot?”

I nodded, unable to speak for a moment. It looked *so* hot.

I ripped my t-shirt off over my head and got out of my PJ pants in record time. Jeremy eyed my straining erection.

“Oooh, you definitely like it.”

“I definitely like it,” I panted, grabbing his thighs and tugging him down the bed so he lay flat. I bent and took his cock in my mouth.

He groaned, arching his back, twisting his fingers in my hair. “Oh my God,” he gasped. “It feels amazing.”

I gazed up at him, humming acknowledgement as I worked his prick with my mouth. I let go of one thigh and brought my hand under his balls, deftly flicking my middle finger against the steel shaft of the toy.

Jeremy cried out, then gasped. “Oh, do that again.”

I did it again, loving the sounds he made.

“Oh, Martin, I love that.”

I did it until my finger started to hurt. Then I let go of his dick and flipped him over roughly.

He stretched his arms out in front of him and bent his knees, bringing his plugged ass up in front of me. “Oh, fuck yeah.”

I spread his cheeks and groaned. The sight of the metal shaft disappearing into his ass made me so hard suddenly. I slapped his left cheek and he laughed.

“Am I a naughty boy, Martin?”

“You are so naughty,” I said, grabbing the lube and dripping some down the crack of his ass and onto my fingers. I just wanted to feel it. I wanted to feel that thing inside him.

“Stay still,” I said, because he was whining and wiggling so much. I felt underneath him. His cock was rock solid now.

He did his best, but as soon as I started to play with his hole he stretched back toward me. “Yessssss.”

“Be patient,” I warned.

“Hurry up,” he said.

I tickled his hole around the shaft of the toy, making him whimper and plead. Finally I pushed my thumb inside him alongside it.

He gasped and held his breath as I pulled it out, then pushed it in again.

“F-f-fuck! Oh God. Keep doing that.”

I did, enjoying his adorable sounds of pleasure, until I needed more.

But there was a problem. “I’m not fucking you with that in you,” I stated. “It’s not safe.”

He whimpered, but nodded. “F-f-fine. Okay. Then what?”

I assessed the situation, and decided quickly.

“You fuck me. Fuck me with that cock ring on and that ball in your ass.”

He looked at me over his shoulder, and grinned. “That was the original idea, Martin, but you got carried away.”

I nodded, so turned on I didn’t know what to do. “I know. I know.”

So Jeremy took over like I knew he would. He kneeled up in front of me, cock still wet with my saliva, and groaned as the ball shifted inside him. “On your back. I want to see your face.”

I nodded again, suddenly the obedient little bitch to Jeremy’s confident command. It was a place I loved to be.

I stretched out on my back beside him, handing him the lube. “Hurry up,” I said.

He raised his eyebrows and gave me a teasing smile. “Be. Patient.”

I had the decency to laugh, even though none of it was funny anymore. I needed him inside me. But he was in charge now.

His lubed cock pushed at my entrance firmly, finding some resistance. “Goddammit, let me in,” he whispered, slipping up along the crack of my ass and using his hand to push his cock down against my hole. “Let me in...”

I took a deep breath, gazing up at him, adoring the crease in his forehead as he concentrated on his task. I bore down and felt the head of his cock push inside.

We both gasped. I followed up with a groan as he pushed in deeper.

He moved forward, arms sliding beside me, pushing his cock into me until we were flush. My mouth hung open, my gaze held by his deep brown eyes and the expression of bliss on his face that matched my own.

We were quiet now, just enjoying the sensation of being joined so intimately. No words needed. He held my gaze as he began to rock against me, hitting the sweet spot with his practiced technique.

I’d been an anal virgin when we’d met, but Jeremy had taken the time to introduce me gradually to the joys of a good butt fuck. Now I was a convert.

I groaned and spread my legs wider to give him access.

“Oh yes. I love fucking you,” Jeremy murmured. “And this toy was worth every penny.”

I nodded frantically, feeling the pleasure build. “It was. It totally was. Sorry I’m such a tightwad.”

He chuckled. “Don’t apologize for being tight. I like you tight.” He thrust hard into me, showing me just how tight I was.

“Oh God. Harder,” I begged.

“Oh fuck yeah,” he moaned, speeding up like he’d been waiting for me to say it. I knew the toy was making him even crazier than he usually was when he fucked me. The steel ball would be rubbing against his prostate, I’m sure.

“Oh God, I’m gonna come. I’m gonna come,” he said desperately, “I can’t stop...”

Instead of telling him it was okay because I was right on the edge too, I just reached between us and grabbed my cock, pulling once, twice and exploding as my orgasm ripped through me.

Jeremy cried out, plunging deep as he was overcome. He kept thrusting as he emptied into me for a long time.

Finally, we both stilled, the only sounds a wailing saxophone and our ragged breaths.

Eventually, Jeremy lifted his head and gazed down at me.

“I’ve really got to sign up for some product testing. Think of what we could get for free!”

* * *

I took another point five milligrams of Xanax the afternoon before the morning of our flight. It had worked so well the previous evening and I knew I wouldn’t sleep a wink without it.

Jeremy had to wake me up when the alarm went off at four thirty a.m. Our flight was scheduled to depart at eight thirty and we wanted to get to the airport the required three hours in advance. We’d spent the previous day packing and ensuring everything was ready. I’d decided to bring just my camera and one specialty zoom lens which I packed in my large wheeled suitcase with my clothes, shoes and other items. Jeremy filled a big canvas duffle bag with his necessities but his Copaxone needles were in his carry-on with an official letter from his neurologist. He’d been advised not to pack them in his checked luggage just in case the luggage got lost or rerouted. We made sure our passports and Jeremy’s meds and prescription papers were easy to access and we’d printed off our boarding passes.

“Hey, wake up sleepyhead,” Jeremy said, giving my face a gentle slap and a soft kiss. “Time to fly.”

I opened my eyes, waking with a sudden jolt of terror. I guess the Xanax had worn off, but at least I’d slept. The familiar feeling of my stomach churning and my synapses firing warnings got me up out of bed and into the shower. As soon as I’d dressed and eaten, I popped another point five milligrams and stashed the bottle in my zippered jacket pocket. I had no illusions that I could keep it a secret from Jeremy past the security line at the airport but I’d just play it off as a precaution. I wasn’t going to tell him I’d been taking them for a couple of days already. The half tablet had worked so well for me that I decided not to take the full one milligram dose that Dr. Acevidos had suggested.

Jeremy showered after me and we both dressed in comfortable clothes with slip-on shoes that were easy to toe off for the security check. We ate a hasty breakfast and gulped down quick cups of coffee before calling a cab. Jeremy wanted to use an Uber but I was old school.

“It’s going to cost twice as much,” he complained.

“I’ll cover it. It’s fine.” I was starting to wonder when the Xanax was going to kick in. I felt a little better than I had on first waking but the fear and rising panic was still there. Anyway, I could always pop another half tablet when we got to the airport.

The McDonald Cartier Airport had undergone extensive renovations since I’d last been there and I hardly knew where anything was anymore. Luckily the signage was pretty good. Jeremy was practically bouncing with excitement as we headed over to the baggage check line.

When I saw the amount of people already lined up my anxiety made itself felt again. The half tablet of Xanax I’d taken didn’t seem to be working at all. Had I built up a resistance to it already? Maybe that’s why Dr. Acevidos had told me to wait until the day of the flight.

I told Jeremy I needed to use the bathroom and blamed the coffee. Of course, there were only automatic taps in the airport washroom. Luckily I located a water fountain. I swallowed another half tablet and hoped it would be enough.

Walking back to where Jeremy waited in the lineup I tried to calm my frantic thoughts with the belief that the meds would soon work to calm me down and everything would be fine.

“Are you okay?” Jeremy asked as I joined him.

“Yeah. Why?”

“You look a little pale.”

“I’m okay.”

“You’re not scared, are you?” he asked, genuinely curious.

“No. Why would I be scared? Air travel is safer than driving.” *Except that if there is a problem, you’re thousands of feet in the air, rather than inches from the side of the highway.*

Jeremy smiled. “I can tell you’re uncomfortable, Martin. It’s normal to be nervous.”

“You’re not nervous at all. You can’t wait to get up there.”

He shrugged. “I love to fly. Always have. Plus I’m excited to be travelling somewhere fun with *you*.”

The way he looked at me, and the beginning effect of the recent meds, made a calmness wash over me. I was with Jeremy and Jeremy would make sure I was all right.

That wonderful feeling lasted through the baggage check and the security screening. Luckily Jeremy had been busy opening his carry-on and showing the security officers his prescribed injectibles when I showed them my bottle of Xanax with the prescription on it and he hadn’t noticed. By the time he’d gone through the metal detector I had it safely stashed in my

jacket pocket again. Once through security we settled ourselves in the departure lounge to watch the planes take off and land out of the huge windows.

All of a sudden, it seemed real. In an hour or so I would be inside one of those machines with no control over anything. *What if the pilot had been drinking? What if he just wasn't very good at his job? What if, despite all the safeguards, one of the other passengers was a hijacker? What if an engine stopped working, or worse, fell off?*

The anxiety must have shown on my face because Jeremy asked me again if I was all right.

"Yeah, I just need to use the bathroom again." I laughed. "Guess I'm a bit nervous."

He smiled. "Once we're up in the air you'll be just fine."

I blanched and walked over to the men's room. Fuck these stupid meds. Why weren't they working? Dr. Acevidos must have got the dose wrong. I was a decent-sized guy, maybe he didn't realize how much I weighed. I'd gained some weight over the past couple of years. I mean, I was in my mid-thirties. That was normal, right?

My anxiety turned to anger as I grabbed the bottle of medication out of my jacket pocket and twisted the lid.

Maybe I was supposed to take a whole milligram at one time. Maybe that was the problem. Well, it couldn't hurt to take one now. Obviously the half milligram dosing just wasn't doing the job. And I had to get on that plane in an hour. I knew for sure that the only way I'd be able to do it would be if I was completely blissed out on Xanax.

I used the bottle of water I'd purchased from a vending machine to wash down one whole pill and stared at my reflection in the mirror. "Get a fucking grip, Martin," I said firmly. "You're going to be fine." I tried to believe it. I didn't. I tipped the pill bottle again and held another one milligram tablet in my palm. I stared at it for several moments and then decided if I took it I would be assured of being calm enough for the flight. I wasn't really worried about anything else at that point. I tossed it back with another swallow of water.

I walked back to where Jeremy was sitting, reading his Fodor's guide to London and looking as if he were going to a tea party and not onto a plane that would take us off the surface of the earth for six hours. I sank down and let my head rest against the back of the seat.

After about thirty minutes I began to feel so much better. Thank fucking Christ, it seemed like the Xanax was finally kicking in.

"Martin, time to board. Wake up."

Someone was shaking me. I really didn't want to wake up but I opened my eyes to be polite. Who was this guy? He was incredibly hot and so close to me.

"Hi," I said. My voice sounded strange, like I was underwater.

The young man with short auburn hair and deep brown eyes gave me a weird look. "Hi. Let's go."

"You're sexy," I said, startled at my courage. I usually couldn't talk to really hot guys.

"Thanks. Let's go."

"Where?" This hot guy was asking me to go somewhere with him and I was asking *where?* Was I insane? I wanted to go wherever he wanted to take me.

A strange, anxious look came over the kid's features, but he still looked really cute.

"Martin, are you kidding me? We have to go to the departure gate. For our flight to London." He spoke slowly and clearly. Then he looked panicked. "Are you having a stroke?"

A stroke? Why would I be having a stroke? Suddenly, somehow, I remembered the Xanax just as I realized that the man speaking to me was my young boyfriend, Jeremy. It was all very funny. I started laughing and stood up a little too fast. Jeremy caught my elbow as I wobbled.

"No, no, I'm not having a stroke. It's the Fanax. I mean, the blanax. I mean, it's the X-Xanax." I laughed again. "I feel so awesome."

Jeremy stared at me, his expression seeming to go through about five different emotions before he firmed his lips and grabbed my arm. "Why didn't you tell me you were taking antianxiety medication?"

I shrugged, still smiling. It seemed irrelevant.

"How much did you take, Martin?"

I frowned. How much *did* I take? Point five first thing, then another point five, then a whole tablet, then one more. I think. How much was that? "Um, two pills? Actually, three. Three pills."

"Can I see the bottle please?"

"Sure sexy." I pulled the bottle out of my pocket and handed it to him.

He examined the label, looking at me with some concern. "It says you're just supposed to take one tablet at a time."

I shrugged. "Wasn't working. It's working now. I'm so happy."

He gave me back the bottle giving me a death stare that only made him hotter. “Don’t. Take. Anymore.”

I shook my head from side to side to let him know I wouldn’t. “Don’t need to.”

“Come on. And for Christ’s sake try to act normal.”

He still had hold of my elbow and it seemed like he wasn’t going to let go. Even in my confused state, something about that resonated within me. We made it to the departure gate without too much trouble. Walking was easier once I got started. I felt like I was seeing things through a soft haze, except whenever Jeremy looked at me, he was crystal clear. In fact, I couldn’t take my eyes off him as we approached the gate.

When we got there he showed the boarding agent a piece of paper then turned to me.

“Martin? Where’s your boarding pass?”

“Huh?”

He smiled and turned back to the agent, a plump, red-haired woman. “I’m sorry, I just asked him to marry me. He’s a bit loopy.”

The woman laughed and beamed at us. “Oh, that’s adorable!”

Had Jeremy asked me to marry him? Wow! Had he? What had I said? Why, yes of course!

I gazed wide-eyed at the woman. “I said YES!”

“Of course you did! May I see your boarding pass, please?”

Boarding pass, boarding pass, where was my boarding pass?

Jeremy reached into my jacket pocket but all he found was the bottle of Xanax. “Excuse me,” he said apologetically to the boarding agent, turning to face me. “Martin, is your boarding pass in your jeans pocket?”

Oh, probably. Yeah, that seemed likely. I fished in my pocket and came out with a piece of paper which I handed to Jeremy. “Is this it?”

Jeremy took the paper and held it out for the boarding agent to check. She looked it over and smiled at us. “Perfect. Thank you. And congratulations!”

As we left the gate I turned to Jeremy. “Are we getting married in London?”

He shook his head. “We’re *not* getting married, Martin.”

“But you just said—”

“Just *be quiet* and come with me.”

Wow. Maybe I should have said no. I wasn't at all sure I wanted to marry him now. He was being so mean. Then I took another look at his ass. Well...

We walked down a long hallway, turned a corner, then another corner, then came to an oval doorway where a male flight attendant waited.

"Good morning, gentlemen. Welcome aboard Flight 499!" He said enthusiastically.

I giggled.

Jeremy pulled me forward. "Thanks."

He found our seats quickly and practically pushed me into the one by the window. "You might as well sit there. You're so fucked up you won't even know we're in the air."

I stared up at him, mesmerized. "You are so hot when you're angry."

"Martin. Don't even. Just shut up and go to sleep or something."

Actually, that sounded like a great idea. "Kay. Goodnight, Jeremy."

I heard him say "Goodnight, Martin," with a slightly less angry lilt to his voice before I did just that.

Chapter Three

“Hey. We’ve landed,” were the next words I heard.

Landed? Landed where?

I forced my eyes to open. “Where are we?”

“London, you idiot.”

We were already in London? How the fuck had that happened?

I stared at Jeremy in complete shock. We did seem to be in an airplane. *Oh Christ, I was in an airplane!* I sat up quickly, eyes widening in panic.

Jeremy gripped my arm, keeping me in my seat. “I said, we’ve *landed*, you moron. Relax. You slept through the entire flight.”

Oh thank God!

“We’ve landed?” I asked breathlessly, hardly believing it.

He nodded. “Yep.”

“In London?”

“Yep.”

“Oh thank God.”

“Yeah, I feel the same way,” he said, not sounding particularly happy.

I furrowed my brow. “I thought you loved to fly.”

He gave me the meanest look. “I don’t want to talk about it. Let’s get our stuff.”

I realized that the other passengers were standing and getting their shit together and moving into the aisles.

“Did something happen?” I asked, wondering why he seemed so pissed off.

He gave me another exasperated look as he stood up. “No, Martin. The flight was fine. Except my boyfriend was practically comatose and I kept having to check his breathing and responses so I wouldn’t worry he was fucking overdosing on fucking Xanax!”

Suddenly, everything came back to me from the morning. I mean, some of it clearly and some of it not so clearly. Had I taken more Xanax in the airport? I couldn’t remember. Maybe? I couldn’t remember getting on the plane. Or even leaving the departure lounge. I remembered going through security feeling more and more anxious and wondering why the meds didn’t seem to be working.

“Oh Christ, Jeremy. I’m so sorry.” I mumbled, embarrassed and still confused.

“Can we talk about it later? We need to get off this plane.”

I stood up, feeling a little lightheaded but otherwise okay. I grabbed my carry-on and moved into the aisle behind Jeremy. I didn’t say anything while we waited to deplane or while we moved with the other passengers to disembark. He was obviously furious with me and I’m sure I deserved it. I felt thrilled to have escaped the horror of the flight but terrible that it had been at Jeremy’s expense. And I regretted not telling him how scared I’d been.

Heathrow airport seemed huge and bright after the confines of the plane. We moved in silence along the hallway to the customs gate then waited a long time to be processed through. Luckily, because our paperwork was in order and I guess we didn’t look suspicious, we made it through without incident.

Jeremy affected a fake cheerfulness in his interactions with the customs agent, merely for appearances. Once we were out of there and heading for Terminal Five and the baggage carousel his mood returned to its earlier sourness.

I felt awful but I didn’t really know how to fix this. Every time I tried to apologize he just put me off and said he didn’t want to talk about it right now. So far our exciting trip to Europe was tanking big time and it was all my fault.

Terminal Five was a mass of people searching for their bags and milling about. I hoped to God our luggage had made it or the trip would be even more of a failure.

As soon as Jeremy’s black duffle bag came down the chute and around to where we were standing, I stepped forward and grabbed it before he could. Although I still felt off and needed to get something to eat, I hauled the heavy bag off the carousel and plunked it down at Jeremy’s feet.

He just looked at me and then back to the chute. I did the same thing for my roller suitcase, and then the feeling of lightheadedness and hunger that I’d felt upon waking came over me again.

“I need to get something to eat, Jeremy.”

“Okay. Me too. They didn’t have much on the plane anyway.”

I double-checked that the luggage had our tags on it. I wasn’t going to risk this vacation getting any worse.

Jeremy gave me a questioning look.

“Just making sure,” I said. “It’s all good. Let’s go.”

We started moving towards the food court.

“Burger King?” Jeremy asked. “I’m fucking starving and I don’t want to wait.”

I nodded. “Sure.” I was in no position to be picky.

We fumbled a bit with the UK currency but managed to buy a couple of value meals and find a small table at which to eat them.

I don’t think a fast-food burger had ever tasted so good! I was so hungry and now kind of depressed about Jeremy’s sour mood. I didn’t look at him as I gobbled it down, and slurped my coke.

When I’d finished and finally looked up, he was staring at me, only halfway through his burger.

“What?” I said, starting to feel angry myself.

“You were *that* hungry?”

“Yeah.”

“Maybe I should have woken you up on the plane.”

I shook my head. “I’m glad you didn’t.”

He regarded me with some thought. “Martin, why didn’t you tell me you were so terrified?”

“I thought you wanted to talk about this later.”

“Fine,” he said, raising his burger to his lips.

“Fine,” I said. “I’m going to the bathroom.” I stood up.

“Wait,” Jeremy said. “Give me the bottle of Xanax.”

“What?” I asked in surprise.

“Give me the bottle,” he repeated with a very stern look. Usually, the only time Jeremy would be stern with me was if we were role-playing in the bedroom. I wasn’t used to this in real time.

“Why? I’m not going to take anymore until our return trip.”

He took a deep breath and I could see that he was reigning himself in. “Just give it to me.”

I pressed my lips together. I didn’t want to cause a scene. “Fine. Here.”

He stuffed the bottle in a pocket of his carry-on while I strode to the men’s room.

I felt a lot better after I'd relieved myself and washed my hands. After splashing some water on my face for good measure I walked back to Jeremy.

We took the Heathrow Express to Paddington Station. I was glad I'd decided to bring just my camera and zoom lens with me, which I'd packed into my one large suitcase. It was annoying enough lugging *that* around. Jeremy had packed a large duffle bag instead of a suitcase so he had that and his carry-on bag slung over opposite shoulders.

The express was crowded. I jostled someone's shoulder and he turned and told me to "Watch out there, mate." He glanced at me and at Jeremy, and smiled. "Youse from overseas?"

I nodded. "Canada. Sorry to be so clumsy."

"No worries, mate. Welcome to the UK."

"Thanks," I said, pleased to receive such greetings after the depressing beginning to our trip.

"Name's Gavin."

"Martin. This is Jeremy."

Jeremy nodded and said a brief hello.

Gavin found some empty seats so we gladly sat down with him. He seemed nice and it was a relief to have someone else to talk to.

"You blokes on vacation, or here for work?" He asked as we settled in.

"A little of both," I said. "I'm a photographer doing a piece on the New Forest for Outside Magazine and Jeremy's a model."

Gavin grinned at Jeremy. "A model, eh? That's a posh deal. Here for the London fashion scene?"

Jeremy shook his head. "Not really."

Gavin waited for Jeremy to say something else. When he didn't he turned back to me. "So, photography, eh? I've dabbled a bit. People say I'm quite good."

I nodded, trying to feign interest. I was beginning to wish I'd been less friendly. "That's great. What do you like to photograph?"

"Oh, this and that. People. My dogs. The city." He took out his phone and flipped through to the gallery, showing me some photos. They weren't bad but they weren't fantastic or anything.

"Nice," I said. "Do you know how long it takes to get from Paddington Station to the Marriot by taxi?" I needed to change the subject.

He shrugged, putting his phone away. “Ten, fifteen minutes. You should use Uber.”

Jeremy perked up. “Thank you. I’ve been telling him that for months.”

“I’m old school,” I said.

“Yeah?” Jeremy said, regarding me speculatively. “Well, I’m new school. I think we should take an Uber to the hotel.”

We stared at each other, ignoring Gavin and engaged in a private standoff.

“Fine. We’ll use Uber,” I conceded, figuring that after all I’d put him through it was the least I could do.

Jeremy’s expression softened and he sat back in his seat. “Thank you.”

Gavin looked back and forth between us. He raised an eyebrow but didn’t say anything.

For the rest of the fifteen-minute journey we made small talk and Gavin filled us in on some cool things to do in and around London. When we parted at the station, he wished us well and strode off to meet his wife and kids.

Jeremy tapped something into his phone and said. “Shit.”

“What?”

He looked at me with some annoyance. “Uber is warning me that Heathrow can be a difficult pick-up because of the taxi regulations.”

I nodded but held my tongue. This was his decision.

“We might as well take a cab.”

“Okay.”

We made our way through the huge train station, passing the statue of Paddington Bear without a word, and I wondered how much fun this trip was actually going to be now that I’d fucked it up completely. I almost regretted agreeing to accompany Jeremy. Almost. But maybe there was still time to fix things.

We were both exhausted. Even though I’d slept for six hours I felt drained and it seemed weird that darkness had fallen since back in Canada it was only late afternoon. Here in London it was nine thirty and I could tell that Jeremy was tired, especially since it seemed he hadn’t slept much or at all on the flight, thanks to me. I think we both felt desperate to get to the hotel.

Walking out of the station into the night, we found ourselves at the taxi stand. Literally dozens of London Cabs were lined up ready to take passengers. As we approached one of the drivers got out and came around.

“Welcome to London! Here, let me take your bag.”

“Thank you,” I said, feeling a huge amount of relief as we placed ourselves into the safety and professionalism of London’s famed taxi service. Even Jeremy’s mood seemed to lighten as we drove through brightly lit downtown London.

At one point I quietly reached for his hand and he let me take it. He didn’t look at me—he was entranced by what he saw out the window of the cab, but he let me take it. And when I got up the courage to give his fingers a soft squeeze, the gesture was returned and I breathed a sigh of relief.

Maybe our trip wasn’t ruined after all.

It only took about ten minutes to get to our hotel, the Holiday Inn Mayfair.

As we walked into the large, bright lobby, a young man at the desk smiled with a warm welcome.

“Good evening, gentlemen. Welcome to London!”

“Thank you,” I said, eternally grateful for all the cheerful people we’d met so far. “We have a reservation.”

“Yes, Sir. Last name?”

“Lewis.”

He typed something into his computer. “Martin?”

“Yes,” I said. “Should be an executive king suite?”

“Yes, Sir. May I have your credit card please?”

I handed him my credit card and glanced at Jeremy. He was looking around the bright lobby with the first expression of pleasure on his face I’d seen since we’d arrived. Thank fucking Christ.

“Here are two room keys, Sir. You’re on the top floor. Room 722. Have a pleasant stay. Please call down if you need anything at all.” He handed me my VISA back and the two room cards.

“Thank you.”

We were the only ones riding the elevator but neither of us said anything. But as we entered our beautifully appointed king suite, Jeremy couldn’t contain himself.

“Wow!” he said as he dumped his duffle on the large bed. “You sure know how to treat a guy.”

I wasn't sure if he was being sarcastic or not, what with his former grumpiness. But he seemed genuinely impressed.

"Well, at least I did something right," I said, still feeling shitty about the flight.

The room was quite spacious, with modern furnishings including a very plush looking king bed, lots of mirrors and a separate suite with a leather love seat, armchair, coffee table and corner desk. I pushed my suitcase into a space by the small sofa and walked over to the window. When I opened the curtains and looked out at the city, we were both struck speechless.

The view was incredible, the entire lighted city spread out below us. The only thing that made the view better was Jeremy coming up behind me and wrapping his arms around me.

"I'm sorry."

I sighed with relief and clung to his arm. "I'm the one who should be sorry."

"Yeah," he said, resting his chin on my shoulder. "Well, I'm the one who wouldn't accept your apology earlier."

We stood like that for a long time, just absorbing the view and enjoying being close.

"I had no idea you were so scared to get on that plane," Jeremy said finally. "Why didn't you tell me?"

I shrugged, glad I wasn't looking at him though he could probably see my reflection in the window. "Ah, Jeremy, I was so embarrassed. It was stupid to be so scared."

"Yeah, well I would have told you that. But then I would have helped you deal with it. I would have made sure you didn't take too many pills."

"I know." I still felt like I'd taken just the right amount, since I didn't remember anything. But it must have been pretty rough on him.

He let go of me and backed up. I turned around.

"I really am sorry. I didn't mean to put you in that position." I hope I conveyed my regret effectively because it came from the heart.

"I know you didn't, but next time be honest with me okay? No more secrets."

I nodded. "No more secrets."

"And, Jesus Christ, Martin. We're in fucking London!" His smile was so big it lit up the room almost as bright as the city outside our window.

I grabbed his shoulders and planted one on him, so desperate to connect in an intimate way with the man who'd given me the silent treatment the last couple of hours. He opened to me and

responded with equal enthusiasm. When we finally released each other it was as if we'd never quarrelled.

"I'm still hungry," he said. "I could eat a steak."

"Then you shall have steak. But let's get room service. I'm too tired to go anywhere."

We ordered sirloins and a couple of beers from Nightingales, the hotel restaurant, and ate them on the bed, while we cruised through the TV channels looking for a familiar program. Eventually we settled on *Say Yes to the Dress*, just so we could make fun of the crazy brides and their opinionated families, and also secretly admire some of the dresses.

I suddenly had a flash of something. I looked over at Jeremy.

"Hey, did you make a joke about asking me to marry you or something? When we were getting on the plane. I have this weird memory..."

Jeremy nearly choked on his steak. "I'd forgotten about that. It was the only way I could explain how loopy you were when we boarded our flight. I said I'd just asked you, so you were kind of emotional and happy."

I stared at him and he looked at me all innocent.

"What?"

"That's so cute."

He shrugged. "I was desperate. You were a mess."

"Did I say yes?"

He gave me a look like I was deranged. "Of course you fucking said yes. You would have said yes to anything at that point. You got on a fucking plane, remember?"

I blushed. "Well, I don't remember much."

He looked at me, contemplating. "Hmm. Well, you said yes. You'd have been a moron not to. You know I love you. Why wouldn't you marry me?"

I stared at him, suddenly feeling like he wasn't joking.

"Are you serious?"

"Why, you got someone else?" he asked cheekily.

I swallowed. "Jeremy, stop joking. Do you really want to marry me?"

He looked at me, eyes widening. "Well, after that stunt you pulled with the Xanax? And after spending six hours on a plane wondering if you were sleeping or passed out? You think I'd

do that for just anybody? Maybe if we were married you'd actually be honest with me about your fears. I'd certainly hope you would be."

"Fuck, stop it. I don't deserve you."

"Of course you don't. But you've got me."

"Then yes. Yes, I'll marry you." I couldn't believe we were having this conversation.

"Good."

I couldn't stop myself then. I turned and tackled him, holding him down and covering his face with kisses. He laughed and squirmed beneath me.

"Let's get married here," I said.

"At the hotel?" he asked.

"No, in London. There must be somewhere we can go to get hitched in London..."

"Are you serious?" he asked, holding me still so I'd stop kissing him and look him in the eyes.

"I am so serious." I'd never been more serious in my life.

"But we don't have anything nice to wear..."

"So?" What did I care about what we wore?

"You're serious."

I nodded, grinning and meeting his excited gaze. "I'm serious."

He hesitated for a moment, assessing me, probably to make sure I wasn't still high on Xanax. "Then let's do it."

We spent the rest of the evening cuddled naked in bed together, watching TV. Because of the time difference, neither of us could fall asleep but were too tired to do anything significant. When I tried to get sexy Jeremy looked at me with an eyebrow raised.

"Martin, I'm too tired to fuck."

"Okay."

"But tomorrow you owe me a spanking."

"Anytime, Gorgeous."

He stared at me. "No, I mean I owe *you* a spanking. Because you deserve one."

"Oh. Shit."

"You better believe it. I just hope the walls are well insulated."

Oh double shit.

Chapter Four

When I woke up the next morning I wondered where I was, until I realized I was in a hotel room.

And there seemed to be someone knocking at the door.

“Housekeeping!” A woman’s voice with a decidedly British accent called from outside our door.

“Just a second,” I said loudly, before climbing out from beneath the covers and padding over to the door. I opened it a crack to speak to the young woman with the cleaning cart. “We’re still in bed. Could you please come back later?”

She nodded. “Of course. My apologies, Sir.”

She rolled her cart away while I took the *Do Not Disturb* sign and placed it on the handle before closing the door.

Jeremy was sitting up in the huge bed, blinking at me. “What time is it?”

I looked at the clock on the table.

“Eleven thirty. Which would be six thirty back home.”

“Yeah, feels like it.”

“We should get up though. If we go back to sleep we’ll just make our jet lag worse.”

I walked over to the big window and pulled one of the curtains aside.

I would never tire of this view.

Now that the sun was up, I could see even further. So many buildings and landmarks that I recognized even though I couldn’t actually identify them yet.

I turned back to Jeremy but he’d burrowed beneath the blankets again.

I rolled my eyes, returning to the bed and pulling the covers off him. “Jeremy, we’re in London, I’m starving and you can’t go back to sleep.”

“Try me.”

I stared at him, appreciating how freaking sexy he looked with his hair mussed, stretched out like that in a king-size bed in a London hotel room.

Hmm. We had no agenda until Monday, when Jeremy had to meet with the legendary photographer for a pre-shoot discussion. I would have to eat something soon but suddenly Jeremy was looking very appetizing.

I grabbed a mint from the coffee bar and popped it in my mouth, then walked over to the bed and crawled upon it, descending on him with entreaties and persuasions until he opened one eye.

“What?”

“I want to fuck you. You wouldn’t let me last night.”

“What makes you think I’ll let you this morning?”

I rubbed my boxer brief covered erection against his thigh. “Please, Jeremy. I’m so horny. Must be this London air.”

He chuckled. “You’re just as horny when we’re at home.”

“Okay, maybe. Plus it’ll help you to wake up.”

“Only if you make it good.”

Challenge accepted. I gave him a love bite on the back of his neck that made him hiss in surprise before I went back to the coffee bar and got another mint. I passed it to him and he plopped it in his mouth without a word, his eyes meeting mine with a hint of wakened desire.

“I need to piss,” he said.

“Me too.”

The large bathroom was beautifully outfitted with a big tub/shower combo, double sinks and a basic toilet. We took turns peeing and then Jeremy walked back to the bed and stood beside it expectantly.

“What?”

“I was serious about that spanking, Martin.”

Oh crap. I’d forgotten about that. Obviously, *he* hadn’t.

“Oh.” *Dammit.* “Isn’t there another way you can punish me?” I asked coyly.

He shook his head from side to side very slowly and deliberately.

“But...but there are people in the hall. It’s the middle of the day...”

He shrugged. “I don’t care.”

Fuck.

“What do you want me to do?”

He smiled. “I want you to come over here and lean over the end of the bed, Martin.”

The way he said those words caused my cock to swell, even though getting spanked wasn’t really a turn on for me. Obviously being ordered around by Jeremy kind of was.

I walked to the edge of the bed and started to bend down.

“You need to take your underwear off, Martin.”

Goddammit.

I glared at him, removing my boxer briefs and positioning myself awkwardly over the end of the high bed. In all honesty it was the least I could do to make up for what I’d put him through on the flight here.

“How’s that?” I asked, embarrassed and feeling like a child.

“Mmm, that’s perfect. You look hot.”

“I feel ridiculous.”

“Good. That’s part of your punishment. You’re gonna act like a child I’m gonna treat you like a child.”

Jesus Christ. Jeremy had never spoken to me like this before, and I kind of liked it. Usually, it was me ordering *him* around and spanking *his* naughty little bottom, always at his bidding of course. Now the tables had turned. We seemed to be discovering all kinds of things about each other on this trip and it had barely begun.

He came and stood close beside me, showing me his tented briefs. “See how hot you look?”

I nodded, gulping. Suddenly his hand was on me, grabbing one butt cheek so hard I gasped.

“Don’t you ever fucking do that to me again, Martin,” he seethed, pushing me into the mattress and letting go before his hand came down hard on my ass.

I cried out because it fucking hurt and I hadn’t expected him to be so rough. Before I could respond his hand came down again, just as hard.

“I’m sorry! I’m sorry,” I burst out, and I *was* sorry, especially now that I realized how mad he still was. “I’ll never do it again. I promise.”

I heard his heavy breathing as he paused, waiting. I kept talking, wanting to placate him so he wouldn’t spank me again. “I’m so sorry. I should have told you how I felt. I should have asked for your help.”

“Exactly.”

“I know. I’m sorry.”

“Okay. Just be quiet now. I need to spank you some more.”

“Really?”

“It will make me feel better.”

Well, *damn*. “Fine.”

I gripped the bedspread as his hand came down on my ass four or five more times, and I tried not to make any noise but it hurt like hell. Still, there was something sexy about the humiliation and the pain. And God knows I fucking deserved it.

Finally, he stopped and crawled onto the bed beside me, pushing his boxer briefs down and shoving his erection in my face. “Show me how sorry you are, Martin,” he breathed, and I could see just how aroused he was. If spanking my ass made him this horny maybe it was worth it.

I met his hooded gaze and reached between his legs, cupping his ass and pulling him forward while I took his cock in my mouth.

He hissed in surprise and let his hand fall to my hair, while I worked him as well as I could in this position. His other hand found my ass and rubbed where he’d hit me.

“You okay?” He whispered while his forehead creased with pleasure.

I nodded, since I couldn’t talk with his cock down my throat.

“I feel *much* better.”

I laughed and choked on him, recovering quickly and snaking a finger in the crack of his ass.

“Oh fuck, Martin,” he said as I touched him there. “Oh yeah...”

