



The Long Road Home
By BA Tortuga

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Chapter 1

Damn.

Damn. Damn. Damn.

He hated starting a day with James' voice shrieking at him over the recorder, strident and bitchy.

"Jefferson Austin Bonham! You have a 10 o'clock client. You get your butt out of bed and get in this office!"

Ty shook his head, hurrying down Sixth Street, the cars whizzing by. He'd make it with fifteen minutes to spare -- check his email, check his messages, drink a decent cup of coffee and get his notes together.

Not optimal, but not bad.

He turned and headed up the steps of the little, pseudo-renovated Victorian house his company shared with three others -- a painter, a counselor, an animal psychic and an image consultant/advertising designer/book illustrator/please give me more work my rent is due. He nodded at Shelly and the... fuzzy beast she was carrying and took the stairs to the third floor.

"Hey, James. I made it."

James looked up, bleached blond spikes standing in wild patterns, shocking pink tie screaming and ugly and somehow working. Shit, the man was brilliant. An utter flake, but brilliant. "You did, Jefferson, darling. I'm *so* proud."

"Bitch." He grinned and winked, heading into his office and opening a window. "Coffee?"

"Of course, darling. Your mother called. She is an unpleasant woman in the mornings."

He snorted. "She's an unpleasant woman, period, and she hates you. What did she say?"

"That your name is Austin. That your sister is pregnant. That she was considering coming for a visit." James leaned in the doorway, freakishly long and lean, eyes rolling. "Tell me it's a lie."

"That my name's Austin? She just regrets naming me after Daddy. That Dawn is knocked up? Probably. That she's coming to visit?" He shuddered, reached for the coffee. "I'll have her stay with you."

"Excuse me? Am I early?" The voice came from the outer office, but James blocked his view. It had a distinct drawl, though.

"Go. Caffeinate and muffin him. I'll be five minutes, tops." He shooed James out, whispering the orders. He gulped down the coffee, made sure the black shirt was tucked into the black pants that fell on the perfectly shined black shoes. He was so avant-garde he made his own butt itch.

A quick clean of his glasses and he was ready, opening the office door and nodding, hand held out. "Good morning. Sorry, I had a bit of business to complete. I'm Jefferson Bonham."

"Well, I'll be damned. So you are." Warm and callused, the man's hand closed over his, shaking firmly. "Had no idea this was what you'd be doing."

He tilted his head, looked up into a vaguely familiar face and blinked. It took him a second to recognize one of the guys he'd gone to school with, back home. Well, gone to school with was a bit of an exaggeration, but they were both theoretically enrolled at the same time. Damn. "No? Most people tell me they can't imagine me doing anything else."

It was the smile that made the name pop into his head. Abraham Lyons. That smile hadn't changed one bit. The hair might be shaggier, more blonde, the face more mature and the body a heck of a lot more filled out, but the smile was the same.

Wicked. Rotten to the core.

"Yeah? Even your momma? I tell you what, you done well for yourself."

"Oh, my! It's like old home week without the old or the home! Jefferson, darling, you didn't tell me you knew our newest client! I'd have given him the decent coffee."

Ty shot James a look. "Go pick swatches for the photo shoot this afternoon, please."

Now.

James fluttered, the pout obvious and meant to make him smile.

"Come into my office and we can chat about what you need." And maybe he could suggest a barber while he was at it. His own hair was probably back to about what it had been in high school -- cut close to the scalp, just the barest fuzz to make sure people understand it wasn't bald, it was fashion.

Abraham followed him in, waiting for the door to click shut before he spoke again. "That's some assistant you got there, Tiny."

His hackles rose up and he forced himself not to snarl. Twenty years and a hundred miles and his sister's stupid nickname for Austin still haunted him. "I go by Jefferson these days, Abraham, and James is energetic, but a fabulous administrator."

Jefferson or Jeff or Austin or Ty -- pick one. Not Tiny. Not.

"How is Dawn these days, anyway?" Abraham had dated Dawn for a bit, for as long as Dawn had dated anyone back then. Damn the man, he was laughing, those greeny-gray eyes dancing. He had to remind himself that it probably wasn't mean spirited.

The boy Abraham had been had laughed at *everyone*. Including himself.

He waved Abraham into a chair, found his own, set just a little taller than the others because being a short guy sucked. "She's married, has two little ones. They own a floral shop back home. Your family is all well?"

Okay, let's see. Open the laptop, take notes.

"Momma's fine. She got married again, popped out four more kids. Daddy? Who know. Junior's in jail."

"Oh." Figured. That son of a bitch was born nasty. "I'm sorry to hear that."

God knew his image consulting wasn't good enough to get a man out of the pen. Well...

Maybe with the right PR person and a decent suit...

"Why? If I had my way that son-of-a-bitch would be in the chair, not pissing in the paint they put on license plates."

Abraham shrugged. "Well, so much for catching up, yeah? Guess you ought to know what I want."

"Well, the psychic works downstairs and she only works with dogs, cats and the occasional houseplant, so yes. Please. How can I help you?"

"I own my own business. I do renovation work. So far I've done mostly private residences, but I'd like to get into historical business buildings and such, and I need..." Here Abraham blushed. "I kinda need an image re-do."

"Hmm... so you do the Bob Villa thing? Okay. Okay, I can work with that. Who sent you to me and what do you want to become? I mean, are you going for wealthy, sophisticated?" Well, a haircut and a new suit would dechickify the man in short order. Hell, if that was what Abraham was here for? He had years of experience.

Snorting, Abraham crossed one booted foot over one knee. "Tiny, I ain't ever gonna be that. I'd just settle for trustworthy with things rich folks own."

"Jefferson." He looked over the top of his glasses. "Honestly, I'm far from little anymore."

Hell, five nights a week at the gym minimum? He was short, but built like a brick shit house. Not Tiny. Damn it. Irritating redneck. "Is there a specific building you've got your sights set on?"

"Well, bids are about to come due on the old courthouse complex. They're turning it into a museum. I'd love to get my hands on that. I'm not looking to become an overnight suit, like you are. But my firm's never done a project of that size, and we've never had to work so closely with the old ladies' aid societies." Abraham looked him over, the appraisal frank. "And yeah, Tiny doesn't suit like it used to."

"Well, we all grow up, don't we? The suit is part of that, and, I guarantee, it takes more than overnight." He pondered, jotting down notes. "Well, honestly, I think the first thing we need is a plan – a little time with a stylist, a little time with a few reporters and speaking for a few important groups, then we'll work the whole package -- I'll need business cards, letterhead, that sort of thing. Who's your backing?"

"John Hyman. What do you mean, stylist?"

"Oh, John's a good man. I've done a lot of work for him." He typed up a couple more notes. Maybe Bev Shire would be available to meet with them, get Abraham into some decent clothes and... "Hmm... what's your schedule like? The Grand Republic Ladies are looking for a speaker on architecture two weeks from yesterday and if we can, I'd love you to take it on."

Haircut, too. Maybe... no, definitely a manicure and a facial.

When all he got was silence as an answer, he looked up to see Abraham staring at him.

"Well, you do work fast. I'd be glad to. I do have a degree in it. But if you think for one minute I'll let someone make up my face and 'do' my hair, you got a problem."

"I don't think you'll require makeup, although a facial wouldn't hurt." He rolled his eyes at the look on Abraham's face. "Trust me, you'll still be a boy afterwards."

"Well, why a facial? I mean, I work. Shouldn't I look like it?" Abraham sat up, foot thumping on the floor. He started playing with Ty's paperclip holder.

"You need to split the difference. These people are vaguely terrified of blue-collar people. Besides, it's good for your skin." He almost chuckled. Nervous much? Christ.

He got a dark look. "I won't give up my boots."

He did laugh then. "Christ, man. I swear you don't have to stop being a redneck. Chill out."

"A leopard doesn't change his spots, Tiny. I may have gotten an education, but I'm still a redneck, no shit." Abraham sighed. "This was a bad idea, yeah?"

Oh, now, he didn't figure the man'd give up that easy. "Well, if you're already giving up? Then, yeah. It was a bad idea and you should tell John you aren't up to it. And my name isn't Tiny."

"Aren't you supposed to be working for me, if I pay you? Aren't I a client? I think maybe you should be willing to meet me halfway, too. No facial. I'll go to a real barber and get a real shave if that makes you happy."

"You'll go to the salon I send you to and they can do the happy shave and a haircut thing." Hard-headed son of a bitch. "And yeah, I'll be working for you. I'm the best at what I do and John knows it. Be grateful I'm not charging you a hundred bucks everytime you get my name wrong."

This? Was almost fun.

"Haircut?" Brows snapping together, Abe stood, leaning on his desk. "What's wrong with my hair?"

"Well, nothing if you're a twenty year old surfer or an underwear model, but unless you're suddenly changing careers? You need to deshag a little." He tapped his pencil against his bottom lip, fighting his smile with everything in him. "You might consider an eyebrow wax too."

"You want me to trim my pubes too, Tiny? Maybe wax my ass?" The man just kept pushing...

"That would be up to you and your personal stash of sex toys, *Abie*. I personally don't give a shit whether you do or not, unless you reckon you'll yank 'em out at the ladies' luncheon."

Oh, Christ. Take a fucking breath, man. He's a *client*.

Abraham hooted, sitting back and looking triumphant as hell. "I knew you still had it in you somewhere, Tiny."

"It's Jefferson, jackass. And you owe me \$100. Now, can you manage a fitting for real clothes in the next few days." Bastard. Ty was going to kick his ass.

"And I'm Abe, buddy. Not Abie, Redneck, or Jackass. When you get it right, I will. You schedule all your claptrap and have sissy boy out there give me a call. But be prepared to meet me over supper."

Abe got up and pulled out his wallet, flinging two hundred dollar bills down on the top of his desk. "There. Now I'm ahead of the game for the next time. You've got my number."

He took the bills and pocketed them. Stubborn motherfucker. Damn. "I'll have James call you, *Abraham*."

Grinning back over his shoulder, Abe sauntered out, ass just swinging. "You just do that, *Jefferson*. See you then."

The urge to throw a pencil at the door when it closed was completely and totally undeniable.

Not near as satisfying as whapping Abe a good one, but it would work.

After about ten minutes of sitting and blinking and fuming, Ty stood, went to the door. "James? You want steak for lunch? We? Have a client to makeover."

Man, that little assistant of Tiny's was hellaciously mean. But Abe had persevered, and told the guy he could only meet in the evening for the next two weeks. He was a busy man. Yeah, yeah, he knew Tiny was too, but if James could just be a doll-baby...

Yeah, it worked like a charm.

So, he was getting to meet Ty over beer and pad Thai. Now how could you say a man who ate pad Thai was completely unsophisticated?

The restaurant was what he called meeting halfway. It wasn't uptown, but it wasn't the cheap seats either, and it had an ambience that was quiet and soothing. Abe sipped his beer at the bar, waiting for Ty to show. He'd been a little early.

Ty walked in, looking stark as fuck in all black. The man was built solid, muscles rippling under the tight-tight shirt. The light caught on those pretentious little wire-rims, hiding the pale eyes away.

That was a damned shame, too, because Ty had pretty eyes. Always had. He'd dated Ty's sister back in the day just to see more of them.

He stood, holding out a hand.

"Hey. Thanks for coming out after hours."

"Not a problem, sir." He got a handshake, a nod. "James said you were a busy, busy man and the food here is glorious."

"That James is a hoot." And a sucker for a compliment like, 'now you have to send me to whoever does *your* hair, honey. ' "And somehow I figured you might agree to Thai. They're saving us a table."

"He's a good man. We've worked together for a long time." Ty moved up to the bar, giving the bartender a warm smile, the man suddenly hopping and popping. "I'd like a house draft, please."

They waited while Ty got his beer before heading to the table, both of them settling in. He looked Ty over good. "The muscles are a good look for you."

"The gym's my second... well, third, home. I enjoy the exercise." Ty smiled, pushed his glasses up. Oh, now. There were those eyes. "So, are you the kind of man who wants to talk first and do business later or get the business over with?"

"Let's get the business out of the way so I can enjoy my food when it comes." He grinned. And so he could enjoy the company, too.

"That's fair." The littlest damn computer ever got pulled out, a cell phone attached to one side. "Let me see. I have a clothes shopping excursion planned with Yvette; a haircut, shave and

manicure arranged with Killian; and the ladies would love to hear you speak. I have a reporter from the daily coming and a local news crew, so we'll get some exposure..."

Man, the little shit could work. It was sorta eerie.

That was why he came so highly recommended. "Clothes. I got a suit, you know."

"I'm incredibly proud of you. John's fronting the clothing budget. If you're not comfortable shopping, I can get measurements and James and Yvette can go together."

"Oh, hell, no. No way is James picking out my clothes." He shuddered, remembering the pink tie. "So you talked to John, huh?"

John Hymon was a great guy and a helluva mentor, but he tended to try to railroad folks.

"John and I have a standing date once a month. He enjoys knowing what's going on." Oh, ho. There was a story there, in that little twist of lips.

Now wasn't the time to ask, though. Abe flagged down a waiter, got another beer. "So, if you planned all this shit, James must have gotten you the schedule I emailed over. I can't get out of any of the site work, so I hope you scheduled around it."

"Absolutely. I have no intention of interfering with what's successful." Ty took a drink, tapped a little. "You have a good reputation around town. Oh. That reminds me. There's a photo shoot scheduled, too. Gerome's a good man and either James or I will be there, but I need shots to get around to people. They'll do your hair and mak... such at the studio."

He snorted. Yeah. Not the make-up, thank you. "All right. But I got to warn you, Tiny, I ain't changing so that my momma doesn't recognize me."

"That's another bill you owe, Abe. I'm keeping track. And you *hired* me to dress up the image. Deal with it. Will you need someone to research the talk for the luncheon for you, or are you comfortable?"

Abe counted to ten under his breath. "I know my shit. And you can bill me for the fucking slip-ups." Goddamn. He could handle just about anything but someone questioning his proficiency at his job.

"I didn't say you didn't know your shit, Abe. I asked about public fucking speaking. Pay attention before you get yourself all het up." That mouth snapped shut, lips pursed, and Abe figured maybe he wasn't the only one counting.

Abe took a deep breath. "I can do the talk. I took speech classes in college that I vaguely recall. What else?"

"I'll send you a file with a few faces, some information. Barbara Linden is going to be at this luncheon, along with Trisha Danning. Barbara's husband is on the board of the hotel. Trisha?

Adores history and is a voting member of the shareholders. There's not one of those ladies that aren't powerful, but those are the two to romance."

Yeah, he could romance the old ladies. "Okay. You'll need to send it to my personal address, instead of the one I sent James. That's the general email for the business."

"I can do that." The little computer was handed over. "Just fill out the contact information you want and I'll take care of it."

Lord. His fingers were better with a hammer than a laptop, but he got it all typed in, and checked for typos. "So, can we order now?"

"Of course." The computer was clicked shut and slipped back into its little bag. "The pad Thai here is too good to pass up. What's your poison?"

"Oh, I'll have the same." He grinned. Oh, much better. That barrier just made him uncomfortable as hell. "So how did you end up here, doing this?"

Ty shrugged, the motion making those muscles ripple. "I guess like anyone does. I escaped. Found a niche. Capitalized on it. Art school only takes you so far and after grad school I had bills to pay. I worked for an outside agency for a while and then decided to take the plunge."

"Do you still draw?" That he remembered, the way Ty used to scribble in notebooks.

Those tanned cheeks got a little pink, but Ty nodded. "Yeah. I do a lot of sketching, a little work on the side. How'd you get into renovation?"

"Oh, I worked construction through college, changed my major to architecture in my sophomore year, after I did a re-do on a spiral staircase in this grand old Victorian lady." Hell, that had been a great year. There'd been that brown eyed boy... John? Joe? He'd been hot.

"Yeah? That's fairly cool. It took me a while to uh... settle into school."

"Really?" Huh. "I always thought you did really well compared to some of us."

"I did. I guess I spent a few years... spreading my wings."

"Raise a little hell, did you?" Oh, he would have loved to have seen that. Tiny always had the potential.

"Maybe." Ty looked almost grateful when the food came, wielding the chopsticks like a master. Showoff.

Man. He'd have to poke the personal bone a little more. The chopsticks looked more awkward in his hand, but he could wield them pretty well, and the food took them through the next few minutes. He just watched the man as they ate.

There was something damned sexy about watching the man eat, about the way the noodles were drawn into Ty's mouth, the chopsticks almost sucked clean.

His cheeks heated, and he bent over his bowl, trying not to be too damned obvious. Good thing he didn't have to stand up.

"So do you live in the city proper?" Ty ordered another beer, drinking this one slower, making it last.

"Nah. Just outside. Got me an old arts and crafts bungalow, a couple acres. You?" Yeah. The beer sipping was just as sexy as the noodle slurping.

"I have an apartment and a studio about three blocks from here." Ty pointed toward the "cultural" district. "I've been there almost five years."

"I've been about two." Abe winked. "Surprised we haven't crossed paths before now."

"Well, the last remodeler I met was the guy we hired to redo the office building and you've *seen* that building." Well, now. That was no shit. Someone had massacred that pretty old house, took everything fine about it and modernized it to death.

"Yeah. I'd love to see some crown molding back up in there, maybe some chair rails, get some of the old hardware..." He ran off at the mouth about it. What could he say?

"Either that or tear the building down and rebuild. That's on the ten-year plan." Ty shook his head, grinned. "I didn't think it could look worse when I bought it."

"You own it?" Oh, wow. "Look, it still has great bones. I'd be willing to do some work on it in my spare time." He hated the very thought of tearing it down. Maybe he could even find plans.

"Yeah. It was the perfect location and I gave the others a huge cut on the rent to invest in the remodel." Ty shook his head. "I should've bought a gym, but the price was right, you know?"

"Sometimes things happen for a reason."

Like them meeting up again. That had to be fate or something. Oh, he wasn't one to get all gushy over old home week. Hell, he'd left Granfield and never looked back. But he'd never forgotten Ty. A man didn't look a gift horse in the mouth when he was given a second chance.

"That's what they say." Ty ate another noodle, licking his lips clean..

Abe watched, fascinated, his own chopsticks hanging in midair.

Damn.

"You okay?" Another bite got picked up, brought to Ty's mouth.

"Uh huh." Licking his lips, Abe groped for his beer bottle, fingers sliding up and down the round base. "Real fine."

Ty's eyes landed on his hand, just caught. "Oh. Good."

"Uh huh." Oh, now he was repeating himself. He picked up his beer and took a drink, just sucking it down. Mmm. Sucking. Where were they? "So, uh. You ever get married?"

Ty started a little, choking on his noodles. "Uh. No. No, I can't say I have."

"Well, that's good." Lord. What a thing to say. "I mean, you've been busy with the career, huh?"

"Oh. Oh, man. Uh. Well, I suppose you'd better hear it from me rather than some stranger. I've been out of the closet for a long, long time..."

"No shit?"

Fuck, he almost snarfed beer out his nose. "I mean I wondered with your pretty little assistant and your size queen muscles. But damn. If I'd've known that I would never have wasted time on your sister, Tiny."

"Size queen muscles?" Ty rolled his eyes, shook his head. "And James and I... And don't call me Tiny, damn it."

"What? I told you to bill me." Leaning forward, he grinned, batting his lashes. "You and James what? Live together? Fuck every day on that monstrous desk of yours?"

"Oh, excellent. Yes, Abie, don't disabuse me of the thought that you're a backwater perv. You almost made it through an entire meal without being a prick."

So formal. So fucking high falutin'. He just wanted to hear the boy curse or something. "Well, I wouldn't want you to be disappointed."

"No. I don't suppose you would. Well, for your information -- James lives with a very talented ballet dancer named Samuel and neither of them find anything vaguely arousing about my monstrous desk." Those eyes were just snapping.

"Uh huh. I gotta say, then, that neither of them knows how to appreciate a fine piece of furniture." Oh, this was *fun*. "That desk says a lot about you."

"Oh, I'm dying to hear this little bit wisdom. Do tell."

"Well, you come off as ruthlessly contemporary. Modernized office. Chrome and cream waiting room. All those black clothes. But that desk? Tiny, that desk is *lush*. Real wood, with a grain that gives a carpenter like me a hard on, and lines that are just as crazy as they are classic. It's a fucking orgasm of a desk."

So there.

Ty's mouth opened and then closed. "You're full of shit. That desk is just... it came with the house."

"Bullshit." No one gave away a desk like that. "You want to know what I think? I think it's your one indulgence in that whole office. I think it's the one thing that's really you. You know what else? I like it."

"Don't fucking delude yourself, Abe. I left the sticks behind and no fucking way some random desk acts like some weathervane to my personality." The rest of the beer was drained, swallowed down by a long throat gone dull red.

"Whatever you say. You don't have to get upset." It was pretty, though. Hellaciously pretty.

Ty took a deep breath, visibly relaxing. "Yeah. Just been a long day. I should call it a night. I'll make sure to send you an itinerary."

"You don't want dessert?" He did. On the desk back at Ty's office. "There's a place down the way that does the best carrot cake on the planet. My treat."

"George's Bakery and Coffeeshop?" At his nod, Ty shook his head and those lips twisted into a grin. "Yeah, I'll get a latte. I live two buildings down."

"A latte? I dare you to resist the carrot cake." He waved the waiter over, got a box for his leftover pad Thai. They finished up their bill, and he paid. He figured it was his job. "Ready?"

"A latte. You know. Coffee? With milk?" Ty paid the tip and grabbed his computer.

"I know that, asshole. I just mean if that's all you think you're gonna have, you're deluded. Because if carrot cake doesn't do it? The caramel fudge cake will."

Dickhead.

"Indulge yourself much, jackass?"

"Do I look like it sits on the gut?" He wasn't muscle-bound like Tiny, but he looked good and he knew it. A man who worked as hard as he did? He could eat cake. "Come on, live a little."

"No. You look good for your age. Must drive the housewives crazy."