I pulled off his cock and stood up, shoving him down on the bed. “I want to fuck you. I need to fuck you, Jeremy.”

“Yes,” he murmured, stretching out and spreading his legs. “There’s lube in my suitcase.”

“Mine too,” I said and we laughed.

I couldn’t remember where I’d packed it and by the time I found it he was leaning on his elbow watching me with barely concealed impatience.

“I know, I know. Sorry.”

“Stop apologizing.”

“I just don’t want you to spank me again. At least not yet.”

He raised his eyebrows and gave me a smirk as I came back to him. Then he was moaning and gasping as I lubed his ass and entered him without further preamble.

“Oh, Jesus, oh fuck yes,” he said as I pushed inside, right to the hilt. I would get him back for that rough spanking with an equally rough fuck.

“You like that, boy? You like me to fuck you hard?” I said, channeling my inner Dom and knowing that he loved dirty talk.

“Oh God, yeah.”

I held his hips tightly and dragged him so he was in a better position. Then I started to pound him.

“You’re ass is gonna be as sore as mine when I’m done with you,” I stated, panting and giving out little cries of pleasure as I pumped him hard.

“Oh yeah. Oh yeah,” he groaned, egging me on. “Fuck me, Martin. Fuck me *hard!*”

His words made me even crazier. All of yesterday’s stress and worry and heartache balled into my abdomen and gathered into a massive orgasm that I knew was imminent.

“Don’t move, don’t move,” I ordered as I drove my cock in once, twice and then squealed as my orgasm took over. I kept thrusting and soon Jeremy was yelling and coming, his hand beneath him working his cock as I hit his sweet spot and tumbled him over the edge.

We lay together, panting and listening to the relative silence of the hotel around us. Christ, what if we’d been heard? We hadn’t exactly been quiet.

It could have been my imagination but I thought I heard a gasp and a whispered curse outside the door of the room. Then a giggle and hushed conversation.

I rested my head on Jeremy’s back for a moment, giving myself up to the fact that we may have just outed ourselves as the most indiscreet couple on the seventh floor, and hoping to God we wouldn’t regret it as soon as we left the room.

“I think we might have been overheard.”

“I think we probably were. What are they gonna do, kick us out?”

“Maybe they’ll extend our stay.” Might as well be optimistic.

He laughed. “You need to get off me.”

“Must I?”

“Martin, come on. I need to get cleaned up.”

“You certainly do, you dirty, dirty boy,” I said in a fake British accent which made him laugh again.

* * *

By the time we'd showered and dressed it was midafternoon and we needed some lunch. I was a little scared to leave the room what with our noisy morning assignation but there was no point staying put. We were in London, for Christ's sake.

Luckily we didn't run into anyone on our way to the elevator. We shared a look of relief as we rode it down to the lobby.

I had sourced what looked like a good place for lunch on my phone so we stepped out of the hotel doors and onto Berkeley Street. It was a bright, sunny day, and the noise and chaos of central London assaulted us as we looked around, trying to orient ourselves.

I squinted down at my phone. "We need to find Curzon Street, which should be...this way." I started walking down the sidewalk to the right.

Jeremy followed. I wanted to take his hand to ensure he stayed near me in the busy street but I dismissed this as ridiculous. He wasn't an eight-year-old. And I wasn't sure how well two grown men holding hands would go over in Soho. Maybe nobody would care. But I didn't want to start our Holiday getting called names or being spat on.

As we walked and I got used to the traffic going opposite ways, I took in the ancient architecture around me. I wasn't sure if the tall buildings were Victorian or Edwardian, but they definitely weren't modern. At least, most of them. It reminded me of the neighbourhood we lived in back in Ottawa, but on a much larger and even more historic scale. This city was so much older than anywhere I'd ever been before.

We found Curzon Street and turned left, crossing at the intersection, finding the rush of traffic and pedestrians lighten up slightly. Here also, historic buildings on either side stretched as far as we could see. The street curved and meandered, until we eventually took a right on Queen Street and located the Tamarind Restaurant. Thank God for Google maps and images.

It was located in the bottom of one of the more boring, boxlike, modern buildings. I say *modern* meaning anything from the 19th century.

The doors opened to a crowded but expansive room with wood floors, beige walls and gold pillars. The delicious smells of tamarind and curry filled our nostrils while we waited for the hostess to seat us. Since there were only two of us it didn't take long to find a table, and we were ushered to a small one in a cozy corner.

"I'm absolutely starving," I said as we sat down and picked up the menus.

Jeremy arched an eyebrow and I was hit once again with how beautiful he was. “We had a very busy morning working up a good appetite.”

I blushed and couldn’t help smiling as I remembered our activities. “Yes, it was very...busy.”

Jeremy chuckled and bumped the toe of my boot under the table. I pulled my foot back and cleared my throat, embarrassed and charmed at the same time.

“Let’s just get a bunch of different plates and share them,” he suggested. We went through the menu and picked out some dishes we were familiar with and some we weren’t. When the server took our order he asked if we’d had Indian food before.

“Oh yes,” I replied. “We’re from Canada.”

The server visibly relaxed. “Excellent. Some of the other tourists complain about the spices and the heat.”

I laughed. “Why would they go to an Indian restaurant?”

“Because they hear it’s the thing to do in London, perhaps?” He took our order and disappeared.

I sipped my Kingfisher as Jeremy pulled out his phone.

“What are you doing?” I asked.

“I’m announcing our engagement,” he said blithely, thumbs working quickly. He glanced up with a smile. “Is that okay?”

I shrugged. He had a lot more social media followers than I did. I was just glad he was so excited about it. “Sure. Okay.”

“I need a photo,” he said and leaned in to take a joint selfie of the two of us. “Perfect.”

He put the phone away and took a sip of his coke. “I still can’t believe we’re here.”

“It’s pretty amazing. How are you feeling, by the way?”

He sat back in his chair and opened his arms with his palms up. “Good. A little tired.”

“Your legs, I mean,” I said gently. “Everything all right so far?”

He stared at me. “Martin, my legs are fine. You don’t get an MS relapse from flying in a plane.”

I blushed. “I know that. But maybe from the stress of your boyfriend acting like an idiot and taking too many sedatives.”

“Uh uh uh. Fiancé. My *fiancé* acting like an idiot.”

I laughed. "Right. Sorry."

"I'm fine, Martin. I'll be fine. I just have to make sure to get enough rest, that's all. I can rest just as easily here as in Ottawa."

I raised my eyebrows, skeptical. "Really?"

"Well, almost. Of course, you'll have to start behaving yourself so I don't have to keep taking," he leaned forward, "*disciplinary action.*"

My cock twitched and started to swell. "Fuck, Jeremy."

He grinned. "Just saying."

I cleared my throat and pretended to examine my fork. "Point taken." Suddenly, the strains of *Here Comes the Rain Again* became noticeable from my back pocket. It was Frankie's ringtone. "Shit," I said. "I'd better take this or she'll think I've died and call the London cops."

I stood up and fished the phone out of my pocket while making my way through the crowded room and out the front door. I stood beside the entry and covered my other ear, which wasn't necessary because I could easily hear Frankie screaming on the other end once I said hello.

"YOU'RE GETTING MARRIED!!!"

"Jesus Christ, Frankie!" I swore. "Calm down!"

"How the FUCK am I supposed to CALM DOWN, MARTIN? My brother's getting MARRIED!"

"Oh my God. If I'd know you were friends with Jeremy on Facebook or Instagram or what-fucking-ever I'd have stopped him from saying anything!"

"Have you seen his post, Martin? It's adorable!"

"No, I haven't actually. We're at a restaurant trying to have lunch."

"So how was the flight?" She asked. I could tell she was trying to calm herself down. "Did the Xanax work?"

I hesitated. "You could say that."

"And your room is nice?"

"It's wonderful. For sleeping and, uh, other stuff," I said, blushing as I remembered our morning antics.

She laughed. "Oh really? Do tell!"

"Nope. Not a word."

“Spoilsport. Oh, Martin, I’m just so excited for you!”

“I can tell.”

“Except that it means I can’t come to your wedding! Which totally sucks balls!”

“Oh yeah. I guess that does kinda suck. But we want to do it while we’re here.”

“I know, I know, and I’m so happy for you, Martin!”

“Thanks, Frankie.”

“I’ll let you go eat but CONGRATULATIONS!!!”

I had to hold the phone away from my ear again.

“Love you, Frankie. Talk soon.”

“Love you, bye! Tell Jeremy congratulations too!”

“I will. Bye.”

I hung up and put the phone back in my pocket. A young woman with spiky blond hair and about ten piercings met my gaze and gave me a thumbs up. “Congrats!”

I blushed but said, “Thanks” and made my way back inside. Jesus, I’d have to talk to Frankie about keeping her voice lower on the phone.

Jeremy didn’t seem to mind that I’d been gone so long. He was tucking into the plates of steaming food that had arrived.

“Everything okay?”

I nodded. “Yeah. I didn’t know you were friends with Frankie on Facebook.”

“Why wouldn’t I be?”

“Anyway, she saw your post and got a little excited.”

He laughed. “Yeah, she would.”

“Uh huh. She almost blew my ear off. She wanted me to pass on her very loud congratulations to you. She’s just mad she can’t come.”

“Oh yeah. I didn’t really think about that. Of course she’d want to.” His face fell.

“No, we are not changing our plans because of one person. I want to marry you here, in London.”

His frown turned into a smile. “Well, if you insist.”

“I do fucking insist. How’s the Korma?”

“It’s fucking Heaven, Martin. Try some.”

The food proved delicious and plentiful. After we'd filled ourselves and relaxed over cups of strong coffee we set out for the next part of our adventure.

Chapter Five

I finally let Jeremy have his way and we took an Uber to our next destination. I was impressed by the service's ease of use and visibility, and it did come out quite a bit cheaper than a regular London Cab. And because payment and tip was all done online, there was none of the usual fumbling for cash and paying the driver before leaving the car at your destination.

After we bid our friendly driver, Franco, goodbye, Jeremy took my hand and pulled me along behind him. There were so many people milling about Trafalgar Square on a Saturday afternoon that nobody really paid us any attention so I didn't feel self-conscious. I enjoyed the feeling of Jeremy's warm fingers wrapped around mine as we made our way into this most famous of London landmarks.

"There's the statue of Nelson," Jeremy pointed out as we gazed around us in the bright sunshine. "And the lions."

"Very cool," I replied, a grin splitting my face as the fact that we were in central London England on a holiday together blew me away once again. Thank goodness Jeremy had gotten me back for my stupid behaviour on the flight over and we were on even ground again. My ass was still a little sore from my earlier punishment but all it did was remind me how much fun we had when we were honest and open with each other.

Instinctively, I took my camera from its bag and lined up some shots. There were people everywhere—kids, adults, seniors—all smiling and enjoying the fine weather. I took several shots of the crowds and zeroed in on a few individuals that caught my attention. Then I told Jeremy I wanted a shot of him in front of one of the lions.

"Sure," he said, making his way to the base of the stone platform on which perched one of the majestic black creatures so iconic of Trafalgar Square. He waited politely while a young woman had her photo taken by her boyfriend and then took her place. Then he leaned up against the stone, crossed his ankles and stuffed his hands in the pockets of his leather jacket.

As I lined up the shot I was again struck by how fucking sexy he was. Dressed in a pair of dark jeans, wearing the brown Blundstone boots I'd got him for his birthday, and rocking a black t-shirt under his brown jacket, he looked incredible. Still so young, the layered brown hair he'd let grow a little longer than usual ruffled in the breeze as he gazed at me out of bold brown eyes.

That was my Jeremy for sure. So much braver and bolder than I'd ever be. But he'd got me here, and I wasn't going to waste this opportunity.

"Perfect," I said, snapping away while he lounged against the hard rock wall. "You look great!"

He laughed, and I kept shooting. "I always look good when you shoot me, Martin. You have some great skills," He added, bouncing his eyebrows suggestively.

I nodded. "Well, you know, I do need good material to work with. You never disappoint."

He grinned and rolled his eyes.

"Okay, now I want you to climb up there," I said, gesturing at the lion.

He looked up at it, then back at me. "You may have to boost me."

"Of course," I said, moving closer. I slung the camera around to my back and laced the fingers of my hands together, making a cradle for his boot. He put a hand on my shoulder and stepped into my hands.

"Ready?" I said.

"Yep."

I boosted him up so he could get a hold of the platform and pull himself the rest of the way up. I tried not to ogle his ass in the tight blue jeans too obviously as he scrambled onto the platform and stood beside the lion.

"Now what?" he asked.

"I don't know, you're good there. Just put one hand on the lion's ass and the other on his mane. And try to look regal."

"How the fuck am I supposed to look regal?"

"Lift your chin and look down at me like I'm your slave. Pretend the lion's your pet and you're just waiting for the right moment to release it on all of us." I know I sounded ridiculous but that was the look I wanted.

Instead of laughing and telling me to go fuck myself, surprisingly Jeremy did as I'd asked and pulled off a pretty good Roman Slave Master impression. Enough that my finger trembled slightly as I pushed the button on the camera and took the shots.

"That's great, perfect. Don't move. Now look over there. Okay. Now look back at me." I took shot after shot, realizing that a few people were standing near enough to hear.

"That guy is so hot!"

“I’m taking his picture!”

“I think he’s a model. Looks like a professional shoot.”

Then Jeremy took his right hand off the lion’s vast rump and turned slightly sideways, leaning into the animal’s mane, placing his hand against it tenderly and pretending to whisper into its giant ear. I took shot after shot, delighting in his willingness to go along with my suggestion.

“Awe, he’s cuddling it.”

“Too cute. And hot!”

“Janet, are you getting it? Take his picture!”

Then Jeremy turned and gave me a look that made my dick as hard as the stone plinth he stood on. He narrowed his eyes and stared fire at me like he wanted to do terrible, nasty things to me while his pet lion waited for his dinner.

As inappropriate as I felt with my jeans tight and a telling bulge showing no doubt, I kept taking the photos, until my breathing became quite heavy and I needed to stop, or I’d throw the camera down and climb up there with him. And we’d be arrested for indecent acts in a public space.

“Okay, that’s good,” I said. Understatement of the year. “Let’s get you down.”

He took my hand and jumped down, smiling at the onlookers, some of whom asked if he was a model and if this was a magazine shoot.

“Yeah, but I’m not on the job right now. We’re just goofing around.” He said, gesturing toward me.

I quirked one side of my lip up. “I can’t help taking pictures of this guy.”

“No kidding!”

“I can see why!”

I didn’t really mind the attention, and I totally understood it. But I wanted to have Jeremy back to myself, so I took his hand and pulled him away towards the steps that led up to the National Gallery. “Show off,” I teased.

He shrugged his shoulders. “You’re the one showing off right now, Martin.” He glanced pointedly at my crotch. “We’d better get you inside so you can hide that weapon.”

I blushed furiously, glancing down at the noticeable bulge in my jeans and holding my camera over it. “It’s your fault and you know it.”

“I just followed instructions and looked at you.”

“That’s all it takes sometimes.”

We moved quickly up the steps and around the side, where there were even more steps. I was glad Jeremy’s legs were okay but it wasn’t very comfortable climbing that many stairs with a major hard-on. Hopefully it would go away soon.

Once inside, I asked for a guide from the lady at the information desk and we followed the crowd up the main stairs to the galleries on Level 2.

“Holy fucking shit.” Jeremy expressed his amazement at the architecture and beauty surrounding him with his usual directness. “I mean, fuck Martin. This place puts our own gallery to shame and it’s a beautiful building.”

As we stared around us at the marble accents and gigantic archways, the polished wood floors and the enormous rooms stretching in all directions, I couldn’t help but agree.

“Quite something, isn’t it?” I reached out and took his hand again, and he turned, meeting my eyes. “Thanks for letting me come with you.”

He smiled. “You mean, to London?”

I nodded. “Yeah.”

“Martin, it wouldn’t have been the same without you. I’d probably still be in the hotel room jerking off to your voice on my phone right now.”

I laughed, dropping his hand and shaking my head. “You nut.” I glanced at the people near us but they didn’t seem to have heard him, thank goodness.

“It’s the truth. I’m so glad you came with me. Now let’s go look at some old paintings.”

We spent the following two hours plus touring the Sainsbury Wing, soaking up the visceral and romantic paintings of some of the greatest masters of the Early Renaissance: Botticelli, Titian, and Caravaggio to name a few.

I could tell Jeremy was enjoying himself because his cheeks were flushed, his eyes bright and his exclamations over the paintings were constant and profuse. He kept his voice hushed but I could still hear the adrenaline and excitement, and when he’d grab my shirt sleeve to show me something he’d found, it made my heart sing.

Quieter in my appreciation of the incredible works of art, I tried to absorb it all and also enjoy Jeremy’s enthusiasm for something I wasn’t sure he’d actually be into. He surprised me again, like he always did. Some of his insights into this or that figure or the way the artist had

conveyed a theme impressed me greatly and opened my own eyes up to new perceptions of old classics. Perhaps it was the age difference between us, but viewing these paintings with Jeremy was like looking through a new pair of eyes at what I had seen before, though never in such immediate splendour.

My eyes and brain began to fatigue before Jeremy seemed to, although he'd gotten quieter as the time passed and evening began to descend. At about six thirty we found ourselves in a quieter space, many people having left to find a spot for supper.

"Look at this, Martin," Jeremy said yet again, pulling me over to a large painting in a corner of the huge room we were in. It depicted another religious scene full of larger than life figures and vibrant colour. We were almost alone, now that the earlier crowds had thinned. There were only a couple of older women at the far end of the room.

"It's magnificent," I said. Then I turned to look at Jeremy's profile as he gazed upon it with the awe of a child. "*You're magnificent.*"

Jeremy glanced at me, eyes widening at the intensity of my gaze. "Thank you," he said.

"For what?"

"For bringing me here. I'd never have come if it weren't for you."

I glanced over my shoulder quickly, seeing that we were unobserved for the moment, and stepped closer, bringing my hand up to his lightly stubbled cheek. His pupils darkened and before I could do it he'd brought his lips to mine in a soft attack. I opened my mouth under his subdued assault and he pushed his tongue inside, daring me to kiss him back in this public place.

I *did* dare. I couldn't fucking help myself. And when the small sounds of a child crying broke through my passion it took some willpower to break away.

I glanced down and saw a boy of about five or six years standing beside a central pillar, sniffing and regarding us with horror and fear.

Oh hell.

"It's okay, we were just...I'm sorry if we scared you," I stammered, not knowing what to say.

This is why I don't kiss in public.

Jeremy recovered more quickly. He crouched down and asked the boy the most obvious question in a surprisingly soft and stable voice. "What's wrong?"

“I can’t find my mum!” The little boy cried, seeming oblivious to our PDA and more frightened of his own situation.

Thank Christ.

“Don’t worry,” Jeremy assured him, “We’ll help you find her. We’re from Canada. Have you heard of Canada?”

The boy nodded. “It’s cold there.”

Jeremy laughed and glanced up at me, probably making sure I was all right. “Sometimes. What’s your name?”

“R-R-Rupert,” the boy said. “I can’t find my mum.”

My heart rate calmed somewhat, I said, “I’ll check the other room. You stay with Rupert.”

He nodded and asked the boy another question.

As soon as I had gone through to the next room I saw who I assumed was Rupert’s mother at the far end, frantically looking around and talking on her cell phone. She looked about thirty with shoulder-length wavy black hair and cat’s eyeglasses. She was wearing jeans and a long, burgundy sweater over a pretty blouse.

I waved and walked quickly over to her.

“I’ve lost my son,” she said, her voice tinged with panic. “He was here one minute and then—”

“It’s all right, he’s in the next room. My—” I didn’t know what to call Jeremy in this circumstance so I settled quickly on the most innocuous option. “...friend is calming him down. He’s quite upset.”

“Oh God, so am I! Thank God you found him. I’m bloody losing my mind...”

“Come on,” I led her over and around the corner. She spoke into her phone. “It’s okay, he’s here. Sorry to worry you, Elliot!”

Jeremy was engaged in a deep conversation with Rupert and the child didn’t even notice his mother until she was almost upon him.

“Rupert! Where have you been? I couldn’t find you!” The woman said with substantial relief as the child turned to her and smiled.

“Mum!” He said happily and ran into her arms. “I was watching the men kissing and then I couldn’t see you anymore.”

My heart leapt into my throat and I shared an alarmed look with Jeremy who had straightened up.

“I—I beg your pardon?” The woman asked her son as I closed my eyes and awaited a very public humiliation.

“I’m so sorry,” Jeremy said, in that same calm voice. “I, uh, kissed my boyfriend. I didn’t know there was anyone near us and I never would have kissed him in front of—”

“They’re from Canada!” Rupert told his mother who, luckily had yet to stand and berate us for our indiscretion. “They kiss just like you and Daddy do. But it’s so funny because they’re boys. It was nice,” he said, with a smile. “But then I couldn’t see you anywhere and I got upset.”

“Well, I’m here now, sweetheart, and everything’s just fine,” the woman said, glancing at me and giving me a reassuring smile. Now I wanted to kiss *her*.

“This is Jeremy and he was telling me all about Canada and how they eat beavertails there.”

“Not the tails of actual beavers, though,” Jeremy added. “It’s kind of like a donut that looks like a beaver tail.”

“But donuts are round!” Rupert said like he was the definitive authority on all things donut.

“Not in Canada, maybe,” the woman said, smoothing her hand over Rupert’s brown hair and taking his hand before standing up.

“We have round donuts in Canada. Don’t worry,” Jeremy assured the boy who did seem quite relieved.

“Thank you so much for looking after him,” Rupert’s mother said with a wide smile and an offered hand to Jeremy. “I’m Alice.”

Jeremy shook her hand. “Glad to meet you.” He touched my shoulder. “This is my boyfriend, Martin. Well, my fiancé actually.”

Way to push your luck.

But Alice smiled and offered her hand to me. “It’s lovely to meet you, Martin.”

“What’s a foncey?” Rupert asked.

We all looked down at him. Alice was the first to speak. “It means that Jeremy and Martin are going to get married soon.”

I felt like I was in the twilight zone. I didn’t even realize I’d been holding my breath until I let it out in a rush.

“Like you and Daddy. That’s why they were kissing.”

Alice smiled up at us. “Yes, just like Mummy and Daddy.”

“I guess they must love each other then,” Rupert added.

Alice laughed—a rich deep sound full of warmth. “Of course they do. That’s why people get married.”

I cleared my throat. I didn’t know what to say.

So far it had been Jeremy doing the talking but I genuinely liked Alice and Rupert and I felt I should say something. “Thank you,” I told her, trying to convey with my gaze just how grateful I was. “For explaining it to him so simply.”

Alice shrugged. “As far as I’m concerned, it *is* that simple. You know, we Brits pride ourselves on our liberal views.”

“I thought you were all staunch traditionalists,” Jeremy said with a grin.

Alice snorted. “Well, I’m certainly not. Nor any of my friends. I attended a gay wedding just last summer, I’ll have you know.” She puffed out her chest in mock defiance.

“I want to get ice cream,” Rupert spoke up suddenly. “Or maybe donuts. Can we, mummy?”

Alice adjusted her purse and frowned. “We need to go home and see Daddy, though. He’s making supper and we don’t want to ruin our meal by eating donuts.”

“Can we get some for dessert?”

“Maybe.”

Rupert’s eyes lit up. “Thanks for finding my mum,” he said to me and then turned to Jeremy. “And thanks for telling me about Canada.”

“Anytime,” Jeremy replied, obviously charmed.

“You should come over to my house and I can show you my LEGOs.”

“I’d love to.”

Alice pulled out her phone again. “Do you mind if I take your phone number, Jeremy? We’d love to have you and Martin for tea...”

Jeremy shrugged. “Sure.” He glanced my way. “We’d love that. We don’t know very many people in London.”

Rupert smiled wide. “You know me and mum now!”

“Yes, we do. Thank goodness,” Jeremy affected relief and Rupert’s smile got wider.

Jeremy gave Alice his phone number which she added to her contacts. She put her phone away and thanked us again.

As they walked away, she turned and gave us a heartfelt grin. “It really was lovely to meet you!”

“Thank you,” I said, gazing after her, still in a mild state of shock. That entire situation could have gone in a completely different direction.

Jeremy and I stood in silence for several moments.

“Are you sorry?” he said finally, gaging my expression.

“What?”

“That I kissed you?”

I stared at Jeremy and shook my head. “No.”

“You looked like you were going to have a heart attack when you saw the kid.”

I nodded. “Yeah, well I thought he was traumatized by our obvious passion.”

Jeremy laughed. “Nah. Kids are tougher than they look. Plus they don’t get the subtext at that age.”

“Thank God,” I said. “There was quite a bit of subtext to that kiss.”

Jeremy raised his eyebrows, moving closer. “Oh yeah? And what was the subtext exactly, Martin?”

“I’ll explain back at the hotel.”

The jet lag had caught up with me again and all I wanted was to be with Jeremy in our luxurious suite.

* * *

“Oh, and Martin?” Jeremy said from his lounging position in the big king bed in our room.

“What?”

“Can you get me a chocolate bar?”

“What kind?”

“I don’t care. They probably have different ones here anyway. Something with nuts.”

I’d told Jeremy I was going to get a coke from the machine down the hall. We were trying to stay awake until eleven or so, but it was only nine thirty and we’d already had sex and afterwards a bite to eat at Nightingales, the hotel restaurant.

Jeremy was looking at his phone and I was just trying to stay awake.

“I know you’re a big fan of nuts,” I said.

“Very funny.”

I slipped out the door and walked down the hall to the machine. There were the usual soft drinks, along with some unique, British ones. Though sorely tempted by the Tango Cherry drink, I really needed the dedicated caffeine of a coke at the moment. I got one for Jeremy too and then perused the snacks in the other machine. There were a lot of strange options, as well as some familiar ones. I ended up getting a few for Jeremy—a Starbar, a Double Decker, and a Caramac. Then a Yorkie bar for myself. When in Rome, right? It seemed a fairly simple way to step out of our comfort zones.

When I got back to the room, Jeremy was sitting up straighter and grinning down at his phone like a fucking lunatic.

I threw the chocolate bars onto his lap and put his coke on the bedside table, opening mine and taking a sip. “What’s up?”

“We’re getting all the love,” he replied and held out his phone.

There was the selfie he’d taken of us at the Indian restaurant, and over it he’d posted:

I said YES! We’re getting married in London!

There were fifty-nine reactions—Likes, Loves, and Wows.

“Jesus. News travels fast.”

Jeremy laughed. “I can’t keep up with all the comments.”

“All of them good, I hope?”

He blinked at me. “What did you expect?”

“Well, at least one along the lines of, ‘Really? You’re tying yourself down to *that* old guy?’”

Jeremy raised his eyebrows. “You’re not old, Martin. And I’d gladly let you tie me down any day of the week.”

And now I was hard again. How did he do that? I guess if I could get rock hard in an instant from a few words out of Jeremy’s mouth, I couldn’t be *that* old.

“I didn’t realize you had so many Facebook friends. Fifty-nine reactions? It’s like putting it up on a billboard or something.”

“Well, why not?” Jeremy said. “I want to shout it to the world. I’m marrying Martin Fucking Lewis!”

I grinned, blushing. “How did you know I’d changed my middle name?”

Jeremy picked up one of the chocolate bars. “A Starbar?”

“For my Star boy.”

“Have you told anyone?”

“Huh?”

“About getting married?”

“I talked to Frankie, remember?”

“Yeah, but she saw it on *my* Facebook.”

That was true. I hadn’t told anyone yet. I didn’t use social media the way Jeremy did and I hadn’t really had the chance to phone anyone. Plus, I only had a few close friends and they could really wait until we got back to find out.

“Well, I haven’t posted about it if that’s what you mean.”

“How come?” He stared at me curiously. “Aren’t you excited?”

I sat on the bed beside him, putting my coke down and unwrapping my Yorkie bar.

“Jeremy, of course I’m excited. I’m fucking ecstatic. It was my idea to do it here, and not wait until we got home.”

He nodded. “Okay. And you don’t care that I’ve told the world?”

I arched a brow. “Other than the fact it made Frankie lose her shit and call me overseas, no. I think it’s cute.” I said, kissing him on the nose. “I’m glad you’re this excited. I feel like the luckiest guy in the world.”

Jeremy smiled. “Yeah, that’s ’cause you are. Don’t forget it.”

I laughed, taking a bite of chocolate. “Never.”

“And, Martin?”

“Yeah?”

“I mean it about letting you tie me down whenever, and wherever, you fucking want to.”

He told me, eyes blazing.

“Jesus Christ, Jeremy.”

“Awake now?”

I answered his burning look with my own. “I don’t think I could go to sleep if I wanted to. And I don’t want to anymore. But we don’t have anything to use for that...purpose.”

Jeremy rose up onto his knees, letting the bedcovers, chocolate bars and his phone slide off his lap, so he was face to face with me. “Oh, I’m sure we can think of something.”

There was a knock at the door. We looked over.

What the fuck?

A male voice with a British accent said, “I have a delivery for a Mr. Lewis and Mr. Trask?”

I got up and walked over to the door after exchanging a confused look with Jeremy.

Standing in the hall with a huge cellophane-wrapped basket was a man dressed in the hotel’s standard uniform.

“I’m Mr. Lewis,” I said, taking the basket from the man. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, Sir. Enjoy your stay.”

I shut the door, carrying the gift basket over to the bed.

“I should have known,” I said wryly, placing it down and taking the card from where it was taped to the cellophane. “Three guesses as to who this is from.”

“Fuck, I love your sister!” Jeremy said, peering at the basket’s contents. “Martin, there’s champagne and chocolate in here. Lots of chocolate!”

I held up the card and read it out to him.

To Martin and Jeremy on your second night in London. CONGRATULATIONS on your impending nuptials! I wish I could be there. You’d better take lots and lots of pictures! Love Frankie and Simon.

I sat down beside the huge basket. “This must have cost a bloody fortune.”

“Look at you, using the colloquial language. And, yeah, it must have. It’s so sweet of them.” Jeremy said, gazing at me with something besides gratitude in his eyes. “But now we have a big decision to make.”

“We do?”

He nodded. “Do we want to enjoy *this* now, or do you want to tie me to the bed and fuck me?”

All the blood left my face and hightailed it to my groin. “I—I—”

“Thought so.”

Chapter Six

Luckily, we'd each packed emergency neckties, just in case we wanted to go to a fancy restaurant or something. It was a comment on our relationship that we ended up using them as ipso facto bondage equipment instead.

If there was a better way to fight the effects of jet lag than tying your sexy as hell boyfriend—I mean, fiancé—to a hotel bed and teasing him mercilessly before giving him the fucking of his life, I didn't know what it could be.

"Ah, Martin, yeah, do that, do that..." Jeremy squirmed as I kissed my way up his inner thigh and sucked one of his balls into my mouth while I grabbed the base of his erection and squeezed. "Oh hell yeah," he moaned.

"Shhhhh, keep it down," I suggested, knowing it was late and not wanting to wake the rest of the hotel.

"Oh *fuck*," he gasped as my tongue stroked up his cock from base to tip. "*You* try keeping it down while I'm doing that to *you* sometime, why doncha?"

I laughed and lifted my head up to take in the beautiful sight before me—Jeremy stretched out naked on his back on the rumpled king-size bed, arms spread, wrists fastened securely to the top corners. I'd used one of my black dress socks to blindfold him.

Then, inspiration hit.

"Hold on a second," I said as I got up, adjusted the growing erection in my boxer briefs and walked over to the table where I'd placed Frankie's gift.

Jeremy must have heard me crinkling the cellophane because he said, "What are you doing, Martin? You're not going to enjoy our treats without me?"

"Don't be silly. I'm going to enjoy them *on* you."

"Oh God. What is this? Fifty Shades of Earl Grey?"

I laughed. "Be quiet. It'll be fun."

"It had better be sexy."

"I'll do my best. Goddamn, you look good from here."

Standing by the table, looking down at him, all tied up and waiting for me, was something else. And he'd have to wait because it might take awhile to get this gift basket opened up.

“Stop staring at me and do what you need to do, Martin. Please,” he begged, pulling at his bonds.

“Geeze, you’re a bossy sub,” I said, but I couldn’t wait to get back over there.

I finally got the ribbon off and opened the cellophane, taking out the bottle of bubbly that was its centrepiece.

“Holy fuck.”

“What?”

“This isn’t sparkling wine. This is *actual champagne*.”

“Whoa. Maybe you shouldn’t waste it on a sex game then...”

There wasn’t a whole lot of conviction in that remark. I felt like he was simply trying to be responsible and thoughtful.

Well fuck that.

“Waste? When is a sex game ever a waste, Jeremy?”

“Yeah, you’re right. Get it open then, and get your ass over here, Martin.”

I clucked at his impatience and set about removing the foil wrap and untwisting the wire cage on the cork. Jeremy must have heard my little giggle.

“What’s so funny?”

“I’m taking the cork cage off. Get it? *Cork cage*?”

“Very funny, Martin. Keep making bad puns and I’ll have to safe word.”

My smile grew wider. I put the small wire cage on the table and tilted the bottle toward the living area, away from myself, Jeremy and the window. Holding the cork firmly, I slowly twisted the bottle. After a few moments I heard a beautiful pop and the cork came loose.

“Ta da.” I held up the bottle and the cork, then realized that my audience couldn’t see a thing.

“That sounded really fucking sexy, Martin. Too bad I’m blindfolded,” Jeremy murmured, licking his lips. “Are you coming?”

“In a minute. Be patient.”

Jeremy sighed, pulling against his wrist restraints while I unwrapped a container of chocolate-covered strawberries. Taking my time, I sauntered back to the bed, placing two champagne glasses on the nightstand. The champagne made a delicious sound as I poured and I

couldn't help licking my lips in anticipation, both for the expensive drink and to be able to get my lips on Jeremy again.

"To us," I said, picking up both glasses and clinking them together.

"Nice, Martin."

I took a sip of mine, then tipped the other glass ever so slightly so that a dribble of champagne landed on Jeremy's lips.

"Open your mouth."

He licked the bubbly off his lips and obeyed my command. I bent to take his lips in mine, inhaling his groan of surprise.

"You tricked me," he said with a grin when I pulled back. "I thought I was getting more champagne."

"You want more?"

"Sure. Yeah, I want more," he panted.

I dribbled a bit more onto his lips and watched, entranced, as his tongue chased a drip from the corner of his mouth.

"Fuck, that's hot," I hissed.

"Mmmm. More, please."

I did the same thing again, and again. It dripped down his chin and over his stubbled cheeks but he got enough to quiet him for the moment.

"Want a strawberry, Jeremy?"

"Mmm. Yeah."

"Open."

I carefully placed the chocolate covered tip of a strawberry between his lips and watched him bite down. My dick swelled even more at the sexy sight.

"Oh, hell," I murmured.

"Mmm, tastes delicious," Jeremy said. "More."

I spent the next few moments feeding him strawberries and enjoying the way his lips and mouth moved as he chewed and savoured them.

"Martin?"

"Hmm," I said, distracted by his mouth.

"That's enough."

“No more strawberries?”

He shook his head slowly back and forth.

“Then, what do you want?” I asked.

When a wicked smile broke across his face and he licked his lips with exaggerated leisure, I pretty much knew. And he knew that I knew.

“What do you think I want?”

I played dumb. “I haven’t the faintest idea.”

“Your dick. My mouth. Now.”

“Jesus. I thought *I* was in charge.”

“Then take charge, for fuck’s sake, and shut me up with that big dick of yours,” he said, making me scramble to take off my boxer briefs and get into position.

Jeremy had always been the one in charge. Who was I kidding? From our first foray into the world of light kink he’d told me exactly what to do and how to do it, being ever more experienced and adventurous in this area than I.