"For my... you little fuck." Laughing, Abe smacked Ty's arm with his free hand as they walked down to the coffeeshop. "I'm not but two years older than you, you puffed up jackass."

"Look, redneck, two years? Ten? Until you get some moisturizer and a brow job? I'll always look like a spring chicken next to you."

Ty ducked the next swat. The man could move.

Damn that box of noodles anyway. He retaliated with words instead. "At least I have a neck. And I'll always be taller."

"Oh, fuck off. There ai...isn't a thing your five inches -- in height -- gains you."

"I can reach the top shelf in the pantry." He opened the door like a gentleman when they reached the coffee shop, inhaling deeply. Oh, damn.

Yum.

"Oh, because that is a make-or-break skill." Ty walked in, the girl at the counter smiling, greeting Ty like it was old home week.

Hell, if he lived two blocks away maybe it was. Abe only made it there maybe once a month. "Hi, honey. The man here wants a latte of some sort, and I want a café Americano. Carrot cake or caramel, T... Ty?"

"I'll have my regular latte, Jessie, and the man here wants carrot cake and he might go on a rampage if he doesn't get it."

"Oh, Little Bit here is going to share. I tell you what, Jessie is it? Give us a slice of each and we don't have to decide." Hoo yeah. That was a great color of purple on Ty's cheeks.

"Little Bit?" Oh shit, if looks could kill he'd be six feet under and wormfood.

"Well, you told me not to call you the other." He winked at Jesse, who turned around right quick to work on the coffee, and Abe nudged Ty with his elbow. "Are you charging me for that too?"

"The first ignorant slip up's always free, Abie." Ty nudged back, the sharp damned elbows digging in.

"Oh, then I don't have to mark you down for that almost 'ain't'." The girl handed them over their coffee and cake, just fascinated if the way she looked from under her lashes was any indication. He headed right for a table, glad he didn't have a hand free to rub his ribs.

There were hot little spots of color on Ty's cheeks, eyes glittering. It was a fine look, even if it didn't suit the atmosphere of the little coffee shop. It would've been better in an alley or on a mattress.

His cock twitched again, and Abe sat a little faster than he meant to, cake, noodles and coffee teetering. "Fuck!"

Ty grabbed the edge of the table, settling it with a thump. That sent that computer bag sliding, tugging the black shirt, and giving him a peek at... something with a shitload of color.

He stared, trying to see more. "You have ink!"

Oh, smooth, Abe. Fucking smooth.

"Huh?" Ty straightened his shirt, sat. "Eat your cake, Abe."

"You allergic to cake, Ty? You have some aversion to frosting? It's not like you have to worry about flab with your hard body." That gave him the opportunity to ogle that fine body. Hell, he really didn't even think Ty was short. Ty was the one who'd always worried on it.

"What on earth are you going on about now?" Ty took a drink of the coffee, eyes rolling. "Last time I checked, I was not allergic to cake or any of the random shit in it. I'm just trying to keep your mouth busy."

"Oh, Tiny." He gave Ty a look that sweet thing assistant of Ty's might have been proud of. "My mouth is *so* much more useful than that."

Ty picked up a fork, took a single bite of the carrot cake without a word, then picked up the plate and pushed the piece, doily and all, right into his face, icing smashing everywhere. "Prove it, asshole."

Then Ty stood, "Put the coffee and cake on my tab, Jess. I'm done."

Abe sputtered for a good half a minute. Then he realized Ty was walking out the door, and he scrambled up, fumbling for a twenty and tossing it on the table. Grabbing a handful of napkins, he hustled, and caught up with Ty at the middle of the next block, grabbing him by the arm.

"I ought to scatter your chickens, you fucker."

"I'd like to see you try, you sanctimonious prick."

"Sanctimonious! Oh, talk about glass houses, Tiny. You've been goddamned insufferable. All I've been trying to do is lighten you up."

And picture Ty in bed. But who was counting.

"Insufferable? I've worked my ass off for the last week getting shit taken care of, *and* I've managed to remember your mother-fucking name while doing it. Just because you can't fucking drag your brain out of Hicksville, USA? Doesn't mean the rest of us haven't been able to." Oh, fuck. There it was. All the fucking fury and fire. It wasn't gone. Cool.

Abe wanted nothing more than to throw the man down and fuck him silly. Only the fact that heads were poking out of windows kept him from doing it. A deep breath swelled his chest as he calmed down.

"Okay, look, I'm sorry. It was irresistible, you being from the old hometown and all. You're good

at your job, for sure. Now, can I come to your place and wash off the cake before I get a cab home?

He thought for a minute Ty was going to tell him to go fuck off, but he got a tight-lipped nod, the fury in those eyes starting to slip-slide into something like disbelief. "Yeah. That's fair. Come on."

Ty's fancy-shmancy shoes clip-clopped down the street, heading them toward a chrome and glass building.

Heartless. That was what buildings like that were, but he kept it to himself, and spared only a passing wistful thought for his wasted cake and left behind pad Thai. He left chunks of carrot cake all down the way, but at least by the time he got to the fancy building the worst had fallen off, so he wouldn't mess up the carpet.

They went up to the eighth floor, down a hall that looked more like a damned hotel than a home. Ty opened the door and let him in, hitting some lights. "The bathroom's down the hall to your left."

Man, the place was... sterile.

The walls and ceiling were painted gray, almost dark against the white carpet. The furniture matched perfectly -- steel and chrome, a few blood-red pillows carefully placed for interest.

The place just... well. It was perfect for meeting clients, he reckoned. "Thanks."

The bathroom wasn't any more Ty-like. The new Ty, maybe, but he'd seen glimpses.

Everything was perfect. Like showroom-type perfect. Hell, even the *soap* was new.

So where did Ty live? Abe grinned. Somewhere there had to be empty pizza boxes and dirty underwear. The cake came off on a towel, and he washed the rest off, using the clean side of the towel to wipe up. He took it out with him when he went back out. "You might want to put this in the laundry."

Ty was in the kitchen, the coffeepot started. The towel was taken through a set of doors leading to a pristine laundry room. "Thanks. Look, I'm sorry about that at the coffee shop. It was out of line. Would you like a cup of coffee?"

"I would." And his cake. But he'd settle. "You do this? Or did you get a decorator in?"

"I bought it furnished. I needed a place with a studio, the right sort of light." He got a cup of coffee -- in a black mug, Christ -- and a nod. "Would you like the tour?"

"I'd love it." Maybe he'd see something. Anything. "You got any milk that's not soy or rice or something?"

"I do. Soy milk tastes like old bed sheets. You want sugar?" He caught a peek in the fridge. Okay. That was hopeful. Beer. Milk. Diet Coke. Bread. Jelly. Real food.

"Yeah, a little." He liked his coffee strong, but sweet and medium brown. "This is a fairly new building. Any good neighbors?"

"Couple artists. Couple actors. One old lady who smells like cheese -- pricey cheese, but still cheese." Milk and sugar were handed over, along with a spoon. "There's a very pricey escort who lives beside me. She's entertaining."

"Yeah? I don't have many neighbors, though I do see the golden retriever from up the way a good bit." He looked around, sipping. "So, tour?"

"Sure. This is kitchen and the laundry. Everything works." Ty grinned, winked, then led him out. "This is the main room. It's got a lot of room to it." A button was pushed and a heavy curtain slid open, revealing a huge window. "Nice view, too. It'll help the resale value, I think."

Then the hall with its gray walls, track lighting. "This is the door to the studio. You've seen the bathroom. Here's the guest room." Another stark room, this one painted bright red, the black lacquer furniture ultra-modern.

"I don't get to see the studio?" The coffee cup hid his smile really well. He didn't mean to just keep pushing and pushing, but Ty brought it out in him. Hell, the guy always had.

"Nope." One more door was opened, a good-sized taupe and black master suite just sort of... sitting there. If Ty had spent more than a single night in that bed, he'd eat a bug.

"This is the master, it's got a decent view too."

"Of what? Could you tell me with your eyes closed?" That came out without him even meaning it to. Damn. He could be civil. He really could.

"What?" He got a confused look, one eyebrow arching.

"Could you tell me what the view looks like without looking at it? You don't spend any time in here, I'd bet."

"What? Of course I do. This is my house. I live here."

"No one lives that pristine, Ty." No one. Not even the President or whatever. Hell, not even his Grandma Lyons and you could eat off her floors. He headed for the studio door, just casual like.

"I have a cleaning lady that comes in once a week." Ty followed him, turning off lights as they went.

"Yeah, but I bet the real action is in here." He tapped the door with his coffee cup.

"That floor's not open for public consumption, Abe." Oh, now. There was a story there.

"I'm not the public. I'm an old pal." Stretching it? Maybe, but he wanted in.

That eyebrow went higher, Ty's lips twisting. "Come get another cup of coffee, Abe."

"Show me the studio, Ty." He grinned, warming to the battle again. God, Ty was even more fascinating now than he'd been lo those many years ago.

"Why do you want to see it?" Ty kept trying to herd him toward the kitchen.

"Because I want to see what kind of stuff you do when you're not making me hair and nail appointments. If it makes you feel better, you can come see my house." He'd like that. Ty in his house. Woo. In his bed.

"You've already seen my house, Abe." Ty tilted his head, gave him a wicked look. "Although your house might be a good place for a photo shoot -- the master craftsman in his own digs."

"What are you hiding? And yeah, you're welcome to use my place for that. I fixed it up myself, and my workshop is out there." He returned the look with interest.

"I'm not hiding anything, and cool -- I'll make the arrangements. Workshops are fascinating places."

"Exactly. Which is why I should get to see your studio." Abe moved, crowding Ty's personal space, sharing coffee-scented air. "Come on, Ty. Let me see the inner sanctum."

Ty didn't back up one iota, eyes staring up at him. "Give me a single decent reason beyond you want."

"There isn't one. I just. Oh, fuck it." Shrugging, he moved away, heading for the kitchen. "I just figured that you couldn't have disappeared completely behind the scary robot man in black gabardine. I was wrong, and that's disappointing as hell."

"Well, you aren't the first person I've disappointed, and I somehow doubt you'll be the last." There was pure ice in that voice. "Are you finished with your coffee?"

"Yeah. Yeah, I am." Lord, he was just making messes all over. Or they both were. Abe mopped coffee off the kitchen counter where he'd set his cup down with a thump. "Sorry. Anyway, you're gonna email me all the times and dates and all?"

Turning, he squared his shoulders. "Look, I'm sorry if I've been an ass. I just made some assumptions I shouldn't have, okay?"

"You don't have to get along with me, Abe. Hell, at this point? You can deal directly with James. He's a considerably less scary robot man and has a personal thing against black. You hired me to make you look good. I'll make the city love you."

"I'll settle for them throwing money at me. And I don't want James. I want you." His lips clamped together. He'd stop right there. That sounded almost like it was about work. "Thanks for the coffee. I'll let myself out."

Ty just stood there, watched him with the weirdest fucking look on his face.

Abe grinned, stopping just at the door to look over his shoulder and say, "Good night, Tiny," before sailing out the door.

He'd stop at the coffee shop on the way back downtown to get a cab.

He really wanted that carrot cake.

Chapter 2

He was hip deep in alligators, blinking at the computer screen and trying to juggle ten thousand things when the intercom rang.

"Jefferson, darling? Uh. Mr. Lyons is here to see you." Again.

"James, I'm busy."

"Uh. How busy?"

He groaned, rubbed his forehead, sighed. Christ, his head hurt. "Damned busy."

"Well, so am I, Tiny." The door rocked on its hinges and Abe walked right in, leaning to plant both hands on his desk. "And I'm sick of dealing with the flunky, cute as he is."

"James isn't my flunky." Ty looked up at the bastard who he'd been avoiding for the last few weeks. "How can I help you, Abe?"

"A progress report would be nice to start. John's poking me. 'So what does Ty say,' he keeps asking. And I have to keep telling him I don't know, because Ty is avoiding me."

Abe had gotten the haircut, he noticed. It wasn't short, but it wasn't so shaggy anymore. Now it looked like a style instead of just not giving a damn.

"Your hair looks good. Well, so far? The luncheon ladies adore you. The photographer wants to have your children and I'm trying to get you an invitation to the hotel's grand soiree for spring." Bastard. John just kept pushing and pushing.

"Told you I could be charming." Relaxing, Abe sat back in the chair across from his desk, one scarred hand absently stroking the curve of the wood. Green eyes sharp on him, tilted his head. "So why *are* you avoiding me, Ty?"

"I've been busy, Abe, and you weren't having a great time with me. James is very capable."

Very capable.

Nosy as fuck, but capable.

Eavesdropping, but capable.

"Oh, I was having fun. You were the one flinging cake." That grin was just maddening. Fucking infuriating.

"I shoved it; I didn't fling it. Jessie said you came back and got your pad Thai."

"I did. And some cake, though they only had the caramel left."

Abe actually did have a portfolio with him, and it was promising when he pulled it out. "I brought some sketches. Of the hotel, for sure, so maybe you can work that in, but also I've been thinking what to do with this place."

"This place?" Okay, intriguing. He shut the laptop and cleared a space for the portfolio.

"I know I told you I would work on it gratis?" One eyebrow went up until he nodded, then Abe spread some drawings across his blotter. "I was thinking to start with the stair rail as you come in. The one outside would look good in brass, the one on the stairs to the second floor of offices should be walnut, though, hand done."

He reached out, looking at the illustrations. The man had one hell of an eye for perspective.

"Why walnut?"

"Well, walnut was a very popular wood in the American Victorian era, which this house roughly sits in, and to be honest? I have a big old chunk of it left over from another project, so it won't cost me anything but work. It also has a glorious sheen when it's polished up, and it will contrast nicely with the sort of creamy squash color I'm gonna paint your entryway."

Lord. Abe really got passionate about his work. Those eyes'd lit up, and not one insult had come his way in a whole five minutes.

"Squash?" He pulled out his set of pencils and a scrap sketchbook, picking a dull yellow and a pink and working them together. "Like this?"

"Yeah. Not a peach, because that's too pink. This is warm. That's actually just about what I had in mind." Another sheet got pulled out. "And your door should have stained glass. I have a lady I know who owes me one... she'd love to make you a window. She just needs to know what you want on it. It would go in like this."

"I should take you up into the attic and show you the shit I stored up there. There was all this stuff left over when Mickey was finished with his remodel."

He couldn't just throw the things away. They were something else.

"Yeah? Oh, man. You gotta show me." Abe bounced to his feet.

"Now?" He chuckled, the enthusiasm almost -- almost -- appealing.

"No time like the present." He got a sly look. "Who knows when I'll see you again. Besides, I can't finish my plan until I know what's usable up there."

"It's dusty up there and I'm not dress..."

James came in, hands full of coffee cups. "You can use your gym clothes, Jefferson. They're always... grubby."

"That's a great idea, James." James got a wink and a blinding grin. Abe really could be charming. Damn it.

"Yeah. Great, James." He glared over at James, but nodded. Okay, there was no reason to be a shit. Abe was actually being decent.

James gave him a serene, placid smile as patently false as his need to be useful so he could eavesdrop some more, and put a little extra wiggle in his walk as he left. Abe hooted.

"He's a national treasure. I'll just have some coffee while I wait for you to change?"

"He's a giant pain in my ass." He raised his voice loud enough for James to hear.

"You wish."

Ty snorted, rolled his eyes. "The milk's in the little fridge under the bar, Abe."

"Thanks."

James gave him a *look* as he passed. "Already know how he takes his lumps, Jefferson, darling?"

"You'd best watch it, you evil old queen. You can be replaced."

James' laugh just echoed. "If you didn't replace me through all those years in the dorm? I'm safe *forever*."

He changed into his workout shorts, the little white muscle shirt and sneakers. It was weird as hell, wearing these clothes here during a work day. His clients? Would shit a brick.

The look in Abe's eyes when he saw him? Was something he'd rather not think about, wide and white hot.

"Come on. The door's over here." Shit. His ink was all showing -- the back piece was one of those college things and the reason for every black shirt in his closet. It was a tree that ran from shoulder to thigh, all four seasons just covering him with buds and leaves and... Was Abe staring at his ass?

"Uh huh." Oh, the man was definitely staring. It was kind of unnerving. Abe followed him -- maybe a little too closely -- as they went up. Okay, a lot, when he could feel hot breath on the small of his back as they climbed.

He booked it, climbing up into the heat. There was a good amount of light coming in through the dormers, the stacks of wood and windows and shit everywhere covered in a fine layer of dust.

"Oh." Well, now at least he knew Abe wasn't staring at him anymore. He looked like a kid on Christmas morning. "Oh, your renovator must have been a real modernist, to tear all this shit out, Ty."

"He was well-recommended." And affordable. Very affordable.

He got a nod, but Abe wasn't really paying attention. Instead he started rummaging, exclaiming over this and that. "Score! You still have all the old door hardware."

He chuckled and headed over to the window to open it up, get some air in. "I didn't throw anything away. There's a chandelier and a shit-lo... a bunch of light fixtures over there."

"Yeah?" Abe made his way over where he pointed, giving him the perfect view of a very tight ass framed by that old pair of jeans as Abe bent to look.

Oh, now. That? Was fine-fine.

He looked his fill, thumping his cock when it started wanting to look too.

"Hmm?" Abe looked at him, blinking dust off his lashes. "Oh, sorry. Thought you said something."

"Huh? Nope. Nothing. Just enjoying the view." He blushed, looked outside. "The gardens next door are amazing."

"Yeah?" Brushing close, Abe wandered over to have a look. "Oh, man, that's cool. Hey, does this place have a courtyard out back?"

"Yeah. It's got a little bench. We have someone come put pansies in and mow."

"Cool. Be a good place for morning coffee." Nudging him, Abe grinned. "Anyway, I think I've seen what I can use. Unless you've got more boxes hidden away."

"All the boxes of stuff I didn't take home are right here." He rolled his eyes, stretching up.

"You took some home, huh?" Now that was a glint he wasn't sure he could read. Abe moved a little closer. "Did you tuck them away in your studio?"

"Curiosity killed the cat, Abe." He caught himself nodding before he stopped. What he had in his studio wasn't Abe's business.

"It's sure gonna kill this one... I got a real hankering to see, Ty." It occurred to him that Abe hadn't called him Tiny since that first time when he'd burst in the door. Maybe Abe was trying for charming with him. "And, hey, you never came to see my workshop. Why don't you help me haul these door pieces and the molding to my truck and I'll take you out there for supper."

"Let me make sure I don't have something scheduled, but yeah. Okay. I'd like to see where you

work." He nodded, stood up and oh, shit, that damn near had him rubbing right up against Abe. "Oh. Sorry."

Abe cleared his throat. "No problem."

But he noticed Abe didn't step back. Not one bit.

"Uh..." Okay. It was hot and quiet and he was *right* there and there was nowhere to fucking go and, fuck if he wasn't getting hard.

"Uh huh." They were breathing in tandem, their chests rising and falling together, and Abe moved about a half an inch, arm brushing his, hip bumping his side.

Fuck, the man smelled good.

"You two find everything you needed up there, Jefferson?" James' voice was strident, loud, and he rolled his eyes, sliding around Abe to look down.

"Yeah. All this shi...stuff's still up here."

He heard Abe mutter something that ended with... "drop it on his head," before coming over and handing him a box of parts. "You take this and I'll grab that molding I want and we'll be good to go."

"You want any of the lighting stuff?" He hefted the box easily, trying to figure out how to adjust his cock with his hands full.

"Not right now. I'll have to look at the wiring first." The molding waggled as Abe hauled it downstairs, and he got to the bottom of the stairs just in time to see Abe almost bowl James over as he went by.

"Eek! Neanderthal men coming through!"

He chuckled, flexed, listened to James gag and choke.

"Yeah. Oh, and you need to clear your boss' schedule for the rest of the afternoon." Abe vanished out the front office door, careful not to scrape the wood against the door jamb.

Oh, that sorry, bossy son of a...

"You're going with him?"

"Yeah. I need to check his workshop lighting."

"Among other things, hmm?" James gave him an arch look. "He's not your type, darling."

"I have a type?" He snorted, shook his head. "Not happening. I'm seeing the workshop."

"Well, enjoy the *ride* out there."

Bitch.

He flipped James off, heading down the stairs, nodded at some older lady carrying a Pomeranian. "Afternoon."

"Good afternoon, dear," trailed after him as he hit the front door, Abe's truck waiting at the curb.

"You ready, Ty? Just throw that in the back."

"I don't have my clothes, my laptop..." Hell, he didn't even his wallet, just his keys.

"Do you need them? Come on, I'll be driving you back in." Abe grinned, smacking the hood of the truck. "Live a little."

Live a little. Christ. Like he was some... uptight prick. He plopped the box in the truck and rolled his eyes. "Come on, then, but I'm not going anywhere in public like this."

"You don't have to. I have all the shit for supper at home."

The ride out took about forty-five minutes, just past the suburbs into what he thought of as the middle of nowhere. Abe probably thought of it as nice and private. And damned if the truck wasn't met by a pair of barking-their-heads-off dogs.

"Aww... you *did* bring your kin with you." He grinned over, winked. Lord knew there'd always been a ton of dogs around his place.

"Hey, the golden belongs up the road. I'm telling you, he just has no sense of direction." They got out of the truck and Abe caught the blue heeler that launched itself at him, chest high. "This girl, though. She's mine."

The golden retriever chose him to lean on, tail wagging, demanding petting.

He reached down, fingers digging into the soft fur without him even thinking about it. Man, the big beast needed a bath, a good brushing and... whew! A bone because damn, doggie breath. "Look at that tail wag."

"He needs some loving, I think. Problem is Sheila here keeps me busy. If I don't exercise her like three times a day, she starts herding me."

The house Abe led him into was an arts and crafts bungalow, neatly painted in blue and brown, with a little porch with some old wicker chairs.

Oh, he liked the colors -- sort of casual, sort of striking. He nodded. The photographer had to shoot Abe here. Had to.

"This is home." Plopping the mutt back down, Abe led him inside. "Don't let the beasts in. Sheila! Out."

He had to laugh as Sheila automatically herded the golden right back away from the door, barking and bouncing.

There was a little arched doorway to the living room, beams on the ceiling and a great framed out fireplace. The main hall led back to the kitchen, and stairs led up, dressed up along the side with recessed cherry panels.

The place was neat as a pin.

He let himself admire, wandering a little, touching the wood here, the carving there. Damn, he'd kind of hoped for beer bottles or antlers on the walls or something. "You did all this, huh? I can't wait to see what you do with the hotel."

"Yeah. That wood on the staircase? Was salvage. You should have seen the avocado green paint there before. Oil-based shit. You want a beer?"

The kitchen had an old round-topped fridge and a gas range older than he was, but it fit somehow, and it looked pretty functional.

"Sure, thanks." How fucking surreal was this? He was in his workout clothes, in a client's -- no, hell, in *Abe's* -- house. James was never going to let him live this down.

"Here you go." The beer was cold, and it was Bud. Nothing like the fancy brew James insisted he keep for the occasional home meeting. "I guess it's my turn to give you a tour, huh?"

He drank deep, the flavor and chill so good, familiar as anything. "Yeah, I'd like to see it all."

"Cool. Come on."

There was a formal dining room, and he would *swear* that was Abe's grandma's dining set, with its medallion-backed chairs and fancy sideboard. He'd been to Miz Lyon's house once with Dawn. Then beyond that there was a half bath with an old pull-chain toilet and an old screened-in sun porch that had been converted to a guest bedroom.

"It's very charming -- and I mean that in the not nose-wrinkled, drama-queen way."

It was. Charming and homey and comfortable and very Abe.

"Thanks." Sipping his beer, Abe led the way back through to the stairs. "Come on, see the inner sanctum."

That was probably a jab at his studio, but he could let it slide.

This once.

The dogs came barreling when they heard the door open, all slobber and tails, Abe's dog carrying a dish in her mouth. "Oh, now. Don't you ever feed them?"

"Hell, yes. But she spends so much energy trying to chase him off that she's always hungry. Hey, if you want to go see the upstairs I'll feed them and meet you back here."

"Well, don't they want him wherever home is?" He petted the dogs, following Abe and dumping out the water dish to refill it.

"Nope. His owner is about eighty. One of her kids got him a year ago, and she just can't keep up, as he's only eighteen months. And she's terrified she'll trip on him."

Abe shrugged, filling two big bowls with kibble from a chained up trash can. "She pays me a little for food, and I just haven't had time to take care of that coat like I should."

"That's a shame. He's a looker." He picked a few burrs out of the pup's coat. "Does he have a name?"

"Not that I know of. Old Lady Ayers never named him. And well..." Here Abe looked a little shamefaced. "If I named him I'd have to keep him, and I'm trying to find him a home."

"Oh. Man, that sucks, pup. You're damn near grown and nameless." He scratched some more, shook his head, laughing as the big blond head pushed right into his hands.

"You want a dog?"

The pups started chowing down, the sudden lack of the golden's weight leaving him almost falling down.

"In my apartment? It's not really dog friendly." Of course, the big old papasan was upstairs, the wood floors would be fine and... Jesus Christ, Ty. Quit it.

"Oh. Well, he's a love, but yeah, I guess he wouldn't fit in."

They got the stuff out of the truck and headed out back to a little frame shed with barn type doors. "This is it. The workshop, I mean. Come on, you can put that box over there."

Oh. Wood shavings and glue and copper polish all crowded at him, the scent of turpentine and pine pitch strong. There were tools stashed everywhere and bins and bins of parts. The best though? Was the enormous hand-hewn workbench that looked about a hundred years old.

"Oh, wow." He went over, fingers sliding over the wood, breathing in deep. Oh, man. He could remember being at Grampa's house, sitting with a piece of sandpaper and a piece of wood in one corner, sanding away and listening to Grampa and Uncle Mike talk and talk and talk.

"Yeah. This was here, in the barn. I had to tear the barn down, but I kept this baby." Crowding close, Abe leaned over the bench. "See the trough in the back? That's really handy."

He went up on his toes, looking. Oh, now. That was clever.

The trough and the way his hip rubbed along Abe's thigh.

Abe looked at him sideways, right through dark blonde lashes, eyes hot. Then Abe pressed against him deliberately, slow and easy, hip bumping just above his.

Damn, the man was like a furnace.

"You've got one hell of a workshop."

"Thanks. It's been a while in the making, but I'm happy enough. Oh, here's that hunk of walnut."

Hunk didn't cover it. It was like railroad ties made out of walnut wood, three of them. They'd make a fantastic stair rail.

"They're huge." He reached out, stroking the wood, careful not to get splinters. "How much do they weigh apiece?"

"Oh, a couple hundred pounds. They're not treated, so they don't weigh as much as a hunk of industrial wood like a tie or telephone pole." Watching him closely, Abe grinned. "You've got a real love of things that feel good, Ty. I like that in a man."

His cheeks got hot, but what was he supposed to say?

'No, I don't like things that feel good?'

Ty just arched an eyebrow and grinned back. "Thanks. You've got a great workshop, Abe. Honest."

"Thanks. Well, we ought to see about supper. And you can play with the dog." Oh, that was a sly look. "Maybe name him."

"I'm not taking him home with me." He headed out into the sunshine, the rays feeling good on his skin, warm.

And of course that dumb mutt came right up, wagging like a mad thing, licking his hand.

Damn it.

"Sure, okay. Get the ball, Sheila."

He laughed at the little heeler as she ran, that tail held up high. The retriever sort of watched, blinked, half following Sheila before coming back for pets. "Oh, you're gonna give that girl a complex. She'll think you don't like her anymore."

"Oh, she's got him wrapped around her pinky paw. But he likes you."

No. No, Abe. No dog.

"What's for supper?" He worked a snarl out with his fingers, trying not to tug.

"Well, I was thinking about simple. Steaks, potatoes? I'm good at charred meat."

Abe. Meat. Yeah, he could see it.

"I can handle that." Contrary to popular assumption, he could eat his weight in dead cow without a qualm. "You got a decent grill?"

"I do. I have a whole patio barbeque thing. Come on." Oh, yeah. The guy had a brick barbeque off a little courtyard on the side of the house, with a two level gas grill and all of the bells and whistles. Had a charcoal grill too.

"Oh... Fucking cool." This? Was his biggest bitch about the apartment. That little hibachi? Not cutting it. He'd tried to make a brisket on it.

Once.

Took nine hours.

"Yeah? You're welcome to come out and use it any time." He couldn't read that look, but something about it made him itch. In a good way. "I got some good sirloin or some New York strip."

"I might bring Lucy out here one day, you never know." His baby car was right now carefully tarped and stowed, the little cherry-red Shelby GT-350 waiting for him.

"Lucy?" Looking downright shocked, Abe turned on him. "You have a... but you said you were out."

"Huh? Out of what?" He must've had that beer too fast.

"Out. You know, coming out of the closet? Why would you have a girlfriend?"

"A girlfriend?" It took him a second to follow, but he got it. Ty just shook his head, not able to hold back his laughter. "Shit, no. Lucy's my Mustang. 1966 Shelby GT-350, sweetest ride on earth."

A girlfriend. Him. Right. Thank you, but no.

"Oh." Cheeks red, Abe laughed hard. "Shit man, here I was thinking you were taking that image thing a bit too far. That sounds like a sweet ride. And very... redneck of you."

"Watch your mouth. My Lucy? She's a lady." He gave it a second, then went on. "Fast and hot, but a pure lady."

"Yeah? You'll have to take me for a spin sometime. So, charcoal or gas, Ty?"

God, it was weird to watch Abe just puttering around, setting up the grill and shoving dogs out of the way.

"Either way's good. What can I do?" He took the ball from Sheila, threw it out past the shop.

The golden took off like a streak. Trying to impress him... He rolled his eyes as Abe came over and handed him a chimney thing.

"Make fire. I like my strip with charcoal and a few chips. I'll go get the steaks lubed up and the potatoes scrubbed. The matches and fluid and shit are in that metal case."

"Ugh. Man make fire." He nodded, getting to work. He ended up pulling off his shirt so the damn thing didn't get destroyed, filling the chimney and getting the fluid on to soak in a little.

"Oh. Now that's a sight." Abe came back out with another beer, looking him over like a thirsty man looking at water in the desert. "Fuck, that's some amazing ink, Ty."

"Sorry, didn't want to ruin my shirt." He grabbed the matches, started lighting the bricks. "I got it done in college in exchange for flash art. Thought I was hot shit. Never thought about what would happen ten years later."

"How you'd have to hide it?" He jumped when Abe touched his back, fingers sliding over the lines of the tattoo. "I got mine where it doesn't show so much. But this is stunning. It's a shame you have to cover it."

His skin went all goosebumps and shivers, but he just nodded, belly going tight. "So now you know my big secret. The black's more than a fashion statement."

"That? Is the most sensible excuse for wearing black I've ever heard." Looking downright tickled, Abe smacked his arm. "So what's your excuse for all the chrome?"

"Chrome? Where?" He looked down his body. "All the body jewelry is long gone."

God, it was fun to fuck with Abe.

"You were pierced. Careful. You'll make me drool." The dogs came sniffing around the grill, and Abe kneed them out of the way. "I meant at your house."

"I told you, it came that way." Ty went to wash his hands at the hose. Hell, the actual apartment was an investment.

"Oh, right. So the studio...?" Still pushing about the studio. Damn it.

"You are a pushy bastard, aren't you?" He chuckled, shook his head. "It's just a big room with windows."

His big room with windows. And paper. And paint. And computers. And toys. And the neatest random shit. And a big-assed TV for watching baseball. And a shit load of plants because the damned things wouldn't die.

"So why can't I see it?" Abe didn't give him time to answer, just went on back into the house, whistling up a storm.

He rolled his eyes and put his shirt back on, throwing the ball a few thousand more times. Man, they never got tired, did they?

Sort of like James when the man was in queen mode.

Sheila eventually wandered off to flop in the shade, but the golden just sat on his foot and looked at him adoringly. Also kind of like James, but in mother hen mode.

Abe poked his head out the door. "You like garden or caesar, man?"

"Either works. Shit, I'm being rude. Let me come help." He eased the pup off him. "Come on, Blinky. Scoot. I'm being an ass."

"Nah. S'okay." He got this goofy grin, Abe watching the dog sulk a moment. "But come on if you want to chop. I've got about a million veggies we can throw in. The lady down the road on the other side? Is an organic gardener."

"Yeah? That's cool. God knows you spend enough for the damn things at the grocery." He washed his hands again, scrubbing off charcoal and dogs and such.

"Yeah. It's nice to get them fresh too. I have to wash them up, but it reminds me of Grandma Lyons." They actually moved easily around each other, Abe handing him a good knife for carrots and radishes.

He stole bites as he went, enjoying the hell out of the flavors, the crunch. He organized the little sticks of carrot with the rounds of radish and the wedges of cuke. Yum.

"There's dressing in the fridge. Bleu cheese or thousand. I have oil and vinegar too."

The steaks looked damned good. Abe had them laid out on a tray, sprinkled with butter for browning and salt and pepper. The potatoes had half cooked in the microwave and been wrapped in foil and were ready to go on the coals.

His stomach rumbled and he popped another bit of carrot to hush it up. "'kay. The coals should be ready, they were graying up nice."

He was pulling out the bleu cheese when his cell phone rang, James' number showing. "What?"

"Just making sure you're having fun, Jefferson. Is his place sexy? Are you naked yet?"

"Don't make me kill you, James. I can hire a beautiful twenty year old for half what I pay you."

"Oh, now there's a thought." Handing him a hunk of crusty Italian bread spread with olive tapenade, Abe headed out to the grill, even as James pouted in his ear.

"Don't be a bitch, Jefferson. *I* would be naked by now."

"Well, one, that's utter bullshit because that dancer of yours would hang you by your balls and two... Well, there is no two. We're making food. That's it."

"Oh, bonding over a meal. Feeding each other by hand. How romantic! And for all you know I might like hanging by my balls."

"That's gross, James. Thanks for the visual." He was chuckling, shaking his head. Irritating bastard. Ty adored him. "I'm fine, okay? Having a steak, playing with the dogs, chopping up carrots."

"Well, don't let a chance at nudity pass you by, darling. Have fun."

"Bitch." He grinned, hung up, looked out back. "You want the salad out there or in here?"

"Oh, outside. There's some foil on the counter. We'll picnic."

Abe was the one with no shirt now, working the coals into place, getting the steaks ready. Nice. Firm muscles, but lean, with smooth skin.

And that ass? Okay, so James might have been naked already. Damn.

He got the salad wrapped up, found the paper plates and silverware and a pan to put them all in. "You want another beer?"

One more for him, that was it.

"Oh, yeah. Hit me." The coals had settled by the time he got back out and the steaks were on, smelling fine already. "How well do you like yours, Ty?"

"Medium rare is good for me. Warm all through, but not murdered." He handed over the beer, put all the stuff on the table. "That smells like heaven."

"It does, doesn't it." He got a grin, a kind of faraway look. "Heaven had better have steaks and dogs and a big woodshop."

"And a beach and decent beer." Oh, yeah. He could handle that. He picked up the ball and threw it, laughing as that big pup took off.

"Hell, yes." They shared a grin, and damned if they weren't almost getting along.

Almost.

The steaks took no time, the potatoes came off crispy skinned and tender on the inside, and his salad was just right. Damn. Maybe it was the outdoor air and the begging dogs, but he hadn't had a meal that tasted that good in a long while.

"Oh, that? Hit the spot. Thank you, sir. It was just right." He was full as a tick and if the hokey redneck similes didn't stop tout suite? He was going to disown himself.

"It was. Thanks for coming out, Ty. I was starting to think you never wanted to see me again." Oh, he was gonna pluck those flippy eyelashes out, one by one.

"Don't make me hurt you, Abe." He rolled his eyes. "That only works with James."

"Damn." Easy, smiling, Abe sat back in his lawn chair and patted his belly. "Just as well; I'm too full to spar with you. So you really think I've got a shot at the hotel?"

"Yeah." He nodded. "Your only real competition seems to be Lisa Franklin and rumor is she's more interested in the new museum of modern art."

Jenny had been working Abe's PR for a week -- the woman was a ferret, finding everything out about everybody. Good thing she was on his side.

"She's got a good crew working for her, but she's really not expert enough on the redos. She likes the new and high profile. 'Sides, she's fucking old Chaim Lopal, the guy who's shelling out half the funding for the art museum, so she'll get it in a pinch."

Man, even in a bigger town it was still a small world.

"Well, Lopal's a... challenge to work with, but the project will keep her out of the time frame that the board wants for the hotel. John will be pleased."

And God knew, that was the real issue, wasn't it? Keep John pleased. He almost snorted.

"Well, that's important. John can be a bugbear when he's not pleased." Yeah, looked like something else they could share a knowing grin over. "Man. I got some cookies Mrs. Ayers sent over. You want something sweet?"

"Maybe one, I'm stuffed." He patted his belly. Man, Abe had one hell of a sweet tooth. Something to remember.

"Cool. I'll get a treat for the muttles too."

The dogs knew what that meant, obviously, because they both woofed and got up, wagging right over to the door.

He laughed good and hard. Oh, that? Cheesy calendar cute. "Those two are something else."

"Yeah. She's got him trained and I? Well, I probably talk to them too much." Each dog got a chew bone, and he got a cookie that had everything but the kitchen sink; coconut and chocolate chunks and nuts and little daubs of frosting.

"Good Lord, this is amazing." He blinked, just a little stunned. "Do I need a fork and knife to eat it?"

"Just hold the napkin under. She made them with her grandkids, and she can't tell them no. They taste surprisingly good, though." Abe winked, digging in, Sheila sitting right by his knee and snapping at the falling coconut.

He took a tentative bite and yeah. Yeah, it was surprisingly good. Sweeter than fuck, but good. "I'm going to bounce off the damned walls."

"That ought to be entertaining. I'll give you a tour of the upstairs and the cellar. That ought to help work it off." Yeah. That would at least get him walking.

"Is the cellar where the dead bodies are?" He sneaked Blinky a bite without chocolate in it, the pup's tail going ninety to nothing. Oh. Man. Killer cute.

"Oh, I bury them all over the property." Abe got up, gathering up the empty beer bottles. "Come on. You can see the bed I built."

"You built a bed? No shit?" He grabbed the plates and shit, impressed with Abe's ability. "Why? I mean, you couldn't find one you liked, or you just always wanted a hand-made one, or what?"

"Well, I wanted to see if I could. And all that was on the market when I got this place was those sleigh beds, which are nice, but hot as hell, as they hold heat in. And I had this big slab of mahogany..." They headed inside, him trailing Abe, and they tossed the stuff and headed upstairs. "And the room is oddly shaped, so I wasn't sure if I could get a premade four poster in."

"Oh, now I'm intrigued..." He had a huge futon in the studio that was perfect -- soft and covered in pillows.

"Yeah. We like intrigued." There was a little landing up there with a sitting area, a chair and a half and ottoman and a palm and a lamp were all that fit. A little hallway went to the master bath, with a big old clawfoot tub and what looked like original tiles fitting right in. And the bedroom was oddly shaped, as promised, with a little hall-like entry, and a couple of weird niches, one for the bed and one for a little library area.

It worked, though. Man, that bed was a towering four poster, all in hand-turned and hand-carved mahogany, just stunning. He kind of expected manly colors, but the bedspread was a quilt in crisp whites and yellows.

"Wow." He moved over to the bed, hand wrapping around the column, the wood cool and slick under his fingers. "Oh, man. Abe. This is beautiful." Ty offered the man a smile, honestly impressed. "You're going to make the hotel a thing of wonder."

"I hope so." Moving close, Abe looked at the bed, rubbing shoulders with him. "It would open doors for sure. I just want to be able to make enough to keep going."

"I know about that. Sometimes I wonder if it wouldn't have been easier in a big firm, but then something works right and I'm right again." He nodded, hand still moving, stroking the slick wood.

"Yeah." Abe was watching his hand intently, tongue coming out to lick at his lips. The wood grain stood out so that it looked like it ought to have texture, but it was smooth, polished to a high sheen.

"It feels amazing." He realized suddenly what he was doing, jacking off Abe's bedpost. Christ on a crutch. He stopped, cheeks heating. "I... Uh..."

Damn.

"It does. I like the way you touch things, Ty." Abe moved even closer, invading his space, smelling like sweat and charcoal and mesquite. "Makes me wonder how you'd touch a person."

"That's a dangerous thing for us... you to wonder about." He breathed in deep, nostrils just flaring. Oh, that scent was pure distilled male.

"With us? Double danger, T-Ty." Nice save, Ty thought. Then he was thinking other things entirely as Abe rubbed against his side, thigh sliding on his. "But fun."

"You don't go for your fun on the softer and curvier side of the road?" Hell, this man'd done the deed with *Dawn*.

Oh, and that was a nasty fucking thought.

This time there was no save. "Tiny, I did girls in high school because my daddy would have cut it off if he'd known what I wanted. Besides, when I dated girls I got to see their brothers half naked out in the yard."

"My name isn't Tiny, Abe, and I got to do the brothers out in the barn." Over the stall door, bent over hay bales, fingers holding onto the tack and... Yeah, he'd been young.

"Well, I wasn't as smart as you, I guess. Now in college?" Abe grinned, leaned right on him. "I did as many as I could."

"Christ, I bet you were a hellion." He shook his head, grinning, leaning onto the bedpost, taking Abe's weight without worrying about it too much. "President of the Reformed Girl-Chasers of America union?"

"Oh, you know it. I chased boys with single-minded determination. Found out I could catch or pitch, and that the wild ones really turned me on." Abe put an arm around him, hand just resting lightly on his hip.

"Man, I had a few stories to tell, way back when. Got myself turned inside out and upside down." Hell, he'd done his own bit of turning, once upon a time.

"I bet you did. Anyone who could get a tat the size of yours? Must have the stamina of a bull moose." Hot breath fanned his cheek as Abe turned, lips meeting the edge of his chin and working down.

He groaned, hand reaching out and meeting that flat, hard belly. Oh, fuck. This was a bad, bad idea.

His chin lifted, tongue flicking out to wet his lips. A terrible fucking idea.

But Abe's skin was so hot, the tight muscles so good under his fingers, and Abe knew how to use that mouth for something besides talk, because those lips and teeth and that hot tongue were finding all of his sweet spots, just boom. Abe half turned, pushing him sideways into the post of the bed, hands meeting at the small of his back.

One hand went up to find one tight little nipple, the other slid south to trace the line of those soft worn jeans and... Oh. Oh, man, that was the silkiest damned little path to glory.

The little nipple tightened right up under his fingers, and Abe bit his chin, the little sting making him gasp.

"Still think this is a bad idea, Ty?"

"Horrible." Of course, that didn't mean he wanted to stop, did it? Ty ducked his head, brought their mouths together, took himself a good, hard taste. Sweet fuck, that was hot.

Tasting him, Abe stroked his lips open with that hot tongue before slipping inside to press deep, over and over. They were rubbing all up and down, Abe plastered against him.

He got one hand around Abe's neck, fingers in that thick, blond hair. The wood on his back was smooth and slick, holding them both up as they ate each other up.

"Mmhmm." Just purring for him like a big cat, Abe sort of straddled his thigh and rubbed, hard as fuck through his jeans. And with the little shorts he wore, wasn't anything hidden at all.

He got his shirt tugged up so they were belly to belly and, oh. Hell, yes. His cry pushed right into Abe's mouth, his fingers and toes both curling.

Strong hands slid up his back, Abe pushing the shirt off over his head. Then Abe was touching his skin, from shoulders to waist and back up, thumbs pushing into his armpits. The kiss went even deeper, Abe's teeth stinging his lips.