And I loved it. My cock had been slowly seeping fluid for the past half hour and now it was ready for some direct attention.

I grabbed a pillow and propped Jeremy’s head up, giving my cock a few rubs in the meantime. He kept licking his lips like he couldn’t wait to have me in there.

Getting into position, my knees on either side of him, erection bobbing in front of his face, I tried to calm my desire. But when I grabbed my cock and bounced the head against his wet lips I couldn’t help the whimper that escaped.

He opened wide, welcoming my leaking prick inside, the blindfold over his eyes giving the image a beautiful depravity.

“Oh, *God*,” I exclaimed as he closed his lips, sucking and swirling his tongue around me. “Oh, yeah.” I had to bite my lip to keep from groaning too loudly, the heat of his mouth enveloping me.

Jeremy moaned, the vibration resonating through my cock down to my balls. I gripped the wooden headboard and stared down at the entrancing image of my cock in his mouth. I couldn’t help but thrust gently in and out while he worked me.

“Oh God, Jeremy, fuck!” I swore as the sensations increased. Reaching down I pushed the blindfold off his face. When his brown eyes met mine I felt a surge of excitement and a

tightening that warned me of imminent orgasm. But I grabbed the base of my cock and pulled out of his mouth before it happened.

“Stop, I can’t hold on. I’ll come.” I confessed.

“So? Come in my mouth, Martin.” That entreaty almost sent me over the edge but I shook my head and moved down so I lay atop him.

“Not this time,” I said, breathing hard and feeling our cocks bump together. Jeremy moaned.

“Then, what?” he asked, as desperate as I.

I sighed and kissed him slowly, leisurely, as I snaked a hand between us and circled our cocks, holding them together and thrusting gently.

“This,” I said, and did it again, eliciting a deep groan from Jeremy and a gasp from myself. “Just this.”

Slick with Jeremy’s saliva my cock moved easily against his for a few moments. But it became obvious we needed something more.

“Hold on,” I said, reaching out for a packet of lube that I quickly ripped open with my teeth.

“You keep saying that,” he sighed.

“Sorry.”

“It’s okay. Just hurry the fuck up, Martin. I need to come.”

“I know, I know,” I said. “So do I, believe me.”

When my hand was fully coated with lube I wrapped it around both of us again and really started to move.

It didn’t take long before Jeremy was uttering curses and thrusting up against me, helping me drive us toward a quick and enjoyable finish.

I felt him tense and heard him cry out as his cock pulsed and shot. Head thrown back against the pillow, mouth agape as the orgasm took him, the sight was enough to get me off. I swore as I came all over my hand and him, trembling with exertion and euphoria.

Finding his mouth with mine I kissed him tenderly, then remembered his hands were still tied to the bedposts. I pulled back and released him, loving the way his arms immediately circled me and pulled me close.

“Martin, that was amazing.”

“Yeah, it kinda was, wasn’t it?”

After we cleaned up and were getting ready to hit the sack, I glanced at the clock on the bedside table.

“Well, we made it ’till midnight.”

“Yep. But now I need to sleep,” Jeremy yawned. “I’m fucking bushed.”

I crawled under the covers while Jeremy checked his phone again.

“Oh,” he said.

“Hmm?”

“There’s a text from Felix.”

My brain was exhausted from our lovemaking and hadn’t caught up yet. “Who?”

“Felix Kureck. The photographer.”

“Oh yeah?”

“Yeah. Welcoming me to London and asking if I want to go for lunch tomorrow—his treat.”

Now my brain was awake. I cleared my throat. “Just you?”

“Well...”

“Did you tell him your boyfriend was coming along on this trip?”

“Well, no. Not yet.”

I tried to maintain an even tone even though I was a little ticked he hadn’t mentioned me to the guy yet. “Do you want to go for lunch with him?”

“Of course. But only if you can come. I’ll text him that you’re with me and we can both go.”

I nodded, relieved. “Okay. I’d love that.” It made me a bit nervous that this Felix guy had invited Jeremy to lunch. I mean, the man was pretty famous. Did he treat all his models this way? Or just the ones he wanted to fuck?

“What are you thinking?” Jeremy said, cocking his head to the side as he typed his reply.

I shook my head. “Nothing. It’s nothing.”

“We didn’t really have any formal plans for tomorrow anyway.”

“No. It will be great to meet the guy.” I tried to sound sincere.

Jeremy plugged his phone in and snuggled under the blankets with me.

“Night,” he said, kissing me sleepily.

“Good night,” I said, wondering what Mr. Kureck’s intentions really were with Jeremy, and not liking the suspicions that were beginning to form in my mind.

* * *

When my eyes opened the following morning I was pleased to see that it was eight fifteen. Looked like our brains/bodies were adjusting to the time zone.

I turned to look beside me and smiled. Jeremy lay with his back to me, stretched out under the blankets, one arm beside his head, peacefully sleeping. He always seemed so benign and innocent in these moments. It made me shudder to think of some of the kinkier aspects of his personality. In a good way, that is. Even so, the way he looked in sleep tugged at my heartstrings and I had to force myself not to touch him. As much as I yearned to kiss him gently on the forehead I didn’t want to wake him.

I lifted the sheets carefully and slid out of the large bed, padding over to the curtains. Sliding my fingers along the edge of the heavy green fabric, I peeked out, making sure not to let in too much light. Still excited by the view of downtown London out these windows I saw grey clouds and rain, probably a more typical weather day than yesterday had been. I didn’t mind the rain, though. It made the hotel room feel cozy and warm.

Grabbing my phone from the coffee table I checked my messages. Nothing major, just a text from a buddy asking if I wanted to meet him for lunch—he didn’t know I was across the ocean. I sent a quick reply letting him know where I was and postponing until I was back on the continent. Then I sent a quick text to Frankie, thanking her for the beautiful gift basket and telling her to convey my appreciation to Simon as well. It had been such a thoughtful thing for them to do.

Then I walked to the small coffeemaker and started it brewing. I was desperate for a cup of coffee. I’d left the curtain pulled slightly aside so there was enough light to manage without flipping a switch and waking Jeremy. But when the coffee started brewing the little machine made so much noise that it ended up rousing him anyway.

He grunted, rolling onto his back to see what I was up to.

“Sorry,” I said.

He grunted sleepily, looking at the window with heavy lids.

“Want a coffee?”

He sat up, yawning. “Sure.”

“Here, you can have this one.” I took the mug of fresh brew over to him.

“Thanks.” He took it from me, cradling it in his hands and inhaling the delicious scent.

His hair was mussed from sleeping and the shadow of stubble on his chin looked very sexy.

I walked back to the machine and started brewing another cup.

“I thought maybe I’d check out the gym across the street this morning. You want to come?”

I said.

He nodded. “Yeah.”

“Did Felix text you back?”

“I’ll check,” he said. He reached for his phone and checked his notifications. “He’s fine with you being there.”

“Okay. Good.” I felt relieved, although what had I expected? That the guy would tell Jeremy he couldn’t bring his partner to lunch? I still felt uneasy about the request. But Jeremy had travelled all the way from Canada for the shoot. Maybe Felix was grateful and did only want to welcome him to London. It was a nice thing to do, really. And I could offer to pay for my own lunch.

“We’re supposed to meet him at Osteria Romana at one o’clock.”

“Italian?”

“I’m looking it up.”

I took my coffee and joined him on the bed, peering over his shoulder as he brought up the website for the restaurant.

“Mmm. Italian.” My favourite.

“Looks like it.” Jeremy checked out the menus. “Seems fairly upscale. I can’t pronounce half of these dishes.”

“Oh.” I felt a bit guilty that I’d invited myself along, but there was no way I was going to let Jeremy have lunch with this guy on his own.

Jeremy shrugged. “He told me after he said you could join us, so he could have picked a cheaper place if he’d wanted to.”

I nodded. “True. Anyway, I’ll offer to pay for my meal.”

Jeremy glanced at me, raising his eyebrows. “It’s going to be pricey.”

“Then I’ll just have a salad.”

“Whatever. If I were you I’d keep quiet and get whatever you want. I’m sure the guy’s loaded.”

I found myself staring at Jeremy, remembering the way he’d looked in slumber compared to the way he looked now—hot as fuck and ready to get into trouble.

He cocked his head. “What?”

“You’re sweet when you’re sleeping, you know.”

He smiled, not sure how to react. “And now?”

I shrugged. “Sweet is not the word that comes to mind.”

He gave me a devilish wink that made my dick twitch and sipped his coffee.

* * *

Jeremy did his injection and we each had a granola bar and a juice box in the hotel room before getting into our sweats and heading downstairs. I’d phoned this place last night to make sure we could pay per visit and discovered there was actually a discount for hotel guests.

The facility seemed pretty high end, but the fee was reasonable. And we lucked out because it wasn’t that crowded at nine on a Sunday morning. There were a decent number of people but the venue was so large—two levels—we had plenty of room and lots of available equipment.

The first time I ever accompanied Jeremy to a gym (the GoodLife in the Byward Market back home) he’d gone out of his way to impress me with an intense workout on the treadmill. A workout that might have been influential in a pseudo MS relapse he experienced a few days later, in the middle of the night, at my place.

He never pushed himself too hard at the gym these days, knowing that would only cause issues that he would rather avoid. He took his health very seriously, as a working model who didn’t always get enough sleep on assignment he knew he had to make every effort to optimize his well being.

I started on the machines while Jeremy headed for the treadmills. He usually did about thirty minutes of power walking before he started free weights, then went back and did a ten-minute jog with ten minutes power walking and a five minute cool down. We made it to the gym at least three times a week back home, four if we were lucky, and it felt nice to work out again. Since getting together with Jeremy I’d quit my half-a-pack-a-day smoking habit and lost fifteen pounds, which meant I wasn’t as easily intimidated in fitness settings. However, I still bristled

when I noticed anyone, man or woman, eyeing my boyfriend/fiancé, which happened often enough. Today was no exception.

I was working my hamstrings when I noticed this muscle-bound, bearded fellow get onto the treadmill beside Jeremy's. At first he seemed involved in working the settings on the machine, but once he started moving I noticed frequent side glances at my boy. Jeremy seemed oblivious, or else he just wanted to stay in the zone and didn't give a damn, which seemed more likely.

But I couldn't help clanging the weights on my machine deliberately like some novice gym goer just to distract the guy. It didn't work.

Anyway, I knew by this time I was helpless to prevent bystanders from eye-fucking Jeremy. It was just something I had to put up with. I got on one of the stationary bikes and tried to work off my jealousy/frustration that way.

After about an hour we'd finished what we needed to do and went back to the hotel to shower and change. I hung our ties off a hanger in the bathroom and, luckily, after two long steamy showers in the enclosed space, most of the wrinkles from their use as wrist bondage came out.

"Works every time," I winked at Jeremy.

"Uh huh. Use your ties as bondage equipment often?"

I laughed. "We have the proper equipment at home, remember?" I elbowed him in the side, just above the small white towel that was wrapped around his narrow hips.

"Yeah, I seem to recall that," he grinned.

I shrugged. "But, in a pinch..."

"Good thinking on your part."

"Necessity is the mother of invention." I nodded toward the ties. "I just know how to get wrinkles out of clothes the easy way because I hate to iron."

I ran my fingers along his freshly shaved cheek and kissed him gently. "Smooth."

"You too," he eyed my face. "But you could do with a nice organic facial."

"Down boy," I said, although my dick twitched at the idea. "We're going to lunch."

"Maybe later?"

I laughed. "Maybe."

We got dressed in the more formal clothes we'd packed since the restaurant seemed so fancy. Jeremy in black jeans, a white button up, tie and grey blazer, me in grey slacks, navy button up, tie and charcoal blazer.

I stole up behind Jeremy as he struggled with his tie. "Let me."

He dropped his hands while I made quick work of it. "There."

"Thanks," he said, turning. "How do I look?"

My eyes raked over him, body responding as usual. "Too sexy to go out in public?"

He gave me a look. "Nice try, bucko. Please try to reign in your ever-present possessiveness during lunch? I really want to get along with this guy. This could really move my modelling career forward, y'know?"

I swallowed and nodded. It might be difficult but I was a guest of Jeremy's in this situation, not to mention a guest of Felix's, so I would behave myself if it killed me. Hopefully, I'd get a good vibe from the guy right off and I'd be able to relax. I didn't want to think about the alternative.

Chapter Seven

On the way to the restaurant Jeremy's phone binged.

"It's Alice. She wants to know if we want to come for afternoon tea on Tuesday."

I smiled. "I'm up for it if you are."

"Hey, I'll take free food and good company whenever it's offered. Especially in a foreign country."

He texted her back and her reply came quickly. "Why do women use so many emoji's?" Jeremy asked, laughing and turning his phone to vibrate only.

"Make sure she texts you her address and we can google map it later."

"Yeah, she did. I just hope her husband's as nice as she and Rupert are. Otherwise it could make for an uncomfortable afternoon."

I shrugged. "I'm sure he will be. She wouldn't invite us if she thought he'd be uncomfortable."

But Jeremy was right. It was really hard to know, until you'd actually met someone, whether the whole gay thing would be an issue. We could only hope it wouldn't.

Our Uber let us off in front of the restaurant in Knightsbridge. We were about ten minutes late but, since we were in a strange city and didn't have a car at our disposal, there wasn't much we could do about it.

The small space was tucked into a narrow alley off the main street. I was glad we'd googled it or we would have been a bit lost. Jeremy had texted Felix that we were running late and Felix had let us know he'd already arrived and had reserved a table.

When we walked inside the small restaurant, my eyes were first drawn to the geometric wall of wine bottles facing the direction from which we had entered. Then I glanced around the room and noticed an imposing presence at one of the larger tables.

Jeremy had already seen the man and now approached him with his hand extended. "So sorry we're late."

The man, Felix Kureck, I presumed, stood and regarded Jeremy with instant approval in his vivid blue eyes. He glanced briefly at me but turned back to Jeremy and took his hand.

“It’s a pleasure to finally meet you in person, Mr. Trask,” he said in a measured voice with a hint of an unidentifiable accent. It wasn’t British. French, perhaps?

“This is my partner, well, my *fiancé* actually, Martin Lewis,” Jeremy said, introducing me.

I held out my hand and Mr. Kureck shook it, smiling at me with a little less warmth than he’d directed towards Jeremy. “Mr. Lewis.”

“Mr. Kureck. How are you?”

Felix shrugged. “Quite hungry, my friend. I’m afraid I neglected to breakfast.”

“We didn’t have much either,” Jeremy said quickly. “We’re eager to try this place. The online reviews were excellent. Thank you so much for suggesting it.”

He was babbling, eager and excited to make a good impression. I’d never seen him quite like this before and it threw me. Usually, he was so confident and at ease with people. But I knew he thought this Kureck guy was a huge deal. I wasn’t so ready to be impressed or intimidated.

“I know you offered to treat the both of us to lunch, Mr. Kureck, but it seems only fair that I pay for myself,” I said graciously, needing to be independent of his goodwill until I had gotten more of a sense of his character.

“Felix, please. And that’s very considerate of you, Mr. Lewis. I had intended to treat Jeremy but I don’t mind extending the offer to anyone of importance to him.”

I nodded. “Thank you. That’s very kind. But I’ll feel better paying for my own lunch.” I smiled, trying to indicate I meant no ill will. I just didn’t want to owe Felix anything. Not at this point anyway.

Felix inclined his head politely. “As you wish. The food here is pricey but worth every penny.” He turned to Jeremy, who had picked up one of the menus. “I’m so pleased you agreed to travel so far to be involved in this project, Mr. Trask.”

Jeremy blushed. “Of course. As soon as my agent said you wanted me I booked my ticket.”

Felix smiled wide as his eyes drifted over Jeremy’s face and down along his arms and torso. “Well, I wanted a particular, youthful energy for this shoot. And may I just say, Mr. Trask, that you don’t disappoint.”

Jeremy squirmed in his seat. “You can call me Jeremy, you know. That would make me more comfortable.”

Strangely that didn’t make me more comfortable at all.

“Of course. You are aware I’m creating a hardcover book called *The New Man*, Jeremy?”

Jeremy nodded. “Yes. I hope I can rise to that challenge.”

Felix stared at Jeremy, surprised. “My dear boy, you are the epitome of what I want to represent in my book.”

“I am?”

“Yes. Young, stylish, smart and very attractive.”

Jeremy blushed, smiled and looked over at me.

I gave him a tight smile. “Of course you are,” I said.

Felix gave me a measured smile and seemed to take me seriously for the first time. He shrugged. “Have you seen any of my work, Mr. Lewis?”

Jeremy had shown me some stuff—very artistic and moody representations of men in various states of undress. No nudity though. At least from what I had seen.

“Yes,” I admitted. “You have a good eye for composition and light.”

“Thank you. Do you have an interest in photography?”

“I dabble.”

“Martin is a nature photographer. He’s actually here on assignment for Outside Magazine,” Jeremy offered, pride in his voice.

Felix appeared suitably impressed. “Is that so? Well, it’s wonderful meeting another photographer. I would love to have a look at your work, Mr. Lewis.”

“Actually, Martin and I *met* through his photography. Although at that time he was in the commercial photography business,” Jeremy said.

Felix made an unpleasant face. “A tricky business, commercial photography. Thankless most of the time.”

I nodded. “That’s an understatement. But then Jeremy showed up for a portfolio shoot.”

Jeremy and I exchanged a glance, remembering our first encounter. I’d been so overcome by the instant attraction I’d felt, but so nervous to do anything about it. Jeremy had finally made the first bold move at our second appointment and things had escalated quickly.

Felix smiled, but the expression didn’t seem to reach his eyes. “How nice. Such a romantic story. But now you are photographing what? Trees, rocks, rivers?”

“Yeah, that kind of thing. I’m writing an article about the New Forest while I’m here.”

“Hmm. I always found nature photography so extremely uninspiring. I’m much more attracted to the human form.” He glanced at Jeremy, then quickly at the server who had approached with an offer to take our drink order.

Something about the comment rubbed me the wrong way. Probably the fact that he said it while trying not to ogle my fiancé. I was not getting a great vibe from this guy and our lunch had only begun. I’m not sure I was too happy that Jeremy would be alone with this man for two days this week.

However, Felix Kureck was a world-renowned photographer with a great reputation. I’d Googled him of course, and I hadn’t seen anything indicating inappropriate behaviour with models, thank goodness. I was worldly enough to know that this didn’t guarantee it hadn’t happened, or that he wouldn’t try something with Jeremy.

Of all people, *I* was aware of Jeremy’s appeal. Maybe that’s where the unease was originating. I remembered how I’d felt when I’d photographed him for the first time. How could I expect this man not to have the same inappropriate feelings for Jeremy that I’d had? Or at least, not to act on them. *Like I had*. But I hadn’t acted on them until Jeremy demonstrated the feeling was mutual. And he’d already told the guy we were engaged.

The whole thing was starting to make me very uneasy. But this was a big deal for Jeremy and he was a grown man who could make his own decisions. I was not going to ruin it for him but I really wasn’t looking forward to this meal. Maybe I should have let Jeremy meet Felix on his own.

“Martin? What are you going to have?” Jeremy said.

I looked up to notice a lovely young woman in black pants and white blouse waiting to take our order.

“Hmm?” I snapped out of my reverie. “What?”

“I’m having the gnocchi with black truffle to start and the lamb chops for an entrée,” Jeremy said to the server.

“I’ll uh, I’ll just have the spaghetti carbonara. No starter.”

“Are you sure?” Felix said. “The gnocchi is quite something.”

“It’s fine. I’ll try Jeremy’s.”

Felix didn’t seem to approve of that idea but I didn’t give a shit. I closed the menu I’d just opened.

The meal continued in this vein, with Felix and Jeremy getting along fine but with me bristling at almost everything Felix said. I knew I was being unreasonable but I couldn't help it. I was jealous. Because I knew Jeremy thought a lot of him, and the guy was good-looking, educated and sophisticated.

It took everything I had to be polite and pretend to be friendly all the way through that torturous meal when what I really wanted to do was drag Jeremy out of there and tell him to cancel the shoot.

Hi, I'm Martin Lewis, modern-day nature photographer and closet caveman, apparently.

I was very quiet on the ride home.

"Martin, what's the matter? I can tell something's bothering you," Jeremy said.

I shrugged. "Doesn't matter."

"Well, that's a fucking cop out. Of course it matters."

"No, it doesn't. Because this is your thing and it doesn't matter what I think."

He stared at me, then he got very quiet. We didn't speak for the rest of the trip back to the hotel.

When we keyed into the room, I took off my suit jacket, loosened my tie and went right to the small sitting area, grabbing my laptop. I needed to unwind and settle myself down. Doing some preparatory research on the New Forest should do the trick.

Jeremy stood just inside the door, staring at me. "Martin."

I didn't answer him. I pretended I hadn't heard him.

"Martin," he said louder.

I glanced up. "What?"

"What is your fucking problem all of a sudden?" He sounded angry and frustrated and I really couldn't blame him. But all the careful restraint I'd imposed on myself for the past couple of hours disintegrated.

"My fucking problem is you're going to be photographed by this creep of a guy and I have no power over what happens during that shoot."

Jeremy dropped his satchel so that it made a loud sound hitting the floor. "*What?*"

"I didn't like him."

"Yeah, that's obvious."

"Sorry."

“Me too. Because I’m really looking forward to what comes out of this shoot, Martin.”

I nodded, my left leg starting to jiggle with excess energy. “I know that. And I’m worried that might color your judgement.”

“What the fuck do you mean by that?”

“Nothing. Forget it.”

Jeremy picked up his bag and placed it on the edge of the bed. Then he walked over and sat down beside me. He took the laptop from me and put it on the table.

“Martin.”

I still felt angry, but he was speaking calmly and it helped to settle me down somewhat.

“What?”

“You *cannot* be jealous of Felix Kureck.”

“Oh yeah?”

Then Jeremy laughed. “Seriously? Come on! You’re fucking jealous.”

“Yeah, I’m jealous. Why is that funny?” I was starting to get mad again.

Jeremy laughed harder. “Because, for one thing, the guy is ancient. Yeah, maybe he dresses well and he’s got that whole artistic genius thing going for him, but I’m not even remotely attracted to him.”

I narrowed my eyes at him. “You’re not?”

“Fuck, Martin. No.”

I felt some relief at that assertion. A little.

“Well, that’s something.”

“Isn’t it everything?”

I shook my head. “What if he tries something with you during the shoot?”

Jeremy stared at me, and I could see the wheels spinning. Quickly, realization dawned. “So that’s what this is about.”

“Huh?”

“You’re worried he’s gonna feel like you did when I came to your studio that first time. And the second time. And, hell, that third time.”

I couldn’t sit still anymore. I stood up and walked over to the window, gazing out at the rainy day that was beginning to brighten slightly.

“Don’t,” I said.

Jeremy stood and walked over to me. He moved close and his arms came around me. “Martin, what happened back then was fate. There was an instant attraction, remember? I know you remember. I *definitely* remember.”

I shuddered. “Jeremy...”

“What, Martin?”

My voice went quiet. “I was perving on you before I even knew if you were interested in me.” I remembered looking at the photos I’d taken that first session.

“You may not have known but I knew. I knew from the moment I walked into your place.”

I made a noise of frustration. He didn’t get it. “But *I* didn’t know. In fact I assumed someone like you would never be interested in me. And I still... I still...”

“You still what, Martin?”

God this was so embarrassing. But I had to tell him. “I jerked off to one of the photos I took of you that first day.” My voice was so quiet I wasn’t sure he’d heard me.

“Shit, Martin, really?” He whispered, his hand starting to make soothing motions on my belly over my shirt.

I nodded. “Yeah. Classy, huh?”

His breath hitched but I couldn’t tell if he was mad or...

“That is so, fucking, hot. I wish I’d known you were that out of control. I’d have taken advantage sooner.”

I let out a long sigh and felt my anger and unease dissipate.

“You didn’t take advantage of me. I was the one perving on you.”

Jeremy started to gently pull the fabric of my dress shirt out of my pants. “Oh no, Martin. I believe there was an equal amount of perving going on. You just weren’t privy to it until I called you over to that chaise where you had me pose.”

He’d completely untucked my shirt and now unbuckled my belt. Then his right hand slid beneath the waistband of my pants.

“I made the first move, Martin, remember? I told you I’d been hard for you since I got there.”

I made a small sound, remembering that moment as his hand found my semihard cock and stroked it.

“You would never have said or done anything inappropriate if I hadn’t told you that.”

His fingers felt so good on my cock. I tried to turn but he wouldn't let me.

"No. Stay still."

"How do you know?"

"How do I know what?"

"That I wouldn't have taken advantage of you."

He kissed me softly on my neck and I could feel his smile. "Oh, Martin. Don't you see? I was in control of everything from the start," he murmured. "I saw something I wanted and I took it."

He wrapped his fingers around my cock and squeezed, making me groan.

"But...but..."

"Martin. You didn't lay a hand on me until I told you to do whatever you wanted to me."

I gasped, closing my eyes, remembering so vividly. "And then I...then I..."

"Fuck, Martin. You gave me the best blowjob I'd ever had."

Oh yeah, I remembered that. I remembered worshipping Jeremy's beautiful cock for the first time like it was yesterday.

"Oh, fuck," I groaned, as he withdrew his hand and unzipped me.

"Turn around."

I did as I was told, turning to face him. He took my chin in his hand, holding me still as he attacked my willing mouth with his own. It was raw and assertive and it took my breath away. I shuddered under his assault and let his tongue plunder my mouth, licking inside and pushing into me with a desperate insistence. When he pulled away my dick was hard as fuck and I couldn't say a word.

"I was the aggressor, Martin. You did nothing wrong. You did *everything fucking right*."

I nodded, completely at his mercy as he slid down my body and grabbed the top of my pants, jerking everything down to my thighs with one motion. I hissed as the air hit my arching cock.

"Oh fuck yes," Jeremy hissed, grabbing the base of it with one hand and giving me a look that could melt steel. "Come to Daddy."

I would have laughed except I was going to combust into flames at any moment. He'd brought me right back to our first sexual encounter. After I'd sucked him off on the chaise he'd

pinned me against the wall just like he was pinning me against the window now, and he'd taken my cock in his mouth, just like he was about to do now.

"Can I blow you, Martin?" He asked me with a saucy look. "Since we're being polite and all I'm supposed to get your consent first."

I nodded frantically, pushing my hips forward. "Fuck yes. Oh God, Jeremy..."

This was exactly what I needed. I needed Jeremy to blow my fucking head off. If anything would settle me down after that tortuous lunch I knew this would. I'd almost forgotten why I was so worked up in the first place.

I gripped the window sill and felt it pressing into my naked ass as Jeremy's tongue licked up my cock from base to tip, again and again, making me squirm and beg.

"Oh, please. Please."

But Jeremy was a master of delayed gratification, at least when it came to me. He nuzzled into my ball sack and licked at my thigh, causing delightful sensations. When he sucked my whole sack into his mouth I just about fainted.

"Ungh!"

His fingers teased my cock as he tongued and sucked my balls, then he grabbed the base again and scraped his tongue up the whole length only to swirl it around the crown and go back to his ball teasing.

I panted and squirmed, listening to the muted sounds of the London traffic outside and thinking there was no better place to be at that moment than in this hotel room, with Jeremy on his knees in front of me.

"Oh GOD!" I shouted as he finally engulfed me in his hot mouth. "Oh fuck!"

He glanced up and when our eyes met a jolt of electricity shot through me and I felt my balls tighten. "Gonna...come..." I said, barely able to get the words out as the orgasm ripped through me and my cock erupted in Jeremy's willing mouth.

He tried to swallow it all. I watched, entranced, as a bit of my semen dribbled from his lips while he continued to suck me, humming with contentment.

I closed my eyes, enjoying the diminishing pleasure while Jeremy kept me warm in his mouth.

Finally, he released me with a satisfied grunt, licking his lips. When I opened my eyes he looked up at me with adoration and satisfaction. "Mmm. You taste so good."

“Jeremy, I—”

He held up his hand. “I know. It’s okay.”

He stood up, pressing his still-clothed body against my partly undressed one. “You can trust me. I’m not gonna let anything happen during the shoot. It’s not the same thing. Because Felix isn’t you. And you’ve already got me. Forever, remember?”

I nodded, and opened my mouth as he kissed me hard, rubbing his erection against me. I tasted myself on him and that made me crazy.

“Want to suck you,” I murmured, trying to catch my breath.

“You can do anything you want to me, Martin.”

Chapter Eight

“Anything?”

“Anything Martin. I’m yours. But could it at least involve your mouth on my dick for a tiny part of it?”

I smiled, feeling very relaxed and relieved after my outburst and subsequent orgasm.

“There’s nothing *tiny* about that option.”

“Hardy har. Look who’s got his sense of humour back. And all it took was a blowjob.”

“You want me to suck you, I’ll suck you.” I said, pulling my pants up and buckling my belt.

“But I want you naked.” I felt more like myself now.

Jeremy’s eyes widened as I tucked my shirt in the rest of the way and tightened my tie.

“But you’re going to stay dressed?”

I nodded, combing my untidy hair with my fingers so it sat a little nicer.

“Should I call you Mr. Lewis?” He teased.

“That would be a good idea, Mr. Trask. Since we’ve only just met.”

His jaw dropped open, then closed. “Okay then,” he said, quickly removing his tie and shirt while I sat in the armchair and watched.

“I see you’ve gotten over your squeamishness about perving on me.”

I cleared my throat. “Yes, well, you made a good point.” I eyed his groin. “And we’re just playing.”

“Mm. I like this game,” Jeremy said, dropping his clothes on the floor as he stripped off his jeans.

“Slowly.”

“Yes, Mr. Lewis.”

My cock had hardened again already and I felt it throb when he said those words.

When he’d finished undressing he crossed his arms and stood before me, eyebrows raised.

“Now what?”

My eyes raked down his form, pausing to take in his long cock standing at attention for me, then moving down his thighs to his calves and feet. He was exquisite.

I shifted in my seat.

“Turn around.”

He stared at me for a moment, then huffed and turned.

“Mr. Trask, your ass is magnificent.”

“So I’ve been told many times, Mr. Lewis.”

“By who?”

“By you, Sir.”

“But we’ve only just met.”

“Then it must have been in my dreams.”

I smiled. “Bend over and grab your ankles, Mr. Trask. I need to see if you are, in fact, suitable for this job.”

I wasn’t sure he’d do as I asked, my request depraved and objectifying. I sat up straighter as he bent at the waist and reached for his ankles. He was actually able to do it, being much more flexible than I.

He gazed at me from between his legs, short hair framing his head like a brown halo. “And what job is that, Mr. Lewis?”

My eyes moved from his face up to the slightly parted cheeks of his ass and the seductive dark cleft there. I shuddered.

“Come here and I’ll show you.”

He let go of one ankle and reached between his legs to cup his testicles, one finger sliding up between those perfect globes, pointing toward Heaven.

I gasped. “*Fuck!*”

Jeremy straightened, swallowing a laugh. “I figured that’s what the job was. I’m sure I’m quite suitable, Mr. Lewis.”

He walked forward and straddled my lap, knees pressing into the soft fabric either side of me. “In fact, I’m quite certain I’m a perfect fit for this *position*.”

His mouth found mine and I moaned into it, my arms enveloping him and pressing him close. “Jeremy...”

He kissed me harder, then pulled back, hands working at my tie. “Are we on a first-name basis now?”

I nodded. “I think that would be best.”

“Whatever you say, Mr. Lewis. I mean, Martin. That *is* your name isn’t it?” He murmured, pulling my tie off and working the first few buttons of my shirt free.

“Yes, that’s my name. And you’ll be screaming it soon. So you’d better practice it,” I panted, helping him get my shirt off while we kissed like we would never stop.

“Martin, Martin, Martin,” he repeated, pushing his pelvis forward against me. “Forget the blowjob. I want you to fuck me, Martin.”

My hands drifted down his back and clutched his buttocks, spreading him while he undid my belt and zipper and took my cock out. I was hard as a rock again. Already.

“Oh Jesus, Martin, that didn’t take long, did it?”

I moaned. “Looking at your ass. Calling you Mr. Trask.” It was all I could say. But that was what had lead to this.

He kissed me again. I slid my fingers between his cheeks and pressed gently.

“We’re gonna need some lube, Martin.”

I nodded, breathless. “Left pocket.”

He laughed, digging into the wrong one.

“*My* left,” I said. “*Your* right.”

He found what he needed.

“Give it to me.” My voice sounded rough.

I spilled some quickly into my hand and reached around him, rubbing it into the crack of his beautiful ass while he moaned into my mouth. He gasped when I pushed a finger, then two, inside him.

“Fuck yes!” He exclaimed. “More.”

I obliged, adding a third, delighting in his squirms and grunts. “I like your initiative,” I said, trying to get back into our game. “I’ll write a note in your file.”

He groaned. “Thank you. It’s nice to get credit where it’s due.”

I laughed but it came out like a growl. “I’ll give you credit where it’s due...”

Withdrawing my fingers I spread his cheeks and pulled him forward, guiding him over my cock. He grabbed the lube and squirted some into his hand, applying it to my erection and sinking down onto me in a series of quick and efficient movements.

“Jeremy!” I yelled as my cock disappeared into the heat of his body.

He caught my mouth again and silenced me with his tongue. We moved together, trying to keep up with the sensations, the emotions, vying for dominance. I felt at once vulnerable and powerful, my cock inside him while he controlled everything. I couldn’t get deep enough.

Finally, he got down to business, taking my wrists and holding them down while he fucked me at the pace he wanted—relentless and unstoppable—until he made me come with a guttural cry and a deep shudder that didn't stop for a whole minute. Then he grabbed his cock and stroked it quickly, once, twice, until he spurted onto my chest and belly with a long groan.

He collapsed forward against me, breathing hard and coming down from a great height. My cock slipped out of him and I felt some of the fluid of my release follow.

“God. Martin.” He sounded shattered which satisfied me in a fundamental way.

I pulled a hand free of his grip and slid my fingers between his cheeks again, smearing the fluid there and kissing him with gratitude and love. And perhaps something else. He was mine and I'd claimed him, yet again. For always.

* * *

“Let's go shopping,” Jeremy said, after we'd rested and changed into jeans and t-shirts.

“Yeah? Want to?”

“Yeah. We've got souvenirs to buy and I want to look for a cool pair of boots.”

“Jeremy. You have four cool pairs of boots already,” I bemoaned. “Plus, eight pairs of runners, six pairs of sandals, four pairs of dress shoes and three sets of bedroom slippers.”

He stared at me with his mouth open. “Wow.” Then he counted on his fingers while his eyes widened. “That's alarmingly accurate.”

I nodded, with a smug look.

“And pretty creepy.”

“Excuse me? It's creepy that I know you have a foot fetish—for yourself?”

Jeremy looked like he was going to burst out laughing. “Well... okay. Got me there.” He stood up and walked up to me, kissing me and then pulling back to face me squarely. “I still want new boots. I don't have any UK boots. I want UK boots.”

“Fine,” I sighed. “What baby wants, baby gets.”

“Fuck you.”

“Again?”

* * *

There was a Doc Marten's store on Neal Street, next to Covent Garden, so we took a taxi. It was only a little further than Trafalgar Square. Staying at a central hotel in London was definitely paying off in time and affordable taxi fares.

We got there around four thirty. Jeremy took some phone shots of the outside of the place since it was quite grand with archways and brick. He'd been wearing Doc Marten's since he was about fifteen so he was very excited. Which became an understatement once we actually went into the store.

"Oh, Jesus fucking Christ, Martin! Look at them!!!"

I nodded, inwardly delighting in his enjoyment but needing to keep a level head. "Imagine. Doc Marten's in a Doc Marten store."

"So many of them! How am I ever going to choose?"

I shook my head in commiseration. "I have no idea."