He pushed a little harder, giving Abe more of his thigh to rub against, letting himself feel that bulge, so fucking hot and fine.

"God, yeah." One hand dropping to slip beneath the waistband of his shorts, Abe moved faster and faster, nipping at his throat, his shoulder.

"So hot..." He got himself a handful of that ass, tugging them tighter and tighter together. His breath was just panting from him, the whole fucking world about the heat between them.

Abe's nod got him a little whisker burn, right there on his neck, and Abe kissed his collarbone. That hand down his shorts worked around between them in front, Abe cupping his cock.

"Mmhmm..." He swallowed hard, hips just bucking up toward that touch. Fuck, he wanted.

"I can't. Damn it, Ty, we need to get on the bed." Abe tugged, dancing them back around the side of the bed, using his damned cock like a leash.

"Don't pull it off. I like it." He chuckled, the sound all husky and breathless and wanting.

"So do I. Thick, hot. Just my kind of thing." He got a wicked grin, Abe getting them to the side of the bed and pushing his shorts down. "Fuck, Ty. You're the hottest thing I've ever seen."

"Oh, now. You gotta show me yours." Focused? Him? Fuck, yes.

"Oh, yeah." Lord, Abe was going to hurt something, he stripped down so fast. The jeans hit the floor right after the boots, and Ty got a nice view of a high, red cock, and a huge as fuck tribal blackwork tattoo on Abe's left thigh.

"You were holding out." Thank fuck he was ambidextrous, one hand heading for the ink, the other for that pretty prick.

"I told you mine didn't show." Groaning, Abe arched into his touch, cock sliding right between his fingers, wet tipped and burning up.

He nodded, not really listening, more just looking and touching, breathing deep. Oh, he got off on the smell of sex. It made his balls ache, made them tight.

They tumbled to the bed, Abe stroking his belly, his thighs, still just coming back every time to his prick. That mouth. Fuck, it was all over him, Abe tasting him, loving on him.

They found a rhythm, their hands working hard. Abe's fingers caught the tip of his cock, the zing making him twist, eyes going wide. "Oh. Fuck."

"Shit. You're. Damn." Crowding, Abe rolled on top of him, really giving them friction. "Ty."

"Yeah. Fucking fine." He stretched up and caught Abe's mouth. His free hand landed on that muscled ass, fingers digging in. Hell yes.

The kiss took them right down, Abe grunting and shooting over his stroking fist, hot and wet and so good.

Ty's eyes rolled, orgasm sliding down his spine and firing from his prick, those callused fingers driving him right over.

"Oh, damn, Ty. Damn." Abe just flopped on him, panting, looking happy as a pig in shit.

"Yeah. Damn." He shook his head, grinning like a moron, heart just pounding. "Nice... nice bed."

"Sturdy." They laughed, both of them acting like fools. Abe kissed him again, this one sloppy and sweet. "Been wanting you a long time."

"Two weeks? Three?" He nibbled on Abe's bottom lip. Mmm... that was fine.

"Oh, sixteen years? Seventeen? I dated your sister to be close to you, man." Abe wouldn't quite look at him, but those cheeks were just flaming.

Oh. Well, that was... Damn. Just damn. "Man, Abe. You're a brave man. I mean, dating *Dawn*?" He winked, stroked one nipple. "I mean, she gets pregnant just by *breathing*."

"Well, I don't think we ever actually did it. I couldn't... man, everyone and his neighbor had your sister, man." Abe grinned, eyes meeting his finally, Abe looking a little dazed.

"Abe." He arched an eyebrow, shook his head. "Shut up and kiss me, man, because ew."

Just. Ew.

Chapter 3

"Hi, James." Abe cradled his cell in one hand as he turned down the street to Ty's office. "Is he busy?"

"Busy? Who knows, but he pulled something at the gym last night and is being evil." James sounded flustered as all fuck, but somehow tickled at the same time. "Are you coming to save me?"

"I am, honey." Damn, that would put a damper on things. Still, Abe was adaptable. He would just adjust his plans from "take me to your casbah and feed me grapes" to "let me take you home and order you take out."

"I'm almost there. I just wanted to test the water."

"Bubbly." James chuckled. "You want coffee? Want me to meet you downstairs?"

"No, let's not look like we're conspiring. But I wouldn't mind some ice water. It's hot as all hell."

If Tiny was already in a bad way, it wouldn't do to let him think Abe and James were making nice.

"You got it, Abe. Come on up." The flowers in the front were starting to wilt from the heat; poor little bedding plants weren't meant for this heat.

He trotted up the stairs, passing Mrs. Pomeranian and nodding at her. He wondered if she just wandered up and down the stairs for exercise. The office was like a meat locker when he went in, cold air making his nipples draw up.

"Hey, James. Good air conditioner."

"Abe, darling. Contrary to Jefferson's opinion, sweat? Is *not* attractive." A glass of ice water with a twist of lime was handed to him. James was dressed in lavender silk. Lavender. Silk. Good lord. "Besides, that black he wears? Holds in heat."

Made his own jeans and t-shirt feel underdressed and grubby. But he wouldn't be caught dead in that. "Well it gave me nipplitis. Shall I beard the lion?"

"Oh, that sounds like it would be fun to watch." James winked, handed him a bottle of Excedrin. "He won't take stronger than this, but if you can get two in him?"

"I'll try." James really was a doll. A flaming, eccentrically dressed doll. Shaking the bottle, Abe headed right in without knocking, figuring on the element of surprise.

Ty was stretched out on the floor, black from head to toe, legs propped up on the side of the desk.

"Hey. You look rough around the edges, man." Maybe he needed a bottle of oil of wintergreen and a heating pad.

Ty jumped, eyes flying open. "Oh, shit. Abe. Man. Hey."

"You gonna make it?" He squatted down next to Ty on the floor, stroking a finger over Ty's lips.

"Yeah. Pulled my hamstring last night like a fucking moron." The words were pissy, but that tongue flicked out, tasting his finger.

"You get the urge to work that hard, Tiny, you know where I live." He pinched Ty's chin and bent to take a kiss before he got up to poke his head out the door. "James? Could you get me a glass of water?"

"Sure, darling. Give me two shakes."

Ty sat up, rolling up slowly. "Did you come by for business, Abe? I heard Mrs. Garrick invited you to give a presentation."

"She did. Go me. Hell, go you." He grinned as James brought him ice water, then closed the door on that long, curious nose. "But actually I came by to kidnap you and take you to your place to order Jade Garden foo and hot and sour soup."

"Hot and sour soup..." Ty actually licked his lips. "Their soup is fabulous. And the cheese rangoon..."

"Yep. And the gravy they put on the egg foo young? Yeah, baby." That was just so fucking hot, how Ty loved taste and texture and shit. "Here, take these."

He handed over two Excedrin and the water.

"Oh, I don't need them." Yeah, right. Ty sure took them quick enough, took his hand too, accepting his help up.

"I know. But I need you softened up if we're gonna be able to canoodle." God, he loved that word. His Grandma had always used it. "So what were you taking out on the weights?"

"Taking out? Nothing. My workout partner, Dave? Decided it was time to up the weights on the curls, but jumped me twenty pounds instead of ten. I managed some reps, but the damned leg just gave out."

"Well, no wonder. You got to be careful, Ty." He still had the urge to call Ty "Tiny," but he let it pass more often than not. It was easier.

"Yeah. Now we just have to figure out whether to back down ten pounds or just do slower reps..." Ty walked around the desk with a little hop-step, hop-step. "Let me see if anything's on the schedule."

"Oh, I'm sure James can clear it." Abe leaned against the desk, foot swinging as he contemplated the fallen warrior. It was a good look for Ty.

"James? Is a taskmaster." Ty grinned, tapping on the little laptop, peering through those little glasses. "Snaps that whip and expects the world to jump."

"Somehow the idea of James with a whip scares me beyond anything I've ever faced." Lord. Shudder to think. "Blinky wants to know when you're coming back out. I gave him a bath for you."

"Oh, I bet he looks good. Bli... I did not name that dog. That is not my dog."

"Oh, well. He just likes you is all." That dog was gonna go home with Tiny sometime soon. At least every once in awhile. Sheila needed someone to herd occasionally. "So? Can you let me feed you?"

"Yeah. I'm not interested in going to the Chamber meet and greet." Those eyes just rolled. "I might hurt someone."

"Or yourself. Come on, baby. Let's go." He wanted to spend more time with Ty so bad it kinda hurt. It scared the fuck out of him, but there it was, and Abe just wasn't much on self denial. "Hell, I can even have James call in our order so it gets to your place not long after we do."

"Excellent." He got a smile, Ty's fingers sliding on his arm, leaving goosebumps behind. "Come on, let's blow this popsicle stand."

Ty headed to the door, eyes finding James. "Take tomorrow off, yeah?"

James grinned. "Are you taking a day off, darling?"

"Shut up, James. Go home. Fuck your dancer."

Lord, that made James' face light up. "And call the Jade Garden, will you? Have them deliver shrimp fried rice, rangoons, egg foo young, hot and sour soup and uh... does he like Peking dumplings?"

"He does, but he'll steal the steamed rice and the soup and mostly eat that."

"He is right here, James."

James snorted. "Yes, and he's being a grump."

"All right, children." He grinned at James. "Dumplings then. Come on, Tiny. Let's get you home and in a nice bath."

"Tiny?" James' eyes went wide. "You call him Tiny and you're still *alive*?"

"Nope. I'm just an animated zombie. He ripped my heart out of my chest the first time I said it, *darling*." Abe hustled past James, holding out an arm for Ty. "Come on, before he gets me really going."

Ty was laughing good and hard, leaning on him a little bit on the way down the stairs. "Animated zombie? Good lord."

"Hey, it worked." They made it to his truck safe and sound, and he headed right for Ty's apartment building, wanting to get Ty mostly naked and that leg up. It was hot enough to fry an egg on the hood of his truck.

"Man, this is the hottest damned summer. The apartment should be nice and cool, though."

"Yeah. It's been killer." The parking gods favored him again, giving him a place right out in front of Ty's. "But we can always put a little ice in the bathtub..."

"Oh, yeah. It's big enough for two." Ty grabbed the elevator keys. "So's the bed."

"This is a good thing."

Maybe Ty wasn't as hurt as he thought. Mmm. Sweat. Rolling down Ty's throat. What was the question again?

"Upstairs. Air conditioning." Ty's fingers just brushed his thigh where the ink was.

"Right. Focus, huh?" Laughing, he put an arm around Ty's waist and got them in the elevator and going up. That was private enough to sneak a kiss. Fuck, it was amazing how good it was between them, so fast.

Ty's tongue was like a fucking flame, pushing into his lips and tasting him. Oh, damn.

The door dinged and they broke the kiss, both of them breathing a little heavily. Okay, a lot. "Damn."

"Uh huh." Ty nodded, hit the open door button as the ding sounded again. "Inside."

"Right." In. They couldn't get too much going on. The food would be there... oh. Kisses like lightning. Like he was a cottonwood that stood tall enough to get hit first. Abe kissed Ty so good, hands cupping his ass, even as Ty went back to his thigh, tracing the pattern of his tat without even seeing it. And how fucking sexy was that?

Deep sounds were pushed right into his lips, Ty close and hot and spicy-smelling, the scent of sex just starting to take that over.

Fuck, yeah. Abe turned them, pushing them up against the wall inside the door so he could get more leverage, rubbing and pressing. He wanted... well, he wanted all sorts of shit they probably didn't have time for.

Ty's hand slid up, cupped his cock and started stroking, right through his jeans, thumb bumping the tip.

"Yeah. Oh, damn, Ty. Yeah." He spread, letting Ty have more of him, bracing himself. His lips slid down Ty's throat, down to Ty's collar, where he nudged the fabric aside and latched on, sucking hard.

"Fuck. Fuck me, that's hot." Those thick fingers worked at his cock, the denim and cotton fixin' to rub him raw, the burn sweet.

All he could do was keep working it, keep biting and sucking and licking as his brain shorted out with every push of Ty's hand. His cock. God, it was just gonna explode and all he could do was work the muscles of Ty's ass, slipping down between to tease the seam of Ty's jeans against his balls.

Ty grunted, just went and jerked against him, ass cheeks clenching against his hand. Oh, that was fine.

"Yeah. Like... like that." Fuck if he wasn't gasping, just begging with his hips and his mouth and his everything. Abe finally got one of his hands to move, so he could latch onto Ty's front, squeezing.

"Uh huh." Ty nodded, teeth sliding over his shoulder, just scraping.

That was it. Abe lost the last braincell that could think and went with the physical, humping and rubbing and stroking and biting until he grunted, eyes going wide. He shot right in his jeans. Lord... not since college.

The way Ty was shuddering and heavy against him? He wasn't alone there either. Damn.

"That was a hell of an appetizer, Tiny." Shit, he hadn't even meant to call Ty that this time. He just couldn't think.

Ty snorted, goosed him. "Be good, Linc."

"Linc?" Abe blinked, trying to get his mind moving again, just feeling too good to care.

"As in Abraham Lincoln?" Ty grinned. "Let's go in."

"Good lord." He laughed out loud. "Does that mean I get to call you Tim?"

"Not a chance, man. Not a fucking chance."

They made it inside. Finally. And Abe was still laughing, just enjoying the heck out of it. "Why don't you get a hot bath going? I'll clean up a little, wait for the food, we can do the whole decadent thing."

"Oh, that sounds like a plan." Ty grinned over. "My tub's big enough for two."

"Perfect." Had to love a man who had priorities. The tub filled while he went to the kitchen and cleaned up the swamp in his jeans. He got plates. Glasses. Stainless steel fucking chopsticks.

He could hear Ty whistling as the water ran, the sound echoing in the apartment, sounding out of place and odd.

The place was just... sterile. And Ty so wasn't. The little buzzer beeped and Abe dug out some cash, heading to get the food. God, he was starving.

He got the bags and shit into the bathroom and got one of those sights a man could fantasize to forever. Ty was in the tub, bubbles up to his nipples, long arms stretched up above that close-cropped head, suds just slip-sliding down.

The little wire glasses usually perched on Ty's nose sat on the sink, and the clothes had been whisked away, no doubt tucked neatly away in the hamper.

"You got a little table or tray?"

"Yeah. There's a TV tray in the linen cabinet." Ty grinned, nodded as he sat up. "For when I read in the tub."

"Cool." Captain organization. The tray was just the right size, and Abe got the food set up, really looking forward to the meal. "Make room, baby. I want in."

"Mmmm..." That sound? Pure distilled sex. Shit, you'd never think something that hungry could come from that throat.

He knew better these days, though. He surely did. He yanked the table right up and got in with Ty, legs sliding along Ty's, just feeling the man up for sure.

"Rangoon?"

"Oh, yeah." Ty slid closer, skin slick, lips open to take a bite.

He popped the bit between Ty's lips, leaning to lick off a crumb as he tweaked Ty's left nipple. "Mmmm. Nice."

"You be good to those." Ty's muscles rippled, jerked, as a bit of egg roll was held to his lips.

The roll was crispy, soft on the inside and just right. The nipple? Tightened right up and looked tasty too. They shared a dumpling, half and half, then a kiss.

A man could get used to this.

Sweet and sour sauce was brushed on his bottom lip and licked off, with short, quick laps. Oh,

sensual bastard. The marble tiles of the bathroom were steaming up, the bubbles popping between them.

Hot. So good. The rice was a little harder to manage than the rest of the stuff, but they did it, feeding each other with their fingers, licking the residue off.

"This was the best fucking idea, Abe." Each bite got farther and farther between as the kisses got longer, deeper.

"You know it, Ty." Fucking wonderful. Just relaxing, jonesing on the water and the food and each other. Yeah. His hands slid on Ty's skin, wet and hot, just touching every bit he could reach.

Those muscles were something else, all draped with that wet, hot skin. Ty moved with every touch, shifting, humming low.

He just couldn't get over it. It was like a feast that the Chinese food couldn't even touch. They'd have leftovers later. If they could keep from sloshing.

Abe pushed the tray away, making sure everything was out of range before diving back in to kiss Ty like a starving man.

"Mmhmm..." Ty slid closer, legs sliding around his waist, cocks nudging each other.

"Yeah. Oh, yeah. God, Ty." He rubbed, reaching down to grab their pricks and rub them together, just jonesing on it. That slick, hot skin was so smooth, so good, contrasting sharply with the rough hair crowning it, sprinkled over Ty's thighs.

Ty's fingers found his nipples, sliding and stroking before giving each one a good tug, making him jerk and send the water splashing.

Shivering at the sensation that ran down his spine, Abe groaned into a new kiss, biting at Ty's lips. Fuck, that was hot as hell. No one had ever given his damned nipples any attention.

He rubbed his thumb along the little bit of scar tissue that used to be a piercing in Ty's cock. Just nudging it made Ty grunt, those fingers working his nipples harder and sending jolts down his belly to settle in his balls.

Just. Damn. Just fucking *knowing* there used to be something there? Abe thought he was gonna lose it for sure. He stroked them harder, not even able to form words anymore, just grunting.

Ty pushed closer, tongue just fucking his lips, those muscles hard and slick against him, hips riding him like he was that damned old bull in Mr. Frederick's pasture.

Riding him. His eyes rolled at the thought of actually fucking Ty. Right. He'd have to put that on the to-do list. Right after coming like a fucking ton of bricks, which was what he did, embarrassingly, just like that.

"Oh. Fuck. Pretty." Ty's eyes rolled, teeth testing his bottom lip, tugging a little as that cock fucked his hand.

Abe squeezed, fighting to keep his eyes open to watch Ty, wanting to see it when he did come, wanting to see that face. He thumbed the tip of that cock again, pressing into the slit, and let Ty chew on him, bruise the fuck out of him.

It was too fucking hot when Ty lost it, just giving it right on up with a deep, low cry.

He kissed deep and lazy, listening to the water slow down around them. He stroked the back of Ty's neck with his free hand, his other hand still moving a little on their cocks.

"Mmmm..." Damn, the man had long eyelashes, just as brown as a nut but right at the tip going a little red. "Good supper."

"Uh huh." Abe chuckled, blinking at the drowsies that tried to take over. "I can't wait to see what you do for dessert."

Ty chuckled, shifted, wincing just a little. "Nap first? Then we can do something with chocolate."

"Mmm, yeah. Or more Chinese." He rinsed off, kissing Ty one more time, because who wouldn't, before letting Ty float away so he could get out of the tub and pack the food up.

Ty slipped out of the tub, hopping over to find two huge, soft towels. Abe got one wrapped around his waist, Ty licking the water off his shoulder.

Grinning, Abe turned and wrapped his arms around Ty's neck, rubbing all up on those hot muscles. "Horny bastard."

"You got a point, redneck?" Ty grinned, the corners of his eyes wrinkling up. Wasn't noticeable with the glasses on.

"Nope. Just an observation." Fucking sexy horny bastard. "Help me get this shit put away and we can go to bed."

"Sounds like a plan." Ty nodded, grabbed his glasses and two containers, naked ass wiggling just so with the little limp.

Woo. They got it all done, working well together, and he almost missed the fighting, but only almost. They'd tie it up again soon enough. For now he could follow that amazing ass with that wild tat rising above it right to Ty's big bed, and get him a double handful of that butt along with his nap.

A man couldn't ask for much more than that.

Ty slept a little, but the big bed was too hard and it wasn't right and hell, Abe was sleeping hard, so he just hauled his butt up to the studio for a little work.

He got settled in his chair, still bare-assed naked, in front of the most beautiful drafting table on Earth. There was a mostly done sketch of Abe on it, this one a close up of the man's face. A click of the remote and the music started up. Another click and the curtains opened to show the night sky, the huge mass of plants on the balcony.

It wasn't long before he was lost in it, singing and drawing, sore leg propped up on the edge of his papasan. He stretched, opened the chifforobe to grab another pencil.

Who knew how long he worked before the door to the studio opened and Abe's head, which was getting shaggy again, popped through.

"Ha! The door isn't locked after all."

He blinked, mouth opened like a fish -- he just *knew* it was. "But the door was *shut*, asshole. Where you raised in a barn?"

Christ, he sounded like Momma.

"God, you sound like my Grandma Lyons." Abe came right on in, stopping just far enough away that he couldn't see what Ty was working on. "I did bring a peace offering."

Oh. Abe had been rummaging in the freezer. He had two ice cream sundaes.

"Oh..." Yum. His belly rumbled loud enough to hear, make Abe grin wider. "Well, maybe I won't kill you."

"Banana split even. Your bananas looked like they needed to be used up. Does that mean I can come over?" Abe motioned at the papasan.

Well, shit. The man was already up there.

And there was ice cream.

"Okay, but no comments on my studio. This place wasn't meant for anyone to see."

No one ever had, either.

"Which is why it looks like it does." That was the only comment, though, Abe wandering over and handing him his ice cream before settling in, looking happy as a pig in shit, and naked as the day he was born. "Oh, man, this is much better than the bed."

He nodded, humming around the bite of banana. That ugly old green thing was the most comfortable chair on Earth. The matching futon with the piles of blankets and pillows was a close-close second.

"You're dripping." Leaning, Abe ran a finger under his lip, catching some ice cream, and pressed it against his mouth.

He opened right on up, not even thinking, just sucking that sweet cream right off.

"Tasty, huh?"

He got another sparkling grin and a wink, Abe shifting back and sighing as he got comfy.

"Not bad at all." He unhooked his drawing and stowed it away to save it from drips, then leaned back in his chair. Mmm. Chocolate.

There was nothing but the clink of spoons on bowls for the longest time. Then Abe set his bowl aside, sitting back and patting his belly. "Perfect."

"Not bad at all." He grinned, shook his head. "Perfect would have been homemade peach. You just can't get good commercial peach ice cream."

"This? Is true." Abe's foot bobbed up and down, just jiggling all sorts of things. "Man, now I'm thinking I ought to get some peaches."

"Uh huh." His eyes were sorta drawn to certain jiggly bits. Pretty-pretty. He could sketch Abe, just like that...

"Yeah, baby. Peaches. Ice cream. We should have hot dogs and shit. At my place though. Your bed is harsh."

Looking at him looking, Abe wiggled a little more.

"I told you, it's an investment." He grabbed a pencil, fingers moving without even thinking while his eyes were eating Abe up. "And you make peach ice cream, I'll be at your beck and call."

"Yeah? Even if I ask you to babysit dogs for a weekend?" Looking fascinated, Abe watched his hands, watched him work.

"I could probably do that. They're good pups." Especially Blinky. Man, that pup was a babydoll. He spent a minute on the line of Abe's thigh, the way those heavy balls rested, left shadows.

"I've got plenty of groceries and all, and I'll only be gone a few days. You could stay at my place if you wanted." Abe's cock started to lift, to grow hard.

"Yeah? When are you taking off?" He licked his lips, moving to sketch that lean, tight belly.

"Next week Tuesday and Wednesday. God only knows why cousin Ellen is having her wedding then, but she is. You remember Ellin Fortin? The horse faced lady? This will be her third husband."

One of Abe's hands dropped to cup that thick cock, rubbing a little.

"Christ, she goes through them at a blinding speed. Watch out for Dawn; she really is knocked up again." His own cock was hard enough to pound nails, but his fingers were busy, getting the sketch finished because, damn. Just. Damn.

"Lord, but she's married right? No worries. Besides, I don't have to be with her to get to you, yeah?" Oh, yeah, Abe's cock had grown to full hardness, going red and hot. Ty could smell him.

"I meant more that she's bitchier than normal. Sort of super-saturated bitch." He got the shoulders, Abe's face, hips shifting on the chair.

"Oh, like hormones and shit." Abe looked dismayed. "Momma says Ellen is pregnant. Fuck, what a nightmare."

"They know what causes that, I hear." He thought he might be in love with the curve of Abe's shoulder.

"Yeah? Imagine that. Too bad my family ain't too bright." Shifting just a little, Abe gave him a hip to love, too, the hipbone jutting out just so.

"Well, given that Dawn seems intent on birthing an entire basketball team, I can't really say much." Oh, fuck. "Mmm... don't move from there for a second."

Abe froze, even his hand stopping, all but the thumb, which rubbed right under the head. Those pretty eyes just watched him, hotter than anything.

"Fuck, you're fine..." He got that pose down, hinting at the papasan, the artwork scattered everywhere. He was damn near panting for it.

"Yeah? You... watching you work is something, baby. You're fucking focused. Makes me hot." Yeah. He could tell. Ty could *see* the way Abe's balls drew up.

He groaned, pencil clattering onto the table as he moved over, ignoring the twinge in his leg as he knelt, tongue tasting those tight little sacs.

"Oh. Oh, fuck, Ty." Spreading wide for him, Abe gave it all up, that sweet cock rubbing his cheek, hand coming up to stroke his hair. "Feels good."

"Tastes better." He nuzzled in, mouth open, tongue sliding and licking, dragging over that velvety, wrinkled skin.

He got a grunt, a jerk, Abe pushing up against his mouth. So damned responsive. Out of the corner of his eye he could see that deep black tattoo, the muscles under it making it move.

He slid his hands under Abe's ass, thumbs working the wrinkled skin behind those balls. Hell, yes.

"Ty. Jesus, Ty." Wriggling, Abe gave up more skin, more everything. The chair creaked but held, and Ty petted him, praised him.

Ty opened wide, took one ball in, sucking so carefully, moving the fragile flesh with his tongue.

Oh, yeah. So good. Ty just moaned, and he could feel the tension in every muscle, feel how hard Abe had to work not to thrash around. And damned if the man wasn't just *babbling*.

He hummed, hips rocking and sort of fucking the air. Come on, now. So fucking fine.

"Ty. Gonna... I need. God." When he looked up Abe looked drugged, eyelids heavy, lips still swollen from earlier, cheeks red. "I'm gonna come, baby."

He lifted his head, thumbs pressing against that tight little hole. He wanted a taste. Shit, he never wanted to be stupid. Something about this man made him fucking crazed. "Come on. Need to see."

Then he got that poor neglected ball, wrapped his lips right around it.

"Oh, fuck!" He got to see, smell and feel it as Abe let go, shooting so hard the whole chair shook. Abe's moan vibrated all the way down his throat.

He groaned, forehead on Abe's thigh, one hand dropping to pull off, fingers just squeezing.

"No. Mine. Let me..." Abe slid down out of the chair beside him, a little uncoordinated, but right there enough to grab Ty's cock and start stroking. "You. God, Ty. Hot."

He arched, every fucking muscle vibrating it was so tight. "Oh. Oh, fuck. Just like that. Abe. Fuck."

The top of his head was gonna come right off.

"Yeah. Yeah. God, I can't wait to suck you, baby. Come on." Those fingers worked him mercilessly, the other hand reaching to cup his balls.

Everything went white hot and fuzzy, his whole fucking soul pouring out as he came, Abe's name just echoing.

Abe pulled him close, leaning both of them up against the papasan, just sort of breathing deep and hard.

He didn't even have enough focus for a "damn." He just cuddled in, heart going ninety to nothing.

"I like your studio, Tiny," Abe said after a bit. "It's you all over."

If he wasn't melted and could move and thought Abe had a single fucking brain cell left, he'd pinch that fine ass. "No one's ever been up here but you, Linc."

Abe drew back to look at him a minute, the weirdest expression on his face. Then the grin dawned.

"Yeah? Well, at least I brought ice cream."

"And bananas. It was the bananas that sealed the deal."

Abe hooted, patting his ass. "Somehow I just knew you were a banana man."

"Be good or I'll banish you to sleep in the investment bed." He just resisted the urge to blow a raspberry. Just.

"Man, anything but that. I vote for the futon. And for us getting some damned condoms."

He nodded. Yeah. The longer he squatted there, the more he thought he might never move again. "The futon's almost as good as the papasan."

"Well, come on then, Tiny. Let's get comfy. We still have leftover Chinese for when we wake up again." Abe just... moved him. Those lean muscles were deceptive as hell.

"Not Tiny, Linc. You must've noticed." He moaned as they hit the soft pile of covers and pillows. "Oh... Comfy."

It wasn't Abe's big old bed, but it was decadent and just right.

"Trust me, Ty." Abe rubbed the muscles in his leg, the motion soothing him right down. "I noticed."

Oh, right there. He nodded, scooted closer, willing to agree to damn near anything. He was as limp as an overcooked noodle in leftover soup.

"Tight." Digging deep, Abe gave him a massage that left him feeling as melted as coming had a few minutes ago. Only with less muscle pain. Damned nice.

"Oh. Might have to keep you." His head just rolled, sleep pulling him hard.

"I'll be around, Ty." Nuzzling right up, Abe cuddled, going lax beside him. "Even when you don't want me to."

Something about that last bit should raise some alarms inside him; he **knew** it should.

But he was warm. Comfy. Home.

Way closer to asleep than awake.

Ty figured he'd worry about it later. He pulled a comforter over them. Way later.

Chapter 4

Goddamn. He should never go back home. Really. His momma, it was good to see. It really was. But his old buddies? Lord, they'd been all over him about still being single, and the old ladies had been even worse.

Ty's sister Dawn had caught up with him, too, big as a house and telling him to say hi to Ty when she found out they lived in the same town. Like he would just run into Ty on the street.

Small town folks.

He let himself into the house, whistling for Sheila, hoping Ty had been out to spend some time as well as feed, or he'd be finding dead mice and shit all over the house and yard. Sheila needed to work.

Sheila came bounding up, coat just shining, the retriever at her heels. The retriever had a big red collar on him, tags jingling, looking fine, all cleaned and brushed.

"Well, well. Look at you all. Spiffy as anything." He just dropped the suitcase and knelt down, needing some doggie loving. Sheila liked to lick him to death, but he made sure he gave the golden some sugar too, just chuckling at the tag.

"Blinky, huh? Well it suits you."

That big ole tongue lolled out, then both dogs took to barking up a storm at the sound of a car roaring into the drive, that souped-up V8 of Ty's just purring.

"Abandoned for the one who brings the food," he murmured, before heading out to get a look at the Mustang. Lord, what a pretty baby. He might just be jealous.

He waved as Ty hopped out. "Well, hey, Tiny. Come to welcome me home?"

Those eyes just rolled behind those little glasses, Ty looking fine in a black shirt tight enough every muscle showed. "I wasn't sure if you'd get home in time to feed them, so I figured I should, Abie."

A bag of something was lifted from the backseat, both dogs wagging ninety to nothing.

"Abie? What happened to Linc?" Oh, yeah. Abe warmed to the battle. He needed it after a half a week of smiling until his fucking cheeks hurt.

"Linc's a term of endearment. Abie's a direct response to Tiny. Open the gate?" Two treats were fished out for the beasts, tossed out away from the fence.

"You bet." He got the gate wrangled, letting the dogs have their fill of loving before shooting off

his next salvo. "Endearment? That sounds promising, baby. Maybe I should have told Dawn we were seeing each other."

"She wouldn't have believed you. From her phone call, you were drooling down her tits. Not only that, she's convinced all gay men either fuck drag queens or leather daddies." He got handed the bag, one of Ty's eyebrows arched. "Here's some dog food and bread and shit. Yours went moldy."

"Oh, now, I could just see you in some black leather, Tiny." He grabbed the bag and pulled before Ty could let go, bringing Ty close enough to kiss. "Sorry, man. I'm in a foul mood from playing nice."

"Well then, I'll have to kick your ass for you." Ty's hand cupped his ass, squeezed good and firm. "You want a ride in my girl before I go pump iron?"

"Oh, hell, yes. Let's feed the mutts and go for a joy ride." God, just to have a little speed. A little open road.

He got a grin, a nod, heading around to dump old water from their dish and refill. "Did everyone get married off okay? No shotguns?"

"No shotguns. Pregnant bride. But Dawn's tits? Eclipsed that so well that hardly anyone noticed. A man could lose an arm in there, Ty." He filled the food bowls with the stuff Ty'd brought and tossed the bread inside as the pups slobbered and chomped.

"Ew." Ty shuddered visibly, nose wrinkling. Blinky and Sheila got a pat, then those eyes caught him. "Come on, man. Let's go. I got a full tank of gas."

"And I got an urge to run." He scratched ears as he went, too, but the dogs were eating, and hardly noticed them slipping out the gate. "Pretty lady you got here."

"Isn't she? Oh, man, you should've seen her when I got her. Destroyed and unloved and just sad. Took me twelve years to get her put together." One hand slid over a fender, Ty all lit up and focused, like he got when he was drawing.

Fucking hot. "She's glorious. And she sounds like she runs like a fuck-starved jackrabbit."

"You know it." Ty slid in, the interior was all leather, deep red to match the paint job. The windows were down already, the engine revving by the time Abe got settled. "Pick a direction."

"South. Maybe southwest." Away from their hometown. Far away. God, that had been depressing. "You know what was worst? Half those people never, ever change."

Ty nodded. "I know. I don't go back there."

The Mustang ate up the road, the wind blowing, the hot air hitting his face, the sun just starting to set.

"Yeah. I don't know what possessed me." Okay, he did. But next time his Momma could come visit him. He could show her all sorts of new shit. He just sat back, really enjoying the air and the road flashing by and Ty in that tiny t-shirt. "You know that shirt makes you look fucking edible, baby."

Ty glanced over, cheeks going pink. Even better than that, that belly rippled, nipples just starting to go tight. "They say black is coming back in style."

"It's not the color. It's the cut." Abe spread his legs a little, giving his cock some room. Fight or fuck, that was him. "Shows off every hard-earned ripple, Ty."

"You should see the white one." Ty took a corner, the car handling the turn like a dream.

That would make him purely drool. "Yeah. The next time you wash your car? Call me. White, wet t-shirt... Damn."

Ty chuckled. "I'll even wear the cut-offs, just for you, but you gotta promise to wear those thin jeans."

"Oh, I'll wear whatever you want, man." Or nothing. He could get behind that. God, it felt good to be on the road, but with no dreaded destination. "I'm glad you dropped by."

"Well, I wasn't sure when you'd get in, you know?" One hand reached over, just ghosted over his thigh.

Oh, ho. Abe just grinned, grabbing that hand loosely so Ty could take it back to shift if he needed, playing with Ty's fingers. "Yeah. I was starting to think I was lost there forever."

"Well, Christ, we can't have that. I'd've had to come fetch your ass."

"Yeah?" He was feeling like a new man, for sure. A wanted man. "That might make it worth going back there some day, baby. Maybe."

Or maybe not.

"Yeah." Ty opened her up, and they fucking flew, the road just dissolving under them.

He just hooted, feeling the wind and the speed. Hoo yeah!

They drove for an hour, easy, not talking, just being. It was dark when Ty pulled into a little restaurant, looked over. "Hungry?"

"Yeah. Starving. I've had nothing but macaroni and cheese and ham for, oh, two days." Good stuff, but when that was all you had? Eurgh. He patted Ty's thigh, fingers lingering a little. Just a little.

"This place is quiet, good. Pasta and such. I did the interior paintings in college."

"No shit?" Well, that made it worth checking the place out even if the food was shit. He was freaking obsessed with Tiny, that was for sure, wanting to know all he could about him. "Sounds like a plan, then. I'll trust your taste."

"Yeah. They have a cheesecake to die for." They hopped out and Ty opened the door, a low cry sounding as they stepped in.

A round, short little bundle of energy bustled across the restaurant. "Ty! Pappa, look! Ty came to see us."

"Evening, Vikki." The older woman was given a hug, a kiss on the top of the head. "How's the family?"

The little lady babbled a bit, and Abe just grinned on, bemused as hell. That was way more the Ty he expected. Warm. Personable. Grinning.

"Vikki, love? This is my friend Abe. Abe, this is Vikki Laurent, and somewhere around here is her good-for-nothing husband, Paulie."

"I'll show you good-for-nothing, you uppity bastard!" The guy coming out of the kitchen must have been twelve feet tall, broad as a barn, cleaver in hand. Ty was grabbed, lifted off the floor and hugged tight. "Where've you been, boy? You make Mama Vikki worry."

"Pappa! You'll hurt yourself. Or Ty. Or both."

Abe chuckled, loving the picture that made. "Pleased to meet you, Vikki." He gave the hand she held out to him a courtly kiss. "Ty told me the food was amazing here, but he didn't tell me there was such a pretty lady."

"Oh, you? Get cheesecake." She grinned, shook her head. "Pappa, put the boy down and fix them both some food."

He chuckled, shook hands with the big guy as he set Ty down. "Nice to meet you, Paulie."

"Welcome, welcome. I know what Ty wants. Are you a scampi fan? Veal parm? Portobello ravioli?"

The man had hands like shovels, the dark eyes warm, happy. It was like they knew somebody completely different from black-robot Jefferson.

Thank God for that. "Oh, yes, sir, I like them all. But you know what really warms my heart? Is chicken parmesan. I'd eat it every night, I had a chance."

"You got it. Mama, get the boys some wine and a salad. The bread has another few minutes."

Ty grinned as they sat, leaning back in the chair and pointing to the murals covering the walls.

One was a vineyard, another was a church, a bridal party pouring out. There was a garden, a wine cellar, a kitchen with a much younger Paulie tossing pizza dough.

"Those are how I got through my sophomore year."

They were just full of life, colorful, so perfect for the ambiance of the place. Abe shook his head. "You've got talent, Ty. You really do. I'm damned impressed."

"Thanks. These were back when I was going to be an artist when I grew up and thought starving sounded entertaining." Ty winked. "Not that Paulie and Vikki would have let me starve."

"No, they look like the kind of folks who would take you under their wing." It was just fascinating. It was like the little lines around Ty's mouth smoothed out a little each minute that they sat there. Even more when they both got a glass of strong red wine.

"They're good people. I need to come out more often." The salads were served, Vikki patting Ty easily, beaming at them both like a mother hen.

"Any time, Ty. You come, bring your friend. Paulie loves to see you."

He waited until she bustled off before clinking his glass against Ty's. "Thanks, baby. I needed this real bad. That trip was like a fucking nightmare."

Ty smiled, nodded. "Sometimes you just gotta drive, you know? You just have to go somewhere... easy."

"Yeah. And." Well, hell, he was getting all mushy. But it was too cool that Ty shared this. With him. "And it's cool to see some of your art. Man, that bread looks like heaven."

Ty blushed, but grinned at him, handing over the butter. They managed to feast, sharing the bottle of wine, laughing and shitting around. Then the plates came out, overflowing with pasta and sauce. His chicken parm was enough to feed three and Ty was moaning over something with pasta and olive and chunks of cheese.

"Holy shit, this is. Wow. I'll eat on this for days." Because he wanted cheesecake. Damn sure he did.

The first bite? Had him groaning. "Oh. Oh, Ty. This is fantastic."

"Uh huh..." Ty offered him a forkful of the pasta, eyes a little glazed. "Try this."

He tried it... Lord. "What is this? I think I'm in love."

"Pasta rustica, he calls it. It's an orgasm on a plate."

"No shit." Mmm. Orgasms. Ty. His cheeks heated, and he tapped the toe of Ty's shoe with his, crunching into another bite of chicken. Fuck, yeah.

"There's cappuccino cheesecake tonight, boys. Leave room. More wine?" Vikki lifted the near empty bottle.

Ty shook his head. "Water, please? I have to drive."

"I'll go with some water, too, if you'll bring me coffee with dessert, Miss Vikki." He smiled, just loving how happy that woman was. "And you can tell Paulie I can die a happy man. Yessir."

"Oh, he'll be tickled. I'll get you water and let him know."

Ty chuckled, shook his head. "Their son is a schoolteacher in Arkansas. Their daughter died in a car accident about three-four months after I met them. They sort of adopted me."

"Well, if you gotta have a second family you oughta have one who can cook." Damn. Just, damn. He kicked off his shoe and walked his toes over Ty's ankle.

Oh, that got him another shiver, those nipples going tight, hard.

"Flirt."

"Oh, no. I have intent. Trust me."

Maybe the wine had gone to his head or something. But yeah. He wanted. Or hell, maybe it was the peppers in the sauce, which was just right. He wondered if he would survive the cheesecake.

He got a nice long look over those glasses, Ty licking sauce off those pretty lips. "Intent? That sounds promising."

"Mmmm." Sauce on bread. Was there anything better? "It should. You should see me carry through on the promise when we get back to my place. My bed is so much more comfy than yours."

"Investment, remember? I sleep on the papasan."

"Uh huh. I like the futon. Blinky ought to really enjoy sleeping there." He hid his grin in his salad, just trying not to choke.

"Blin... Oh, no. He's not my dog, man. He's just a good dog." Ty suddenly turned bright red. "Oh, and uh. There might be two matching bandanas in the house for them. The dogs. From when they got a good grooming."

"Thanks for that. They look great." Abe just winked, tip-toeing up Ty's calf. "I guess Blinky can stay with me. Sheila would get bored. But you need to come visit often."

"Yeah? I might be able to do that." Ty's leg shifted, ass sliding on the chair.

"Oh, I bet you can. You're a resourceful guy." Shit, that was pretty. Spots of color on Ty's cheeks. A little hitch in the breathing. Abe's cock twitched, started pressing his zipper.

"Is that what we're calling it now? Resourceful?" Ty's voice had gone all husky, low.

"Well, that sounds better than desperate and needy." Which was where he was going. Abe shifted, trying to find a comfortable spot. It was hard, because well. It was hard.

Ty's laugh just rang out, surprised and sexy and just flat-out honest.

"Oh, now that sounds like it's time for dessert." Vikki came back, and Abe blushed, sitting back a bit.

"Yes, ma'am. I need a box for this luscious supper though."

"I'll have Paulie box them up for you." She gathered plates, beaming. "Two cheesecakes and coffees, coming up."

Ty reached out, hugged her waist. "Thanks, beautiful. You take good care of me."

"Well, sure. You should remember that when we don't see you for months and months."

"Oh, how could anyone not come on out here all the time?" Abe grinned, poking Ty's leg. She giggled off, and Abe just nodded after her. "She's a doll."

"She's a wonder and Paulie? Loves her more than life."

"I can see why." It was sure good to see Ty relaxed, happy as fuck, and really good to see someone besides the sweet-cheeked little assistant James to determine who his friends might be. "And if the cheesecake is half as good as the food? They just gained a new regular."

"Oh, man. The cheesecake? Better than anything on Earth but... Well, it's damn fine." Ty chuckled, winked as two slabs of cheesecake were placed before them.

"Good save." He chuckled, just loving the look on Vikki's face. Oh. Oh, damn that cheesecake was... it was a fucking work of art.

"Uh huh. Eat your dessert, Abe. You had intentions."

"Oh, right." Yeah. Grinning, he dug in and polished it off along with the exquisite coffee. He was gonna need a walk. Or something.

Paulie came out of the kitchen, arms full of bags. "I had some odds and ends for your freezer and Mama had an extra cheesecake and..."

"Oh, now. You don't have to..."

"Hush. Me and Pappa, we want to."

Ty was bright red, shaking his head. "I..."

Abe laughed right out loud. "You're not gonna win this one, T... Ty. Just give up with grace. Vikki, I'll make sure he eats it."

"Oh, we like him, Ty. We like him very much." Vikki came around, kissed him on the cheek. "This one? Can come back anytime."

He wondered if that meant Ty had brought others, and how many. He'd ask on the way home. No sense starting something in front of the nice lady. "I'll be back for sure, lady, for the food and your company."

They got piled up with food and hugs, Ty slipping a handful of bills in the tip jar. The night had cooled off, the stars bright and shining. "You ready to go, Abe?"

"I am. This was the best idea." They bumped hips on the way out, and he may have copped a feel. Okay, he did. Happily. "So who all else have you brought?"

"Huh? Brought? You mean here to meet them?" Ty opened the trunk and they put the food in. "James has come out a couple times. John once -- that was disastrous. There was a guy a long time ago; Vikki didn't like him."