"Can I help you?" said a young guy about Jeremy's age with a modern undercut hairstyle shaved up the sides and back and left longer and floppy on top. He was cute.

"Yeah, for sure. But I don't really know what I want."

"He already has two pair at home," I said.

The guy smiled. "You can never have too many Docs."

Jeremy grinned. "Exactly. Thank you. See, Martin? He understands me."

"He also wants to sell you a pair of boots."

The lad grinned. "True enough," he held out his hand. "Name's Graham. Where are you blokes from? Not here, obviously."

"Jeremy. We're from across the pond. Canada, to be exact."

"Excellent. Welcome to London."

"Thanks. The boots are kind of going to be a souvenir, so I'd like something that screams London, if possible."

"Union Jack? Sex Pistols?"

"Oh, hell yeah!"

While Jeremy went off with Graham to look at boots, I hung back and sat down on a bench by the door. He was in good hands and I wanted to do something.

After all my jealousy over Kureck and the fantastic make-up sex Jeremy and I'd had earlier, I really wanted to get this London wedding planned and executed. Call it partly calculating but mostly romantic, I figured once he was actually my husband—officially, on paper, in the eyes of the law—I'd feel a lot better. But that meant we had to organize the thing for

sometime in the next eleven days, preferably before we headed off to our campout in the New Forest. Which gave me all of six days.

Since Google has the answer to everything I typed in *How to get married in London England*.

After about ten or fifteen minutes perusing the results it became apparent that our dream of making it official in London had hit a snag.

I looked up and saw Jeremy and Graham in the back corner of the store discussing a pair of Docs with the Union Jack flag on the front, and tried not to let my disappointment get a hold on me. We would figure something out. We had to.

He saw me looking and winked, which made me smile. Right now all that mattered was that Jeremy got the boots he wanted. We could talk about the technicalities of marrying in a foreign country afterwards. I wondered what people did when they eloped? I had heard so many stories of couples taking off and getting hitched, and not having to file any papers beforehand. At least, I don't think they'd had to.

I bookmarked the page and looked up in time to see Jeremy waving me over to where he stood before a mirror with the Union Jack boots on.

Putting my phone away, I walked over, checking out how sexy he looked in his skinny jeans and the very British boots.

"Get them. They're perfect."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

Jeremy gestured to another pair of boots on the bench nearby. "But I like those ones too. I can't decide."

The ones on the bench were printed with random graffiti in a multitude of colours. I could picture Jeremy wearing them with jeans or shorts in the summer. They were lighter and more playful than the black and red Union Jack ones.

I shrugged. "Get them both."

"You're joking, right? They're a hundred pounds each. That's one fifty Canadian."

I walked past him picked up the graffiti printed ones and put them back in the box. I closed it, picked it up and carried it to the cash.

"Martin, what are you doing?" He followed me and tugged on my sleeve.

“I’m buying these ones. You can pay for the others,” I said matter-of-factly.

“Really? You sure?”

I nodded. “Yeah, I’m sure. Consider it an engagement gift.” I smiled at him, conveying how very much I wanted to do this for him.

His faced flushed and he kissed me quickly on the lips, so fast that Graham might not have seen.

“Thank you. I love you so much.”

I leaned forward and whispered in his ear. “Just promise to wear them around the hotel room for a bit, okay? Maybe wearing only your briefs? They need to be worn in properly, you know.” When I pulled back I gazed at him meaningfully and he laughed.

“Your wish is my command, Sugar Daddy.”

Now I was blushing and Graham seemed to be a little red as well as he came around the cash, but he was smiling.

“Awesome choice, man,” Graham commented as he rang up the graffiti boots and Jeremy took off the Union Jack ones to put them back in the box. “They’ll last forever.”

We strolled around the well-known shopping district for about an hour, buying sandwiches at a café to take back to the hotel for a light supper—we were so full from lunch we knew we wouldn’t want a full-on restaurant meal. The rain had stopped and the sun even poked through the clouds a couple of times.

On the drive to the hotel, in the back of our cab, Jeremy just about climbed on my lap he was so happy. “You are the best, you know that?”

“I try.”

“And you said I had too many boots.”

“You can never have too many boots. Especially when you look so hot in them. And I can look at you. I bet they’ll look fantastic with those blue and white striped boxer briefs.”

“Ah, I see the logic of your decision. I will not be beholden to all your crazy perversions just because you shelled out a hundred pounds on me.”

I raised my eyebrows, with a small smirk.

“Okay, fine. You probably won’t be able to get me out of them for at least a week anyway.”

When we got back to our room, Jeremy immediately took out his boots to stroke and admire them. He took some photos for his blog. He’d started a free Wordpress website to

chronicle our journey and it was good to know there would be a record of where we went and what we did. Plus, it was easy for our family and friends back home to keep tabs on us and know a bit of what was going on.

We put on our pyjamas early and lounged around. Jeremy surfed the internet and I researched our wedding options.

It was becoming clear that a London wedding was not going to happen, but it looked like a Paris wedding was in the cards. I hadn't told Jeremy yet. I wondered how to approach it.

"Hey, Jeremy."

"Yeah?"

"Y'know my big idea of getting married here in London?"

He looked up at me from his computer. "Yeah? You don't want to?"

"Of course I want to, but it looks like there are more rules about getting officially hitched here than I thought there'd be."

"Damn. That sucks."

"There's a mandatory twenty-eight-day waiting period once they post the bans in the registry office."

"Poop. We can still have a ceremony though, right?" He said hesitantly. "Like, worry about the official paperwork when we get back to Canada, but have a small wedding ceremony here? Is that possible?"

I nodded, pleased. "I don't see why not. It's something we'd always remember."

Jeremy grinned. "I think I'd remember it wherever we had it. But it would be cool to do something here."

I nodded. "Okay. Let me research some places we could do it. Might be an idea to ask Alice and her husband for some suggestions too."

"Then in Ottawa we just do the paperwork and go to city hall to make it official. I really do want to make it official," Jeremy said.

I felt moisture threaten at the corner of my eyes and looked away quickly, then back at him. "I love you. I want to make it official too."

Chapter Nine

I woke up to the alarm on Jeremy's phone at seven thirty. He had to meet Kureck at his studio at ten and wanted plenty of time to get ready.

When I felt him start to move out from under the bedsheets I wrapped a hand around his wrist, keeping him close. "Wait a second."

"What? This better not be a booty call, Martin. You had all night and I need to shower."

"Can I just get a kiss?"

He rolled his eyes but moved closer. "Always. You don't even have to ask."

"Sorry about the morning breath," I said, finding his mouth in the dimness.

"Doesn't matter," he murmured, kissing me back.

I trailed a hand down over the soft skin of his ass, stroking him there while I kissed him. I wished we had nothing better to do than make love all morning.

Finally he pulled away. "Gotta go shower."

I propped myself on my elbow and watched him get out of bed. God, he was beautiful. And he was mine. I really hoped Felix Kureck understood that.

While Jeremy was in the shower I got up and made myself a crappy cup of Keurig coffee. As expected, it tasted like shit. I swallowed a couple of mouthfuls anyway.

Jeremy came out of the bathroom with a towel around his waist.

"Oh, Martin, that face. Looks like someone you hate just came in your mouth."

I gave him a tolerant look, then wrinkled my nose. "That wouldn't even be as bad as this swill. Want to go downstairs for some decent coffee and breakfast?"

He nodded.

"Can I grab a shower first?" I asked.

"Make it quick. I have to hoof it to Felix's by, like, nine thirty."

By half past eight we were down in the hotel restaurant drinking strong Sumatran coffee and digging into breakfast. Jeremy, not wanting to be bloated and uncomfortable for his photo shoot, opted for oatmeal with fruit and whole-wheat toast. I, however, with no plans while he was gone except for lounging around the suite doing some online research, had ordered Eggs Benedict with hash browns and ham. It tasted heavenly.

I noticed that Jeremy kept tapping his foot against the floor.

“Nervous?” I asked.

He smiled. “A bit. Excited. Both.”

“I can come with you if you want.”

“Martin.”

“Well, I can.”

“I think I can handle it. I’m not eight. I’m a grown man.”

“I know that. I just…”

“You’ve got to let this go, Martin. Felix isn’t going to jump me, trust me. I’m sure he looks at sexier men than me most days, and keeps his hands to himself.”

“How do you know?”

He just looked at me and shook his head.

“Fine. I’m just saying.”

“I know. I know you’ve got my back. I just need you to relax. I need to do this by myself.”

“Okay. Just, text me when you’re finished so I know when to expect you back?”

“Of course.”

After we’d put the meal on our room tab and got up to leave, Jeremy’s phone buzzed. After checking it he told me Felix was offering to pick him up so Jeremy could save the cab fare.

“That’s nice of him.”

“He’ll be here in fifteen. I just need to brush my teeth and pack my bag.”

We went back up to the room. I leaned on the window ledge and gazed out at the sunny London skyline, filled with unease about Jeremy’s photo shoot. I realized by now it was misplaced jealousy. I had to let it go and be confident he’d navigate this endeavour with skill and safety. I was only a text away, after all.

Jeremy came over to give me a sweet kiss on the lips.

“Mmm, minty,” I said.

“Be good while I’m gone, Martin.”

“What the hell does that mean?”

“No surfing hard-core porn sites or anything. That shit we do *together*.”

“Very funny.”

“The soft-core ones are fair game though, if you feel like it,” he smirked.

I rolled my eyes. “How about I wait for you to get back, and then we’ll create our own soft-core porn?”

He grinned salaciously. “Or hard-core, even?”

I laughed. “Get out of here. Good luck. Have fun.”

He laughed and checked his phone. “He’s here. See you later. I’ll text you when I’m on my way back.”

I nodded, watching him leave and sighing with regret. We’d been together every minute since we boarded the flight to London, and his sudden absence felt like a part of me was missing.

The next hour passed slowly as I puttered around the hotel room aimlessly looking for stuff to do to take my mind off the rest. Finally deciding to check out the hotel pool, I put on my red trunks and a t-shirt, grabbed a book in case I decided to just sit in a deck chair and read, and padded to the elevator.

The pool was in the basement. When the elevator doors opened the pungent smell of too much chlorine washed over me, taking me back to swimming lessons with my class in grades five and six. I still don’t get why the teachers put us through that—right when the girls were starting to go through puberty and the boys were starting to take notice. I remember my best friend, Julia, crying because she didn’t want to go swimming but she was too embarrassed to tell our male teacher that she had her period. Some girls started early and she was one of those. Her best friend Alice told Mr. Clarkson that Julia wasn’t feeling well and had puked in the change room. Mr. Clarkson, whether he figured out what the deal really was or not, told Alice to sit with her in the bleachers and make sure she was okay. I tried to send her comforting glances when the teacher and the other boys weren’t looking but that just made her more embarrassed.

All of that came back to me as I made my way poolside. I guess I didn’t really frequent indoor pools very often. Frankie and Simon had an in-ground outdoor pool which was where Jeremy and I got our swim on during the warm months of the Ottawa summers.

There wasn’t anyone else down there, since it was early afternoon on a Monday. I dumped my book and towel on one of the chairs and got in quickly, starting to swim laps as soon as my body hit the water. It worked for about five minutes, maybe ten. Then thoughts of Jeremy posing in various erotic ways for Felix started popping into my brain like in those Viewfinder cameras we used to use. I knew Felix was after a certain kind of sexual energy for this shoot. A youthful, erotic, male energy, that Jeremy certainly had in abundance.

It had never really bothered me that he shared that energy with other photographers during regular modelling shoots for fashion ikons like Yves St. Laurent or Burberry. I knew those outfits sent overworked photographers who only wanted to get the best and quickest shot and then went on to their next appointment. It was more of a job than an art piece.

But this thing with Felix Kureck was something more, and that's what had Jeremy so excited and a little nervous. This was art photography. This was spending an afternoon trying different things and creating something together. This was intimate. I only hoped it was intimate in a way that kept propriety in mind and didn't overstep professional and personal boundaries. I'd seen that happen once before and it had better not happen again with Jeremy because he was mine and I wasn't sharing.

I got out of the water and dried off, grabbing my book and heading back to the elevator. I'd left my phone upstairs so as soon as I got changed into dry clothes I checked it to see if Jeremy had texted me.

He had:

The shoot went a bit late so we're just grabbing lunch and then Felix will drive me back to the hotel. Should be there around four. See you soon. <3.

Maybe that soft-core porn idea wasn't a bad one. It would take my mind off other things for at least twenty minutes. I brought my laptop onto the bed and kicked off my shoes, unzipping my pants and stroking over my cock, wondering what I should watch. I perused my list of favourites.

None of it was really soft-core though. It was all pretty hard-core kink with guys getting tied up and fucked with huge dildos and shit like that. There was one I really got off on, and that was this really hot, muscled guy, hog-tied over a suspended metal bar, while a sexy Dom in jeans and a t-shirt slapped his ass and balls and fingered him like it was all in a day's work.

I clicked on that one.

There he was, all hard and captive and vulnerable. The suspension mechanism creaked as he was lifted into the air, ass on display, completely helpless.

The Dom rubbed the sub's dick back and forth and said "You ready for some pain, boy?" The sub moaned and stuttered, "Yes, Sir," and sure enough my dick thought that was a great answer.

I grab the glass of water I'd had the foresight to place on the bedside table and take a swig, eyes glued to the screen of my laptop as Dom-guy starts spanking sub-guy's ass. Sub-guy gasps

and squirms. So hot. Then Dom-guy slaps sub-guy's balls, which are tied up with rope making them bulge and glisten in the dim light. It can't be pleasant but the guy seems to get off on it. That part doesn't turn me on so much, but it's okay. I like the dominance factor.

This goes on for several moments, then Dom-guy gives sub-guy's balls a final whack and leaves him hanging there, walking over and around behind him. Sub-guy watches him grab a white medical glove from a box. Sub-guy moans, struggling with the anticipation of what might come next. Dom-guy acts like he's already done this a million times that day and just wants to get it over with. He's so blasé about everything and that just makes it all hotter.

Dom-guy walks back and goes to the table on the other side, putting on the glove and grabbing a bottle of lube. Dom-guy casually walks over, dribbling some lube onto his hand, and quickly inserts a finger into sub-guy's ass while sub-guy whimpers in surprise and groans.

Dom-guy doesn't react, just keeps moving his finger in and out of the guy like he's a doctor checking for polyps, while sub-guy goes berserk with moans and gasps and sighs.

So. Fucking. Hot.

I slide my hand under the cotton of my briefs and stroke my dick, wondering what it would feel like to be tied up like that and have someone finger me with such nonchalance and efficiency. "Fuck," I say to no-one in particular. I grab the tube of lube from beside me and squirt some into my hand, wrapping my fingers around my cock while I keep watching the video.

Dom-guy keeps poking his finger into sub-guy's ass, changing position and obviously going for sub-guy's prostate which he locates like the pro he is. Sub-guy moans, trembles and makes stuttering pleasure sounds while Dom-guy adds a second finger and revs things up even higher. Sub-guy goes crazy now, swinging in his bindings while Dom-guy fingers him without mercy. It goes on for a while and my own cock throbs at the visuals and the sounds coming out of sub-guy.

Finally, Dom-guy stops and walks around in front of sub-guy again. He picks up a huge black dildo from the table. Sub-guy struggles and whimpers. He knows what's about to happen and so do I. It's obvious that sub-guy is both terrified and incredibly aroused. And so am I. Well, not so terrified because it isn't going into my ass. Definitely aroused. It's going into sub-guy's ass and I get to watch.

The camera angle changes so we can see sub-guy side-on while Dom-guy lubes the dildo and lines it up.

The noise sub-guy makes when the dildo is pushed deep into him makes me gasp and stroke my dick harder. It looks so good and Dom-guy is still pretending to just be going through the motions, like he doesn't care whether sub-guy is getting off on it or not when he obviously does, because he's sliding that dildo in and out so perfectly, listening to sub-guy's moans and groans. Finally, Dom-guy pulls sub-guy's dick from between his legs and rubs it while he pushes the dildo in and out aggressively and sub-guy goes berserk and finally comes with jerks all over Dom-guy's hand, the metal rod creaking and protesting.

And I come too, my quiet grunts mingling with sub-guy's screams and my whimpers dying down to small gasps as I finish.

Fuck me, I really needed that.

I leaned my head back against the headboard, waiting for the stars in my vision to clear while I loosely held the base of my spent dick and wondered if Jeremy was on his way back to the hotel yet.

After I had some time to clean up and settle into a chair to look at possible wedding locales on my laptop, my phone buzzed with his message: *On my way. Close your porn and clean up ;)*

For some reason I felt hugely relieved that he would be back any minute from his shoot and I'd be able to keep an eye on him again. I knew he wasn't a child, in any sense of the word, but I felt protective and possessive of him. I knew that was all wrong somehow but I couldn't fucking help it.

When I heard the key card in the door and it opened on a flushed and excited Jeremy who threw his bag in the corner and walked saucily over to me with a big smile on his face, I couldn't help but match his emotion.

I moved the laptop onto the table and welcomed him as he climbed onto my lap and kissed me full on the lips. It was more than I'd anticipated and I laughed against his lips.

"I guess you had a good time?"

He nodded, pulling back. "Well, it was a lot of posing and changing and posing again—typical model stuff—but, yeah, I think it went really well. Felix is excited about the photos he got. His energy is infectious. But, then again, that's pretty typical with artists."

He kissed me again and then got off my lap. "But I'm fucking bushed. I need a nap."

I nodded. "Okay. Then I'm taking you out for supper. Maybe a show? Depending how you feel?"

“That sounds awesome. God, I’m getting so spoiled. We better go to the gym tomorrow ’cause y’know, this,” he gestured up and down his body, “is an investment that needs to be maintained. I can’t be putting on weight because I’m being wined and dined all over the fucking place.”

“Just go lie down. You look great. But, yeah, we’ll go to the gym tomorrow.”

I watched as Jeremy climbed up onto the bed where I’d masturbated an hour ago and flopped down on his stomach.

“G’night, Martin. If you open any porn turn the volume down, yeah?”

“I already did all that,” I confessed. “I’m very relaxed right now.”

He turned his head and opened his eyes to gaze at me. “Oh yeah? What did you watch?”

“Hard-core.”

Jeremy hissed. “You are such a naughty boy.”

“Then maybe you should punish me. After your nap, of course.” I winked.

“Oh, so very naughty,” he mumbled, turning into the pillow. Soon his breathing deepened and he was fast asleep.

I watched him with a smile, listening to his little sighs and snores with an extreme amount of satisfaction. He was here, he was mine, and he was going to spank my ass again. Yeah, so I kind of decided I’d liked that after all.

Sue me.

Chapter Ten

We went for supper at a very cool pub called The Boot and Flogger. Something about the name of the place, and its location very near to the Southward Playhouse where I'd gotten us last minute tickets to Priscilla—Queen of the Desert, seemed meant to be.

The food was great, and the place looked right out of a story by Charles Dickens. We ate quickly and found our seats at the Southwark with hardly any time to lose.

The production was outstanding. I had seen the movie years back but forgotten everything except the basic plot, so it was like watching it for the first time again. Jeremy had never even seen the movie. He almost pissed himself a few times laughing at the antics of the outrageous characters and the pithy language.

We had a wonderful evening. Back at the hotel we collapsed and fell asleep.

Luckily, Jeremy's second appointment with Kureck wasn't until two in the afternoon so we slept late and woke to the gentle knocking of the housecleaning service at around eleven.

"No thank you. Please come back later," I called from my comfortable spot nestled against Jeremy's warm body.

Jeremy, wakened by my voice, rolled over and snuggled into me. "Close call."

"I'm sure they've encountered worse things than two good looking Canadian guys sharing a bed."

Jeremy laughed, then yawned. "No doubt." He rose up on his elbow, giving me a once-over and moving his eyebrows up and down. "You certainly *are* good looking."

I smiled and blushed. "Well, not as good looking as you. If you could see yourself right now." My eyes roamed over his young, athletic body, flushed cheeks and tousled hair.

"Same," he whispered, running his fingers over my jaw where stubble had emerged overnight.

I winked and he kissed me softly.

"Thanks for taking me to the play last night. I loved it," he said.

"You're welcome. Anything for you, Jeremy."

He raised his eyebrow. "Anything?"

I began to feel suspicious. "What do you have in mind?"

His mouth twisted, like he wanted to say something but wasn't sure how I'd take it.

“What?”

He laughed. “Well, there was some talk of punishment thrown around last night, when you were being very naughty.”

“Oh shit.”

“I see that you remember.”

“Maybe.”

Now, in the bright morning light, I wasn't so sure I was ready for another spanking. Or particularly wanted one.

“But I rather think that your punishment should be whatever *I* decide it should be.”

“I know you want to spank me, Jeremy.” I could see it in his expression.

“Hmm, well joke's on you, then.”

“Huh?”

“Your punishment will be a very sore hand when you're done with me.”

I gaped at him as my dick woke up to the idea of taking him over my knee. “I get to spank *you*?”

“Well, I don't know. That doesn't seem like much of a punishment now.”

I sat up. “Jeremy, delivering a good spanking is a very tricky business.” I stated matter-of-factly.

“Really?”

“Yes. It takes a lot of physical strength to spank a naughty boy's ass so long and hard he can't sit down the next day.”

“Jesus Christ, Martin. I think I love you.”

“And when he comes all over your lap and the bedsheets it gets very, very messy.”

Jeremy's eyes widened and his mouth opened. “Fuck,” he panted, suddenly out of breath.

“Or,” I said, my devilish or Dom side or whatever making an appearance, “maybe I'll just spank my naughty boy enough to get him good and horny and keep him thinking about me all day while he's posing for another man.”

Jeremy's mouth curled up in a wicked smile. “Oh, I like that idea even more.”

I stared at him and a small laugh bubbled out of my mouth. “Jeeze, you *are* a masochist.”

He tipped an imaginary hat to me. “At your service, my good Master.”

I smirked, then grabbed his wrist and gently pulled him over my lap. “Be a good boy, then.”

Jeremy puffed out a breath as he landed across my thighs. “What if people in the hall hear us?” he said as the reality of our situation sank in. “It’s the middle of the day.”

“Well,” I said thoughtfully, tracing my finger along the top edge of his white boxer briefs then softly pulling it lower to expose his plump bottom. “I can’t do anything about the sound of my hand slapping your ass, but you’d better be as quiet as you can.”

He gasped as I ran my hand over his pale skin, squeezing and cupping that gorgeous flesh as my dick swelled even more at the thought of this unexpected treat.

It was a testament to how angry he’d been about my behaviour on our flight that he’d reversed the dynamic and spanked ME our first morning in London. We both much preferred it *this way*.

I felt Jeremy’s erection rub against my thigh as he wiggled with anticipation on my lap, but I continued to stroke and squeeze him, letting his anxiety and excitement build until he became quite desperate.

“Martin,” he breathed, rutting against my leg. “What the fuck are you waiting for?”

I smiled, although he couldn’t see me. I really enjoyed having this control over him. “For the right moment to begin.”

“Anytime would be great.”

“Hey, shhhh. Take your punishment, brat.”

He huffed out a laugh and squirmed even more. “I would if you were *giving* it to me.”

“Oh, I’m giving it to you,” I said smugly, teasing my finger down over his taint and tapping his balls.

He moaned and a shiver went through him. “Oh.”

“You ready?”

“Yeah.”

I gave him a swat, then followed it up with a firmer slap. He sighed contentedly and lifted his ass up for more.

“Oh fuck yeah.”

“It’s been awhile.”

“Yeah.”

I started to spank him gently, just warming him up and enjoying how he wiggled and squirmed over my lap. I'm sure he felt my erection pressing against his hip and I could sure feel *his* poking me in the thigh every time he moved. I was always amazed how hard he got from this. How much he liked it. But then, I got off on it too.

“Harder. Please.” Whispering so nobody else would hear.

I obliged, increasing the force of my slaps but also lowering my voice. “Such a naughty boy. Needs a good spanking.”

Jeremy moaned quietly, pressing his forehead to the mattress and balling the top sheet in his fist.

My hand began to throb but I didn't care. Jeremy's ass glowed a lovely pink colour now, and his panting breaths came quickly.

“Stop, stop,” he said suddenly, becoming quite still on my lap but for an involuntary tremor or two. “If you don't want me to come.”

I took my hand off him, not wanting to push him over the edge even though it would be amazing to give him one more hard slap and watch him unravel and explode. It had happened before.

“Easy,” I murmured, trying to stay still as he struggled for control. He tried valiantly not to touch my leg with his ready to explode cock as he groaned with the amount of control it took. I was impressed when he brought himself back from the edge and relaxed over my lap again.

“Such a good boy.”

“Stop talking. Just stop. Anything you say or do right now is going to fucking make me come. Just...stop.”

I wanted to laugh at his desperation, at his struggle to avoid an orgasm, when I really wouldn't mind one bit if he soaked the sheets from the feel of my hand on him or the words I said. But I didn't. I stayed as still and as quiet as I could until he recovered himself.

“I'm going to get off your lap now, Martin,” he said with a shaky, husky voice. “And I'm going to go take a cold shower.”

I started to say something as he lifted himself carefully off of me but he pinned me with an intense stare.

“Don’t say anything or on my fucking word I’ll take my cock in hand and jerk all over your smug face. But when I get home tonight, after we have something to eat, you’re going to do that again and I’m not fucking holding anything back.”

My cock jerked in answer to the look in his eyes and I nodded mutely.

Holy fucking hell. This man owned me.

I watched him walk to the bathroom and close the door behind him, then let myself collapse to my back on the bed, wanting nothing more than to get *myself* off now.

But I wouldn’t. I could be good too.

* * *

By the time we calmed down and ordered up some sandwiches for a quick lunch, Jeremy began to look forward to his second shoot with Felix.

“He wants to try some other things today. Last time we went for some fairly traditional shots but he’s got some cool ideas for today.”

“Uh huh,” I said, consciously pushing down my jealous suspicion. I knew where my paranoia came from but I was determined not to let it ruin this for Jeremy.

A simmering sexual tension hung in the air from our morning escapade, and every once in a while a memory of how Jeremy had felt across my lap made my cock perk up. But I tamped it down and Jeremy went about getting ready for his shoot. When Felix texted that he was at the hotel, Jeremy gave me a quick kiss and left.

I knew I didn’t feel like staying put in the hotel room on such a beautiful day, so I went through some of the brochures in the hotel lobby and ended up taking a cab to St. James’ park. It felt strange to be a lone tourist without my trusty sidekick, but I determined to make the best of it.

As I tramped the tidy dirt paths of the spacious park, enjoying the views, the greenery and the other visitors, I reflected on my relationship with Jeremy and where it had brought me. The truth is I would never have come to England if I hadn’t fallen in love with him. I was happy doing local photo spreads and simply excited to be taken seriously as a nature photographer. I hadn’t thought of doing an article here for Outside Magazine until I’d needed an excuse to accompany Jeremy.

I’d thought to bring my camera with me and took lots of good shots of the park and the pelicans and some of the people. Although I’d have preferred to be with Jeremy, I enjoyed the

lack of distraction from fully immersing myself in my art. It helped me forget that Jeremy was posing in some other photographer's studio.

I got back to the hotel at five thirty and decided to shower off the sweat and dust from the afternoon.

When I came out of the bathroom I was surprised to see Jeremy sitting on the small couch doing something on his computer. I hadn't heard him come in.

"Hey, you're back!"

"Just got here." His voice sounded clipped and stressed.

"What's wrong?"

He looked up, as if surprised I'd noticed anything and gave me a reassuring smile.

"Nothing, just tired. I should probably take a nap."

"Did Felix bring you back?"

Jeremy nodded, not saying anything.

"It's almost six now but we can go for a later supper if you need to lie down."

He nodded again.

I felt something in my gut cramp up. "Everything go okay today?"

He nodded again, but looked up and flashed me a smile. "Yep. I'm just updating my blog and then I'm gonna go lie down."

"Okay," I said, trying to ignore my sense that something was off.

* * *

He slept for two hours so maybe he *was* simply exhausted. Two intense modelling sessions in as many days was a lot for someone who struggled with MS fatigue.

I'd made reservations at Nightingales, the hotel restaurant, but Jeremy didn't seem to want to get dressed.

"Let's just order room service," he said, in his t-shirt and boxer briefs, and who the fuck was I to argue?

I called down to cancel our reservation and place a room service order for two of the salmon entrées with rice and vegetables.

When it arrived we sat side by side on the bed with the TV on low and ate in a companionable silence. Jeremy seemed quieter than usual, but maybe he was still tired.

"So, are you all done then? With the photo shoot?"

He seemed to come out of a trance, looked over at me and shook his head. “He wants me to come back on Friday.”

“Oh.” I’d hoped they’d be finished by now. But it wasn’t entirely unexpected. Kureck had said it could take a few shoots to get exactly what he needed.

“He’s a bit of a perfectionist,” Jeremy said.

“Yeah? That’s true of many photographers, I guess. Plus, he’s got a reputation to live up to.”

“Yeah.”

“You don’t seem as excited as you were before. Everything go okay today?”

He nodded. “Yeah. Fine. Maybe it’s a bit of the letdown, now it’s almost done. He hasn’t let me look at any of the photos either. So I have no idea what they look like.”

“I’m sure they look amazing, Jeremy. I’m sure *you* look amazing.”

He smiled finally and winked at me. “I prefer when *you* take my picture to be honest.”

My heart swelled in my chest and the pleasure must have shown on my face.

He nodded. “I do. You are sweet and you show me the pictures. It’s like we’re a team. I thought that’s what it would be like with Kureck.”

I noticed he used the photographer’s last name.

“It’s not?”

“Nah. He just tells me what to do, how to pose, that kind of thing. He’s kind of temperamental too. Gets pissed off frequently, and I don’t know if it’s something I’m doing or not doing...” His eyes glazed over like he was somewhere else. Then he shook his head. “I don’t know.”

“You don’t have to go back you know. If you’re not having fun.” I kind of hoped he’d decide not to.

“I don’t know why I’m complaining,” he said. “It’s not like being a model is a rigorous job. Tiring, sure, and you have to do what you’re told, and do it cheerfully, but...” he laughed softly. “It’s not like I’m working in the mines.”

I reached out and brushed the hair back from his forehead. “Anyway, you have two days to rest. Then Friday. But if he asks you back after that you’ll have to say no. You have a wedding to go to this weekend.”

His eyebrows shot up. “Jesus, I’d completely forgotten about that!”

I made my expression into one of extreme horror and clutched my chest, then fell back onto the pillows moaning, “My poor bruised heart!”

That got a reaction.

Jeremy put his plate and mine to the side, then crawled overtop of me, taking my hand in his and kissing me on the lips. “Only because I’ve been so busy. I forgot I was going to be the luckiest man in London. Maybe the world.”

I arched my eyebrow. “*Maybe* the world?”

“Okay, okay. Yeah, the luckiest man in the world.”

“No you aren’t. Because *I* am.”

He blushed and kissed me again, so tenderly, so lovingly, his hand on my neck sending shivers down to my groin.

“How’s your ass?” I asked him. “Hope I didn’t leave any marks to ruin your session today?”

He smiled against my lips. “Nope. Or at least, Kureck didn’t mention anything. And I had my pants on. I’m not posing nude or anything, dummy.”

“Glad to hear it.”

“He hasn’t *asked* me to pose naked. Yet, anyway.” Jeremy said, something serious in his tone.

I tensed, pulling away from him slightly. “Do you think he will?”

Jeremy stared into my eyes, as if contemplating whether he should tell the truth or lie. “I’m a little worried he’ll ask me to on Friday.”

So *that’s* what was bothering him. No wonder.

I sat up, pushing Jeremy gently off me. “What makes you think that?” Alarm bells went off in my head but I had to reign in my protective instinct. Jeremy was a grown man who could stand up for himself.

Jeremy shrugged. “I don’t know.”

I stared at him, willing him to open up and be honest. “Yes, you do.”

“The way he looks at me, it’s like he wants nothing more than to strip the clothes right off me and...”

Rage flared within me at that response. I kept it inside, though, and waited for Jeremy to finish. But he didn’t. He let his sentence trail off.

My voice sounded strangled when I spoke. “And *what? What* do you think he wants to do, Jeremy?”

“Martin, calm the fuck down.”

“I’m fine,” I said, getting off the bed and pacing the floor. I went back and forth between the bed and the window for three turns and then leaned over the bed with my hands on the mattress and stared right at Jeremy. “What do you think he wants to do, Jeremy?”

“Take my fucking picture, Martin, what do *you* think? But I think he wants me naked. Maybe.”

“*Jesus Christ.*”

Now Jeremy seemed mad. “What’s the big deal, Martin? Fuck, I knew you’d react this way.”

Me? He was the one who was all quiet and reserved when he got home, obviously worried about something. My reaction, maybe? Or the thought of posing for Kureck in the buff. Maybe that didn’t bother him at all.

I pushed off the bed and faced the window, folding my arms across my chest. “Would you?”

“Would I...what?”

“Would you agree to pose nude for him?” I tried to quell the anxiety that rose within my chest and forced myself to turn and face him. “If I wasn’t here. If you were doing this all on your own, without my influence. Would you agree to do it?”

He stared at me, obviously conflicted. His hands came up to rub at his face and over the back of his head. “I don’t know.”

“Do you want to?”

“What if I said yes?”

I swallowed. “It’s your decision. It’s your body, Jeremy.”

This time he let his head fall back onto the pillows. “There’s nothing wrong with the naked male body, Martin.”

I laughed. “Believe me, I know.”

“Har har. I just... I don’t know how it would affect my career, y’know. I don’t know if I want to go there.”

“Let me ask something else,” I said, forcing my brain and my mouth to act separately from the jealous emotion that was threatening to erupt from deep inside me. “If he asks you to pose nude on Friday, will you be comfortable telling him no? If you decide you *don't* want to do it?”

The way he looked at me, with a lack of confidence and conviction, told me everything.

“I don't know what he'd do if I said no, honestly.”

Chapter Eleven

I stared at Jeremy, wondering what he meant.

He sat up. “I mean, I don’t know if he’d be okay with it, or if he’d be all disappointed and throw away the rest of the photos and not even have me in his book at all.”

Ah. So that’s what was at stake here. I knew artists could be temperamental, but I doubted that Kureck would throw out all the work he’d done with Jeremy, plus all the effort he’d put into getting him to London, just because Jeremy wanted to keep his underpants on. But I really didn’t know. What I *did* know, and had to convey to Jeremy, was that standing up for your comfort level was important and worth risking whatever the reaction might be.

Sometimes I forgot how young he still was. I forgot that he might not feel confident in the face of an artistic talent and reputation like Felix Kureck.

“What if I come with you?”

“Martin, I don’t need you to hold my hand.”

“I know. But I could just be there for some reason we could make up. Kureck won’t dare to pressure you if I’m there.”

“Martin, no. I can look after myself.”

I nodded. *But would he?*

“I just have to decide if it’s something I’m willing to do or not.” He must have seen the way my jaw clenched. “Regardless of how *you* feel about it. It’s *my* body, Martin. *My* professional reputation.”

“Fine. You decide.” I tried without success to unclench my fists. Then I girded myself and recited the following, even though it just about killed me. “I’ll support your decision, either way.”

Jeremy stared at me, eyes wide. “I know how hard it was for you to say that.”

“Do you really?”

“I think so. Because you look like you’re going to pass out from keeping it all inside.”

I snorted and laughed nervously, which at least let some of the tension out. “I’m trying, Jeremy. I’m fucking trying.”

“And, uh, I know we kind of had a plan to get our groove on tonight but I honestly feel like just cuddling and watching TV if that’s okay with you.”

“Jeremy, that’s fine. You know that’s fine. It’s always fine.”

“If you need to jerk off or anything, go for it.”