"From college? Or when you were first starting up the ladder?" It wasn't really important. Really. But he wanted to know.

"Little of both, sort of. It's complicated and sorta fucked up. He was uh... he was..." Ty started the car. "I should have listened to Vikki."

"She seems like a great lady." And with good taste if he did say so himself. "You all right to drive? With the wine?"

"Oh, yeah. Hell, the food more than absorbed that." They headed out, the sky just fucking huge.

He spread his arms and twirled in the night before he got in. Felt good. Free.

"Better now?" Ty gave him a grin. "Still need me to kick your ass?"

"Nah. We can do other things with it." A thought occurred to him, and he grinned back. "Did you get us condoms?"

Ty's lips twisted, fighting that grin. "You'd know if you'd looked in the bag."

Lord, lord. It was good to be back from hell, and the trip out to eat had been nice.

But now he couldn't wait to get home.

"Jefferson! Darling! We're going to be late!" James walked into his office, white tuxedo shirt pristine, three bowties hanging over the thin arm -- red, aqua and gay-pride-parade. "Which tie do you think I shou... you're not wearing black, are you?"

"Of course I am, and, no, we're not, and where the fuck did you find that tie?" He found his own tie -- black, thank you -- and shook his head. "Wear the red, James."

"It's better than eternal night, Jefferson. You're like Night Of the Living Dead creepy."

"Don't be a bitch, James."

"Advance your color palette, darling."

He looked over, arched an eyebrow. Irritating little fucker. "I can't pull baby pink off like you, James."

"Oh, I don't know. Maybe if you mixed it with charcoal gray." Man, his office was like Grand Central, Abe wandering in looking... well, looking eye-popping in a fucking tux.

"Hey, there. Look at you." He grinned, just eating up those long, lean lines. "Pure class."

"You mean you approve?" Abe managed to look both shocked and amused as he held his arms out and twirled.

He looked the man over, first just admiring, then professionally. "You clean up well. Tonight you'll be the belle of the ball."

"Well, if I'd known that I would have brought my fan and my gloves." Winking, Abe pinched James' ass as he wandered by toward the mirror. "You? Are looking edible, Tiny."

He finished tying his tie, going all hot and melty. "Watch it, Abie, or I'll feed you to John tonight."

"Oh, fuck, he's gonna be out there like a barracuda anyway." Abe came over and straightened his tie, so close he could see that Abe had gotten a professional shave. "This is one all black and white look I like on you."

"Thank you." Oh, fuck. Abe smelled good, all male and sex and... Damn.

"Don't jump him, darling. You're showing him off tonight; he'll get mussed."

"Oh. Mussed could be good." Leaning a little, Abe gave him a kiss, right on the corner of his mouth. Then he backed off. "I think I like the aqua, James."

Oh, little shit. "Just don't wear the rainbows."

"Are you suggesting I'd cause problems, darling?"

"I'm suggesting that the queening needs to tone down a touch, James. This is not the time for to channel Liberace."

Play was all and good. This? Was business.

"The aqua goes better with your eyes, James." Abe nodded at him though, eyes serious. "So, you think all the ladies you briefed me on will be there?"

"I spoke to three myself this week -- Mrs. Waterhill is very excited. You're sitting with her at the banquet. She's old money, old class. Determined to make the hotel famous. Remember, she's a historian, professionally. Don't talk down to her."

"Right. I'll corral the fake charm. She's not the deaf one, right?"

"Nope. She's brilliant and sharp and she'll like you." He nodded, finding his cufflinks and heading over to straighten James' collar. "Just watch out for John, don't let him corner you to talk business. You've got better things to do tonight."

"God, you're bossy, Jefferson." James winked and goosed him.

Abe hooted. "I like him, you know? Well, gents, we look fab and time's a wastin'. Let's go. I promise not to get wine on my shirt front."

"Who's riding where?" Ty grabbed his keys, his wallet, his card case. "Lucy's in the garage here."

"I've got the truck. There's room for all of us, but James would have to squeeze in the back." Hooking a hand under his arm, Abe drew him out, letting James lock up.

"I am not squeezing *anywhere*." Ty laughed as the little SUV pulled up, James' dancer waving. "My chariot awaits!"

"See you there, man." They got in, waited for James to leave, and then Abe scooted just close enough to touch but not muss and gave him a kiss. "Yeah. Mmm."

"You look amazing, Linc. You excited?"

He wanted to reach out, stroke that tight belly. Later. Maybe later tonight and again tomorrow morning.

"Nervous a little. I want this to go well, you know?" Those eyes shone with excitement, Abe scooting back and throwing the truck into gear. "You got any other clients coming?"

"Three or four, yes. People who need to get together and make nice." And John wanted to discuss selling the agency again, coming to work for him for the PR department. And wasn't that just going to be a fun little talk.

"Yeah? Man, you're a busy guy." He got a shrewd look. "You worried about John?"

Asshole just read his mind.

"Yeah. Some. He and I have known each other a long time, you know?"

And it was fucking hard to say no to the man who taught you everything you knew about your business.

"I know. And he's... a force of nature." Abe look wry for a minute, before grinning over at him. "But if you're worried then that means he'll leave me alone tonight."

"You know it. You'll have your hands full with caviar on crackers and ladies with wrinkly cleavage."

"Oh, ew. That just made a bad, bad image in my head." Whapping him, Abe pulled up at a red light. "So what's the set up? Who do I meet and greet first so no one gets offended? Or do I let them come to me?"

"Let them come. They're looking for you. Remember, all of us know this is business. I mean, it's dressed up like fun? But it's just a big-assed public board meeting."

"Okay." Fingers tapping on the wheel, Abe got them rolling again, hair flopping a little in his eyes. "Man, I hate this shit."

"Just remember that you can escape after coffee and dessert and a dance or two." He? Would be up in John's suite by then, having their little talk.

"You bet. You... uh. You gonna be around then?" There it was with the mind reading again. Or maybe it was wishful thinking.

"If I'm lucky?" He smiled, reached into his jacket pocket for a cardkey, handed it over. "I... Well, there's a room I reserved for the night. Champagne, whirlpool..."

"Oh." He got a sideways look that just burned. Hot as fuck. "Good thing I got a sitter for the pups."

The keycard disappeared into Abe's pocket just as easily, and they pulled into the hotel parking lot, showing the attendant their ticket. "Well, it's showtime, baby. Should I call you Jefferson or Ty?"

"Ty's fine." He smiled over. "Don't be nervous. You'll be a huge hit."

After all, that was what he'd been hired for.

"Yeah. Thanks, Ty. For all of this shit."

"Just think, you survived a manicure, a stylist." He waited, grinned. "James."

"James is a creampuff. You're the tough nut." Lord, Abe's fingers slipped across his ass as he got out of the truck, reminding him of the reward at the end of the night.

"I'm a vicious one. Go on, get yourself a glass of wine and be successful. I have a terrified English professor needing to introduce herself to a patron of the arts."

That smolder was back, just for an instant. "All right. But I *will* see you later. Count on it."

"I will. I'll be there after John's done with me. Save the champagne."

One way or the other -- celebrating or not -- by the end of the evening, they were going to need it.

Chapter 5

The night was fucking endless. The Waterhill woman was sharp as a skinning knife, and she grilled the heck out of him over supper, really testing his knowledge of the history of the hotel and what his plan might be for it. She really gave him the once over on Historical Register regulations, too.

The rest of the ladies fell to his charm, so that wasn't so bad, but John... Lord. John had latched onto him, mainly interrogating him about Ty. Was he professional? Did he do a good job? Did he see a lot of clients around? What about James? Should Ty get rid of him and get someone less flamboyant?"

"If you sent me to him just to have a spy, you can fuck off, John," he'd said, ignoring the way those gray brows lowered over John's aristocratic nose. "I'm pleased with his work."

John had just glowered. "Boy needs to come work for me."

And he'd just grinned. "Tell him, you old fart."

And that was the end of that.

Now he sat waiting for Ty in the hotel room the key went to, looking around at what needed work, what was plastered over and patched. She was still a grand old lady.

Abe undid his tie and let it hang, pushing off his shoes. Damn. He was sick of the tux already.

Ty came in about an hour later, lips tight, tie and collar undone, eyes flashing some. "Hey, Abe. How'd the charming of the ladies go?"

"It went." He sat up, the ceiling watching having made him a little dizzy. "You look like a bear with a sore paw."

"Yeah. I'll cope, though." Ty put his jacket aside, reached for the champagne. "Tell me what all went on."

"Well, Mrs. Waterhill put me through my paces for sure. Mrs. Lomax was right nice and I only had to shout twice. John tried to corner me, but I took your advice and told him I had to mingle."

He gave Ty a look. "He wants you to come join his firm, huh?"

"Yeah. You could say that." Ty's lips went tight, thin, then relaxed. "Mrs. Waterhill was very pleased. I spoke to her during dessert."

The cork was worked free, two glasses filled.

"Yeah? She's a hellacious sharp cookie, baby." He took his glass, holding out a hand. "Come sit a minute, and then we'll get in the bath."

Ty's hand slipped into his, squeezing tight before Ty moved in close. "Hey, Abe. You look fine."

"You do too, baby." He took a kiss, just letting them taste each other and the champagne, not pushing it yet. Other things needed to be pushed first. "You okay?"

"I'll manage, I guess. John gave me a lot to think on." He got a little half smile, a nod. "Glad you're here, yeah? Real glad."

"I am too, Ty." That old son-of-a-bitch. Abe stifled a sigh, setting his champagne aside so he could work shirt studs and cuff links on Ty's clothes.

"That whirlpool looks like heaven."

"You gonna keep them in when you redo the place?"

"Yeah, though I think they can be worked around to make them look better." That was one reason the old ladies' aid wanted the place fixed. When they'd torn up the old rooms to give each one a private bath, they'd cut corners. It was a damned shame.

He bared those muscles, that flat belly, the little curls just visible, leading south.

"God, you're a piece of work, Tiny." All that skin. He traced each little cut of pec and ab, glorying in it, letting those curls catch his fingers.

"Not tiny." Ty leaned back, gave him more skin, gave him free rein to touch.

"Not a bit." He let his fingers dip, press the bulge below Ty's belt. "I just like to tease you."

"Yeah, I know." Those eyes held his. "I want you, Abe. It's been a long night."

"Well, come on then." He got up, shedding clothes. "Let's go get that bath."

"Hell, yes." Ty got undressed and then those hands reached for him, sliding on his skin.

Oh. He arched, turning this way and that to get more touch. He moved right up close and kissed Ty hard, just licking at that fine mouth before he reached up to take off the little glasses.

Ty moaned, hands pushing up over his chest, letting him feel that touch, fingers digging right on in.

He palmed Ty's nipples, pressing against them, dancing them back toward the tub. "You. Damn. Hot."

"Yeah. You look... Shit, Linc. Could eat you right up."

"Well, come and get me then." He really did want that whirlpool bath, so he turned and went the rest of the way, ass wiggling to entice Ty along.

Ty followed right behind, fingers digging into his ass, teeth threatening his shoulder. "Start the water, Abe."

"Bossy." Like he wasn't going to. Abe started the water and got the jets going, hand sliding to cup Ty's thigh. "Pretty, pretty."

"Love the way your hands feel." Not that Ty's hands were bad at all, moving over his back, rubbing little, sure circles.

He nuzzled against Ty's chest, sniffing deep. "Rough as a cob, you mean?"

"Real. I get to needing something real." The words were low, serious.

Damn. Abe looked up, chin on Ty's sternum where he sat on the side of the tub. "Right here, Ty. I'm right here."

"Yeah." Those fingers traced his face, his lips, his eyebrows.

He turned the water off, finally, and held onto Ty as he slipped into the warmth and goodness. "Oh, get in here, baby, This is amazing."

Ty stepped in, settling on his lap with a splash. "This work, Linc?"

"Hell, yes. This works like a house afire." His cock was starting to ache a little, rubbing against Ty as it was. He arched up, just loving it.

Ty's hands wrapped around his prick, lips parting and that pink tongue flicking out.

"Oh, yeah. Like that. Only..." He got lined up, his cock running up along Ty's as he pulled Ty down. "Good."

"Uhn. Good." Ty nodded, lips brushing his, teasing.

It just amazed him, how hot they were together. He wrapped his hand around Ty's, both of their pricks in the grip now, and just went to town, humming as he rocked.

"Want to taste you, Abe. You smell so good." Ty watched him, eyes hot and hungry.

"Yeah. Oh, God." He'd been careful. So careful all these years. Abe opened his hand. "I... we should use a rubber, Tiny, but... Damn. I want you. I haven't ever not."

"Me either. I... I wouldn't give you anything. I'm not that way." Ty's face turned red, but those eyes were serious. "I never even wanted to, before you."

Fuck him raw. "Oh, baby. Yeah. I want to do everything with you."

Ty groaned, pushed close enough that the water couldn't even get between them. The kiss he got was desperate, wild, making his heart clench.

He just held on, letting the kiss go deep, his lips stinging. He touched Ty everywhere he could reach, nails scraping.

Those muscles were something else, rippling under his touch. The heat just soared between them, threatening to burn him alive.

"Ty. Baby. You. I can't." He was just gonna bust. Right there in the tub. His cock throbbed, making his eyes roll.

"Come on. Come on, Linc. We got all fucking night. Please." Ty's thighs squeezed him, teeth sharp on his lip.

"Fuck!" That bite sent him over, had him coming like a ton of bricks, his ears ringing. His hips snapped, the water around them sloshing up his back.

Ty made a deep sound, raw as fuck, those muscles all going tense as he shot.

They drifted together, both of them floating and lax as their muscles unclenched.

"Damn, Ty."

"Uh huh." Ty sort of blinked, watched him.

Grinning, he pushed against the water, letting it push back so they squashed together. "We should do more stuff like that. In bed. With the champagne."

"Mmm... yeah. Kisses that bubble."

"Among other things, yeah." He got up, his ass starting to feel wrinkled, letting Ty slide off him. Then he hauled Ty to his feet. "Come on."

"Pushy bastard." Ty chuckled, goosing him good and hard.

His feet almost shot out from under him, and he laughed like a loon, grabbing onto Ty and pushing them around like dancing bears. "You like it."

Ty snorted, hands grabby and slick. "Me? Like being manhandled around?"

"Uh huh. You like someone as pushy as you. So you don't always have to make the decisions." A kiss might soften that one, so Abe took one, already swollen lips just burning.

Oh, that was the right decision, Ty started to say something, then just dove into the kiss instead, stealing his breath.

Hoo yeah. He'd figured out how to drop the insight bombs, baby. Opening up, he let Ty take the kiss wherever he wanted it to go, backing them toward the bed.

Fuck. As focused as Ty was drawing? It was nothing on those kisses -- deep and slow, Ty just gave it all up.

There was just nothing like a man who was as sensual as Ty. Nothing. Abe stroked over Ty's back, tracing the tattoo from memory, grinning into the kiss as their legs hit the bed and they toppled.

"Timber." Ty pressed good and close, belly sliding against his own.

"Mmhmm. I love your skin." No-filter-man was at it again, but it was true. He bent to lick that skin, tongue slipping down Ty's neck to his shoulder.

He found a sweet spot, one that had Ty gasping, hands wrapping around his hips and pulling him closer.

Yeah. Right where the arm met the body, just south of the collarbone. He bit into the soft skin off to one side before licking his way over to one nipple. Yeah. He loved the way Ty shivered.

Ty's fingers slid around, tracing circles on his hipbone as that nipple drew up, hard and tight. Now, who on earth could resist that?

Not him, for sure, and he sucked on it, testing it with his teeth. God, Tiny was something else.

"Fuck, Linc. That. Shit." They rolled, Ty landing half atop him and pressing him into the mattress.

Breathless, he blinked up at the caveman Ty have become all of a sudden. "Why, Tiny, you animal." He laughed, stretching his arms up, arching long under Ty's weight.

He got a look, Ty leaning until they were face-to-face. "Not Tiny."

One of those hands slid right down his belly toward his cock.

"Not a bit. I just like to tease you." There was no teasing now, though, not with Ty touching him and his cock growing. He pushed into the touch, groaning.

"And what if I decided to tease you back, Linc?" Those fingers ghosted over his balls, tickling, barely there.

His legs fell apart, his back muscles straining as he tried to get more. "Well, I guess I'd have to... oh. There."

What was the question?

Ty chuckled, brushed their lips together. Those touches kept coming, kept pushing him. "Uh huh. Right there."

"I. Ty. I need you to." Lord, he was turning into a demanding bastard. But he really did need more. More touches and kisses. More Ty.

"Pushy redneck." Ty moaned, tongue pushing into his lips as one hand palmed his balls and rolled them.

"Uh huh. Feels good when you push back." His hands had stilled, and he started moving them again, loving the play of muscle in Ty's back.

"Does." Ty rocked a little, leaning toward his hands. "Could just eat you alive."

"Okay." That mouth could have all of him anytime. "God, Ty. I just think about your mouth on me and I'm ready to blow."

"Mmmm..." Ty slid down, hands spreading his legs as that mouth trailed down along his belly, making all sorts of promises. Oh. Oh, that was a fucking amazing sight. All that smooth skin, that ink, the black pattern on the bedspread, all right there between his legs.

Made a man believe in God. Abe resisted the urge to push Ty on down, let him linger wherever he wanted. His hands had a better use, and that was tracing Ty's cheeks, ruffling his hair, petting that sweet tattooed back.

Ty nuzzled into the curls above his cock, breathing him right in. "Oh, that's... Yeah."

Hips jerking a little from Ty's breath landing on him, Abe moaned, needing so bad his muscles jumped and twitched. "Ty."

"Yeah. Yeah, Linc. Right here." Those eyes blinked up at him, just burning. "I won't leave you hanging."

"I know you won't, baby." No. Ty might tease but he'd never disappoint. The man delivered. Period.

Ty turned his head, tongue sliding over the tip of his cock, just dragging over it.

"Oh. Oh, hell, yeah." Reaching down, Abe cupped his cock in one hand, lifting it toward those swollen lips. Offering and begging all at once.

The sound that he got was pure need, made his balls ache. Ty opened up, lips sinking down over his prick, wrapping around and sucking good and hard.

Holy Jesus. He couldn't remember the last time he felt a mouth on him with nothing between it

and his cock, and this was Ty's mouth. A deep groan tore out of him, and he pushed up, needing more, now, please.

Ty groaned, opened right up and let him in. Goddamn. One strong hand slid under his ass, muscles rippling as Ty encouraged his thrusts, his motions.

What could he do but just roll with it, his whole body flushed and tense, his belly so tight Ty could bounce off it. Oh. Later. Abe shook, babbling a little.

Little hums and moans answered him, the vibrations enough to make a dead man rise and walk. He could see Ty's hips moving in time with his, fucking the air.

That was the sexiest damned thing he'd ever seen, and if it wasn't for the tub just a few minutes ago, he'd be coming so hard. He held on, though, wanting to make it last, needing it.

"Ty. Fuck, your mouth."

"Mmhmm." Ty nodded, just purring, nose buried in his pubes.

That did it. Who cared how long ago he'd come? Feeling Ty all the way down, throat closing around him? Abe blew like a hurricane, his hips just snapping, not even able to give Ty a warning.

Ty kept sucking him, mouth gentling, cheek on his hip.

"God." His brain was surely running out his ears. All he could see was white static. "You. Ty."

Ty's tongue slid over the tip of his cock, so hot and soft.

His cock twitched a little, so sensitive it almost hurt. "C'mere, Tiny. Want to taste."

He got a sharp slap of the tongue to his cock for that Tiny, Ty flicking the tip.

"Ty..." He moaned, shifting on the hotel bedspread, scratching his back and ass. "Please, I. It's too much."

His cock was released, a soft kiss placed right at the base. "I was right. You taste good."

Blinking, he grinned down, grabbing Ty's shoulders to pull him up along his body. "Lemme taste me on you."

Ty groaned, cock leaving wet kisses all along his thighs. Those lips were swollen and shining, wet. Fuck.

He took the kiss he wanted so bad, reaching for Ty's cock and stroking it, tasting himself mixed with the spice of Ty, the flavor just stunning.

A low cry pushed into his hand, Ty's hips snapping, those eyes wide and hungry.

Maybe it was hokey as hell, but he wanted to do the same for Ty as Ty had done for him, and he pushed, sending Ty back off him onto the bed on his back. He was greedy, going right for his prize, lifting Ty's cock to his lips with one hand, cupping those heavy balls with the other.

Not Tiny at all.

"Oh. Oh. Linc." Ty's thighs went tight as boards, spreading as Ty's knees bent, heels digging into the mattress.

The play of muscle Abe could see out of the corner of his eyes made him wish he was the artist. He'd love to capture that. The taste though, oh man, it was hot and wild, all salty-bitter and just fucking perfect. Abe tongued the slit on the upslide, ran his lips along the ridged underside on the way back down.

"Fuck. That. Oh, sweet Christ." Ty's fingers brushed through his hair, trembling, shaking.

Yeah, baby, he thought. That's it. Come on. Abe sucked harder, really giving it his all, fingers pushing behind Ty's balls to press against his Ty's hole.

Ty spread wider, hips moving in short jerks. "Yeah. Yeah."

He couldn't wait to get inside Ty, couldn't hardly stand the thought, but what he was doing was just as good, just as right. He moaned around Ty as he caught drops of precome on his tongue.

That earned him a whimper, Ty going still, stiff, entire body trembling on the edge.

He pulled back and then pushed back down, doing for Ty what Ty had done around him, swallowing hard.

Heat just poured from Ty's cock, bitter-salty and all male, his name echoing in the room.

Abe smiled, licking and sucking at Ty as he came down, kissing Ty's belly when that fine cock finally went soft.

"Good, baby. Really good."

"Uh huh." Ty reached for him, all sweet and melty.