I gave him a look. “I think I’ll be all right.”

I put our plates on the table and joined him on the bed, pulling him against me and kissing his forehead gently.

* * *

In the morning, while we hung about lazily in our hotel room so Jeremy could rest, I took him on an online tour of the places I thought might make good spots for our impromptu ceremony.

“There’s St. James’ Park. I was there yesterday.”

“You were?”

“Yeah, I had some time to waste, while you were at the studio.”

“You mean you weren’t just moping around here waiting for me to get back?”

“Fuck you.”

“If you’re lucky.”

Jeremy winked, and I was pleased to see he was brighter than he’d been late yesterday. He might not have made a decision yet about Friday and what he would do if Felix wanted more of him than he was willing to give, but it didn’t seem to be stressing him quite so much. Maybe because I knew what the problem was, or *might* be, and I had given him my unconditional support, no matter how hard it might be for *me* to have him pose nude. Exhaustion may have been a big part of his up and down moods the night before, not to mention that emotional lability was a common symptom of MS in and of itself.

I brought my laptop over to the small table where he sat drinking the rest of his coffee and we looked at a few of the options. As I was trying to find a website I’d thought I’d bookmarked the day before, Jeremy’s hand snaked under my arm and pressed against the zipper of my jeans, making my dick hard in an instant.

I sidelined a glance at him. “That’s a little distracting, you know.”

He grinned and pressed more firmly. “I know.”

I returned my eyes to the computer screen, typing in another search while Jeremy slowly teased me through my jeans. It felt good and I resisted grabbing his wrist and hauling him over to the bed, because I wanted to play a little hard-to-get for once. His sessions with Kureck were

making me edgy and, even though I didn't hold any of it against him, I felt a little miffed and neglected.

"Here it is. This is in West London. We'd have to see if they have availability this weekend."

"I have availability right now, Martin," Jeremy purred, leaning up against me and rubbing me through my jeans over and over.

"I'd like to get this organized, Jeremy," I said, stifling a groan. "I really want to get married as soon as possible."

"What's the rush, Martin? Are you pregnant?" Jeremy joked. "If anything, *I'd* be the pregnant one in this relationship. I've bottomed more than you."

I sidlined a glance at him. "I didn't realize we were keeping score."

Jeremy grinned and shrugged. "I don't really care. Except I do like to have *your* ass every once in a while. Like, maybe today?"

I turned my head and blinked, startled by the request.

"I'll use protection if you're worried about getting knocked up."

"Very funny. And don't you dare," I breathed, my lips inches from his.

His hand came up behind my neck and he pulled me forward, locking our mouths in a passionate kiss that threatened to light the curtains on fire. When he pulled away he smiled from ear to ear and said, "I am going to fuck you so deep and hard I'll be surprised if you're *not* pregnant when I'm done."

Desire flamed in me at that assertion. "I know you'll do your very best." I felt a bit nervous, and a lot excited, that Jeremy wanted to top today.

He didn't do it often. More because of the dynamic of our relationship than for any specific reason. But Jeremy had taken my cherry way back when we'd first gotten together, after weeks of anticipation while he'd gotten me used to fingers and toys until I was begging him to fuck me. And finally, he did.

It had been one of the most transformative experiences of my life.

"You're going to have to do some work first," I said with my eyebrow raised, referring to the fact that I would need some preparation.

"Looking forward to it," he said with a grin.

“Did you bring some of those, you know, whatever they’re called?” I asked, suddenly embarrassed. Jeremy was much less bothered by normal bodily functions than me.

He actually laughed. “God, Martin, if you can’t say it... You mean the anal douches I use to get ready for your monster cock?”

I blushed and nodded. “Yeah, those.”

“Why, yes, Martin. I *did* bring them. *Lots* of them. Enough for you to get yourself all shiny and clean for me to plow you like a farmer’s field.”

“Very funny.”

“Oh, I’m not joking. They’re in my kitbag on the bathroom counter. You can use more than one if you need to.”

I cleared my throat, pushed his hand away and stood up, closing my laptop. “Pretty sure one will suffice.”

It was a testament to my desire for Jeremy that this entire conversation and the prospect of using a douche didn’t deter me from my path. I made my way to the bathroom.

“Make sure you do a good job, Martin. I’m going deep,” he called. “Maybe you should do a full enema.”

“Fuck you.”

He dissolved with laughter as I shut the door behind me.

* * *

“Omg, Jeremy, harder. Fuck, harder!” I moaned, completely undone and at his mercy. God, my boy was good at fucking. Why didn’t we do this more?

“Yeah? You want it harder? You sure?” He panted, keeping his careful rhythm.

“Yes! Please, please.” I was not above begging.

“Martin, you sweet little slut. I’m liking this side of you.”

I groaned as he picked up his pace a little. “The—the inside?” I quipped, unable to resist.

“Oh, you have no idea,” he moaned. “So fucking tight.”

“You feel like King Kong from here,” I panted, reaching down to fist my cock and groaning at the pleasure. “But I like it.”

“You do, don’t you?” Jeremy purred, thrusting harder. “I can tell.”

“Oh my God, you’re killing me. Yeah, like that! More!”

“Greedy, greedy. Next time I’m going to gag you.”

“Oh fuck! There, there, yes, oh God! Jeremy!” I yelled his name and climaxed in my fist as he plowed me like he’d promised. Right after that, he stilled deep and came with a low groan as he bent over me on the bed. After a few seconds he pumped a couple of times and shuddered as he whispered a curse.

“You okay?” I asked finally when he’d been still for a while. I felt him hot and close above me. He hadn’t withdrawn and I enjoyed that remaining fullness and the intimacy of it all.

“I like this,” he said in my ear, kissing the lobe and rubbing his stubbled cheek against mine. “Being inside you. Feeling myself slowly shrinking. Are you okay?”

“Oh God, Jeremy. I’m fucking amazing. I like this too.”

“You’ll be sore.”

“It’s okay. I asked for it.”

“Begged, actually.”

“Okay, you can get out now,” I joked, feeling him softening and sliding out anyway.

He moved off me and then made a noise in his throat followed by, “Oh Jesus, don’t move.”

As something wet leaked out of me, I clenched by instinct. “What? What’s wrong?”

“Nothing. It’s just, seeing my spunk come out of you like that. So fucking hot.”

“Pervert.”

“Prude. I could go again. Right now.” He gestured at his dick which was, indeed, beginning to swell again.

“Holy shit. You *do* like that.”

He gave me a grin. “I *really* like it. But I know you don’t want me in there again just yet.”

My face must have expressed some regret at the fact that I couldn’t accommodate him for a second go.

“It’s okay, Martin. Maybe I’ll just jerk off all over your ass, since I love it so much.”

“Okay.”

He leaned down and bit my flesh, licking as if to apologize. “Mmm, you make me so horny.”

“Apparently.”

“Roll over.”

“Thought you wanted to come on my ass.”

“Changed my mind.”

I rolled over onto my back and locked gazes with him as he kneeled up over me, grabbing the bottle of lube from the bedside table.

I watched lazily as he pleased himself with no compunction, revelling in his sounds of enjoyment. God, he was gorgeous—all glistening muscles and hard flesh, face a contortion of ecstasy when he finally climaxed, shooting semen all over my chest and chin.

“There,” he said afterwards, with a certain smugness. “Now I’ve thoroughly claimed you.”

* * *

Five hours later we sat at Alice and Rupert’s and Elliot’s dining room table, drinking tea and sampling the cakes and pastries they’d laid out for us.

“So, this is high tea, huh?” Jeremy said.

Rupert laughed. “No, this is afternoon tea. The good one.”

Jeremy raised his eyebrows at Alice, who smiled.

“It’s a common mistake, Jeremy. Afternoon tea is the one with the scones and treats. High tea is a later meal like what you would call “supper” in Canada.”

“High tea is dull,” said Rupert.

“Rupert, be polite,” Elliot, his father, advised gently.

“Sorry, I mean high tea isn’t as nice as afternoon tea.” He bit off a piece of treacle tart and chewed carefully, eyeing his father.

“So, Martin, is Ottawa as interesting as it sounds, with all the political stuff going on?” Elliot asked, giving Rupert a touch on his back, as if out of appreciation for his effort.

Jeremy laughed, causing Martin to look over. “Sorry. I just. Ottawa is *not* that interesting. Parts of Ottawa are cool, but, generally, well. Yeah. Boring old government town.”

Martin smiled. “He’s right actually. Ottawa is a pretty conservative environment. It’s a great place to raise a family so, lots of public servants and most of the bars and restaurants shut down at one or two am. Earlier on weekdays.”

Alice gaped. “What? Really?”

“Really. Downtown is a ghost town after about 10pm, except for Elgin Street and the Byward Market.”

“Thank God for Elgin Street,” Jeremy mumbled, his mouth full of cake.

Rupert stared at him, then glanced at Elliot.

Jeremy noticed. "Sorry, Rupe. You're doing much better than me." He wiped his lips and swallowed his treat, returning Rupert's smile.

"We live just off Elgin," Martin said. "So at least we're able to hit the street for a late meal or a night out when we need one."

Alice sighed. "A night out. What is this magical thing you speak of?" She glanced at Elliot, who grinned.

"Actually, we're planning to hit a club later tonight if you want to come," Jeremy said, picking up another scone. "This is scrummy, by the way. Delicious."

"I see you're picking up the lingo," Alice said, "and we would love to go out tonight but we don't have anyone to watch Rupert."

"I don't need anyone to watch me!"

"You're six," Elliot said. "Alice, if you want to go out with Martin and Jeremy, I can hold down the fort here."

Alice said, "Okay," before the words were out of Elliot's mouth. "Oh, sorry, that sounded a little desperate, didn't it?" she whispered, putting a hand to her lips and turning red.

"It's okay. I get it."

"Get what, Daddy?" Rupert asked.

Elliot smiled. "Mummy works very hard looking after you and taking care of the house. She needs a night out with her chums now and then."

Rupert smiled, turning bright eyes on Martin and Jeremy. "Okay. Mummy likes to dance."

I nodded. "So does Jeremy. But I'm not really into it. Maybe mummy can dance with Jeremy. Would that be okay?"

"Yes!" Rupert shouted, nodding and standing.

Alice's cheeks reddened even more and Elliot's eyes widened but Rupert seemed to think it was a wonderful idea.

"How about I take turns dancing with them both?" Jeremy said. He turned to me. "You're not getting out of it that easy, mister." Then he looked at Elliot. "Do I have permission to dance with your beautiful wife, sir?"

Elliot just stared at Jeremy like he'd lost his mind. "You honestly think I have to give my wife permission to do anything? She'd bloody clobber me if I stood in her way."

Alice laughed and elbowed her husband in the ribs. “Yes, I would. Especially tonight. Don’t worry, I won’t touch. I might look, though. I’ll probably look.”

Elliot grinned. “I don’t expect anything less. Have a great time.”

* * *

Alice was able to recommend an LGBTQ+ dance club she’d been to on occasion that wasn’t too far and promised an exciting evening. Jeremy and I cabbled back to the hotel, had supper and chilled. Alice came and picked us up at around nine thirty in her little red VW Golf.

“You made your escape?” Jeremy asked as he got in the passenger seat and I squeezed in the back. It was a bit cramped but at least we didn’t have to pay for a cab.

“Bloody right I did,” Alice laughed. “Thank you for helping me break out!”

Dalston Superstore, a small, casual restaurant/bar and dance club near Stoke Newington, proved to be as welcoming as Alice had assured.

After a short turn in a queue we were permitted entry into a crowded space where people of all genders, persuasions and styles mingled with drinks in hand.

“What’ll you have, Alice?” I asked, for once excited by the music and chaos and close quarters. The casual, friendly vibe was exactly what I needed.

“Oh, I guess a rye and ginger for now.” She started to open her purse.

“Uh uh. We’re buying your drinks tonight, Alice.”

“What? No, I can’t possibly accept—” She stared at me, then glanced at Jeremy. “Well, at least I know you’re not trying to get me drunk to take advantage of me.” She laughed. Her eyes roamed up and down Jeremy quickly. “As much as I might like that.”

Jeremy grinned. “Sorry.” He pointed at me. “Taken. Also, gay. But, if I wasn’t...”

Alice held up her hand. “Stop right there. Let me indulge my fantasy.”

I laughed and went to the bar, getting Alice her drink and a beer for Jeremy.

“What about you?” Jeremy said, since I’d not gotten anything for myself.

“I’m okay right now. I’ll have something later.”

“You better. How am I gonna get you dancing if you’re sober?” He looked around us at the crowd. “Speaking of dancing...”

“Downstairs!” Alice said and pointed to the back wall where we could see the sign for stairs. “Follow me. And watch your step. They’re deadly.”

We made our way through the swarm of patrons and down a set of steep and slippery concrete steps into the bowels of the club. The crowd was nicely diverse. I saw flamboyant twinks, muscled gym boys, hard-core dykes, femmes, chubby bears and everything in between. Everyone seemed happy and intent on making the most of the small space.

“I fell down the bottom four steps once. Almost cracked my head open,” Alice said, tapping her head. “God, it’s nice to be back!”

As we moved into the darkened space of the lower level and were assaulted by loud dance music blasting from the speakers, I leaned in close. “You must have other gay friends then, if you’ve been here before?”

Alice turned to me and grinned widely. “I do. And I, myself, am not entirely straight, although first appearances may dictate otherwise.” She winked.

Oh. Okay. Why had I assumed she was straight? “I’m sorry, I just thought because of...”

“The husband and the kid? Sure, I get it.” Alice laughed. “Don’t worry about it, Martin. I love challenging assumptions.”

A Madonna song started playing then and Alice squealed.

“Oh, I love this one!” She threw back the rest of her rye and ginger in three gulps, passed the empty glass to me and said, “Come on, Jeremy!”

“Hold this? You can have the rest if you want,” Jeremy told me as Alice pulled him into the crazy swirl of people.

I laughed at their antics and stood there with Alice’s empty glass and Jeremy’s beer, watching them find a spot and get down to moving. I was glad we’d brought Alice because I could never keep up with Jeremy at places like this. He was more outgoing and confident than me and loved to dance, whereas I always needed persuading. Observing and lurking on the sidelines, enjoying the music and the energy from a safe distance, felt a lot more comfortable.

I found an out-of-the-way spot for the empty glass, then stood in a dark corner sipping Jeremy’s beer and watching my gorgeous boyfriend dance his heart out with his new bisexual bestie. I’d decided by now that Alice was pretty fucking amazing. I wondered if she and Elliot and Rupert would come to our wedding ceremony, if we ever got our shit together and organized the damn thing. It would be nice to have some new friends there since our Canadian friends couldn’t attend at such short notice.

Lost in my thoughts, I felt a light touch on my arm and looked to my left to see an attractive young fellow with gelled brown hair in Docs, blue disco shorts and a white mesh shirt looking at me with grey eyes rimmed in black khol eyeshadow.

“Hey there, handsome. Fancy a dance?”

My cock twitched in my pants at the look he gave me. The London accent didn't hurt. He was cute, there was no denying it. He was a little shorter than me, about the same height as Jeremy. I glanced over at Jeremy who was lost in the music and the fun he was having. My eyes came back to the saucy boy at my side.

“I'm not a very good dancer,” I confessed, smiling and feeling warmth in my face and elsewhere.

He grinned. “S'all right. I can shake it for the both of us. What's yer name?”

“Martin.”

“Good to meet you, Martin. I'm Ollie.”

I took another pull on my beer. I needed to be slightly buzzed for this. “I'm actually here with my partner,” I said, gesturing to the dance floor. “But he's already dancing with a friend.”

Ollie looked at the crowded floor and returned his dark gaze to me. “Well, then, perfect. So, you can dance with me, yeah?”

I laughed, charmed by his cocky attitude that was tempered by a sweet smile and nonthreatening manner. He waggled his eyebrows, gave me an appreciative once-over and nodded at the dance floor.

“Come on. Don't make me beg, Martin.” He winked at me. “Because I just might if you say no.”

Ollie had a tight little body, the cutest dimple in his cheek, and eyes that could probably convince a priest to take a risk on a night of passion. How could I refuse him? Besides, I was on vacation in London, at a cool club, and Jeremy himself would kill me if I passed up this opportunity.

I nodded. “Okay. Sure.”

Ollie's eyebrows flew up and he gently took the beer out of my hand and passed it to someone passing by. “Here.”

The stranger said, “Cheers, mate!”

Ollie grinned at my surprised expression and said, "I'll buy you one after." Then he pulled me by the hand into the crowd of uninhibited clubbers.

His hand felt warm and soft but I started to feel some panic at the thought of dancing with a complete stranger. But when would I have this opportunity again? Anyway, Jeremy was only a few feet away and when he caught sight of us, his eyes widened and his chin dropped and it was *so* worth it. I grinned sheepishly and shrugged, trying my hardest to keep up with the energetic twink shaking his booty next to me. There was no way in hell I could but I moved as unselfconsciously as I could manage, trying not to look like a complete nitwit. I was nowhere near drunk enough for it but I tried to enjoy it regardless.

Ollie didn't seem to have any problem with self-consciousness. He danced with unrestrained enthusiasm and didn't seem to care who noticed. His eyes kept meeting mine with a secret interest and it made me feel good to know that I still had some level of charisma, even though I was approaching the ripe old age of forty.

All of a sudden, I felt strong arms slide around me and turned to see Jeremy as he embraced me from behind. He gave Ollie a smile and a nod. "I see you found my boyfriend."

Ollie laughed, nodded, and placed a hand on my cheek wistfully before he spun in a circle and looked back at us. "I did. Couldn't have him standing all alone on the sidelines so I brought him to you."

"Actually, he's my fiancé," Jeremy clarified.

Ollie nodded, and flashed a smile. "Lucky you."

As Jeremy moved out from behind me, keeping one arm around my waist and grinding himself against my hip with a bold dance move, Ollie's eyes widened and he finally stopped moving to the music.

"Bloody hell, are you a model or something? You're super-hot!"

Jeremy and I both laughed and then Alice popped up in front of us. "And who might you be, gorgeous?" She asked Ollie, face flushed and eyes bright with energy.

"Ollie. And you are?"

"Alice, just a friend of theirs. Married, domestic, boring. Here for a three-hour escape from my dreary home life and for the eye candy." She gave Ollie the once-over. "You're lovely!"

He grinned. “Thanks! Wanna take a spin? Looks like these two have become inseparable so...” He glanced regretfully at Jeremy and me and nodded at Alice. “Come on, honey, let’s shake it!”

Alice laughed and turned to us. “Sorry guys, but I’m going to have to take him up on it. I don’t get invitations like this anymore.”

“Go for it. Just remember, you’re married,” Jeremy said, meeting Ollie’s gaze and holding it. “Married.” He pointed at his ring finger and then at Alice.

“It’s all right. I don’t swing that way anyhow.” He looked at Alice, eyebrows raised. “But I bet you can tear it up, yeah?”

“Oh honey, you better believe it!”

I lost the rest of their conversation because Jeremy grabbed my hips and pulled me close, grinding against me so aggressively my dick went from semi to full on hard in an instant. I think I groaned.

“Martin, that was *so* hot.”

“My dancing? Huh.”

“Well, no. Watching you with another guy. A *hot* guy, at that.”

I glanced back to where Ollie was bopping with Alice. “Yeah, he *is* pretty cute, isn’t he?”

“Hey, hey, excuse me?” Jeremy said, taking my chin and turning my face his way. “I’m pretty cute too. Or so you’ve said on occasion.”

“Oh baby, you are the cutest,” I confessed, pulling him against me. I don’t know what was happening, except that I was drunk on happiness and maybe the freedom of being in a strange city surrounded by strangers. But I think Jeremy liked it. When he crowded against me I felt just how *much* he liked it.

“I hope you weren’t this hard when you were dancing with Alice.”

Jeremy laughed. “Nowhere near. Only happened when you came over.”

“Good.”

We danced until two, taking breaks to go upstairs, drink and visit the unisex toilet. Alice spent most of the night dancing with Ollie and his friends, since Jeremy and I couldn’t get enough of each other.

Luckily, Alice didn't need more than a couple of drinks early on to fuel her exhibitionism since she was our designated driver. Jeremy and I may have been a little drunk when we all decided to head home.

I dissolved in a fit of laughter as I fell on top of Jeremy in the back seat of Alice's car.

"Oh, excuse me, so sorry."

But I wasn't. He smelled so good, even with his hair sticking to his skin and sweat spots on his t-shirt.

"Hey, hey, no boffing in my car!" Alice said firmly. "Wait until you're back at the hotel, you yobs."

"I thought you were sitting up front," Jeremy said, laughing and half-heartedly pushing me away. "Won't Alice be lonely?"

"Don't worry about me, fellas. I've had enough fun to last me at least six months now. I need to switch back into mum and wife mode on the drive back." She glanced in the mirror. "Have fun back there. Not too much fun, mind."

"Oh, you are definitely getting back into mom mode," Jeremy quipped.

"Har, har. Seriously though, that was the best time! Thank you so much for taking me there!"

"Well, actually, *you* were the one who took *us* there."

"You know what I mean. If you guys hadn't been going out—"

"Hey, Alice," I said with a slight slur, leaning forward and talking close to her ear as she put the car in gear.

"Yes, Love?"

"Wanna come to our wedding?"

"Seriously? You're not just asking because you're tipsy?"

"No, no, I meant to ask earlier. You, Elliot, Rupert. You're all invited."

"Martin, we'd love to come. When is it?"

Jeremy spoke up. "We don't even know. This weekend sometime. It's going to be very informal."

"Let's say Sunday. We'll do it Sunday." I hiccupped.

"Where? We haven't even picked a place, Martin."

"What about our place?" Alice said. "If the weather's nice we can have it in the garden!"

“Seriously?” Jeremy said, stunned.

“Why not? It’s not every day I meet two hot Canadian blokes who want to get married in my home city! And, seriously, all I had planned for this weekend was laundry and Rupert’s swimming lesson, which is on Saturday. Come on, please, please, please?”

I met Jeremy’s gaze and he nodded.

“Yes. That would be perfect,” I said, suddenly feeling much more sober and sincerely grateful. “Thank you.”

Chapter Twelve

My head throbbed slightly upon waking in the morning, but it wasn't as bad as it could have been. I slipped out of bed so as not to wake up Jeremy and found some Advil in the bag of toiletries we'd brought.

When I checked my phone there were seven texts from Alice. Apparently she was a *tad* excited about hosting our wedding ceremony. And, being mom to a little boy, had been forced to rise at the tender hour of seven thirty, poor thing. She seemed fine though:

Good morning, Martin! Thank you SOOOOOO much for letting me host your wedding to Jeremy, which I realize won't be an official ceremony but we will make it as legit as possible!!! I had so much fun last night, you both are just adorable and meant to be together! Sorry, am I fangerling? I'm fangirling, aren't I?

Here are some photos of the garden. I think the forecast is actually good for Sunday so we should be able to have everything outside. Show Jeremy and see what he thinks. I hope this will be okay? Let me know.

Oh, I just realized that Elliot has a bike tour on Saturday so he won't be around to help with setup but that is OKAY. I'm sure he'll be onside for Sunday. Yep, I just checked with him and he says he is willing to help when he can. And says thank you for giving his crazy wife something to occupy her restless mind. Cute. He's charming, this guy. Lol.

Do you want me to organize food? Like, I can make a bunch of mini-sandwiches and a veggie plate on Saturday and keep them in the fridge. Who is going to be there? Just us, or do you have other British friends?

Oh oh oh, I got Ollie's contact info, can we invite Ollie? He was SOOOOOO nice and so was his boyfriend?

Geeze, I'm kind of taking over, aren't I. I'll stop now. You're probably not even awake yet. I hope you're not too hungover. I had SOOOOOO much fun last night you have no idea. Boy, did I need that!

Text me or call me later and we'll do some planning. Also, ignore any request of mine that sounded unhinged or that you simply don't think is reasonable. This is your show—yours and Jeremy's—and I really don't want to lose sight of that. Maybe I already have?

I couldn't help smiling. She was so excited and so willing to help with everything. It was just what we needed. And inviting Ollie and his boyfriend? Why not? Otherwise it would just be Alice, Elliot, Rupert and us. The only thing we needed now was someone to unofficially officiate.

I thought about it for like, one second, before texting Alice back.

Hi! Wow, you have got this covered. Thank you so much for taking this on. Definitely yes to inviting Ollie and his boyfriend, and do you think that Elliot might agree to unofficially officiate for us? He would make an excellent unofficial officiant. Also, the sandwiches and veggie plate sounds great—we won't need much more than that. Although Jeremy might want to get a cake and I'm sure Rupert would agree that a cake is necessary. We can look around at bakeries today maybe. But we will take care of that.

As I was thumbing the message I heard Jeremy stirring and glanced up.

“Good morning, Gorgeous.”

“Ow. My head.”

“There's Advil on the nightstand, and a glass of water.”

“Who are you texting?”

“Alice. She's gone into hyperdrive.”

He laughed softly and swallowed two liquigels. “About the wedding?”

“Yep. Are you okay with inviting Ollie and his boyfriend?”

“Who?”

“Ollie. You remember. Hot pants and mesh shirt, eyeliner?”

“Oh, *that* Ollie. Wait, did you get his phone number?”

I raised my eyebrows. *Now* who was jealous?

“No, I didn’t. Alice did, though. It was her idea to invite them.”

“Oh. Well, in that case, sure. I wouldn’t mind seeing his perky little ass again.”

My eyebrows went even higher and my chin dropped.

“I’m kidding. Well, kind of. He was very nice. And huge props to anyone that can get *you* onto the dance floor willingly.” He dragged himself out from under the covers and walked over to me, stark naked. “I had so much fun last night,” he said, stopping in front of me.

I let my eyes drift over his beautiful body and met his gaze. “Me too.”

“Really? Or are you just saying that because you don’t want to disappoint me?”

“Jeremy. I had fun. In fact, I don’t remember having so much fun at a club ever before.”

He reached out and placed his hand flat on my cheek, tilting my face up. “You looked pretty damn sexy dancing with Ollie.”

I shrugged, finding that hard to believe. “He probably would have preferred dancing with you.”

“Martin, no...”

“Did you see his face when he caught sight of you, Jeremy? I thought he was going to come in his little blue shorts.”

Jeremy snorted a laugh. “Whatever. You’re the one he asked. You should have seen how he was looking at *you*.”

I remembered the look Ollie had given me and Jeremy was right. There had been definite interest there. Sexual interest. I blushed.

“Uh huh. Not quite so innocent it seems.”

“Maybe he was just generally horny,” I said, still finding it hard to believe.

“Fuck, Martin, when are you going to believe that other men find you hot? I mean, besides me. I know you believe *I* find you hot. Pretty sure I’ve pounded it into you by now.”

“Jeremy.”

“If I hadn’t been there to lay claim, Ollie would have dragged you back home with him and begged you to take off those shorts and fuck him so hard...”

“Oh God.” I stared at Jeremy’s morning erection and tried not to think of Ollie. “He has a boyfriend,” I said meekly.

“So? Maybe they have an arrangement.” He narrowed his eyes at me. “Are you trying not to think of him?”

“Yes?”

Jeremy shook his head and took my hand pulling me forward. “You’re allowed to think of other guys, Martin. In fact, I want you to think about Ollie and his sweet little ass while you kneel down and blow me.”

My eyes shot up as my knees settled on the carpet. Jeremy looked down at me with lust in his eyes. “You sure?” I said.

“That I want you to blow me? Pretty sure. Maybe it will make my headache go away.”

“No, I mean, you want me to think about Ollie? While I’m blowing you?” Now I couldn’t help thinking about Ollie, so I really hoped he was serious.

“Of course. I may not want you to *actually* blow Ollie. Correction—I *definitely* don’t want you to actually blow Ollie. But you *are* allowed to fantasize in my presence, especially if I can fully appreciate what you’re fantasizing about. Maybe I’ll imagine that *you’re* Ollie.”

Even though my eyes were transfixed on the hard cock in front of my face and the musky smell of Jeremy who hadn’t showered all the sweat from the night before off himself, I couldn’t help adding some humour to the situation.

“I kind of feel like we’re taking some big liberties with poor Ollie right now.”

Jeremy wrapped his hand around his erection and pointed it at my lips. “Pretty sure he won’t know, or mind if he *did* know.”

I licked my lips, waiting. Jeremy closed his eyes.

“I’m picturing his pert little ass in those tight blue shorts right now.” Jeremy stroked himself and opened one eye.

“Fuck, me too.”

“Then start sucking. *Ollie.*”

Fuck, that was...

I opened my mouth, hands on my thighs, as Jeremy moved forward.

He groaned as my lips tightened around him. “Oh yeah, Martin, I mean, Ollie. Oh, whatever, who cares?”

I pulled off to mutter, “Nice,” before diving back onto him. Just for that I was gonna make this as quick as possible. Make him come before he wanted to. I could do that if I put my mind to it.

He laughed, but then groaned as I slapped his hand away and circled his dick with mine, taking him deeper into my throat and meeting his eyes, which were now both wide open and watching.

“Oh, fuck!”

Yeah, oh fuck, yourself. I am gonna make you come so hard you'll forget all about Ollie or whoever, who cares?

One of my knees made a cracking noise as I worked him but it didn't hurt and I ignored it, tried not to let it make me feel as old as I was. If I *was* Ollie I would go at him like a Hoover, so that's what I fucking did.

“Oh my God, fuck, that's so good, so good, Jesus!” he moaned, beside himself.

I used my hand to jerk him as I mouthed and sucked him, determined to get him off in seconds flat.

“Oh fuck, oh fuck. I'm gonna come, gonna...”

His hand gripped my shoulder for balance as his dick pulsed and come shot down my throat, filled my mouth and overflowed.

His groan was so loud I was surprised there wasn't a knock on the door. I'd probably be embarrassed about this later, but right now I didn't care. I swallowed and coughed as he kept pumping and coming and groaning.

Mission. Accomplished.

Finally, I pulled off him, licking my swollen lips and clearing my throat. I wiped my hand over my mouth to clean up the excess and looked up.

He was staring down at me with the most blissed out, surprised, expression.

“What?” I asked, my voice husky. I realized I was hard as fuck in my pants now.

“That was—I mean, wow. If that was you blowing me thinking about Ollie, I am going to kiss him when I see him.” He smiled at the angry expression that must have taken over my face. “On the cheek.”

I wiped my hands on my pants and stood up slowly, eyes raking over Jeremy's sated form. “I was pretending *I* was Ollie. Kind of.”

“Mmm, yeah, that was fucking amazing.”

I stood there staring at him.

“What?”

“I kind of want to jerk off all over you now.”

“Can I lie down? My head still feels a bit sore.”

“Yeah. Lie down on the bed. On your back.”

Jeremy obeyed. Stretched out languorously on his back, head propped on the pillows, playing with his shrinking cock that was still wet with my saliva. What a fucking sight.

I grabbed the lube off the side table, but Jeremy took it from me.

“No, come here.”

He pulled me forward, so I straddled him, knees on each side of his chest as he stared at my crotch. “Take it out.”

I breathed harder, undid the button and zipper of my jeans and pushed them down, then got my very hard cock out of my shorts.

Jeremy stared at it with a sexy smile. “Mmm, I need to suck that.”

“Who’s pretending to be Ollie now?” I asked breathlessly.

“I am,” Jeremy murmured. “I loved showing off my ass in those little blue shorts for you, Martin. And now I’m going to suck you while your boyfriend watches.”

This was just a little fucked up but I liked it.

Jeremy’s hands slid into my jeans and cupped my ass, pulling me forward. I gasped as his lips surrounded me, his eyes on mine.

“Mmm, soon I’m gonna spank that ass in those little shorts,” I breathed. We had to get Jeremy some of those shorts. I’d ask Ollie where to get some. Maybe Alice would know.

Jeremy growled around my dick and sucked harder as his fingers pushed into my crack.

“Oh fuck. Gonna spank that little ass so hard.” I knew what turned Jeremy on.

He moaned and pressed his fingertips against my hole, as he guided my dick in and out of his wet mouth. I was so hard. I couldn’t get enough.

Of their own volition my hands came up to his face, holding him still as I pushed my cock in and out of his willing mouth. He closed his eyes while I fucked his face, tongue relaxed and extended, mouth wide open for me, lips covering his teeth. Jeremy was a very—good—boy.

“Oh fuck, here, I can’t—” I panted as I erupted over his tongue with a loud groan and a few more curses.

My semen coated his tongue and dripped over his lips and it was the fucking most beautiful thing I’d ever seen, except for the adoring look in his eyes when he opened them and his lips moved into a smile.

He wagged his white tongue at me, then pulled it into his mouth and swallowed, making my dick pulse again and a little more fluid leak out as I pulled at it.

“Oh my God, you are fucking hot,” I said breathlessly. “Fuck Ollie. You are way hotter.”

His grin got bigger and he let go of my ass, putting his hands behind his head. “Don’t you forget it.”

“How could I? But...”

“What?”

“We need to get you a pair of blue hot pants. Because I really want to spank you in them.”

His chin dropped open. “Hell yeah. Okay.”

We both smiled.

“How’s the headache now?” I asked.

“Pretty much not there anymore. Hmm. Advil, a great orgasm, and your come in my mouth? Best hangover cure ever.”

“Good. Because we need to visit some bakeries,” I said, doing up my pants.

* * *

“Do you think we really need a cake?”

“Rupert will be disappointed if there isn’t one. Besides, that’s one tradition I fully intend to uphold.”

Jeremy put a hand on my arm, stopping me on the sidewalk. “What about rings?”

I blinked.

“Are we getting rings? We should probably get rings.”

I stared at him, warmth swelling in my chest, nodding slowly. “Yes. Definitely.”

“Let’s get rings first. That seems...more important.”

“Okay.”

* * *

It took us three jewellery stores before we found what we wanted: matching titanium rings with a thin royal blue line running down the middle, at a price that wouldn't severely test our bank balances. Luckily, they had our sizes in stock so it was a quick purchase and a heady feeling of relief filled my chest as we left with our purchase.

"Well. That's the hard part done," I said with a smile.

"Is it?"

"Sure. Promising to love you and keep you in front of a small group of friends in Alice's backyard? Easy."

Jeremy laughed. "I'll remind you of that when you're freaking out thirty minutes before the ceremony."

"Never happen."

"Sure."

I stopped and stared at him on the sidewalk as other weekday shoppers walked by. "What if it's *you* that freaks out?"

"What?" He said, eyes widening. "Why would I freak out?"

Are you freaking serious? "Because you're only twenty-six and you're about to give yourself to me for ...for the rest of your life. I mean, the rest of your *life*, Jeremy."

He shrugged, like it was nothing. "Yeah, so?"

I tugged on the sleeve of his jacket, pulling him under a shadowed overhang where we were shielded from prying eyes. "What if, what if you change your mind?"

"Martin, I'm not going to change my mind. Are you insane?"

"Just, I don't want you to feel like you were pressured into this."

"I'm pretty sure it was my freaking idea. To get married."

Was it? I couldn't quite remember. "It's just, you're so damn young and I'm so fucking old." *Why was I beating this damn horse so hard?*

He took my hands in his, the paper bag with my ring box in it hanging from the fingers of his left hand. "Martin, you're thirty-five."

"And you're twenty-six. I'm almost ten years older."

"Uh, yeah. We kind of knew that when we got together. You think that bothers me?"

"No, I just...I worry about the future. Sometimes."

“Hmm,” He said, and I could see him struggling to keep his frustration with me at bay.

“You know what I worry about, Martin?”

“I’m sure you’re going to tell me.”

“Yeah, cause it kind of puts your worries to shame I bet. I worry about this stupid disease rising up again and turning me into a burden on you, one you might not want some day.”

I blinked as my eyes burned with sudden emotion.

“Jeremy, I—”

He let go of my hands, his own clenching into fists as his breathing rate increased. “Fuck, Martin, you’re not even old and you’re worried about not being the perfect man for me. You keep forgetting that I’m not perfect either.”

And then he was gone, turning quickly and walking away from me along the London sidewalk.

“Jeremy, wait, Jeremy, don’t—” I said, chasing him down, grabbing his elbow to stop him. “No, I’m sorry, I don’t even know where this is coming from, just, just, I want you to be sure, you know? Because, if you decide, fifteen years from now, when I *am* fifty, that you don’t want me anymore, it will fucking destroy me.”

He had stopped walking and was just standing there, fuming, and staring at me. “What the fuck do you think would happen to me, if you decided the same thing? I fucking love you, you jerk, and I want to marry you and I damn well hope you want to marry me because, Martin? I’m planning to spend the rest of my life arguing with you about stupid shit. Okay?”

I nodded, tears springing from the corners of my eyes now. “Okay. Okay.”

“Jesus Christ,” Jeremy swore, shaking his head like I was the most irritating child. “Come on, Martin. Let’s get a cab.”

We cabled back to the hotel, Jeremy’s hand on my knee the entire ride as I sniffled with emotion and tried to act manly. As soon as we got in the room, he pulled me to him and kissed me so softly and sweetly the tears threatened to start again.

“I love you, you moron. I bought you a fucking wedding ring.”

I laughed and kissed him back, pulling him in close to me.

Chapter Thirteen

We'd forgotten, in all of our ring shopping and the argument after, to look for a cake, so I texted Alice in the morning and she said she'd take care of it. She and Rupert would pick out something good for us.

"Do you think Rupert might want to bring us the rings or something? Or carry flowers up the aisle? Or both?" I asked Jeremy.

"Wow. That's a great idea. I'll ask Alice."

"That poor woman. Her phone is getting quite the workout."

"She's loving every minute of it," Jeremy assured me, picking up his phone to compose the text.

When he'd finished, I cleared my throat, not quite knowing how to bring up what I wanted to discuss. "Um, have you decided what you're going to tell Kureck?"

Jeremy put his phone down on the table and raised his eyebrows. "Huh?"

You're seriously going to play dumb about this right now? "About the nudity issue."

"Still haven't decided," he muttered and stood up.

"You haven't decided? You don't have a plan?" I said. I *always* had a plan. For everything. Jeremy wasn't like me and sometimes that was hard to deal with.

"Martin, it might not be an issue. I may have misjudged the whole thing. He's been nothing but professional so far."

"So far?"

"I don't know. I got this feeling during the last session that he wanted more from me, y'know? And what more could he have except to shoot me naked? So, I felt like he might want to go there today."

"And if he does? If he asks to shoot you naked?" *Or worse?*

Jeremy blinked. "I'll decide then. See how I feel about it when it actually becomes a possibility and not just something I've made up in my head."

"Jeremy," I said, putting my hand on his arm. He was going to be pissed at me but I had to say something. Surely, he wasn't completely naïve? "What if he wants something else?"

"Martin, don't be ridiculous. And I thought we already had this conversation."

Had we? We had talked about my insecurities around Kureck. We hadn't talked about the very real possibility that Kureck could want something besides great photographs from Jeremy.

"Jeremy, people get put in awkward situations all the time. By people who seem professional at first and suddenly they're meeting you at the door with their robe undone and—"

"Kureck isn't like that, Martin. He's demanding, sure, and frustrating, yeah, but he's not a complete dick. Not in *that* way."

"You don't really know him..."

"I know him more than you do, Martin. I'm not worried about that. I'm just worried he will legit ask me if I'm okay with doing some nude shots. And I'm still not sure about it." He huffed out a breath. "Although, I gotta tell you, you being all like this is making me seriously consider it."

"What?" I exclaimed, more loudly than I'd intended. "You'd pose nude out of spite?"

He shook his head. "Not out of spite, Martin, but to prove to you that even if I agreed to pose nude for Kureck he wouldn't pressure me for anything more."

Oh great, so now it was turning into a dare. I'd just made the whole situation worse.

"I don't want to talk about this anymore," I said, turning away.

"You brought it up."

"I'm sorry I did. Just do whatever you want, Jeremy. Just... be fucking careful, that's all. Text me when you're on your way back."

"Martin, I'll be fine."

"I hope so."

* * *

Kureck picked Jeremy up at twelve thirty and I tried to find something to do to take my mind off the situation. Luckily, Alice texted me with some questions and we ended up chatting for over an hour, so I was very surprised when the hotel room door opened and Jeremy strode in, dumping his messenger bag by the door and walking straight into the bathroom after only a quick glance my way.

"Alice, I'll call you back," I said, a frisson of dread curling its way up my spine as I heard the bathroom door shut and lock.

I stood up and walked over there. The sound of the shower turning on really made me nervous. Why would he need to shower unless...

I knocked on the door. “Jeremy, are you okay?”

No answer. Maybe he couldn’t hear me over the water.

I realized that pounding the shit out of the door and yelling in a panic wouldn’t do either of us any good. All I could do was sink to the floor with my legs stretched out and my back against the bathroom door and wait.

My phone buzzed with a text from Alice:

I’ve got to go out, Martin. Call me tonight and I’ll give you all my updates on the wedding plans. Give Jeremy a kiss from me.

I tried to quell my anxious thoughts of what might have happened but it was hard to keep the possibilities from circling themselves in my mind. Finally, after what seemed like forever, the door opened quickly and I put out a hand to stop from falling. I was relieved to see anger on Jeremy’s face as opposed to defeat or anxiety, but I needed to know what happened.

He had a small white towel wrapped around his waist and his hair was wet.

“Get up,” he said shortly. “I need to get dressed and you’re in my way.”

I scrambled to stand but didn’t get out of his way. “What happened? For God’s sake, Jeremy, tell me what the fuck happened and why you’re home so early!”

His hand came up and he slapped the door frame right beside my head like he wanted to hit me, making me flinch.

“You were right, okay? You were fucking right and it makes me so fucking mad!” He hit the frame again and the sound right beside my ear was worse than anything, even worse than the look he was giving me. “Get out of the way. I need to get dressed.”

I moved, because I wasn’t a hundred percent sure he wasn’t going to hit me next. I’d never seen him like this.

“What did he do, Jeremy? What the fuck *did he do*?”

“Just leave me alone for a minute. Where are my PJ pants?”

I saw them on the chair, reached for them and handed them over. He grabbed them and put them on as my eyes flew over him, checking for bruises, cuts, anything that would tell me what happened. There was nothing visible.

I passed him his t-shirt.

“Thanks,” he muttered as he put it on and then climbed into the king-size bed under the covers and closed his eyes. “I need to take a nap.”

“Jeremy, I need you tell me what happened.”

Nothing.

“Jeremy, if you don’t tell me what happened right the fuck now I’m calling the police and giving them Kureck’s address.”

He opened his eyes. “Martin, don’t. I’m fine. He’s an asshole, not a rapist.”

I sat down on the edge of the bed and put my head in my hands. “Jesus Christ, Jeremy.”

“What, you think—” He sat up. “You think I’d let that asshole touch me? Are you fucking kidding me?”

Relief swept through me like a beam of sacred light. But anger followed it.

“What the fuck am I supposed to think? You come home early, lock yourself in the goddamn bathroom where, for all I know, you’re showering off the bastard’s spunk and *you won’t talk to me? Fuck, Jeremy!*” I turned and glared at him. “Don’t you *ever* do that to me again! Please, tell me he didn’t touch you. Did he touch you?”

Jeremy rubbed his hands over his face. “Not really.”

And the panic was back. “What does that mean?”

“I mean, he started to but I told him to stop. And when he didn’t stop I pushed him. And when he *still* didn’t stop I punched him in the fucking face.”

I stared at Jeremy and thanked God he had been able to protect himself. And, yeah, I was impressed.

“So, technically, yeah, he touched me. But he didn’t *touch me*, touch me. I mean, he tried to. But I didn’t let him.”

I couldn’t help my reaction. I leaned forward and pulled Jeremy into my arms, holding him close and keeping him against me. “Jesus, Jeremy, I didn’t *want* to be right.”

He was stiff for a few moments, and then I felt him relax as his arms came up and encircled me. “It’s okay. It’s okay, Martin.”

I shook my head. “It’s not okay, Jeremy. He’s not allowed to do that. We should call the police. File a report.”

“No. I’m not doing that.”

I pulled back. “Why the fuck not?”

“I’m going to charge him with, what, touching me on the arm the wrong way? He’s a photographer, Martin, and I was being photographed. He’ll just say he was guiding my pose or something.”

I swallowed and tried to accept his reasoning. But I needed to know the details.

“What exactly happened, Jeremy?”

He pulled back and settled himself against the pillows, a line of worry on his forehead, but remained silent.

“Did he ask you to take your clothes off for the shoot?”

Jeremy looked at the wall and nodded. He didn’t speak.

“And...did you? Did you agree to that?”

A few seconds of nothing, then he nodded. He wouldn’t meet my gaze.

“Jeremy, look at me.”

He shook his head and I saw moisture in his eyes.

“Jeremy. It wasn’t your fault.”

His eyes finally met mine, so full of disappointment and sadness it made my heart clench.

“But if I hadn’t agreed to do that...” His voice trailed off.

“Agreeing to pose nude for a professional photographer isn’t the same thing as agreeing to have sex with him.”

“I know, but, maybe the lines were blurred after that. I guess he thought I might want to ... do more.” He was staring at the wall again. He seemed embarrassed.

I thought about it for a moment. “I don’t understand.”

His eyes flashed to mine, full of guilt and regret, and for a split second I wondered if the lines had blurred for Jeremy, too.

“I was fucking hard, Martin. I couldn’t help it, in the situation.”

“But that’s—”

“It was exciting and new to pose for someone besides you, naked. I was totally getting off on it. And, of course, he noticed. And maybe he thought—” Jeremy sat up and now *really* met my gaze. “But, I swear, Martin, I didn’t want anything more than for him to take some really amazing photos of me. I swear to God. I never expected it to go further than that. And when he, when he—”

I nodded, showing my support.

“...when he came at me I was kind of shocked, you know? But I told him to stop right away, because I didn’t want that, I *never* wanted it. I pushed him away, but maybe he thought I didn’t mean it. He kept trying to kiss me and I fucking panicked and...”

“Punched him in the face.” I said it with a kind of sick enjoyment and almost a smile on my face. He noticed.

“It’s not fucking funny, Martin.”

“I know, I know. But that part? The punching him in the face part? That’s my favourite.” I said softly, letting him know I thought he was wonderful and strong and so precious. My almost-smile became an actual smile, and a corner of Jeremy’s mouth tried to answer it, then succeeded.

“Jerk. You’re a jerk,” he said. He lifted his hand and stroked a finger along my jaw. “I grabbed my shit and left. I was so mad. *So* mad. At him, and at you for being fucking right.”

I kissed the palm of his hand. “I know. I’m sorry. I’m sorry I was right.”

“Yeah, me too.”

Jeremy fell asleep while I sat beside him, stroking the smooth hair back from his forehead and trying to process what had happened. And what had almost happened. He looked younger than he was when he slept and I felt so very protective of him.

It took me several moments to realize the sound I heard was Jeremy’s cell phone ringing from his pants pocket in the bathroom. I felt like I should answer it, since it could be someone from back home—Jeremy hadn’t gotten any calls so far while we’d been in London, that I knew of—just texts and social media notifications. If there was an emergency back home he’d want to know.

I was able to get off the bed without waking him and found his jeans in a clump on the bathroom floor. I dug the phone out of the pocket and saw the name onscreen.

Felix Kureck.

Fuck.

I closed the bathroom door quietly and swiped to answer.

“Hey.”

“Ah, Jeremy, good. I wanted to speak to you about what happened at the studio today.”

A beat. “This is Martin.”

“Oh.” Pause. “Hello, Martin, how are you? Is Jeremy there?”

“Yes, he’s here.”

“May I speak with him, please?”

“No. You can speak with *me* about what happened in the studio today.”

“Hmm.” Throat clearing. “What did he tell you?”

“How’s your face? I hope he broke a tooth at least.” The hand that wasn’t holding the phone squeezed into a fist.

“What are you talking about?”

“I’m talking about the punch Jeremy landed on your face when you tried to kiss him, or were you trying to do more than that? Do you even realize what an asshole you are?”

“Martin, it sounds like Jeremy’s and my version of what happened here are very different. What did he tell you?”

“Okay, let me hear your version.”

“I’d like to speak to Jeremy first.”

“No.”

Kureck sighed. “Very well. I was taking photographs of Jeremy. He was naked, did he tell you that?”

“Yes.” A feeling of dread began to fester in my belly and a brief moment of doubt bubbled in my head. What if Jeremy had lied about what had happened? But no, there was no way.

“Okay. Well,” throat clearing again. “There was some, er, obvious sexual tension in the room and—”

“Kureck. Don’t you dare try to tell me that Jeremy wanted it.”

He paused for a long moment, then, “Why not? Don’t you believe that is within the realm of possibility?”

He was trying to undermine Jeremy’s credibility. It was in his interests to convince me that Jeremy had lied. But I wasn’t falling for it.

“No, Kureck, I fucking don’t. I believe every word he said about what happened. And I hope your face is seriously fucked up right now because that would make me very, very happy. I’m kind of disappointed you can still talk.”

“I really don’t know what you’re talking about. He told you he hit me?” There was a kind of laugh and then he said, “Oh, that’s rich. Kid is living a fantasy life it seems.”

“Kureck? Don’t fucking call him that and I know he’s telling the truth and you are just damn good at pretending. But I’m not falling for it. And I’m hanging up right now and you’ll be lucky if Jeremy doesn’t bring charges against you.”

I pressed End Call to the sound of Kureck starting to speak again but I didn’t want to hear it. He could die in a fiery death as far as I was concerned.

My heart pounded in my ears as I put Jeremy’s phone back in his pocket. Then I splashed some cold water on my face and stared at my reflection in the fancy mirror.

There was no way Jeremy was lying. Jeremy would never lie about something like this. Jeremy *didn’t* lie. Not about important stuff.

Still, my hand trembled as I opened and closed the bathroom door. I climbed onto the bed, snuggling Jeremy from behind and throwing an arm over him. His right hand, the hand he’d have used when he’d punched Kureck, lay flat on the sheets. The knuckles were very obviously red and swollen, and there was a small, fresh cut on one of them that had begun to scab. I sighed with relief and some guilt that I’d even felt the need to look.

Chapter Fourteen

It was almost four thirty when Jeremy woke up. I felt his body jerk and then he sat up rather suddenly. “Martin?”

“I’m right here. Beside you.”

His gaze landed on me and he visibly relaxed. “Sorry. I just got scared for a second.”

“Understandable.”

He lay back down, facing me. I brushed the brown hair out of his eyes.

“Hey,” he said.

“Hey.” I leaned in and kissed him gently. “You okay?”

He nodded. “Yeah. I’m okay. Now that I’m with you.”

I blinked back emotion and pulled him tight against me, nuzzling into his neck and inhaling his scent. “Oh, Jeremy.”

“Martin. How come you’re so smart?”

“What?”

“I mean, sometimes, like now, it’s really annoying, but how did you get to be so smart about people?”

“I don’t know. Experience?”

He pulled away slightly, so he could look at me. “Did anything like this ever happen to you?”

I blushed, embarrassed even now to think about it. It had been such a long time ago. “Yes.”

He didn’t say anything else. Didn’t ask about it. Just looked at me with wide open, honest eyes.

“I was twenty-three. It was a friend of a friend. An older man, yeah.” I said in reply to Jeremy’s raised brow. “He offered to show me some techniques. Photography related of course. Took me out to the woods to shoot some nature stuff which was my area of interest. His also. Of course, he was more interested in some other aspects of the natural world. Namely, me.”

“Whoah.”

“Yeah. I wasn’t ready for it when he made advances, and I was timid and embarrassed. I let things go too far then panicked. He probably thought I was on board until I pushed him away and made excuses. I said I wasn’t feeling well instead of telling him to fuck right off and leave me

alone. I didn't want it. I didn't want *him*. I had a crush on my friend Craig at the time and I didn't even think this guy was attractive. But I let him touch me because I was so surprised and had been taught to be polite to older adults." I shook my head, blushing with embarrassment and guilt even now. "It's so stupid. I still don't know why I didn't make him stop right away. I wish I'd been as brave as you."

"Martin."

"He kept after me for weeks and I just kept making excuses as to why we couldn't get together. I wasn't even brave enough to tell him to back off, that I didn't want anything to do with him. I kept hoping he'd get the hint."

"Did he?"

"I ran into him at a party later that year. The thing with Craig had crashed and burned and I was vulnerable, lonely. I, uh, I let him fuck me in my friend's bedroom at that party."

"Oh, Martin."

"Yeah, it wasn't any good. And halfway through I decided I wanted him to stop. Naturally, he was pretty into it and, whether he didn't hear me or didn't *want* to hear me, I'll never know."

"Jesus."

"Pretty sure he heard me. And just, didn't stop till he'd finished, y'know? It hurt like hell and he didn't fucking stop."

"Martin, that's fucking rape. He raped you."

I blinked. I didn't really feel that was true. "The thing is, at the beginning, I thought I wanted it."

"But you told him to stop."

"Yeah, but he was already fucking me. I'd already agreed to do it."

"But you told him to stop and he didn't listen. He *didn't stop*, Martin." He let it go for the moment. "I thought you said you weren't even attracted to him."

"Yeah, but he wanted me and I guess I wasn't feeling very attractive at the time. He took me into one of the bedrooms and got down and blew me. Which, y'know, always feels good. And I came and then he said he wanted to fuck me."

"Did you *want* to let him fuck you? Like that, right after you came?"

"Not really. But he used his hand to get me, y'know, hard again, and kept asking me to let him, and acting like I owed him, and I guess I kind of felt like I *did* owe him, and—"

“Oh man. That’s horrible. I can’t believe he didn’t listen when you wanted him to stop.”

“I kept downplaying it in my own mind, like it was just a misunderstanding or something and that I wasn’t irrevocably hurt by it. And that it wasn’t anything malicious on his part. But as the months went by I got more and more angry about it. Angry that I didn’t stand up to him more, but even more angry that he was so fucking persistent and ignored how I was obviously feeling.” I looked up at Jeremy. “I really wish I’d punched him in the face.”

Jeremy smiled, but there was regret and sadness there too. “If you ever see him again, point him out and I’ll do it for you.” He looked at his right hand and flexed it. “Except they never tell you how much it hurts your hand.”

“Do you want some ice?”

“Yeah. Okay.”

I got off the bed, thinking I should probably tell Jeremy about Kureck’s phone call. As I walked back to him with a facecloth full of ice cubes, I casually mentioned it.

“*What?* What the fuck do you mean *he called?*”

“I heard your phone ring from the bathroom. I thought it might be an emergency.”

“You answered my phone?”

“Well, yeah. I didn’t want you to wake up and as soon as I saw—as soon as I saw his fucking name, I *needed* to answer it.”

Jeremy looked like he wanted to punch Kureck again, even as he took the face cloth and held it to his knuckles. “What did the bastard say?”

I sat on the bed, getting Jeremy to pass his hand over so I could hold the cloth to his knuckles.

“Nothing important. He wanted to talk to you.”

“I bet.”

“Damage control.”

“Yeah.”

“I said he couldn’t. I wasn’t very polite about it.”

“And?”

“I called him an asshole.”

“Good. Because he *is* an asshole.”

“Then he tried to tell me that you were lying to me about what happened.”

Jeremy's head whipped up, his eyes piercing into me. He tried to pull his hand away. But I tightened my grip and didn't let him.

"Jeremy, I believe you. I'm not going to let some guy I barely know convince me that the man I love lied about being assaulted, or nearly assaulted."

Jeremy seemed to relax. Anyway, he stopped trying to take his hand away.

"I would never lie about something like that, especially to you. I don't think it's even possible."

"I know. But the fact that he even tried to instil doubt in my mind—well, he's got balls, I'll say that."

"So, what, did he act like everything was normal? I mean, what did he say exactly?"

I ran through the conversation with Jeremy, watching his eyes widen as he listened.

"That fucking creep! I cannot believe he called me and then fucking lied about what happened. What was he going to do if *I* had answered?"

"Probably try to convince you it was all in your head. That you'd overreacted. He denied you hit him."

"Well, I fucking did. Apparently, I should have hit him harder."

I shook my head, taking the ice off and looking at his knuckles. "Probably a good thing you didn't. You don't need to break your hand to prove anything." I raised it to my lips and placed very soft kisses on his sore skin.

"I bet he deletes all the work we did and doesn't even include me in his stupid book."

I blinked. "Do you still *want* to be in the book?"

"I don't know. Maybe? It's the entire reason I came here. Yeah, I still want to be in his book. But I don't want the nude shots in the book. Not anymore. Not now that I know he had more than an artistic interest in my body."

I nodded, glad for that. "Can't you talk to the agency? Maybe they can deal with him. If you just tell them he crossed some boundaries and you're not comfortable dealing with him directly?"

"Yeah, maybe."

My phone buzzed and scared the crap out of both of us. I looked down to see a text from Alice.

Hey, I'm home. Is this a good time to call?

I showed Jeremy and he nodded. “Just don’t talk about any of this other stuff.”

“No, of course.”

“Way to put a damper on the wedding.”

“We won’t let it,” I said, smiling and kissing him on his forehead, before texting Alice back.

A few moments later my phone rang.

“Hi, Alice.”

“Martin! Is Jeremy back?”

Our eyes met. “Yeah, he’s here. I’ll put you on speaker.”

“Okay. How did your final shoot go, Jeremy?”

“Fine. How was your day?” Jeremy raised a pretend gun to his head and pulled the trigger.

I mimed laughter even though I still felt a bit depressed about everything. What was the saying—*Fake it till you make it?*

“Very successful, as a matter of fact! Rupert and I ordered a cake for you.”

“What flavour?” Jeremy said.

“Vanilla.”

“Uh, Alice,” I began because I could see Jeremy bursting to respond. I was too late.

“Vanilla!” Jeremy scoffed.

Alice hesitated “Don’t tell me you don’t like vanilla?”

Jeremy started laughing and it was lovely to hear.

“I think Jeremy’s laughing because he is definitely *not* vanilla. I mean, in the other sense. You know...”

“Oh. Oh *my God*. Seriously? Why didn’t you tell me before now?”

“I’m sure vanilla is fine for the cake, Alice, if for nothing else in Jeremy’s life.”

“Jesus, you two are killing me. Now my mind is going places...”

Jeremy leaned in. “Alice, I love vanilla. As long as it’s in a cake. Or cookies. *Not* the bedroom.”

“Why couldn’t you have told me that before we went to the club? It would have added a whole other level to my fantasy!”

“So sorry, Alice. Terrible oversight. We’ll have to find a moment to discuss Jeremy’s more flavorful...predilections,” I said, eyeing the young man in question.

“Okay, phew, can’t wait. Now, the cake is lovely and they’re going to put a figurine on top of it. I told Rupert it might not be something you wanted but he was insistent when we found one with two men.”

Jeremy put a hand to his chest and our eyes met.

“Alice, that’s adorable. I’m sure the cake will be amazing. And tell Rupert he made the right choice,” I said, truly touched that so much thought and care was going into our little ceremony.

We spent a good half hour on the phone with Alice, sorting out details for Sunday. Rupert had decided to go full flower girl/ring bearer. He wanted to lead us down the aisle throwing flower petals AND present the rings at the right time. Dressed up as Batman. Which would be amazing and perfect.

“Feeling better?” I asked Jeremy.

“Yeah. Much. I think I’ll call the agency and let them know what happened.”

“I think that’s a good idea.”

“Can you make me a cup of tea, please?”

“Of course.”

He stood and scratched his head, looking at the door. “Do you mind if I go into the hall? I just need some privacy.”

“Not at all. The little room with the candy machine doesn’t get very busy.”

“Good idea. Back in a few. Love you, Martin.” He grinned.

“Love you too.”

I had to blink back tears for a second, both from the offhand endearment and the fact he had to have this shitty conversation with his agency. I didn’t envy him one bit.

When he came back to the room his face was drawn. I handed him his tea which he took and then sat down in one of the armchairs.

“How did that go?”

“Fine. Good, I guess.”

“What’s the matter?”

“Well, they pressed for details but I didn’t...I didn’t want to tell them *exactly* what happened. Only that he invaded my personal space and made me uncomfortable.”

“Fair enough.”

“Yeah, well, they said they could send him an email letting him know what I’d said and that I’d asked to make an adjustment to my consent form. At least that sounds more professional than me just calling him. I also don’t *want* to talk to him. At all.”

“Has he texted or tried to call you again?”

“He texted me once asking me to call him. But I’m not going to.”

“Good. He probably won’t call you in case I answer again.”

“Yeah. Thank God. I’m glad you spoke to him.” He stood up and walked over to me.

“Thanks for defending my honour.”

“He’s lucky I didn’t go to his studio and finish what you started,” I said, giving my best nonsense look.

“Mmm. I love it when you go all alpha. So sexy.” He put his hand on my arm.

“Really?”

“Uh huh. I could use a big alpha hug right now. If you don’t mind.”

I opened my arms and gathered him in, holding him close and safe in my embrace.

“I’m really proud of you,” I said, nuzzling his ear.

“Why?”

“For dealing with everything the way you did. For standing up for yourself and not letting Kureck take advantage. For dealing with it in a professional manner. You know, when you have time tonight or tomorrow, you should write down what happened just in case there is ever any question. Or in case you ever have to corroborate someone else’s complaint against him.”

“Okay. Good idea.”

I took his chin in my hands and gave him a soft kiss on the lips. “You want to go out tonight?”

“Not really.” He shrugged. “I just want to cuddle in bed with you.”

“You just had a nap.”

“Who said anything about sleeping?” He gave me a shy little smile.

I nodded, returning it. “Okay.”

“Maybe we could watch something on Netflix.”

“This hotel has Netflix?”

“It does.”

“How civilized.”

“Now shut up and get your ass into bed, Martin.”

I did as I was told, not one to argue with Jeremy when he was in this kind of a mood. And really, I was as desperate to chill out together in bed as he was. I wasn't sure if sex was on the menu—I thought it might be, but I didn't want to push him after the day he'd had.

And it didn't matter. It was a treat to strip to my boxers and t-shirt in the middle of the day and slide under the covers with him, our bodies falling into a familiar intimacy. He passed me the remote.

We surfed channels, then settled onto reruns of Seinfeld. We needed a laugh and some ridiculousness to lighten the mood.

I guess I wasn't laughing loudly enough because Jeremy dug his fingers into my hip, making me try to wiggle away and laugh louder.

“Stop...oh fuck, stop it, you madman,” I said, unable to do anything but squirm and giggle. Very manly.

“Oooh, I like it when you're desperate.”

“Fuck you.”

“Okay. Now or later?”

“Fuck, now if you'll stop doing that. Or later. I'm easy.”

“Oh, I know that.” He said, digging deeper until I reached around and grabbed his wrist.

“Mercy!” I laughed. “Mercy. Stop. Please.”

He sighed, as if disappointed in my lack of stamina.

“You're no fun, Martin.”

I gave him an offended look. “I can be fun. I am the *King of Fun*, Jeremy.”

He raised his eyebrows and tilted his chin, folding his arms across his chest. “Really.”

I stared at him, wondering what I had to do to prove it. “Okay, what is the most enjoyable thing I've ever done to you? Tell me and I'll do it right now.”

His eyes lit up. “Well...”

“Oh Lord, it's spanking, right? I know that's your favourite thing, you little pervert.”

He eyed my right hand and didn't deny it. He wiggled his eyebrows. “You *did* ask.”

“I did ask.”

“I'm also kind of deliberately being a brat here.”

“You know, we really need to address this age-play thing. Do you really want me to be your *Daddy*?”

His eyes darkened and he got real quiet, almost quivering with anticipation. Then he nodded. Then he blushed, like, big time.

“Oh fuck,” I said.

“Is that too weird? It’s weird isn’t it?” he said, hiding his face in the pillow.

“Of course not,” I said, suddenly hard as hell. Sure, maybe it was a little weird. But it was only role play.

Jeremy lifted his face, which was a deep red, from the pillow. “I mean, it feels a bit weird but, Jesus, when you said that just now? I think I came a little.” He took my hand and placed it on his boxers where there was now a very wet spot. He closed his eyes, pressing my hand against his erection.

“I mean,” he said, his breath short and quick. “I don’t want you to go too crazy with this. But a little bit here and there? Could set me off like gangbusters.”

I nodded, mind spinning.

“Over my knee right now, then,” I breathed.

As he grinned and crawled over me, I added: “Young man.”

He froze and I wondered if I’d gone too far. But he laid himself over my lap, making a small sound in his throat as his extremely stiff cock pressed against my thigh. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to ... break it.”

It took me a second to catch up.

“Didn’t I tell you not to touch it?” Not sure what *it* was but it really didn’t seem to matter.

He nodded his head. “Yes, Sir, you did.”

“And you disobeyed me?”

“I’m sorry. I should be punished,” he said, trembling.

“Mmm. Obviously. You are a *very* naughty boy, Jeremy,” My fingers traced the skin at the edge of his boxer briefs.

“I know.” Panting breaths. “I’m sorry.”

“You will be when I’m done with you.”

“Oh...God.”

I slid my fingers over the rise of his ass in his white briefs and tugged on the waistband. “Take these down for me, please.”

He stilled. “Wh—at?”

“Pull down your shorts, Jeremy.”

He wiggled a bit and I wondered if he would call the whole thing off. In order to carry out my instruction he had to reach his arms back which meant his face now pressed awkwardly into the mattress. But he did it and pushed the waistband of his briefs halfway down his buttocks.

I sighed. It was unnerving how I was able to fall so comfortably into this role. I didn’t want to examine it, but I couldn’t stop now.

“All the way, please.”

“Holy shit,” Jeremy said in a husky voice as he pushed the waistband back to where his bottom met the top of his thighs.

“Excuse me?” I pretended to be shocked. “I won’t have you using profanity when you speak to me.”

“I wasn’t—”

“Excuse me?”

I heard a huff and I wasn’t sure if he was laughing at me or expressing real frustration. “Sorry.”

Oh, man I was good at this. Why was I so good at this?

“That’s better. Ready?”

Jeremy grunted and shifted, his cock still caught up in the cotton boxers as it pressed hot against me.

“I’ll take that as a ‘yes’, son.”

I didn’t give Jeremy any time to wrap his head around my use of that word before giving him a firm slap to the underside of his buttocks. I was rewarded with a loud groan and a shudder all along the length of him. My own cock was painfully hard and I’m sure he could feel it.

I used the fingers of my left hand to swipe the damp hair back from his forehead, then let them glide along his neck and along the centre of his back. His thumbs were still hooked in the waistband of his briefs so I gently pulled one hand away and across the centre of his lower back, then brought his other hand up to cross over it.

“Keep your hands here.”

“Uh huh,” he whispered, voice barely registering as his breathing ramped up.

“You okay?” I said in a soft voice, very different from the *Dad* voice I had been using. I wanted to check in with him.

There was a shaky burst of a laugh that turned into a moan. “Fuck yes. Don’t stop.”

I smiled, then became the stern father figure once more.

“I’ll give you ten swats for being such an ungrateful, clumsy, little brat,” I said. “And if you ever, *ever*, touch *any* of Daddy’s airplane models again I’ll make sure you don’t sit down for a week. Do you understand?”

“*Yes.*” It was a squeak, as if he were a lot younger than he really was.

I didn’t let myself think about that too much. It was pretty obvious that I had a grown man over my knee, with his big adult cock pushing against my thigh. If he wanted to pretend to be a kid who’d gotten into a whole lot of trouble and subsequently brought a spanking upon himself, who was I to judge? Especially when I was fully invested.

“Good.” I couldn’t help adding the most Dad-like thing in the world. “You know, this hurts me more than it hurts you.”

Before Jeremy could even bust out a response to that one my hand was coming down on his ass, again and again, causing him to twist and groan with either pleasure or pain, I wasn’t quite sure which, until on the last slap he shuddered hard and I felt the hot pulse of his spunk on my thigh while I gripped his wrist to keep him from falling off my lap.

“Jesus Christ,” I whispered as he moaned and kept coming, his body literally convulsing with release. “Oh, Lord, son.”

He moaned again, then pulled his hand from my now relaxed grip and folded his arms under his head, wiping his forehead against them and then resting his cheek and blinking up at me.

“Holy. Fuck.”

“You liked that.”

“*Holy. Fuck.*”

“Did I do okay?”

“Holy fucking Christ, Martin, are you kidding me? You are the daddy of my dreams. Why have we never done this before?”

I shrugged. “I don’t know.”

“Did it feel weird?” He asked with a quiet voice.

“Kind of. But, more because of how right it felt. It *didn't* really feel weird, which was weird. You know what I mean?”

“Yeah. I know what you mean.”

“Now you’ve made a mess.” I gestured at my leg.

He gave me a side-eye and a grin. “Yes, I did. How are you going to punish me for *that*?”

I sat back, licking my lips and enjoying the sight of him, sated and laying over my lap with a red, spanked ass. “I think you should do something for Daddy now.”

His eyebrows flew up as I shifted, letting him feel the hard length of my cock even more.

“I can do that,” he said, softly. “Seems only fair.”

I lifted my arms up behind my head, nodding with a pleased smile on my face. “Good boy.”

I stayed in that position while he turned around and sucked me off, playing up the fact that his red ass was in the air, his boxer briefs around his thighs, and his dirty mouth around my cock.

Chapter Fifteen

I woke up curled around Jeremy, his cheek against my chest. As I blinked and took in the sight of him, remembering our cheeky *Daddy/son* playtime the night before, I was surprised to hear a soft, sleepy chuckle.

“I can hear you remembering what happened last night,” he said in a sleep deep voice.

I felt the blush creep into my cheeks but decided to play dumb. “Huh?”

He laughed again and his hand found my morning wood. He ran a finger along the underside of my cock, making it twitch and causing a gasp from me.

“Yep. You remember.”

“Actually, I just need to piss.”

He tipped his head up and blinked those dark lashes at me. “Sure.”

I couldn’t help but grin at the sweet, not-so-innocent look he gave me.

“Behave yourself,” I said.

“Or what?”

My eyebrows shot up. “Or I’ll take you over my knee again.”

“Oh, we’re definitely doing *that* again, Daddy.”

I felt my cheeks get hotter. In the bright light of day, the game we’d played seemed slightly more deviant.

Jeremy shifted a bit and winced. “Only, not right now because my ass is still sore.”

“That’ll teach you.”

“Hmm. I don’t think it will.”

“Brat.”

“Daddy,” he said, touching my cock again.

“Oh God, stop it, Jeremy. That seems so inappropriate now.”

He sat up, frowning. “Really?”

I gulped, feeling my cock throb. “Well, only because it’s morning.”

“Hmm. So extreme age play after dark only? I can live with that.”

This time I laughed. “I’m old and conservative, I guess.”

“Could have fooled me. You’re not old, Martin. And you give my kinky soul a run for its money.” He pushed up and off the bed, standing and stretching as he yawned.

I let my eyes wander over him. “Let’s see, then.”

“What?”

“Turn around.”

He grinned and waggled his eyebrows, then turned to show me his ass. It was still a bit red, with sharper marks here and there, but no bruises, thank God. At least, not yet.

I hissed in a breath.

“You like it?”

Oh, hell yes. But I felt a bit guilty about how *much* I liked it. Liked that he still had marks on him from what we’d done the night before. What *I’d* done.

“Maybe.”

“Liar.”

“Fuck.”

“You are a kinky son-of-a-bitch, Martin, and you know it. It’s too late to blame it all on me.”

“Fine.”