They snuggled, the big hotel bed not as comfy as his, but better than Ty's. The water burbled in the tub, and he laughed. "We forgot to turn off the jets."

"I'll deal with it. Later." Ty's eyelashes brushed his skin, tickled.

"Okay." Hell, it wouldn't hurt anything. He wrapped one leg around Ty's hip, stroking Ty's back.

"So what did John say?"

"That he wants me to come work for him. Shut down the agency." Ty's cheek heated against his skin.

"Why? You're doing good, yeah?" Now he stroked Ty's hair, just soothing. "Don't let him get to you."

"Yeah. I'm doing okay. I can weather this."

"Good." Turning, he kissed Ty's cheek. "You need anything, you holler."

Ty hugged his waist. "Yeah. Yeah, Linc."

Okay, that was enough of the serious shit. They'd sleep. Then they'd call room service and get chocolate cake. And then? They'd try any of the other million things Abe wanted to do to Ty.

Business was done until at least tomorrow.

Or maybe even the next day.

He had the radio going, nothing on but a wifebeater and shorts as he caught up on paperwork in the office. Man, working Sundays sucked.

Still, he had a huge cup of tea, some snacks, the sun was shining.

Ty could live with it.

A knock at the main door about gave him a heart attack, unexpected as it was. James had a key, so the only person he could think would be out there would be the Pomeranian lady, maybe.

He padded over to peek out the sliver of glass beside the door, already reaching out to unlock it.

Abe stood there in a pair of cut-offs so little they threatened to be obscene, a metal band t-shirt and sneakers, holding a big old wicker basket. When the door finally gave, Abe bounced.

"Hey, Tiny."

"Not Tiny." The complaint was half-hearted, his focus on those itty-bitty cut-offs. Sweet Christ.

"Nope. But it still makes you growl, so why not? Anyhoo, it's too damned nice to be in here working. Come out and picnic with me."

Oh, man. That was a temptation and a half. "Oh, that sounds... I got paperwork to do, but... What's in the basket?"

"Fried chicken, potato salad, and beans. Some fresh rolls. And a coconut cream pie. All

compliments of the neighbor lady's daughter, who came to visit and thank me for taking Blinky. She? Is the best cook ever. The dogs are in the truck. Let's go to the river." Abe waggled the basket, moving close enough to brush the hair on their legs together.

He was nodding before he even thought about it, reaching up to tug Abe down for a kiss, good and deep and all about saying hi and you're fine and so fucking good to see you. "Let me grab my shoes."

"Mmhmm." Abe lingered over the next kiss a little, grinning huge as he pulled back, Abe's eyes a little dazed. "Okay."

He left the laptop on the desk, grabbed wallet, keys and sunglasses, and a six-pack of cokes. "I'm ready. Did I mention that those are amazing shorts, man? Like long-term fantasy amazing."

"Yeah?" That got him another wide-assed smile, another kiss. "I can see your tat through that tank. So it's mutual. Come on."

He was laughing as they bebopped down the stairs, the pups raising a ruckus when they came into sight. "Blinky! Sheila!"

He got his due of kisses and wags, work already a hundred miles away. "Stinky beasts. Y'all want to go play?"

Man, did they woof at that. Those silly mutts knew how to live it up, that was for sure. Abe stuck the basket behind the seats before hopping in and popping the door open for him.

He slid in beside, pulling his cap on. "Mmm... that chicken smells good."

Chicken wasn't the only thing either.

"Does, doesn't it?"

Yeah, Abe smelled like sunscreen and sweat and hot days, just musky as hell. It was a fine thing. Abe flipped the radio on and gunned it, and soon enough they were headed out of town, just booking on down the road.

Ty opened two Cokes for them, both of them singing like goobers. Even with the air on, the sun liked to baked him whole and man, it felt good. Felt just fine.

Abe got them a nice quiet place to park at the river trail, the families with kids all wanting to be where the picnic tables and grills were. They backed the truck right up to the edge of the bank and popped the tailgate down, giving them the best view, and the best place to throw balls for the dogs.

Ty stripped off his shirt, grinning like a fool. There was just enough breeze to make it right and keep the damn bugs away. Perfect.

"Mmmm. Gonna make me forget the food, Ty." Abe threw a tennis ball for the mutts before

grabbing him, fingers slip-sliding on his skin until the rough pads dragged across his nipples.
"Fuck, you're a beautiful man."

Oh, that touch just made him purr, made his cock swell and throb. "You make me want, so bad."

The truck bed was hot under his ass, the heat enough to make him shift just a little.

"Oh. Shit, baby. I got a blanket behind the seats...lemme get it." Abe bounced off and came back in a flash, tossing him an old flannel blanket, just enough to pad the bed if they doubled it up.
"That ought to work, yeah?"

He let his eyes drag over Abe's body, just eating the man up. He'd never had it so bad, never wanted over and over, but Abe? Damn. "Yeah."

"Cool. Now, where were we? Oh, yeah." Abe pretty much jumped him, pushing him down and kissing him. Those clever, clever hands slid back up his chest, counting his ribs, thumbs finally pressing against the sweet spot right where his arm met his body.

He groaned into the kiss, his own fingers sliding along the line of denim and thigh. Pretty, pretty.

The denim didn't hide much, and Abe was hard for him, cock pressing up toward his fingers.

He teased, fingers just stroking over the shaft, brushing the tip. So fucking hot. So good.

"Uhn. Ty. Good." One of Abe's hands dropped to cup his ass, squeezing a little. Just about the time they were overrun by dripping, smelly dog.

He snorted, laughing hard as Sheila pushed the sopping ball into Abe's hand, wagging tail spraying water everywhere.

"Jesus, fuck, girl!"

Abe sat up just in time to get a snootful of Blinky, licking and slobbering, just making him howl. Funniest damned thing he'd seen in ages.

He was just fucking rolling, tickled fucking pink.

A hard pinch to his thigh made him yelp, and Abe started laughing at *him* when Blinky came on over to make sure he was all right, snuffling his cheek, all wet fur and jingling collar tags.

He got a faceful of dog kisses, Blinky panting and stinky as all fuck. Ty grabbed the ball, throwing it over at Abe, knowing both dogs would go for it.

They tumbled right over and Abe went down under the mass of wagging hair, sputtering and flailing. "Goddamnit, Tiny! Help me!"

He grabbed, tugging Abe up into his arms, one hand tossing the ball good and far.

Abe just lay there, laughing his ass off, smacking him lazily. "Damned mutts. Maybe we ought to eat."

"Eating's good." The view from where he was was damn near perfect -- all long, lean muscles, inked thigh, damp cutoffs. Ty leaned down, lips brushing Abe's temple. "Thank you."

"You? Are most welcome, baby." Yeah, there was still a nice bulge poking out of those cut-offs, but the urgency had settled, become a hum beneath the surface. "Now, you *have* to taste this chicken."

He grinned and nodded, helping Abe get things pulled out, stealing tastes of things as they appeared from the basket. Oh, hell yes. He hadn't tasted chicken like that since his granny had passed on.

The potato salad was to die for, and the beans were barbeque, not just baked. If the rest of it was any indication, the pie was gonna be like heaven. Abe sure did collect good places to get food.

They each got a leg and a big piece, chowing down without much discussion. "Oh, man. This is pure Heaven."

"It is." Abe grinned over, nudging his leg. "Better than staring at a computer all day."

"Now what would you know about staring at a computer all day?" He winked, just managing to control the smile.

"Just that it strains the eyes, baby." Slipping him a piece of dill pickle, Abe chuckled. "Not my bag."

"Didn't think it would be mine either. It's more like the down side of my job."

"Yeah." Reaching out, Abe stroked his thigh, rubbing the hairs there back and forth. "It's a nasty part of the job. I hate doing the books, but right now I can't afford someone in, not and maintain the lifestyle I like."

He nodded, fed Abe a bite of chicken. "I hear that."

Hell, since the conversation with John that had ended with "you'll either come willing or not, but you'll come work for me, Jefferson"? His business had dropped damn near ten percent. He figured he was going to learn all about cutting corners.

"Want a roll?"

Oh. Fresh yeast rolls. There was something to be said for the simple things, though.

"Mmm... yeah. Those look like heaven." He leaned back on one elbow, grinning up toward the sun.

Fingerfood-sized bites were pressed against his lips, fluffy and buttery. Every so often one of them would throw a bite to the dogs, who sat patiently on the ground next to the tailgate.

"It's a damned fine way to spend a day."

"It is. I don't think I've had a picnic in twenty years. It's better than I remember it being." He reached over, brushed crumbs off Abe's lips.

Capturing his hand, Abe kissed his fingers, the gesture oddly courtly. "It's the company, Tiny."

He nodded, fingers cupping Abe's jaw. Yeah. Yeah, it was, and how fucked was that? To go all over the damned world looking for what he needed and find it here.

"Mmmm." The basket slid up toward the cab, away from the dogs, Abe pushing all the stuff out of the way. "Dessert can wait. I say we clear our palates."

Oh, the best way to do that ever had to be Abe's kiss. Way better than a champagne sorbet.

He scooted until they were resting together, belly-to-belly, his hand on Abe's lower back.

Abe hummed, rubbing up on him, cock growing between them. "Yeah, baby. Like that."

Abe's top leg wrapped over his thigh, pulling them even closer. So good.

"Yeah." He spent some time just focusing on their kiss. There was a tiny scar on the inside of Abe's bottom lip that fascinated his tongue and he explored the way one of Abe's bottom teeth was a touch crooked, too little to even see.

Abe kissed him back just as thoroughly, chasing his tongue back into his mouth, teeth testing his lower lip. They both tasted like chicken and sweet sauce, but Abe was spicy, always, right underneath.

He just sort of melted into the kisses, got lost and stupid and fuck, he wanted to draw this, the look in Abe's eyes.

There was no urgency. No rush. Just them and the rushing of the river water and the distant bark as the dogs took off after a rabbit.

Oh, he thought maybe picnics should go on the regular rotation. Weekly. At least.

Pushing under his shorts with one hand, Abe traced his cleft, working down, then up. All the while Abe kissed him, working him until his lips burned and throbbed.

Tremors just sort of shook him, head to toe. He'd never felt so fucking good. Ever.

Humming, Abe slid around a little more, sort of pushing him on his back and climbing on him. The pressure was just what he needed, the friction good.

He whimpered, legs spreading, moving to cradle Abe between them.

"Yeah. Baby." Pushing down, Abe bit into his throat, just moaning. "Love how you taste."

It was all he could do not to cry out, call out. Instead he jammed one hand into his mouth, free hand reaching for Abe's head. Damn. Damn.

The rough whiskers on Abe's cheek rubbed his chest, Abe's hot lips wrapping around his nipple and sucking. They were moving faster now, rocking the truck on its springs.

Oh, fuck. He groaned, imagining Abe pushing inside him, fucking him good and hard, stretching him around that prick. Oh, yeah. Yeah. He. Damn.

"Ty!" Abe shoved his shorts all the way down, and tried to wedge a hand between them to get to the button of those cut offs too.

"We're gonna get arrested, someone comes up." He sucked in, gave Abe room to get those shorts off.

"Yeah. Some fish and game guy's gonna get an eyeful." They laughed, but it turned to moans as their cocks rubbed, all naked and wet.

"Mmmhmm..." He got his hands on Abe's ass, not intending to share even an eyeful.

"Baby." Groaning, Abe dove down to kiss him again, burning his mouth, humping him like there was no tomorrow. It was so hot, with the sun beating down, both of them running sweat.

"Yeah." He shifted, found Abe's ear, whispering all sorts of things about needing and wanting and being right where he fucking wanted to be.

Abe pulled back to look at him, eyes wide and green as he shot between them, not even a gasp coming from him. Just that laser stare.

"Linc." He didn't think, just looked, just let Abe see as he shot, hips rolling.

"Fuck. Ty." Collapsing down on him, Abe just wheezed, relaxing as their breathing came back to normal.

"Uh huh." He nodded, agreeing. Absolutely. 100%.

"I think we earned that coconut cream pie. And maybe a dip in the river." There'd be places where it wasn't running too fast.

"Absolutely. That was good ab work." He grinned, fingers stroking down along Abe's belly.

"Hell, yes. Who needs a Bowflex when I have you?"

Abe squealed and rolled off him, laughing like a loon as one of the dogs licked his ankle again. "Well, at least they waited until we were done."

"Uh huh. They're good puppies." He chuckled as Blinky woofed at him, agreeing. Silly mutt. "Pie or dip first?"

"Dip. I think we need to wash up a bit before we eat."

Yeah. They could splash and get cool. That would work.

He nodded, sliding his shorts back on. "Come on, Linc. Let's go play in the water."

"Last one in is a rotten egg." Hitching up those itty bitty shorts, Abe took off like a shot, wading into the water at a good low spot on the bank and immediately splashing water up at him in a great sheet.

"Bastard." He laughed, heading out to retaliate. Beautiful fucking bastard.

"Come on, Tiny. Come and get me." Abe took off his t-shirt finally and tossed it toward the truck, that fine skin shining in the sun. "Feels great."

Blinky helped, jumping in and shaking, distracting Abe so he could get a shot in, water hitting the man right in the face. "Good boy!"

"See? I keep telling you he's your dog."

Just laughing, Abe waded around, throwing water at him like there was no tomorrow. Sheila just barked and ran up and down the bank, cheering them on. They were soaked and breathless, laughter just echoing. He managed to get close enough to goose Abe good and hard. Abe must have jumped a good foot in the air, spinning as he came down and splashing a huge handful of water right at his face.

He gasped and choked, launching himself at Abe as soon as he could see straight. Abe caught him easily, but they went down as Abe slipped, both of them spluttering and wheezing as they sucked in half the river.

"Trying to kill me, are you?" They were all tangled up, water-logged.

"Hey, you're the one throwing yourself at me." Grinning, Abe kissed him, tasting like mud and water and a hot summer day.

"Shit, Linc. No one in their right mind would turn your ass down."

"You'd be amazed." Holding his hand, Abe pulled him to the bank, sloshing with every step. "I'm glad you didn't."

"Yeah. Me too." He chuckled, grabbing his shorts as the weight of the water dragged them down.

"Woo! A free show." Abe hoisted back up on the tailgate and dragged him up too, fingers dipping into the waistband of his shorts. "I like."

"Careful now, they're just hanging on..."

"Uh huh. Oopsie, there they go." And there they went, landing with a wet sploot. Abe hummed happily, getting grabby handed with him, just touching him all over. "Pretty, Ty."

Damn. Abe made him feel all... Yeah. He turned over, stretched, filling cock cuddling into the blanket on the truck and giving Abe a good long look at his ink, his ass.

"Oh, damn." The truck creaked as Abe scrambled up to straddle his thighs, strong hands rubbing his muscles. "You look fucking edible."

"You like the ink? Man, when I got it, I felt a hundred feet tall. Took six months."

"I love it. It's like... it's like what you hide inside, Tiny. Hiding it under your clothes. Shit, I'm not making sense." What made sense was how hard Abe was against his ass, rocking down on him.

He pushed back up against Abe, thighs parting a little, making a clear offer.

"Mmm. Baby. Make me think things... you wanna, yeah? I might even have some lube in the basket."

"I want. Need to feel you inside, yeah?" He tilted his hips, just burning with it, needing.

"You got me, baby. Any way you want." The weight on his back increased as Abe leaned to drag the basket close, rummaging. "Never wanted anything more in my life."

He hummed, just jonesing on the heat and pressure of Abe against him. So good. Just what he needed.

The cut-offs went flying, and Abe was all over him, heat and skin and pressure, that cock pushing at him. Abe slid two fingers down his crease, slick, downright wet, pushing at his hole.

He let Abe in, the stretch sweet, making his muscles ripple. He didn't let many guys in, didn't trust.

Abe was... different.

"Fuck. So tight, Ty. So damned tight." Careful, slow, Abe stretched him, petting his back with the other hand. Soothing him.

"Feels so good..." He squeezed, then relaxed, heart just pounding. "Never thought I'd be making love with you in a truck bed."

"You know me, Tiny. All class." Abe pinched his ass, the sting making him clamp down on Abe's fingers just as they twisted inside him, pressing his sweet spot.

"All min... Oh! Oh, again. Fuck." He bucked, coming up on his hands and knees.

"Oh, fuck, Ty." Again and again Abe hit that spot, making him cry out, driving him up until he was flying. Then Abe slid his fingers out and slid his cock in, hot and hard and stretching him almost to the point of pain.

He just panted, sweat pouring off him. "Sweet fuck. Abe. So fucking full."

"Hot and tight, baby. So good." Moving inside, Abe rocked them, pushed him, damp and heavy against his back.

He nodded, making all sorts of noises that didn't make a lick of sense. He felt so good he didn't even care, so long as Abe didn't stop.

Stopping wasn't on the agenda. Faster and harder was, and so was Abe reaching under and grabbing his cock, stroking him in time with each thrust deep inside him. Oh. So was Abe licking his tat, tracing the design with tongue and teeth.

"Oh. Oh. Abe. I. Love. Damn. Please." He met each thrust, eyes rolling, hips just snapping. "Coming."

"Yeah. Yeah, Ty." He could feel it when he set Abe off too, Abe's prick jerking inside him, filling him. Abe kissed his shoulders lazily, tongue licking at his sweat.

"Sweet Christ. We should schedule picnics more often."

"Fuck, yes, Tiny. And there's still pie. And more ball with the mutts..." They toppled eventually, just flopping together so it was impossible to tell where one began and the other ended. "Damn."

"Yeah. Yeah." He couldn't stop grinning, just cuddling back against Abe with a sigh. "Abie."

"Oh, you'll pay for that, baby. When I can move again."

Sheah. That threat? Held not one iota of force.

He was in more danger from the dogs.

"Put it on my tab."

Chapter 6

Shit, this had been the longest fucking day in creation.

Abe let himself in, wondering where the dogs were. They should be about to chew his leg off by now, wanting to be fed. Sheila woofed softly from *inside* as he came in, and he saw all sorts of take-out cartons on the kitchen counter. Brows rising, he went to the living room, and there in the pool of light from the reading lamp over the couch was Tiny, sleeping away with Blinky on his feet.

Oh. Damn, that was a sight to come home to.

Blinky scrambled up, breaking up the scene as he came over to get scratches, beating Ty with his tail all the while.

Ty snorted, sat up, blinking and rubbing the back of his neck. "Uh. Hey. Hi. How's things?"

Abe grinned. "Tired, baby. But glad to see you."

"Yeah, long fucking day. I brought stuff. Food. Dinner. You know."

"I saw. I hope it didn't ruin?" He patted the dogs and just sort of stood there with a goofy fucking grin on his face, looking at Tiny in his house seeming right at home. "Come and kiss me?"

"Nope. I put the ice cream in the freezer." Ty stood up, so fine in jeans, bare feet, little glasses askew. That tight body just pushed right into his arms, face lifted for a kiss.

Abe took that kiss happily, diving into it with all of the pent up stress of the day. Ty just eased him. Just by being there. His hands slid up and down Ty's back, testing the muscles.

Ty moaned into his lips, muscles rippling under his hands. Oh, man. Nothing like a hot body to make coming home good.

"Damn." The kiss only broke because they had to breathe. "You make it worth the long-assed day. Hey."

"How's the hotel looking, Linc?" Ty nuzzled, kissed his jaw, fingers stroking his belly.

"It's good. Oh." His muscles jumped, his nipples tightening as Ty tickled his belly button. "She's really gutted, but that means I can start making her beautiful."

"Mmhmm..." Ty worked his shirt open, off. Those parted lips moved down toward one nipple, tongue sliding. "I can't wait to see it."

Fuck. His nipple went so hard that it almost hurt, and he leaned back, getting more. "Yeah... want you to. Want you."

"Uh huh." Ty wasn't shy, teeth and tongue working him, making him burn.

His hands scrabbled on Ty's back, one finally getting a grip on the back of Ty's head, holding him close. "Good. So hot."

"Want you. You want food first or can I get you naked?"

"Food can wait." Was that him saying that? "Need you more." He struggled with Ty's jeans, needing skin.

"Thank God." Ty nodded, fingers stripping him down to the skin as that fine body dropped down, mouth on his belly.

"Ty." He blinked down, looking at that view, just stunned again and again that this man wanted him. This fucking glorious man. "Love."

"Yes. Hell, yes." Ty took him in, eyes holding his the whole way. Sweet fuck.

His brain shorted out. All Abe could do was look at Ty and fuck his face, loving those eyes and those lips and those silly glasses with all he had in him.

Ty's hands were holding his ass, thumbs rubbing his hips in circles.

His balls drew up, his stomach went tight, and Abe knew he was gonna blow any minute. "Ty. Gonna."

The sound he got vibrated all the way through him, suction going fierce, demanding that he give it up. Yep. Abe gave it right up, hips snapping as he shot, grunting as his breath squeezed out of him. Tiny just took him down, fingers on his balls, rolling them, rubbing them.

"Oh, oh God. Ty..." His thighs shook, his muscles refusing to hold him up. "I'm all melted."

Ty stood, got him over to the sofa without even breathing hard. Damn, that was nice.

"Muscleman." Lazy in his bones, he reached out for Ty's crotch, massaging a little. "Wanna fuck me?"

"Does a bear shit in the woods, Linc?" Mmm... that prick was hard as diamonds, already wet-tipped and ready.

"That sounds nasty..." He giggled, just floating. "C'mere."

Abe spread his legs and opened his arms, needing Ty like air.

Ty settled right against him, grinning, tongue pushing into his lips. That pretty prick settled against his hip, rubbing nice and slow. "So fine, Linc. Just right."

"Uh huh. You look good on me. Feel good too. I swear, Tiny, you killed my last brain cell." He sounded like an idiot. But a happy one.

"Don't need 'em to fuck, Abe. Just need to feel, yeah? Lube?"

"Uh." He kept some in the little remote drawer in the coffee table. Just in case. "In with the clicker."

"Oh, fucking A." Ty rummaged in the drawer, hips rocking the whole time. The crow when Ty found it? Made him grin.