“We should put something in our vows, even.”

“*What?*”

“I promise to be a naughty brat sometimes so that you can spank me over your knee and I can call you Daddy.”

“Jesus Christ.”

“And you can say *I promise to give you the discipline you need whenever you need it, to make you into the amazing and beautiful young man I know you can be.*”

I laughed, imagining saying these things in front of our guests. “In your fucking dreams, Jeremy.”

“Oh yes, that *will* be in my dreams. I’ll be thinking it while we’re exchanging our real vows.”

“Aren’t we just doing standard vows?”

“What? The standard vows for when a man marries another man?”

“I see your point. But we can just alter the standard vows.”

“As much as I like getting spanked, and fooling around with discipline, I am not promising to “obey” you, Martin.”

“Nobody does that anymore.”

He blinked. “Haven’t you written something down?”

My mouth went dry. “What? No.”

“I have.”

“You have?”

“Uh, yeah. I wrote my vows out to you the other day. After we got the rings.”

I must have looked lost, because he came back to the bed and cupped my cheek in his hand, kissing me softly on the lips.

“Martin, relax. You still have time.”

“What do *yours* say?”

He shook his head from side to side. “Oh no. You’re not hearing them until we’re standing in front of Alice’s husband.” He kissed me ever so sweetly again, then pulled back and winked. “But don’t worry. I didn’t put in the kinky stuff.”

* * *

After our hotel breakfast I opened a new Word document while Jeremy went on Facebook, or whatever social media he was into these days.

Staring at the white screen, I tried to come up with something that expressed what Jeremy meant to me and what I would promise him during our time together. There were so many things I wanted to put down, but I didn’t want to stand there and recite a ten-minute list. It was a struggle to keep it short. When I was done, after I’d crossed out a bunch of stuff and re-phrased everything several times, I was happy with what I had. And I knew it expressed all the things that were important to me.

As I lay my pencil down on the table there was a knock at the door. It couldn’t be housekeeping because they’d been in while we were at breakfast.

When I opened the door, the older, sharply dressed gentleman standing there holding two dry-cleaning bags over his arm, smiled at me.

“Mr. Lewis or Mr. Trask?”

I blinked. “Mr. Lewis.”

The man nodded. “I have your tuxes.”

“Uh, there must be a mistake, we didn’t—”

Jeremy’s voice came from behind me. “Excellent! You can lay them on the chair for now.”

I turned to Jeremy, confused. “We didn’t order tuxes. We didn’t *try on* any tuxes. Did we?”

The gentleman ignored my puzzlement and laid the bags over the back of the chair. Then he placed two boxes on the seat.

“Thank you,” Jeremy said, handing the man a five-pound note.

The man, who had not stopped smiling, raised his hand. “Not necessary. It’s all part of the service. Just call the shop on Monday and we’ll pick it all up. Have a wonderful celebration!”

“Thank you so much,” Jeremy said, walking him to the door and shutting it behind him.

“Did I miss something?”

Jeremy grinned, looking a bit sheepish, and walked over to me. “I know we were just gonna wear the suits we brought with us, but that didn’t seem right. For something so special. So, I gave Alice our measurements and told her what I wanted and she arranged everything.”

“But surely she didn’t *pay* for everything?”

“Of course not. It’s on me, Martin.”

I blinked again. “You’re paying?”

“I’m paying. For this. You bought the rings and I wanted to contribute something.”

I didn’t know what to say.

“Plus, I couldn’t disappoint Alice and Rupert. They’re expecting a big, fat, Canadian gay wedding and it is our duty to do it right.”

I didn’t have any words for that, so I reached out and pulled him close, kissing him hard and demonstrating just how touched I was at his thoughtfulness.

After a few long moments he gently eased his mouth away. His hands rested on my arms, eyes bright with anticipation.

“We should try everything on to make sure of the fit and that we have everything we need.”

“Okay.”

The dry-cleaning bags were labelled with our names. I picked up mine and laid it out on the bedspread, unzipping it and peeling it back from the grey tux jacket and pants.

“Figured you’d want something fairly traditional,” Jeremy said, peering over my shoulder. “Plus, you look good in grey.”

I fingered the fine fabric and blinked back some strong emotion. “Thanks. It’s perfect.”

“Here, I’m going in the bathroom to put my stuff on. We can surprise each other.”

I laughed. “But you already know what I’m wearing.”

“But I haven’t actually seen it on you, silly.” He patted my shoulder and made his way to the luxurious bathroom. I said his name, making him stop and turn.

“This is so sweet of you, Jeremy. I really am touched.”

He smiled, flashing his teeth. “If you look as good as I think you’re going to, you definitely *will* be touched. By me, at the very least, and if I’m not careful, by several others.” He winked and left me to my outfit.

I hadn’t worn a tux in years. Not since my sister’s wedding to Simon. It took me awhile to figure things out and, before I did, the door to the bathroom opened. I looked up and choked on whatever I was going to say.

Jeremy looked like a wet dream. The dark blue fabric of the suit jacket, vest and pants set off his brown eyes and brown hair to perfection. The slim fit trousers and jacket outlined his narrow hips, legs and slightly broader shoulders in a way that made my mouth go dry. The matching vest hugged his waist and chest and provided a lovely contrast to the pale pink silk tie that rested under the collar of his plain white dress shirt. A pink line of silk peeked out of his jacket where the pocket square was tucked neatly.

“Oh man,” I said, voice shaking slightly, hands trembling as I tried to button my vest while taking in the stunning image before me.

He lifted his chin and straightened his jacket, walking toward me with intention. When he got close I dropped my hands and waited.

“Here, let me help you,” he said, finishing the top button of my vest and picking up the black silk tie.

“Jeremy, you look amazing. So beautiful. I don’t fucking deserve you.”

“Shut up, Martin. You look as good as I do and you haven’t even got the whole outfit on yet,” he said sweetly, then grinned. “And once we make sure everything fits, I’m peeling you out of it and having my way with you.”

“Yours fits perfectly,” I breathed while he looped my tie over itself, his tongue visible between his lips as he concentrated. “I mean,” I glanced down at his groin and noticed a slight bulge there. “Jesus Christ, Jeremy.”

He laughed and finished with my tie, then handed me the jacket, which I put on and tried to straighten.

Jeremy stepped back. “Oh, yes.” His eyes blazed like fire, looking me up and down. “Oh, yes, *Sir*.”

I rolled my eyes but he made me stand in front of the mirror. The tall man with dirty blond hair and blue eyes who stared back at me looked a bit lost but he certainly did look handsome and ... distinguished?

“Wow,” I said. “Nice.”

Jeremy scoffed. “Nice? *Nice*?” He moved in close and looked over my shoulder as his arms went around me. He patted the front of the grey vest, fiddling with the buttons and otherwise fussing so that everything looked pristine. “This is much more than *nice*, let me tell you.”

His breath felt hot on my ear, and I saw my cheeks flush in the mirror as my cock hardened inside the fancy suit pants. As if he could read my mind, Jeremy slid his hand down over the front of the grey fabric and gently stroked me to full hardness.

“Jeremy,” I gasped, stifling a moan and trying to turn toward him. “I don’t want to mess these pants...”

“Then take them off.”

I stared at him, still overcome by how he looked in his tux. “But you...”

“I’m keeping mine on. You seem to like it.”

Oh fuck, did I ever. I liked it so much I was wondering how I’d hide a hard-on during the ceremony tomorrow. He read my mind again.

“We won’t be able to fuck tomorrow so we best get it out of our system now. And maybe again tonight.” His eyes lazily roamed over me again. “Take off your pants.”

I blinked at him, then saw the resolve in his expression. Gone was the Daddy’s boy from last night and this morning. In its place was a dominant persona that appeared from time-to-time whenever Jeremy felt especially confident and superior. Like now, for instance, when my ever-present self-doubt and self-deprecation made him angry and suddenly toppy. He could pull this off as easily as the guilty boy he’d draped across my lap last night. It was one of the many reasons I loved him.

Once I had my socks, shoes and pants off, all laid neatly atop the nearby chair, Jeremy moved forward. “I think, in order to save this entire outfit from anything that might sully it,” he said, licking his lips. “We’ll have to take *everything* off you, Martin.”

I lifted my chin, staring into his dark eyes because that was just fine with me. I stood very still as he came close and pushed the jacket back and off my shoulders. We watched it fall to the floor.

“I’ll hang it up,” he said. “Don’t move.”

He moved around me and bent to pick up the jacket, as I turned my head to watch the fabric of his pants stretch across his ass.

“Stop looking at my ass,” he said as he straightened and went to find the hanger.

“Make me.”

“Challenge accepted.”

He hung up the jacket, then opened the drawer in his bedside table and took something out. As he walked over to me I realized it was one of the neckties we’d used as bondage earlier in the week.

My breathing hitched as I realized what was in store.

“Jeremy...”

“Yes?” He said, standing very close in front of me and placing the tie up to cover my eyes.

“I love you.”

“I know. But can you be quiet or should I gag you as well?”

One side of my mouth quirked. “I can be quiet.”

“Hmm. We’ll see.” He finished securing my blindfold in place and his fingers worked on the tie at my throat as he undid the perfect knot he’d made only moments earlier.

“Only now I can’t see you in that goddamn beautiful suit.”

“Hmm, that’s a shame.”

He took his time undressing me. I heard him put everything back in order on the hanger as he did, and then into the closet.

When I was down to just my boxers, he came over and took my hands, placing them on his hips which were still covered in expensive fabric.

“You can *feel* me, though. Still all spiffy while you’re almost naked. How about that?”

I ran my fingers lightly over his clothes, feeling the smooth cloth and his lean muscles underneath. My hands were shaking, I was so excited.

He came close and kissed me, hands running down my naked chest and belly to the waistband of my boxers. He slid one finger underneath and traced the line of it, tickling and teasing my sensitive skin. Then he backed off and I heard fabric rustling.

“I’m taking off the jacket now, because I’m getting hot.”

“Okay.”

I listened while he shed the jacket and hung it up on its hanger in the closet.

“But I’m leaving the rest of the outfit on and you are just gonna have to deal with not being able to see me in it while I touch and tease you. And you better not come until your dick is safely down my throat or we’ll be making an emergency trip to the dry cleaner.”

“Oh fuck.”

“Mmmm. Nope. Just a blow job. For now.”

I heard some rustling and felt his warm breath on my belly just before he placed a soft kiss there and hooked his fingers under the waistband of my briefs.

“Peek-a-boo,” he muttered, pulling the band away from my skin and letting the cool air caress my nether regions. I gasped.

“Oh, hello,” he murmured, pulling the shorts down to my thighs. “Down, boy.”

“Not a chance,” I panted.

“Shhh,” he said.

I felt the knuckles of his hand drift along the underside of my cock, making me whimper. My hands itched to reach out and touch him but I kept them clenched at my sides. I pictured the way he must look, dressed in the fine clothes, kneeling at my feet. My cock jerked, bumping against his cheek.

His hands wrapped around my naked thighs, as I felt his stubbled cheek rub against my prick. It felt deliciously rough on the sensitive skin there.

“Ah,” I gasped, trying to get my bearings.

Then his tongue found the head of my cock and I yelped with surprise.

“Mmm,” he hummed, sending vibrations through his tongue and into me.

“Oh ... hell.”

I really wanted to lift the blindfold but I didn’t. I listened to the sounds of his clothes rustling and the soft sweet hum of his throat as he worked me. I’d seen him do it plenty of times, but never all decked out like this. It was strange to think we’d never indulged ourselves before,

but it was such a rare event for us to go anywhere fancy. I made a point to take Jeremy out to some theatre or music performances when we got home.

This train of thought was interrupted when Jeremy's lubed finger slipped between my ass cheeks and pushed inside me.

"Fuck! Fuck!"

My legs trembled as I widened my stance and thrust into his mouth as he pushed his finger deep and pressed just the right spot.

"*Oh fuck!*" I yelled as I came down his throat, trying not to fall over, steadied by his gripping hands and strong arms.

I groaned and shook as the pleasure coursed through me, running my fingers through his short hair as he finished me off.

"So good. So good," I murmured, in a daze of satiety.

Jeremy laughed, letting me slide out of his mouth and pulling the boxer briefs up and over my wet cock. He smacked his lips with gusto.

"Delicious."

I heard his clothes rustle as he stood and then I could see him grinning as he pushed the blindfold up over my head. He took my face in his hands and gazed at me lovingly before bringing his lips to mine in a gentle, affectionate kiss.

I licked his lower lip, then tongued inside his mouth to taste myself and express my deep gratitude. His long arms wrapped around me and pulled me close, holding me against his strong, fancily-clothed body, like I was the most precious thing in the world.

Chapter Sixteen

“Do you, Martin Eliot Lewis, take this man, Jeremy Owen Trask, to be your husband, your partner in love, and your willing helpmate, for as long as you both shall live?”

Elliot’s voice boomed out in the small yard as I looked at Jeremy in his elegant tuxedo and pink tie, his brown hair gelled to perfection and his bright eyes shining with emotion.

I cleared my throat and blinked back moisture. “I do.”

Elliot smiled. “And do you, Jeremy Owen Trask, take this man, Martin Eliot Lewis, to be your husband, your partner in love, and your willing helpmate, for as long as you both shall live?”

Jeremy was smiling so wide both his dimples were showing. “I do. Of course, I do. Who wouldn’t?”

I wiped at my face and cleared my throat as Elliot continued.

“I now pronounce you husband and husband. You may kiss the groom.”

Our small audience laughed in unison as Jeremy grabbed my lapel and pulled me toward him, locking onto my lips with fervour. We managed to keep it PG in the interests of Rupert, but contained in that chaste kiss was all of the intention and commitment we had for each other.

When we drew apart I noticed dampness on Jeremy’s cheeks.

We turned toward our guests, holding hands as Elliot said, “Please give a fond welcome to Mr. And Mr. Lewis-Trask!”

Our guests, the few we’d been able to gather at short notice, clapped and cheered as we walked through the makeshift aisle to where Alice had set up the tables with food and drink.

Jeremy turned back. “All right. Time to eat!”

“Yay!” Rupert yelled out, tearing out of Alice’s grasp and running toward the tables, looking suitably heroic in his Batman costume.

I saw Alice start moving toward us but Ollie and his boyfriend beat her to it.

“Aaaaaaah!!!” Ollie shrieked, grabbing Jeremy in a hug. “Congratulations!!!”

Dressed in burgundy jeans, silver t-shirt and a black leather jacket, Ollie pulled off the urban-chic look. His boyfriend, Lucas, in a black tailored suit with a red carnation in the lapel, shook my hand. “Cheers, Martin! So happy for you both.”

I thanked him as Ollie grabbed me up in an exuberant hug and spanked me on the ass.

“Jeremy said I could do that. Congratulations!!!”

I rolled my eyes at Jeremy, who winked. “Yeah, Jeremy’s the one that *likes* it.”

Ollie raised his eyebrows and glanced at Jeremy. “Oh, *is* he now. That is some very *fine* information I will take with me. Thank you for sharing.”

I laughed and hugged him back. “I’m glad you and Lucas made it. We don’t have a lot of friends here in London...”

“Well, you’ve got us now. And these fine folks!” He put his arm around Alice where she stood, eagerly awaiting her turn with us.

“Oh Martin, I’m so chuffed for you and Jeremy!” Alice said, her cheeks flush with excitement. “Mr. and Mr. Lewis-Trask! That has a lovely ring to it.”

“I know, right?” Jeremy said, coming in for a hug from Alice. “Thank you for doing this, Alice, it means so much to us.”

“It was absolutely my pleasure.”

“We were honoured to do it,” Elliot, who had joined the group by the food table in his very ministerial black suit and crisp white button up, said. “I only wish it was official now.”

“It sure sounded official. And we can legally change our names if we want to. I’m sure we’ll sign all the papers and go through a civil ceremony back in Canada for all the legal reasons, but *this* is our public declaration, right *here*,” Jeremy asserted, finding and squeezing my hand.

“I did get it all on video for your friends back home,” Alice’s friend Lorraine piped up, checking her phone and holding it up. “I’ll send you the file as soon as I can.”

I smiled at her. “Thank you so much!”

The next few moments were a flurry of congratulations and hugs from the friends of friends that had joined us—a significant group for two Canadian travellers on a spur-of-the-moment mission.

“Jeremy! Jeremy, there’s cake!” A small voice said with excitement.

I glanced down to see Rupert tugging on Jeremy’s navy sleeve, looking up at my husband with adoring eyes.

My husband.

Jeremy winked at me and grinned at the little boy. “What *kind* of cake?”

“CHOCOLATE!!!” Rupert shouted.

“Lead the way, then,” Jeremy said, giving me a wave and following our minuscule superhero to the desserts.

I took a moment to appreciate Alice’s and Elliot’s decorated garden and cherish the work that had gone into making this day special. They’d erected a sizeable canopy under which they’d placed two tables covered with a pretty blue cloth. On the table were an assortment of finger sandwiches, cold meats and cheese, with a large dessert tray at one end where Jeremy and Rupert were cutting themselves pieces of a dark chocolate cake.

The day had started out sunny but now grey clouds skated through the sky and it looked like we might get a shower. But the temperature was blessedly mild so I took off my tux jacket and laid it on a folding chair.

“So, how does it feel to be married to that gorgeous creature?” Alice asked me, as Ollie and Lucas excused themselves to get something to eat.

I glanced at Jeremy who did seem like something out of a fairy tale. “Unreal. But incredibly wonderful.”

“Elliot, do you have the, um...” Alice cleared her throat and pointed to me, staring at her husband.

“One second,” he said, also removing his jacket as he pulled something out of the inside pocket. “I imagine you’ll want to do the honours.”

Alice took the envelope he gave her and smiled at me warmly. “We wanted to give you something special to celebrate this moment.”

I felt hot with embarrassment all of a sudden. She’d already done so much for us. I shook my head. “Alice, you didn’t have to do that. You’ve already made this day incredible.”

“We wanted to. It was Elliot’s idea.” She held out the envelope.

I stared at it.

“Take it, Martin, or I’m going to kick you in the balls.”

Elliot laughed. “And she will.”

I took it. “Seriously, Alice, it’s too much.”

“You haven’t even looked at it. It’s just a little something. Just humour me and open the envelope, for Heaven’s sake.”

I opened the envelope just as Jeremy approached us, carrying two paper plates of chocolate cake. Inside was tucked a beautiful note in elegant handwriting, wishing us a long and happy marriage. And when I unfolded it, a small card almost escaped my grasp.

I gazed at the thick paper. Facing up was an image of the London Eye Ferris wheel.

“Turn it over,” Elliot urged, seeming as excited as Alice.

I flipped it so Jeremy and I could read it:

*RESERVED: PRIVATE CAPSULE FOR 2 (aged 18 or older), Sunday, June 4th, 2017,
16:30.*

*INCLUDES: Bottle of Pomeroy Brut Royal Champagne
 Personal London Eye Host
 Priority Boarding
 30 Minute Rotation
 Access to the VIP Lounge*

“Blimey! A private capsule on the London Eye!” Ollie shrieked, leaning over my shoulder to have a look. “That must have cost a—”

“Come on, let’s get some more sandwiches,” Lucas said, dragging Ollie away and leaving Jeremy and I gaping at Alice and Elliot.

“That’s...that’s, like, two hours from now,” Jeremy said.

Alice nodded. “Well, we knew you weren’t planning a proper honeymoon so...”

“Did you have other plans for today?” Elliot asked, looking worried. “Alice didn’t think so, but...”

“Well, we do now,” I said, holding up the card. “I don’t know what to say, except thank you. I can’t think of a better way to end this day.”

“Oh, Martin,” Alice said, nudging her husband out of the way so she could hug me. “We’re so happy for you both. I’m so glad you made out with your now-husband in front of my son at the museum!”

Elliot laughed at the look on my face. He squeezed my arm. “Enjoy! We’ve been up a few times, but never in a private capsule. It should be spectacular.”

“I’m sure it will be. Thanks again, Elliot, Alice. For everything.”

“Okay, okay, enough gratitude. Now eat the chocolate cake your husband brought you.”

I did just that, enjoying the rich chocolate and the warmth and welcome we’d been shown so far away from home.

* * *

People began to disperse from our little reception by three pm. We offered to help tidy up but Alice forbade us and Elliot offered to drive us to the London Eye. Alice said the VIP Lounge was quite posh and we should have a drink while we waited for our private pod.

“You know, you two gave my wife something special today,” Elliot said as he drove. “She loves being a mom and everything, but looking after a kid all day and night is a tough gig sometimes. This really gave her something exciting to do, and she was all sorts of relaxed after that night at the club.”

“I guess we were lucky we happened to have a good snog within sight of Rupert that day at the museum,” Jeremy said.

“Snog?” I asked.

“Kiss.” Jeremy and Elliot said at the same time.

“Ah. It’s not something we do much in public spaces, for obvious reasons,” I murmured. “We thought we were alone.”

“Doesn’t bother me. I’m glad Rupert got to see two people being genuinely loving and affectionate with each other. And got to see them get married. He doesn’t know it’s not official. And there’s no reason it won’t be, eventually. Thank God for progress.”

“Yes,” I said. “I’m glad the only thing that prevented us was the fact that we don’t live in the UK. Not the fact we’re gay.”

“And we *will* make it legal once we’re back in Canada, right Martin?” Jeremy asked. “I want to combine our names officially and legally be your husband.”

I stared at him, my eyes welling again, and nodded. “Of course.”

* * *

“Welcome to the London Eye. Can I get you a drink?” The female server had approached us as soon as we’d walked through the doors to the VIP Lounge.

“I’ll have a gin and tonic, please,” I said.

When in Rome...

Jeremy ordered a rye and ginger. We sat together at a small table overlooking the Thames while we sipped our drinks and tried to come to terms with the fact that we were, for all intents and purposes, now married.

“I didn’t think—”

“Can you believe—”

We laughed and I gestured for Jeremy to continue.

“I just, I didn’t think it would make that big a difference.”

“What? You mean the ceremony?”

“Yeah. I mean, I was excited and I was looking forward to it, but I didn’t realize how much it would mean to me, to be able to hold your hands and say I would be there for you for the rest of our lives.”

I blinked to keep the moisture at bay again. “Awe Jeremy. You’re gonna make me cry. Again.”

He shrugged. “I love you so much, you know. I mean, we have so much fun together and the sex is,” he raised his eyes to the sky, “the sex is out of this world, but I don’t even care. I mean, I care, but it doesn’t even matter. You’re so much more to me than that...”

“Okay, stop. Stop. I feel the same about you but we have to stop talking about it or I am seriously going to start bawling in the middle of the VIP Lounge,” I said quietly, grabbing his hand and squeezing, evading his gaze because he was so damn beautiful and honest I couldn’t bear it.

“Drink your rye, Jeremy. And I know you said you didn’t care about the sex but when we get back to the hotel I’m laying you out for making me cry so much today.”

He laughed and sipped his drink. “Deal.”

* * *

I had never imagined the beauty of London from this perspective.

Our host, a handsome older gentleman named Murphy, knew everything you could imagine about the geography of London. He described each detail down to the history and sociology of the landscape. Then he left us to ourselves and retreated to the other side of the pod where he did something on his phone. Since the pods were designed to carry big crowds of people, we had some space.

I glanced at Murphy and hoped like hell he was trained to be respectful of all sorts of couples as I pulled Jeremy close and kissed him on the cheek, whispering endearments into his ear.

Murphy spoke, continuing to be busy on his phone, almost as if he weren't talking to us at all.

"Pretend I'm not here. I can see you're newly married so if you want to snog, go right ahead. It wouldn't be the first time."

I felt a wave of relief as Jeremy giggled and said, "Well, if you insist," grabbing my lapels and kissing me hard and deep as we floated above London in a glass Ferris wheel bubble.

We kissed each other for the rest of the 30-minute ride, glancing up now and then to take in the scenery, check that Murphy wasn't watching and sip our champagne. I'm pretty sure I caught Murphy looking a couple of times but he had the sweetest little smirk on his handsome face so I didn't call him on it.

Even though the ride was exciting, the views breathtaking, and the pod quite secure, I was glad to be on solid ground again when it was over. Still, I'd never forget the experience nor the generosity of Elliot and Alice for giving it to us.

Jeremy was like a kid who'd eaten too much candy—overexcited and energetic even after the long day. I figured he'd crash back at the hotel but as soon as we got in the door of our room he was shucking his clothes and demanding my attention.

"Christ, Martin, I am so fucking horny you have no idea."

I watched him whip off his bow-tie and tear off his jacket, then frantically unbutton his shirt and pull it apart.

"I'm getting an idea," I said, working my own tie off but taking the time to lay my jacket on the bed.

"Don't put it on the bed, Martin. You're going to fuck me there in a minute."

I raised my eyebrows. "Oh, I am, am I?"

"Fuck, I forgot about the stupid cufflinks." Jeremy was trapped in his shirt, having pushed it off his shoulders and now unable to unfasten his cuffs. His forehead crinkled with concern and he looked to me for assistance.

"Hmm, what an unfortunate circumstance," I said, moving forward as I carefully removed my own cufflinks and discarded my shirt, moving it and my jacket to the chair.

Jeremy's chest rose and fell as he watched me come closer. He lifted his chin as his eyes darkened and widened. "What are you gonna do?"

I smiled, eyes travelling over my captive husband as my cock filled and pressed painfully against the front of my rented trousers. "The question, Jeremy, isn't what I'm going to do to you. It's what I'm *not* going to do you. Because, there wouldn't be very fucking much on that list."

"But what about the clothes?"

I shrugged, undoing the fly of my pants and pushing them down. "Well, I'm getting rid of these, and yours next. But I can't think of anything better than ravishing you while you're trapped in your wedding shirt."

Jeremy's lips parted as his breathing quickened.

I continued, "They have to clean them anyway. What's a bit of sweat and spunk? I'm sure it wouldn't be the first time. They rent to men, generally, right?"

"You had me at 'sweat and spunk'," Jeremy panted as I knelt before him and undid his pants.

His dick was outlined in his dark blue boxer shorts and I gave it a firm kiss while I worked to take his pants down.

"Oh God. Do that again," he whispered, closing his eyes.

"What? This?" I said, kissing his covered cock again, then exhaling against it, moistening the cotton with my mouth.

His breath caught in his throat.

Then I bared my teeth against him, applying a light pressure.

"Fuck!" he hissed between clenched teeth, pushing against me. "Oh fuck, Martin, that feels so goddamn..."

"So goddamn what?" I asked, tonguing him through the material, feeling his cock get even harder.

He hissed again. "I can't believe I'm married to a man like you."

I kissed his cock gently and sat on my heels, looking up at him. "What do you mean?"

He swallowed and opened his eyes, which appeared glazed and unfocused before he deliberately zeroed in on me. "You're so dirty. And I love it."

I grinned, licking my lips, eager to really have a go at his leaking prick. "You made me this way. I wasn't anywhere near this depraved before I met *you*."

He barked a laugh and narrowed his eyes at me. “*Sure* you weren’t. Didn’t you jerk off to my photo?”

I felt my cheeks flush as I remembered *that* little indiscretion. “Didn’t you come to your photo session wearing a butt plug knowing you were going to seduce me?”

He laughed again. “Let’s call it a draw. We’re equally depraved.”

“Which is why we work so well together.”

“Yes.”

“Jeremy?”

“Yeah?”

“Please be quiet while I suck your cock. There are people trying to sleep in this hotel.”

He moaned as I drew the waistband of his briefs down to reveal it, shiny with moisture and red with heat. “What do I get if I can be quiet?”

“What you deserve.”

“Which is?”

“A good hiding and a hard fuck.”

He whimpered. “My lips are sealed.”

“Good boy.”

Chapter Seventeen

Our original plan had been to camp out in the New Forest.

If I'd been here on my own ten years ago, that would have been ideal. But I wasn't alone and my husband had a chronic disease that worsened in intense heat. Although it was unlikely to get all that hot in the south of England in June, when the London hotel manager discovered we were heading to the New Forest he pulled in a favour and booked us a cottage in the village of Minstead. This also saved us from having to rent all our camping supplies and afforded us a convenient and comfortable home base for my New Forest photography adventure.

The old wood door creaked as I pushed it open and gazed inside the small cabin. For a moment I wondered where Jeremy had gone, then I saw him, laid out on the Queen bed, sound asleep.

I smiled and tried to be quiet as I closed the door and put my camera on the table beside my laptop. I'd had a very productive shooting day and I was starving.

I wondered how long Jeremy had been napping. He'd been exhausted by our time in London and his work with Kureck. The stress of his last visit hadn't helped, then we'd had our ceremony, so he was beat. It had been a whirlwind of an adventure but he needed a few days to rest while I explored the New Forest and got the shots I needed for my article.

God, how lucky was I, really?

Sprawled out on the bed in a pair of skinny jeans and a black t-shirt, he'd pulled the corner of the quilt over his middle to keep off the chill of the air-conditioning. His face on the pillow, relaxed in sleep, pained my heart with its absolute vulnerability.

While awake, Jeremy was an energetic goofball and always ready with a sarcastic comment or an enthusiastic thumbs up for whatever we were doing. Asleep, he lost about five years and became an exhausted teenager. I knew the MS was to blame for this exhaustion. Jeremy, at twenty-six, should have more energy than me. At least he didn't fight it and didn't hesitate to flake out for an hour or take it easy for a few days when he needed to.

I peeled off my sweaty shirt, glad the cottage had air-conditioning—for Jeremy's sake and my own. It had been hotter than I'd anticipated.

Now that we were into our second week in the UK and the prospect of our flight home loomed, my anxiety began to build. Hopefully Jeremy hadn't tossed out my Xanax. As far as I

knew he still had it. I hadn't dared asked for it back, but I assumed he was keeping it safe so he could more closely monitor its use on the flight home. Which seemed fair and expected.

I decided to take a shower. While I soaped myself over from head to foot I wondered what would come of this entire Kureck thing. Would Jeremy still be in the book? Would Kureck try to pull something? I washed my hair quickly and when I'd dried off and wandered back into the bedroom, Jeremy was awake.

He sat at the table with his laptop open, chewing his lip. His face looked pale and there were creases in the skin of his forehead.

"What's the matter? You feeling okay?" I asked, pulling a pair of boxer briefs out of my suitcase and putting them on.

He nodded and met my gaze, but didn't seem quite right. "How was your walk? Did you get some good shots?" he asked.

I nodded as I walked around to see what he was looking at but he closed his laptop.

"What is it? What are you looking at?"

"Porn."

"Yeah, right. If you were looking at porn you'd be begging me to watch." I put a hand on his shoulder. "What is it?"

He sat there, avoiding my gaze, hand on the closed laptop.

"Jeremy. Come on. You're scaring me."

He bit his lip again, then slowly opened it.

On his desktop was a black and white photograph of a naked man sprawled on a leather sofa. The man's face was in shadow but everything else was outlined perfectly by soft lighting that stroked the surface of his skin like a lover. My chin dropped at the sensuality of the pose and the image, and I felt my cock swelling even as I recognized the planes of a body I had mapped with my tongue more than once.

"Jesus Christ. That's *you*."

"Yeah."

"It's stunning."

"I know."

"Where did you—?"

“Kureck sent it to the agency, along with some other shots that are equally good, but where I have clothes on.”

I couldn't stop staring at the image before me. There was no denying that Jeremy looked beautiful and surreal, like an angel that had just come to earth. But I was struck by a sudden jolt of anger.

“But you told him not to put the nude ones in the book. He's not going to put this one in the book?”

Jeremy hesitated. “He wants to.”

I whirled around, pacing to the window and back to the table. “But you didn't give your consent! Not to this, not to him trying to seduce you! How can he even think this is *remotely* okay?”

“Martin, *calm down.*”

“How can you just sit there? Call Amanda and tell her you don't want this image in Kureck's book! You didn't fucking agree to it and Kureck can go to hell!”

He wouldn't look at me. He wouldn't look at the image either.

“Are you...are you reconsidering? About the nudity?” I asked in a subdued voice.

He swallowed. “It's a fantastic shot, Martin. You have to admit it's the best photo anyone has ever taken of me, naked *or* clothed.”

His eyes suddenly flashed up to mine, as if he'd just realized what he'd said. “I mean, professional image. I mean—”

I tried to swallow my words but the betrayal and disappointment was too much. “Oh. Oh, I see.”

“Martin, I mean, of course *you've* taken amazing shots of me.”

“Yeah, and I got your consent first. And I'm not going to publish them in a book for everyone to see!”

“What if I *want* everyone to see it?”

“I'm going for a walk.”

“But you just came back!”

I didn't say anything. Because if I opened my mouth again before I worked off some of this anger I couldn't even anticipate what might come out of it. I pulled on a pair of jeans and a t-shirt, grabbed my phone off the table and left, giving him a withering glare before I did.

It took at least forty minutes of furious walking and letting the angry and jealous thoughts swirl themselves around in my head before they petered out enough that I could think logically. Being in nature always calmed me but there was still a pit of disappointment in my gut.

It wasn't so much the nude image. Honestly, it *wasn't* that. If he wanted a beautiful nude image of himself published for everyone to see, I didn't really have a problem with it. Sure, it made me uncomfortable and it pulled at strings of insecurity that I'd probably never get rid of. But it was *his* choice and *his* body. He was his own man and could damn well make his own decisions.

It was that Kureck had completely taken advantage of him. Had actually tried to assault him. Had then lied and tried to gaslight both me and Jeremy.

I was worried that if Jeremy caved and allowed Kureck to get exactly what he'd wanted all along, it would set up a pattern of behaviour that would worry me constantly whenever Jeremy was involved in a photo shoot.

Yes, the image was incredible. Yes, Kureck was a true artist—even *I* had to admit that. Being in Kureck's book would give Jeremy's career a sense of legitimacy and a boost. But unless he wanted a career in doing nudes there was no reason to agree to this photo being in the book. Because I knew that once other photographers got a glimpse of Jeremy in all his beautiful glory there would be a stampede of requests for him.

And I wasn't sure I was ready for that. I wasn't sure *he* was ready for that. And I was also sure he would face unwanted attention more often than not in that kind of a career. There were plenty of cases of male photographers and even female photographers taking advantage of male models.

It made me furious that Kureck could persuade Jeremy to pose nude when he hadn't really wanted to do so. And, because Kureck was magic behind the camera he'd turned the love of my life into a naked, sexual God for all to see. Because no man or woman was going to look at that image and not feel it inside. It was absolutely sexual and sensual and incredibly arousing.

I stopped in the middle of the woods and ran my hands through my hair, pulling on the roots and trying to get myself together. Because that was the crux of it. I didn't want to share *that* part of him.

Except it really wasn't my decision. And I wouldn't risk losing him because I was a selfish, insecure bastard.

At this moment he was alone in a rented cabin in the woods in a foreign country, knowing I was mad at him when he'd done nothing wrong.

I grabbed my phone out of the pocket of my jeans and found him in my contacts. I hit Call and held the phone to my ear, hoping he'd at least answer. After several long rings, I heard it connect.

"Hi," he said.

"Jeremy, I'm sorry," I blurted out. "It caught me by surprise and it's an amazing image and if you want it in Kureck's book then I won't say another word. I'm not mad at you. I'm pissed at Kureck for breaking the agreement, that's all."

"I called the agency. I told them the agreement was that he wouldn't put the nude photos in the book. I'm standing my ground."

"Oh, thank God." The relief in my voice must have been obvious.

"Yeah, I think Amanda was happy even though now *they* have to deal with him."

"She's pretty awesome."

"Yeah. Are you coming back? I've barely seen you today."

"On my way."

"Meet me at the rocks by the pond. I want to get some fresh air."

* * *

When I got to the edge of the trees near the clearing, I saw Jeremy already by the pond, sitting on one of the large rocks and facing the other way. It was as if I'd come suddenly upon some wild forest creature, the excitement that ran through me as I focused my camera and took several shots of him, unsuspecting and completely oblivious to my presence.

He sat with one blue-jeaned leg up on the rock, the other stretched out to the ground, completely relaxed and focused on the beauty of the water and the summer day. He was in the shade, thank goodness, since the heat could affect him so strongly, but the sun glanced off the surface of the pond and I was able to get several shots of him before, as if sensing me, he turned in my direction and smiled.

"There you are. Can't stop taking pictures, can you?"

I shook my head. "Not when there are such beautiful specimens to capture."

He rolled his eyes. "But you've already captured me. Several times."

“Still not enough,” I said, walking over and sitting down next to him. “This forest is so beautiful. I’m so glad we came to England.”

Jeremy nodded, turning and kissing my cheek. “Me too. I can’t believe it’s almost over.” He turned to eye me. “Are you nervous about our flight home on Friday?”

My stomach dropped and I cleared my throat. I fiddled with the camera settings, avoiding his gaze.

“I thought so,” he said. “Martin, you can take the pills. Just not as many as last time, okay? I’m going to be in charge of them this time.”

I nodded. “Okay.”

“I will look after you, okay? I just want you to be conscious. I don’t want to be worried you’re not breathing properly. That flight over was...it was so hard for me.”

“I know.”

“You *don’t* know. Six hours of no conversation, no interaction with you except for those brief times I shook you to make sure you were alive...”

“I’m sorry.”

“I kept wondering if I should tell the flight attendant, or if I should try to keep you awake for the flight, or what. It was *awful*, Martin. That was not how I wanted our trip to begin.”

“I know. I’m sorry,” I said. “But I’m really terrified of being awake on the plane.”

“I will be there. And I’ll talk to you the entire time, Martin. I’ll make you laugh and relax, and you’ll have the Xanax to help you, too. The *proper* dose. You’ll be fine.”

I nodded, not entirely convinced, but trying to believe him.

“Trust me?”

“More than anyone.”

“Okay. Now let’s go back to the cabin and have a look at the photos you’ve taken.”

* * *

We looked at the photos, and I honestly believed that they were some of the best work I’d ever done. Jeremy said the same thing.

“I want a couple of those blown up and framed for back home.”

“Sure. Me too. They’re fantastic.”

“Better than anything Kureck has.”

“Well...that’s debatable.”

“No, it’s not. You should put your own book out, Martin.”

“Of nature photography?”

“Sure.”

“Maybe.”

“Maybe, shmaybe. Do it. Finish this article for Outside and then we’ll do a book. We can set up a Kickstarter for it.”

I grinned. “Fine. Sure.”

“So, are you going to fuck me now, Mr. Big Shot nature photographer? Or should I wank off to that hard-core porn you bookmarked.”

My eyes widened. “What?”

He grinned. “You shouldn’t leave your laptop open when there are curious youngsters like me around.”

I felt my cheeks redden. “Jeremy Owen Trask, did you use my laptop without permission?”

“Maybe.”

“Did you jerk off to my hard-core porn collection?”

“*Collection?* You mean there’s more than that one with the hog-tied guy and the big dildo?”

He made as if to leap off the bed toward my laptop.

I grabbed him and held him down. “Oh no, you don’t. We can make our own hard-core porn right here.”

“Uh, yeah, I don’t think so. I’m good with spanking and maybe having my wrists tied but...”

“Okay, soft porn, then. I’m too lazy for the whole rigging thing anyway.”

“Phew.”

“And over you go...”

I pulled him over my lap and pressed his face into the mattress.

His laughter was muffled by the bedclothes as I swatted him firmly on his behind. “For Christ’s sake, take my pants off and do it right.”

Challenge accepted.

Soon he was draped over me wearing only his boxer briefs and a cheeky smile. “That’s better,” he said, breathing hard.

“It certainly is,” I said, feeling his erection digging into my thigh. “Now I can go easy, or I can go hard. Which would you prefer?”

“Oh, hard, definitely. Go hard, baby.”

“Okay. You asked for it.”

I went hard. He squirmed and yelled and tried to get off my lap but I held him still and listened to his cries and laughter combined until I felt him rutting against me.

“Now, that’s enough of that,” I said, rolling him over so that he lay on his back on the bed, panting and moaning about his sore ass.

I kissed him desperately, grabbing his cock and stroking slowly.

“Oh God, *faster*. I’m close.”

“Exactly.”

I continued the languid teasing while he whimpered, writhing under me.

“Oh God, oh God, oh God.”

“Do you love me, Jeremy?”

“Yes, I love you, Martin.”

“Do you want me to make you come?”

“Oh God, yes. Please.”

“In my mouth?”

He moaned desperately and shoved his cock in my face.

I grinned, looking at him laid out before me, a slave to his frantic desire.

“Hold still,” I said, just to piss him off, while I grabbed the base of his dick and guided it to my eager mouth.

The sounds he made caused my cock to drip with sympathy as I sucked him slowly, then quickly, using my hand to stroke him at the same time.

“Oh God, Martin...I’m coming...I’m coming...” he gasped as his cock pulsed and shot streams of semen down my throat. I swallowed and kept stroking him through until his rigid body relaxed and he sighed happily.

As I pulled off, I smacked my lips together loudly. “Mmm, so good.”

He chuckled. “Martin.”

“Yeah?”

“I want you to spank me like that the night before our flight home. I want my ass to be red and sore on the flight.”

I laughed in surprise.

“Really?”

He shrugged. “Sure. Maybe if I keep reminding you how sore it is you can keep your mind off being in the air and keep it on my ass, where it belongs.”

“I love you, Jeremy.”

“I love you too, Martin. Now bring that big dick over here so I can suck it without having to move a muscle.”

Chapter Eighteen

“How are you feeling?” Jeremy asked me, rubbing my knee gently and closing his Kindle e-reader.

The Heathrow lounge was crowded with other travellers but we’d found a couple of seats facing the restrooms a little bit away from the mass.

How was I feeling? Pretty good, really. Less anxious than I’d expected.

“Not too bad,” I replied. “Still don’t really want to get on the plane.”

Jeremy nodded. “It’ll be okay.”

“I know. Plus, I really want to go home so I have to get on the plane to do that, right?”

Jeremy smiled. “Me too. It’s been an incredible trip. But it’s time to go home and get settled in to domestic bliss. Right, Mr. Lewis-Trask?”

“Right, Mr. Lewis-Trask.”

He kissed me quickly on the lips as a notification sounded on his phone. He looked at it and grinned.

“It’s Alice. She wants to video-chat. You up for it?”

“Of course.”

Jeremy lifted his phone and hit connect. Suddenly, Rupert’s smiling face loomed big in the phone. “HI! Hi, Jeremy and Martin!!! Are you on the plane to Canada?”

“Not yet. We’re at the airport still. Our flight boards in half an hour.”

Alice’s face became visible over Rupert’s shoulder. “Hi! I’m so sorry we have to say goodbye!”

“Hi Alice,” I said, waving at the phone. “Thank you so much for everything.”

“Oh pish, it was our pleasure. We’re all so glad to have met you both!”

“Hey, if you ever want to hop the pond and come for a visit, we’d be happy to show you around. Ottawa is beautiful all year round. I’d offer our home but it’s barely big enough for the two of us...”

“Of course, we’ll come! We’ll rent an Airbnb near you guys.”

“Really, mummy? Can we go to Canada?”

“Sure!”

“Absolutely,” Elliot said, coming into the frame. “Please send my wife a text to let her know you’ve arrived safely. She’s a bit of a mother hen.”

“F you, Elliot. But, yes, please do, or I’ll worry. How are you feeling, Martin?”

“Oh, all right. I guess I’ll live.”

“That’s the spirit. Get Jeremy to give you a kiss from all of us and try to enjoy your flight.”

“Will do.”

“Hey, Rupert?” Jeremy said, waiting until the camera turned to the young boy with the chocolate milk moustache.”

“Yes?”

“If you come to Canada I’ll buy you a Beavertail to eat, okay?”

“Okay! Mom, can we go to Canada on Saturday?”

Laughter. “It’ll take a bit more planning than that, silly. But maybe next year. Say goodbye to Jeremy and Martin now.”

“Next *year*?” The poor kid looked like he might cry. But he bravely forced a smile. “Okay. Goodbye Martin and Jeremy! I’m glad I got to be at your wedding.”

“I thought that was Batman?” He turned to me, “Wasn’t Batman at our wedding, Martin?”

“I think so.” I played along.

Rupert laughed. “Right, that was Batman!”

Elliot and Alice said goodbye and then we disconnected. I felt strangely emotional. Maybe it was the Xanax.

“We were lucky to run into them,” Jeremy said.

“I guess we were lucky Rupert saw us kissing.”

“See? PDAs are always worth it.” Jeremy glanced over his shoulder, then quickly kissed me again and turned back to his phone.

* * *

About fifty minutes later we had boarded our plane and found our seats. I still felt reasonably okay, which was surprising and reassuring, because I knew Jeremy wasn’t going to let me have more Xanax until at least another four hours had passed. I don’t know if it was because we were going home, or because Jeremy knew how much flying bothered me this time, or because I knew I had survived the flight over so what was one more?

Whatever it was, the low buzzing anxiety in my gut didn't seem to touch my brain. I had the aisle seat, so I would be able to stretch my leg out once we were in the air and I didn't have to look out the window if I didn't want to. I was nervous about the takeoff but that wouldn't be for a while yet as people were still boarding.

Jeremy reached out and took my hand. "Okay?"

I nodded. "Yep. So far so good."

"Did you turn off your phone?"

"Yes. You?"

"Not yet. I just want to Instagram this moment," he said, snapping a photo of our clasped hands before he let go.

"You and your social media addiction."

"Hey, I can't disappoint my followers. They want to know you're okay."

My eyes widened. "Tell me you did not tell everyone you know that I'm terrified of flying."

He laughed. "Nope. They'll just think we're super romantic."

"Good."

I watched him play with his phone for a few minutes, then watched as his eyes narrowed and a frown formed on his face. He had his texts open.

"What's wrong?"

"Just a second," he said, reading something on the screen that was obviously not making him happy.

I waited until he tapped something out in reply and shut off his phone. It wasn't until he plastered a completely fake smile on his face and turned to me that I confronted him.

"Out with it."

"What?"

"I'm not sitting here for six hours wondering what's upsetting you. Who was it?"

His smile faded. "Amanda."

His agent.

"And?"

He sighed, looking out the window for a few moments, then turning back to me. "Kureck is threatening to pull all my photos from the book."

I couldn't believe it. "What?"

"If I don't let him publish the nude one, he won't put any of them in it."

I stared at him, fury rising in my belly, eclipsing the anxiety. "That *rat bastard*. That fucking *prick*. Tell her to tell him we'll charge him with assault if he doesn't put your photos in the book. There's a contract isn't there?"

Jeremy shrugged. "I told her to tell him I didn't really care what he did with those photos. He can shove them up his hairy old ass if he'll get a kick out of it. He probably would."

I stared at Jeremy, my mouth open. "But, Jeremy, that's the whole reason we came to England!"

"Maybe it is. But I honestly don't care about the photos or his stupid book. I'm glad we came to England and got to stay at that swanky hotel, got to see the sights, I got to marry the man of my dreams, and we met Alice and Elliot and Rupert. *And* Ollie and Lucas."

"But your *photos*—your *career*—Jeremy, you were so excited about being in Kureck's book!"

"Yeah, that was before he tried to get nasty with me. And what the fuck, now he's trying to blackmail me? What a prick. Seriously, I don't even *want* to be in his stupid book now."

I stared at my husband, filled with pride, and also sadness that he'd lost this battle. But he'd kept his dignity and his right to decide what Kureck could and couldn't print. Sometimes I couldn't fathom Jeremy's strength. Like when he'd had that MS relapse shortly after we'd started seeing each other. He didn't let the disease dictate the way he lived his life, yet he made allowances and took care of his body so that he could live well and stay healthy. I should have known he could stand up to anyone and anything.

"I love you."

"I love you, too. And I'm gonna be in *your* book anyway, remember?"

"I'm not as famous as Kureck. We may only be able to sell it to our friends and family."

"I don't care. I don't care if it's only a coffee table book on our very own coffee table. I would be honoured to be in any book of yours, Martin."

I blinked back tears. Goddamn these pills. They were keeping my anxiety at bay thank goodness but they were turning me into a sappy wimp.

"I'd kiss you if I could," I whispered.

He smiled, this time with genuine warmth. "Save it for later. When we're back home."

I nodded. He put his phone away and took my hand. "Ready?"

"As I'll ever be. Don't let go."

He shook his head. "Never."

* * *

The flight was long but I did manage to sleep through a couple of hours of it.

When I woke up I noticed Jeremy had nodded off as well so I tried to stay relaxed and calm while he slept. It actually wasn't that bad. By then the majority of the flight was over and we were due to arrive at McDonald Cartier Airport in just over an hour.

Everything had gone smoothly and there weren't any crying children or annoying people so it had been fairly tolerable. I looked out the window on the other side of the plane onto blue skies and fluffy white clouds and thanked God for my luck.

Now that we were so close I couldn't wait to be home. I missed the beautiful familiarity of my home city, the Canadian accents all around me that I didn't even register because I had one too, our small townhome on McLeod Street. Tomorrow, after a good night's sleep in our own bed, we could lounge around in our underwear all day and I would cook Jeremy's favourite meal for supper. I missed cooking for him. Even though he was a better cook than me, he loved my spaghetti and meatballs with loaded garlic bread.

When the pilot announced our approach to the Ottawa airport I gently nudged Jeremy's shoulder.

"Hmm? What?" He slurred, blinking and sitting up, looking around him. "You okay, Martin? I must have gone to sleep."

"I'm fine. But we're going to go in for our landing soon and I'm feeling nervous. Plus, I think the Xanax has worn off."

"Do you want another one? I can give you one. It's been more than four hours."

I smiled. "Nope. I'm okay now that you're awake."

"Almost home," he said, smiling sleepily.

"Almost home."

* * *

The landing was a bit nerve-wracking but Jeremy talked me through it and I was so eager to be home I hardly even cared. I knew we would be all right.

As we waited for the seatbelt light to go off so we could stand up and start getting our stuff together, Jeremy took his phone out and turned it on.

“Hmm. What do you know.”

“What?”

He turned his phone to me. There was a text from Amanda.

Kureck caved. You're in the book. Only the photos you approved. You are my hero, Jeremy. XOXO.

“Oh my God, that’s fantastic!” I exclaimed, raising my hand for a high five since I couldn’t safely give him a full mouth kiss in front of all these people.

He didn’t leave me hanging. He gave me a high five and the slap of our hands together rang out loudly in the cabin.

“Hey, that sounds familiar.”

“Jeremy.” I gave him a look that said *behave yourself*.

His eyes twinkled. “I just can’t wait to be spanked in my own bedroom finally. Except we’ll have to wait a couple of days ’cause I’m still sore from last night.”

He didn’t even moderate his voice when he said it, and I blushed and threw a glance at the people behind us. An old man gazed at me over the rim of his black glasses as he turned the page of his magazine. He didn’t seem fazed.

I coughed and glared at Jeremy.

“Oooh, he’s getting mad. This is gonna be great,” Jeremy murmured.

The old man coughed and put down his magazine. Luckily, the light went off and we could start getting ready to deplane.

I kept giving Jeremy stern looks which probably only served to rev him up but luckily he kept his mouth shut. Although, a couple of times he rubbed his ass with his hand and my mouth went dry.

Customs moved fairly quickly and we were out the arrivals gate in no time.

“Oh, Jesus Christ,” I moaned, seeing a large sign with WELCOME HOME JEREMY AND MARTIN, NEWLYWEDS! On it, being held by an almost quivering woman beside a taller, smiling, bearded man.

Jeremy started laughing like an idiot while I approached Frankie and Simon, my face flaming red.

“Frankie! You do realize not everyone supports gay marriage, right?” I grabbed for the sign but she was passing it to Simon and grabbing me into a violent embrace.

“Oh Martin, congratulations!!! Who cares! Tell them to fuck off. I’ll personally attack anyone who gives us any trouble. Welcome home!!!”

She kissed me and I hugged her back, then released her so she could assault my young husband.

“Jeremy!!!”

“Frankie!!! It’s so good to be home!” He said, spinning her in his arms.

“At least someone’s happy to see me,” she grouched. When Jeremy released her she punched me in the arm.

“Hey!”

“That’s for getting married without me.”

“That hurt, Frankie!”

“Yeah? So did getting left out of the most important day of your life.”

“It was an unofficial ceremony!”

“What?”

“We couldn’t get hitched legally without having lived there for a year or more. So the whole thing was unofficial,” I explained.

“But still amazing, and we’re sorry you couldn’t be there,” Jeremy added.

“So…you’ll need to have an official ceremony here in Ottawa?”

“I guess so—”

Frankie shrieked and grabbed onto Simon’s strong arm. He winced.

“SO I CAN PLAN ANOTHER WEDDING?”

“Jesus, Frankie, keep it down. Yes! For God’s sake, you can do whatever you like if you’ll just be quiet.”

“Oh, my God, Martin! I’m so excited!!!”

“Welcome home, Martin. Jeremy,” Simon said warmly, hugging each of us as he tried to detach himself from Frankie’s excited grip.

“Jeremy! We have to get together to talk about themes and flowers and all that good stuff,” Frankie said, hooking her arm in his as he glanced back at me with a smile and shrugged.

Yeah, It was good to be home.

* * *

Simon drove, with Frankie going on about wedding plans for the entire drive.

“Oh my God, Jeremy, I love your boots! Those are gorgeous!”

He was wearing his Union Jack Doc Martins.

“Thanks. One of my many souvenirs of our trip.”

“Oh yeah, what else did you get?”

“A well-spanked ass.”

To his credit, Simon didn’t crash the car, just exploded with deep guffaws while Frankie put a hand to her mouth and tried not to laugh as hard as she wanted to.

“Oh my God. My little brother is a beast.”

“Kill me now,” I said, staring hard out the window, wondering if my skin colour would ever go back to normal.

“You have no idea,” Jeremy said smoothly. When I met his gaze he winked at me and blew me a kiss.

Now I *really* wanted to spank his ass.

When we got to the house, Simon and Frankie helped us get our cases out of the car.

“Thank you so much for picking us up at the airport,” Jeremy said, glancing at me and wondering if I was as grateful as he was.

“Yes, thanks. It was very thoughtful. Do you want to come in for coffee?”

Frankie’s eyes lit up but Simon took her arm and angled her away from us. “No, I’m sure you’re both exhausted from the trip and want nothing better than to kick off your shoes and relax.”

God bless him.

“Call me tomorrow, Jeremy!” Frankie called out as Simon opened the passenger door for her. “We have to start planning this wedding!”

“Okay. No problem. G’Night!”

I keyed us in and we dragged our bags in and closed the door behind us with a sigh of relief, flicking on the hall light. There was a lamp in the corner of the studio that was on a timer and gave the ground floor a welcoming glow.

“We’re home, baby,” Jeremy said, pulling me against him and kissing me on my face, my neck and everywhere. “That was a long flight.”

“God, it smells so good. So ordinary and familiar.”

“Shouldn’t you carry me upstairs or something? Isn’t that something that newly married people do when they go home?”

I gazed at him, rubbing his side affectionately and calculating whether I could safely carry him up all those stairs. “Uh…”

“I’m kidding, Martin. You go first, that way I can look at your ass.”

“Is that something newly married people do?”

“Oh, absolutely.”

I led the way upstairs, hauling my suitcase, pushing the hall door open onto our small apartment above the studio. Jeremy followed behind with his duffle bag and small carry-on.

“Just leave them here for now. We can unpack in the morning,” I said, plopping down on the living room sofa and grabbing the remote for the TV. “All I want to do right now is watch something mindless and snuggle.”

“Okay, but I’m hungry. I’m gonna order a pizza.”

“Jeremy, what a brilliant idea.”

After he’d placed the order for a large vegetarian and a Caesar salad, he plopped himself down beside me after turning on a few lamps and checking that everything was as it should be.

“You feeling okay? No lasting effects of the Xanax?”

“I’ve never felt better, Jeremy. We’re home, I don’t have to think about boarding another plane for a very long time, and you called me the man of your dreams. How can I feel any better than that?”

He took my face in his hands and kissed me soundly, pulling away and staring into my eyes. “Welcome home, Martin.”

“Welcome home, Jeremy.”

Chapter Nineteen

“What are you wearing, Martin?” Jeremy called from the bedroom. “You’re not dressing up, are you?”

We’d been home a week and Frankie and Simon had invited us over for dinner and drinks to hear about our trip in detail.

“Just my dark jeans and a navy button up,” I said from the living room. I was reading an email from my editor at Outside Magazine who seemed very pleased with the photos and copy I’d sent him.

“Okay. I’ll try not to match.”

“Who cares if we *do* match?” I asked, smiling because of the email and Jeremy’s concern over our outfits.

“Martin. We may be married but we are not going to be one of *those* couples.”

“Fine. Where whatever you want. I’m sure Frankie won’t care. She loves you so much you could wear a dress and she’d be delighted.”

He laughed. “Now that is something I definitely won’t rule out for the future. But I don’t own any dresses at the moment. Not even a kilt.”

“We’ll have to remedy that. I’d love to see you in a kilt,” I said as I got up and headed for the bedroom. “In a kilt wearing your Docs and one of your tight club shirts...”

When I got to the doorway I froze. “Oh Jeremy. Where did you get *those*?”

He was pulling a pair of jeans from the closet but all I could see was his ass in a pair of tight Union Jack boxer briefs that I’d never seen before. Saliva pooled in my mouth and my cock filled in an instant. Pavlov would be proud.

He looked at me, smirking, and wiggled his ass, grabbing onto the dresser for balance. “Whoops,” he laughed.

He was experiencing some MS symptoms, presumably from all the travel and perhaps the stress brought on by the whole thing with Kureck. But he seemed fine and was blasé about having to use his cane again. “What? These? Oh, I found them in one of the shops in Covent Garden and bought them when you weren’t looking. I also got ones with a London Bus and another pair with a London Cab on them. The UK trifecta.” He stuck out his exquisite booty to my great appreciation. “Surprise!”

“Jesus fuck. Do we *have* to go to dinner?” I said, eyeing him hungrily as he bent carefully to pull on his jeans. “I think I might be having a heart attack.”

“Very funny. And, yes, we do have to go, because I *have* to tell Frankie everything about our trip or she won’t stop bugging me about it. Plus, I want to tell her. Her reactions are priceless. I can relive the entire trip through her eyes.”

“Fine. But I might need to go jerk off first. Not excited about showing up with a huge erection.”

“I can suck you off, maybe. Shouldn’t take long,” he said, eyeing the bulge in my jeans. I shook my head. “No worries. I’ll save it for later.”

* * *

“Jesus, someone must be having a party,” Jeremy said as we drove past a bunch of cars parked on the side of the street. “I’m glad we don’t have to look for street parking.”

“Me too,” I said, pulling into the driveway behind Simon’s Prius.

We got out and walked to the front door. Jeremy had put on black skinny jeans, a purple short sleeve t-shirt and his graffiti Doc Martens. I was a little bummed that he needed to use his cane again but I wouldn’t let it show. It was June, and warm, but not as oppressively hot as it would be in July and August. He looked incredibly sexy and I almost wished we could cancel and just go home.

I rang the bell.

Almost instantly the door swung open and Frankie gazed out at us, excited and dressed in a fancy wrap dress and heels. “There you are! Come in, come in!”

She opened the door wide. I noticed her glance at Jeremy’s cane but to her credit she didn’t say a word about it. When her eyes met mine I shot her a relaxed smile to reassure her and she beamed. “So glad you could make it!”

“Yeah, well, when you bribe us with food it’s hard to say no,” I said, joking.

It wasn’t until Jeremy stopped dead just past Frankie and said, “Fuck me. The party’s here, Martin,” that I realized we’d been had.

“Surprise!” Frankie yelled, moving aside so I could see all of the smiling guests staring at us from the living room.

“Oh Dear God,” I said, not sure I was up for talking to so many people. It was kind of a moot point. I smiled in spite of myself because it was an awfully nice thing for Frankie and Simon to do.

The man in question appeared, holding a drink and grinning. “Sorry. I couldn’t stop her. You know how she is.”

“A better man would have divorced her by now.”

“Luckily I’m not him.”

“Yes, that is lucky.”

“Martin, shut the F up and come say hi to your friends. You can put your introvert personality in your back pocket for one night, can’t you? I really don’t know how we’re related, frankly.”

Jeremy was receiving hugs and greetings from a great many people when I encountered the same fate near the kitchen island.

“Martin. Welcome back!” My friend, Ahmed, said, shaking my hand and patting me on the back. “How was it?”

“It was fantastic, Ahmed, thanks.”

“You want a drink?”

“Sure. A beer, I guess.”

While he went to get it for me, Jeremy’s friend from Starbucks, Lucy, saw me and gave me a big hug. “Congratulations, Martin! Jeremy said you finally made an honest man out of him.”

I laughed. “Well, I married him, if that’s what you mean. But it isn’t official or anything. We’ll be having a ceremony here in Ottawa in the fall, if my sister has anything to say about it.”

“Is Jeremy okay? I noticed he’s using his cane again.”

“I’m sure he’ll be fine. Just a little souvenir from the trip.”

“What a stupid disease. Poor Jeremy.”

“He’s fine, Lucy. Don’t baby him. It’ll only embarrass him. He’ll be on me like a horny dog when we get home tonight. Nothing slows that man down.”

She laughed and lifted her drink. “Cheers to that. He’s pretty amazing.”

“Yes, he is.”

Ahmed came back with my drink and a coke for himself. “Cheers.”

“Cheers,” I said, clinking drinks. “How’s Miriam?”

He shrugged. "Fine. She's having a battle with Farza though. Farza doesn't want to wear the hijab and Miriam thinks she should."

"What do you think?"

"I don't really care. I have no problem with her not wearing it and I understand her not wanting to. Miriam needs a little convincing. She's always worn one and her mother and grandmother too. She doesn't understand Farza and she's worried she'll leave her religion behind."

I nodded, feeling a bit bad for thirteen year-old Farza. I wondered what other battles she'd have to fight with her mother. I hoped she'd win this one.

"Do you think she'll get her way?"

He laughed. "If I know Farza. Miriam has more than she bargained for in that child. Our sons are much more malleable."

I'd met Ahmed at a photography club I'd joined for a little while. We shared the same sense of humour and love of nature, and when I'd mentioned that I was gay he hadn't batted an eye. He was second-generation Canadian, whereas Miriam had come over with her parents from Jordan when she was six. She was a little more traditional than him but she had welcomed me with open arms whenever I'd visited Ahmed in their home.

"How was the New Forest? Did you get some nice shots?" He asked, sipping his soft drink. Not drinking and avoiding pork were the two concessions Ahmed made to his religion. He didn't pray and he only went to the Mosque on holy days and only because Miriam insisted. He didn't even fast for Ramadan. It was pretty hilarious because Miriam did fast and Ahmed would get up and make himself coffee and an omelette, not caring if it was making her mouth water and her resolve slip. He was hoping that one day she'd give in and eat breakfast with him during Ramadan and admit it was all a bit ridiculous. It hadn't happened yet.

"I did. They'll be in the September issue of Outside Magazine." I glanced over to see Jeremy now seated on the sofa beside Frankie, talking to her animatedly while a handful of people listened in.

"I'd better get over there, Ahmed. God knows what he's telling them," I said, lifting my hand to shake Ahmed's. "It's great to see you."

"You too, Martin. Miriam and I will have you both over for dinner again soon."

"We'd love that."

I left Ahmed heading for the snack table while I moved closer to Jeremy. Jeremy glanced up and smiled, mid-sentence. As I got closer I realized he was telling them about kissing in the gallery and being spotted by little Rupert.

“Martin almost died. He thought Security was going to drag him away for public indecency.”

Frankie laughed hard and I nodded. “Yeah, well, I thought we’d scared the kid.”

“Jesus, just how passionate *was* that kiss? Full tongue and everything?” Frankie asked.

I nodded, glancing at Jeremy, remembering nearly combusting from that kiss before Rupert started crying.

“You devil,” Frankie said to Jeremy, who shrugged, smiling proudly.

“Yes, sirree, I about melted the reserve right off him in that gallery. He’s lucky I only kissed him,” he said, winking.

“Very funny,” I replied. “So’s Rupert.”

“True. Anyway, that’s how we met Rupert and Alice. They had us for afternoon tea and we took Alice clubbing later at this really hot gay bar in London. It was pretty epic.”

“And that’s where we met Ollie,” I added, leaning on the back of the sofa. “Remember Ollie?”

“Oh, how I remember Ollie,” Jeremy sighed.

Frankie gazed at us, open-mouthed. “Who?”

“Hot little twink we met at Dalston Superstore—the gay club,” Jeremy said, eyes half lidded as he remembered that night. “He was so cute he persuaded Martin to dance with him.”

“What? Oh my God. Really?”

I laughed. “Yeah, for about three minutes, until he caught sight of Jeremy. Then it was all over for me.”

Jeremy grinned, gesturing at himself. “Well, can you blame him?”

“Of course, I can’t. I happen to completely understand.” I kissed Jeremy on the top of his head and rubbed his shoulder.

The party lasted until about eleven, when most of the guests had gone and it was only Jeremy and me and Frankie and Simon left.

“You okay, Jeremy?” Frankie asked, “Want a cup of coffee?”

We were lounging together on the sofa. I was leaning against the corner with Jeremy relaxing in my arms, his head on my shoulder, his half-open eyes watching the lights from the electric fireplace dance on the floor.

“Nah, I’m good. Martin can take me home and put me to bed.”

Ah well, so much for our wild sex romp tonight. He was exhausted from all the socializing and frankly, so was I.

“I hope this surprise party wasn’t too much for you.”

“Frankie, it was fantastic. Stop fussing. I’m fine,” Jeremy said.

“We had a great time,” I said to both Frankie and Simon. “Thank you for organizing it.”

I edged out from under Jeremy and brought him his Docs which weren’t that dirty on the bottom since they were so new.

“Thanks,” he said, bending over to put them on. As he laced them up he peeked up at Frankie. “Hey, can you go shopping with me next week? I need to buy a kilt.”

My eyes widened and I smiled.

“Of course! Is it for the wedding? Oh my God, we could do a whole Scottish theme, with pipers and Celtic music and—”

He waved her off. “Nope. I want to be the only sexy guy in a kilt at this wedding.”

Simon and I laughed.

“Okay, fine, have it your way.”

“Oh, I will.” He finished tying his boots and used the arm of the sofa to push up to standing. “Hmm, not too bad for being so tired. Still, can someone get me my cane? I would hate to ruin the evening by falling on my ass.”

Simon grabbed Jeremy’s cane and brought it over.

“Thanks.” He looked over at me. “Shall we?”

We made our exit and drove home.

As we cuddled in bed together I rubbed his belly softly and kissed his ear. “I love you, Mr. Lewis-Trask.”

“I love you, too, even though your sister’s crazy.”

* * *

In the morning, I woke up to Jeremy’s soft brown eyes watching me.

“Hey,” I said. “Did you sleep well?”

He nodded. “Yep. Great.”

I blinked, propping myself on my elbow. “What time is it?”

“Ten thirty.”

“Wow. We *did* sleep in.”

“Mmm hmm. I’m feeling very lazy,” he stretched out beside me, showing off his sleek body and hard cock.

“You are, are you?” I said, grinning, my eyes running all over him, feeling rejuvenated from the long sleep and the entertaining evening we’d had.

“Yeah. But I should probably do my needle.”

“Stay here. I’ll get it.”

“Martin, you don’t have to get it—”

“Don’t you move a muscle, sexy boy. You wait right here until I get back.” I used my firmest Dom voice.

His eyes widened and he smiled. “Oh. All right then.” He put his arms behind his head and watched me with hungry eyes.

“That’s better.”

I went to the kitchen cupboard where he kept his needles—the ones that he kept out of the fridge—and the little packet of alcohol wipes. I brought everything back to the bed and sat beside where he was laying. He held his hand out but I shook my head.

“I’ll do it.”

“What?”

“I’ll do your needle for you. If that’s okay?” I gazed at him, wanting to do this for him, but wanting to make sure he was okay with it first. I knew how and had done it in the past on occasion.

He nodded, regarding me with a curious expression. Probably wondering what I was up to. I wasn’t really up to anything. I just wanted to take care of him. There wasn’t much I could do about his disease, but I could do *this* and I could give him some gentle—or not—loving that would hopefully lead to a great orgasm. God, if we could beat this thing with great sex we certainly would, or die trying.

I took out one of the individually packed and pre-filled needles, peeled back the paper, lifted it out and examined it for clarity. It was fine. I put it to the side and opened one of the alcohol wipes.

“Where?” I said, looking at him.

In order to avoid side effects on his skin’s surface he rotated his injection sites throughout the week, and I knew he had assigned specific areas to each day, but I didn’t know his schedule. It was so much of a routine now that I barely paid attention anymore.

He smiled at me coyly and shifted onto his side, pushing the blanket down past his hip. He was still wearing his Union Jack undershorts. He slipped a finger under the waistband and pulled it down, exposing his flank and more of his ass than was strictly necessary.

“Hip.”

“Uh huh,” I said, licking my lips and trying to ignore my increasing arousal. I had to keep my hand steady.

His eyes on mine, he ran his other hand smoothly down his side and grabbed an inch of skin on his hip, squeezing it between two fingers. How he managed to make a move like that sexy I had no idea, but he did. Or maybe everything he did was sexy.

“There?” I said, swallowing hard and holding the needle closer.

“Mmm hmm. Right there.”

Jesus Christ. I had to get this done so I could throw the needle away and start kissing him. But I had to be careful and do it properly. I didn’t want to hurt him more than necessary. But I could see his dick outlined in the tight boxer briefs and suddenly I couldn’t breathe.

I closed my eyes, trying to focus.

“You okay? I can do it myself if you’d rather,” he said softly.

I opened my eyes. He was watching me indulgently, waiting. I shook my head.

Carefully, I nudged his hand away and pinched the skin of his hip myself. “Ready?”

He nodded, eyes full of affection and trust.

I counted silently to three and plunged the needle gently but firmly into his skin. He didn’t make a sound. I started to push the plunger but he said, “Let go of the skin first, then push the medicine in.”

“Oh. Right.” Concentrate Martin. Jesus.

I followed his instructions until the syringe was empty, then withdrew the needle. A tiny bit of blood bubbled to the surface of the skin. “Shit, I forgot to bring a cotton ball,” I said, starting to get up.

“It’s okay.” He grabbed a tissue from the box on the bedside table, balled it up and pressed it against the injection site. “No worries.”

I put the needle back in its casing and laid it on my bedside table.

Then I stared at his erection and cleared my throat. “Now...I want you to roll onto your back and let the nurse take care of this other—not so little—problem you’re having.”

He smiled a huge smile, and did as he was told, placing his arms behind his head again, and humming in contentment. “Whatever do you mean?”

I matched his grin, sliding down the bed, nudging his legs apart so I could lay between them. “I mean, you seem to have a very large erection that might pose a problem when you try to get up and walk.” I ran my fingers over the outline of his cock, making him whimper low in his throat. “And, uh, I have some techniques I can use to take care of that for you, Mr. Lewis-Trask.”

“Well, I must say, this is the best experience I’ve ever had with the Ottawa Public Health Department. I’ll be sure to mention it on the survey.”

I grinned, pulling the waistband down and watching his cock bounce free from its cotton confines. “I should certainly hope so, Mr. Lewis-Trask. I plan for you to have a more than satisfactory experience with my services today.”

Jeremy laughed and thrust up toward my eager mouth.

If there *had* been a survey, he would have given me five stars at the very least.