Made him touch, his fingers counting Ty's ribs, his thumbs rubbing circles over those little nipples. Fuck, that was hot.

Ty got one of his legs propped up on the back of the couch, the other braced on the floor. Those slick fingers pressed against him, circling his hole, teasing him.

Abe relaxed, went loose and easy, opening right up. He wanted Ty in him so bad. Needed to feel. "Come on, Tiny. Quit teasing."

"Pushy bastard." Two fingers pushed in, deep and sure, spreading him wide.

"Yes. I'm impatient and needy too. Now come on."

His eyes rolled when Ty hit just the right spot, making him jump, his cock trying to rise.

"You forgot growly and sex on a stick." Ty panted, watching him, hitting that spot over and over.

He shook, his muscles jumping, his whole body on overload. "Now, Ty. I'm ready as I'm gonna be."

"Yeah, Linc. Want to feel you all around me." Ty settled, cock replacing those fingers and spreading him wide.

Oh, fuck. Ty felt huge and hot as a brand, and it made him feel like a fucking god the way Ty looked at him, all stunned and wide-eyed. He stroked Ty's cheek. "Come and get me, baby. Now. Move."

He got a whimper, Ty turning and nuzzling into his hand. Ty started thrusting, taking him with hard, deep strokes.

Yeah. Yeah. His head fell back, his leg slipping down around Ty's waist as he pushed up on the other for leverage. That cock speared him, pushing him so wide, and he just went crazy with it. Moaning, he reached down to stroke his cock, as it had made a helluva comeback.

Ty slapped his hand away, head shaking, fingers wrapping around his prick and stroking.
"Mine."

"Yours. All yours, baby. I promise." Fuck, that was the hottest thing, because in that moment he could tell Tiny meant it, the look possessive as anything he'd ever seen.

And that included Sheila with a new bone.

"Good." Those eyes were serious, hot, eating him up. "Oh shit, you... you're the finest thing..."

That fine skin was just gleaming, muscles working.

There just wasn't enough air in the room. Not for him to breathe and do what they were doing. His vision started to blur, his cock leaking like crazy. "Ty. Can't... God. Too much."

"Come on. Come on, love. Fuck. Let me feel you when you come." Ty's thumb bumped the tip of his cock, rubbing good and hard.

He lost it, a deep cry coming out of his chest, his cock jerking as he came. He clamped down on Ty deep and tight, watching that face. Just watching.

Their skin slapped together, Ty driving into him, eyes rolling as heat just filled him. "Yeah..."

A man could live for years on a sight like that. It wasn't until they sort of collapsed together that he realized one hand was still on Ty's cheek, stroking the stubble back and forth. Damn.

"So what did you bring me for supper?"

"Buffalo wings. Meatball sandwiches. Ice cream." Ty grinned, winked. "Junk food."

"Oh, man. Now I know I love you."

Plink.

Plonk.

The words just fell out like nothing going.

Abe was amazed at himself.

"What kind of ice cream?"

"Cherry nut and chocolate chip." Ty looked at him, one eyebrow arched. "And I hear you. I mean, you took me on a picnic and everything."

"Yeah. Yeah." That was exactly it. Thank God Tiny got him. He grinned, patting Ty's ass. "Feed me. Then you can take me to bed and we can do it again."

He really hadn't been looking forward to coming home tonight to an empty house.

It was a damned fine thing that he hadn't had to.

Lord, Fall couldn't show up fast enough. Either that or he was going to have to put air in Lucy.

Ty pulled up to Abe's place, surprised to see the truck there already. They'd arranged a weekend off – time off have come few and far between, but there was some hold up with wood for the hotel and he... Well, he needed a break from the pushing and pushing.

He grabbed a couple bags of groceries and his travel bag, whistling up Blinky and Sheila. "Hey, beasts! I brought bones! Real ones, from the butcher."

They came romping right at him, Sheila panting and wagging, Blinky smelling like... something dead. Oh, man. Silly mutt. The door opened, Abe stepping out on the porch and grinning, wagging a beer at him.

"You bring me a bone too, Tiny?"

"I brought sausage and some chicken and stuff. That counts. What did you let my dog get into? He's gross." He tossed the bones, heading up for a kiss.

"I didn't..." Abe came right into his arms and took a kiss, loving on him. "Your dog?"

"Shut up. Not a word." He couldn't stop grinning; fuck, he'd missed this man. "There's Eskimo pies."

"Oooh. And I have barbeque beef and rolls." Abe wrapped an arm around his waist and pulled him inside, just managing to keep the dogs out. "Jesus, tonight he's stinky, not Blinky."

"I heard that." He got the groceries put away, refusing to even think about the fact that he knew where everything went. "You looking forward to a weekend?"

"With you? Hell yeah." Every time Abe went by him he got touches, pulling at his clothes, patting his ass.

"Grabby redneck." He grinned, leaned over against Abe, goosing that tight ass.

"Uh huh." Abe stroked the small of his back, then down to the underside of his ass. "You have the best stuff to grab."

"Now, now. You got a shitload of yummy bits to grab." Yummy bits? Lord, he was slipping. Happy, but slipping.

"Yeah?" Feeding him a piece of slaw, Abe bumped hips with him. "All yours, baby."

"Oh, that's good. More?" He reached out, petting Abe's belly. "All of this is mine? Are you sure?"

The knife Abe'd just reached for got set back on the counter, Abe turning to him and pulling him close. "Every bit."

"Oh. Excellent." There was a place where they fit just... Oh, yeah. Right there. "I'm thinking I could do a lot of loving on your various bits, Linc."

"Mmm. That sounds good. You're gonna have to show me which bits are best, baby." They swayed, Abe's hips against his.

"You mean like this little spot here that wrinkles when you're bitchy?" He went up on tiptoe, brushing his lips against the spot.

"Am I bitchy?" He got a grin, a kiss on his chin. "I love the way you look over your glasses at me."

He peered over his glasses, grinned. "There's a little shadow your lip makes; I draw it, over and over."

Shut up, Ty.

"You can draw me any time, baby." Oh, Abe liked that. He could tell. "And I love the way your forehead creases when I call you Tiny."

"Not Tiny. I like the way water gathers in the hollow of your throat when you shower." Bastard. Beautiful bastard.

"Really?" Lifting Ty's t-shirt right off, Abe traced the join of his arm and chest. "There's nothing better than the way you shiver when I touch you here. I swear."

He did shiver, goosebumps raising all over his torso. "Oh. I... Mmm... There's your belly. Wars have been fought for less."

Oh, that got him skin, Abe skimming off his own t-shirt, tight muscles rippling. "Your abs are way more cut than mine. I like to lick them. You might have noticed."

"Maybe. Yours are... Shit, Linc. I love how they slide down, make a 'v' pointing straight to glory." His fingers traced that path, his moan just audible.

"Hmmmmmm." Humming, Abe rubbed against his hand like a big old cat. "And your tat? It's like it points the way to heaven."

"There's your nipples. Sweet and tight..." He leaned in, took one in his mouth, sucking good and hard, looking to make Abe moan.

That moan echoed through the kitchen, Abe's whole body twitching. "You... so sensitive. Yours are. Almost pink, Tiny."

Abe was trying to touch him back, but just couldn't seem to make his hands work.

He nipped, good and hard. Not tiny. His hands dropped down, tracing the ink on that thigh. He loved this too, right here.

"Uhn. Ty. Baby. All of it. Every bit. Yours." Abe just vibrated under his hands, muscles jumping.

Yeah. He lifted his head, panting a little. "Bed. Sofa. Something, yeah?"

"Bed. I want... all. All of you." Gathering himself, Abe straightened, pulling at him. "Come on, baby. Let's get naked and horizontal. I want to just tear you up."

"Anything. Come on." He grabbed Abe's hand, tugging, heading toward that bed.

The four poster loomed in the bedroom, and Abe sort of ran the last few steps, leaping on it and bouncing. Spreading his arms and legs, Abe wiggled down on the mattress.

"What other parts, baby?"

He took the time to strip down, crawling in between those spread legs. It was nothing to slide his cheek up along the inside of Abe's thigh, nudging the velvet-soft sacs with his nose. "Love how you smell, right here."

"Muh." Those sounds were just pure man in ecstasy, happy as all fuck. Abe petted his neck, his scalp. "Love your touch, Ty. Just... kills me."

He nuzzled in, tongue flicking out to taste the musk and salt and Abe. "Taste so good, Linc."

"Feels... feels amazing." Yeah. No lie, because Abe's balls drew up, hot and tight, those thigh muscles shaking.

He opened those legs, hands spreading Abe, exposing the tiny ring of muscles. "Mmm... this bit? Mine too."

Then he licked, tongue pressing flat against that tight little hole.

"Hasn't been anyone else's in a long time. Just you." Hips rising and falling, Abe pushed against his mouth, getting closer. Abe's skin was so damned hot it burned.

He nodded, licking, drawing a lazy circle around the wrinkled flesh. His hands squeezed that tight ass, tilting Abe a little.

So good. "Please, baby. Please."

Lord, Abe was thrashing, begging, opening right up for him.

He fucked that tight hole with his tongue, hips rocking, pushing his cock against the quilt. His balls ached, just tight as stones.

Abe's cock rose high and tight, flushed deep red. That hole squeezed down on him, Abe just pulling his tongue in, and God, it was all too damned right.

"Want." He pushed up, cock in hand, nudging it against that sweet hole. "Love. Please."

"Now, Ty. Now." Abe hooked his hands under his own thighs and opened wide, waiting and ready for him, cock slapping his belly. He'd never seen anything like it in his life.

Heat surrounded him, squeezed him, and his cry just sort of tore out of him as he pushed deep.

Those green eyes burned into his as Abe reached out for him, pulling him close. Those hands traced his tat, every line, even though he sure couldn't see it from that angle. The man just had it memorized.

He fucking burned inside, needing this like nothing else. "Abe. I... Fuck, Linc."

"I know, baby. I know." Abe's voice came raw and hard, needy. That tight ass clamped down around him, just squeezing, and Abe arched, twisting and shouting as he came without Ty ever even touching his cock.

"Fuck!" He grabbed Linc's hips, just humping, finding his orgasm just like that, just like that.

"Oh." It was a long, drawn out groan, the kind you laughed at in porn movies, but with Abe it was sexy as anything. "Yeah. Needed that. Love that part best..."

"Uh huh. And we have two whole more days." He slumped against Abe's chest, heart pounding.

"God, yes. I don't get a big enough dose of you, Tiny. And I'm an addict." Abe just petted and patted and licked the sweat off his shoulder.

"Not tiny." He nodded. Addicted. Yeah. Yeah.

Chapter 7

Fuck, three-day weekends went fast. Abe eased out from under the covers, stopping by the footboard a minute to look at Tiny, sleeping peacefully away in the half light. Goddamn the man looked good in his bed. He wandered to the bathroom, scratching because it felt damned good and doing his thing before heading out to feed the muttles, who were sleeping head to tail right outside the freaking bedroom door.

Coffee was achieved, the dogs tossed out, and breakfast started, all before the sun really got up good, the chill of an Indian summer morning all in the tile under his feet.

Short weekend or no, life was good.

Warm hands landed on his shoulders, rubbing nice and slow. Ty's heat covered his back, his ass. "Mornin' glory."

"Hey. Biscuits are in the oven." They were those frozen bag ones, but they tasted just fine. Humming, he leaned back, letting Tiny hold his weight. "How'd you sleep?"

"Like a rock. Always do in your bed." He got a kiss to the back of his neck. "Figure you drug me."

"It's the sex, baby." Slipping around he turned to face Ty, wrapping his arms around that muscled back. "Now gimme a kiss."

"Bossy redneck." Ty went up on his toes, lips pressing together. Mmm... minty fresh.

That was all the encouragement he needed to press deep with his tongue, taking the kiss right from the start. Hell, yes, he was bossy, needy, and downright unwilling to let go. Ty pushed against him, opening right up with a sweet as fuck little sound. That hard body was warm, ready, eager.

God, there was nothing better. Abe cupped Ty's ass, fingers really digging in to test the muscle, rubbing up against Ty's belly. "Fine good morning, Ty."

"Uh huh." One hand slipped down his chest, fingers working a nipple.

"Oh. Fuck, Tiny. Right there." He nibbled Ty's neck, his own fingers spreading Ty's ass and dipping between the cheeks, finding the softest, hottest flesh. "You make me crazy."

"Mm-hmm. Want." Ty swallowed, breath coming in little pants. "How long 'til breakfast?"

"Uh." Man he really had to think. "Fifteen?"

"Not long enough to fuck me, damn it." Ty pinched his nipple again, a zing shooting through him and ending in his balls.

Biscuits? Or Ty? Ladies and gents, we have a winner, he thought.

"I have. Uhn. I have more biscuits. Turn off the oven, Tiny. I can't reach."

"Oh, fuck yes." Ty reached out, whapped the oven until the thing turned off. "Not tiny, Abie."

He grabbed Ty's cock, using it like a leash as he headed back to the bedroom. "I know, baby. This is not tiny at all."

They made it halfway down the hall before he had to stop and take another kiss, squeezing Ty good before slipping down to cup those heavy balls.

Ty spread for him, hips rocking toward his touch. He got a deep, low moan, Ty's body just begging for him, right there.

Fuck, yes. He twirled Ty around to face away before dropping to his knees and spreading those tight cheeks wide. He pushed in, licking Ty's hole, getting him ready.

"Fuck! Love!" Ty went up on tiptoe, those amazing fucking muscles going tense.

The tree tat rose above him, and Abe figured it was like the apple tree in Eden. Temptation brought to life. He licked and sucked, really pushing deep. He loved the taste of his Ty.

The low sounds got rough, raw, Ty begging now, spread wide and rocking back toward him.

He hardly noticed the creak in his knees when he got up, spitting into his palm to slick his cock before lining up against Ty's hole. "Ready for me, baby?"

"Uh huh. Please. Need you." He got to watch those muscles ripple, the ink shift and move just for him.

His balls... man, they were going to bust. Abe thrust in, slow but sure, sliding right inside. He kept one hand on Ty's hip, the other sliding up to cover Ty's hand where it rested against the wall.

Ty's fingers twined with his, holding on. "Love. In me. Fucking sweet."

"Uh huh." So who needed verbal? He moved, in and out, each thrust gaining strength until he was fucking Ty like a madman, just really giving it to him. So good.

Ty squeezed his cock, bodies slapping together, heat just building and building.

"Love. Baby, I just. Oh, fuck." He was stuck on the fuck part. Who wouldn't be? Squeezing Ty's hand, he moved faster, loving the burn around his cock.

"Gonna. Gonna. Linc..." Ty grunted, ass going tight as a fist, muscles tremoring as the scent of come filled the air.

"Oh..." He groaned, loud and long, his cock jerking deep inside Ty as he shot, his eyes rolling in his head. "Love you."

Ty nodded, lips brushing his arm. "Yeah. Yeah, Abe."

"Yeah..." He chuckled. "Now I'm hungry for food."

"We could get cleaned up, take Lucy out for a drive and get something, spend the day wandering."

"That is the best offer I've had in weeks. Well, aside from sex in the hallway." He kissed the back of Ty's neck, easing out. "Let's go, baby. I want pancakes."

"Mmm... and bacon." Ty grinned back at him, eyes just shining. "I might even let you drive."

Oh, man. If that wasn't love? Abe didn't know what was.

Chapter 8

Time just slipped by a man too fast.

The hotel had eaten his time like a giant pregnant bitch, just sucking up days and weeks until it was damned near Christmas and he was so tired he could hardly see straight.

Not to mention that Abe hadn't seen Ty in nearly three weeks. Not once. It was time to rectify that particular situation, and get him a dose of his Tiny. He'd spoken to him on the phone maybe once, from then on getting James, and if that wasn't a sign that Ty was feeling neglected, Abe didn't know what was.

So he got a bottle of wine. The really damned good stuff old lady Waterhill had sent over when she saw the final results on her baby hotel. He stopped at the Adriatic and got moussaka and spanakoupita and all sorts of olives and cheeses and stuffed grape leaves. And he got some lube, too, before heading on over to Tiny's depressing-as-hell apartment, ringing that pretentious buzzer down at the lobby and waiting.

"Yes?" Well, now. That wasn't his man's voice, not unless he'd gone nutless and Yankee.

"Um." He checked the buzzer his finger hovered over. "I'm sorry, ma'am, I'm looking for Jefferson Bonham."

"Jeff... Oh! Oh, the dear young man I bought the flat from. I'm sorry, I've purchased this place and I don't have a forwarding address."

"Purchased..." His voice rose, and Abe snapped his mouth shut. No screaming at her. "Thank you, ma'am. I'm sorry I bothered you."

Abe went back to his truck and sat for a minute, staring at the dashboard. Then he pulled out his cell and called James. He'd practice his screaming on that little turncoat son-of-a-bitch.

"lo darling! Happy almost Christmas!" James sounded absolutely cheery. Bastard.

"Don't you 'darlin' me, you little fuck. Where is he?"

Goddamn, he could chew fucking nails he was so mad.

"What? Who?" James' voice trailed off just a second. "He didn't tell you yet. Fuck me."

"No thank you, honey. You're not my type. Where. Is. He." He bit every word off, his jaw so tight he thought it might just snap.

"He's in one of those nasty little apartments on the other side of the river. Uh... Freemont. Off Third. He's okay. He just needed the money, you know?"

"Why the fuck..." Abe breathed deep. "What street and apartment number, honey? I need to see him. Now."

"Uh..." He heard papers rattling. "Forty-seven. It's toward the back, I think. He's parking the Mustang over here right now, so don't look for it."

"Thanks, James." There was no way he could apologize for snapping, not with James in on it, but he would at least be polite enough for a howdy-do. "I'll talk atcha later."

The truck probably left pieces of tire on the street he peeled out so fast, but goddamn. Just Jesus H. He tore out across the river, pulling up at the apartment building, wrinkling his nose. The place was a dump.

Why hadn't Ty called him, told him? He was gonna rip the man a new asshole.

The door made a satisfying clonk as he pounded on it.

"No soliciting. Read the fucking sign." Ty's voice snapped out, clear as a bell. Thin fucking walls.

"Well, you probably don't want what I'm selling, Tiny, but if you don't open the door, I will knock the fucker down."

Hoo, yeah. He could *do* pissed-off redneck.

"Linc?" He heard some rustling, got sight of Ty for the first time in weeks as the door opened, pale and dressed in black. "Hey, I didn't think I'd get to see you 'til tomorrow evening."

"Obviously." He pushed in, brushing past Ty and slapping the bottle of wine into his hands. "I was in your old neighborhood. You weren't."

"No. I put the place up on the market and it went." The new place was a mess -- like Ty'd just taken the studio and dumped it in a little room.

"You might have mentioned it to me." Yeah. He was just calm as could be.

"You were busy. I didn't want to add stress." Ty wound through the mess to the little kitchenette, one hand working the back of his neck.

Oh, hell no. That was no excuse. He followed like he was a big dog and Ty was a poodle on a rope. "You think it didn't add to the stress to get to your place and have you gone, me thinking you'd left town and I didn't even know?"

"Left town? Oh, bullshit. I've got my cell. Hell, Linc. I have a date with you *tomorrow*." Ty looked over at him and he'd buy that Ty didn't say anything for any reason except for that little beaten down look hidden behind those damned glasses.

He sighed. "I thought. Well, hell, Tiny. I thought we were tight. Why didn't you *tell* me?"

Was he that fucking self-absorbed that Ty didn't think he should know? Would care?

"What good would it have done, man?" Ty shrugged, shook his head. "You were piled under with shit, so was I. Hell, she bought everything but the studio crap and my clothes. There wasn't even a truckload to pack."

"Goddamn it, Tiny, that's not what I mean!" He slapped the take-out cartons down on a tiny clear space of counter, grabbing Ty's arms. "You should have told me. I could help."

"That's what got me into all this shit in the first place; building my business on somebody's help. Fuck, I had to sell, man. I had to if I want to keep the business open." Ty's muscles tensed, clenched, just tight as all hell. "I'm not John's fucking bitch to come calling whenever and I'm sick and tired of having to be!"

Whoa, nelly. The man was wound so tight he was going to go off like a spring loaded top.

"Jesus, Ty. I didn't know... I didn't think it was that bad. I'm sorry, baby."

"It's not your problem. You've got enough shit to think about." Ty swallowed, took a deep, deep breath and let it out. "I should have gone to the gym after hours. Worked out some shit."

"No, you should have called me. Bitch." He leaned up, took a kiss. How hard was it to stay good and mad when Ty looked like that? Whipped.

"Not even a little." Ty opened up to him, just giving it up, even if he could bounce quarters off those delts.

He took the kiss good and deep, soothing both of them. He just couldn't keep the will to fight. Not when Ty's hands were on his ass. Ty tugged him closer, something less than anger and more than want in the sound that pushed into his lips.

"Mmhmm. Yeah, baby." They could fight, eat, and fuck later, not necessarily in that order. Right now he'd just stay right where he was and kiss that mouth, feeling Ty's lips swell against his.

His shirt got pushed up and his pants got shoved down. Those hands found his belly, his chest, nails scraping just enough to really feel, to burn. He arched, rocked, pushing against Ty. This was what he'd come for, what he'd needed. They'd both had a long couple of weeks, damn it.

Ty nodded, teeth testing his bottom lip, fingers finding his nipples. Then Ty started walking them toward the futon, the blankets and pillows all piled up on the green mattress.

"The futon made it, huh?" Of course it did. It and the papasan, the only things Ty really gave a shit about in that "investment" property. He let Ty push him down on it, crawl on top of him.

"Huh. My drawing table, my plants. My chifforobe. My stuff." Ty leaned down, leaving sucking kisses all along his belly, his chest.

"No, come up here, baby. Want you to fuck me." He needed it. But he knew Ty needed it even more. "Gimme."

Ty groaned, the sound all raw need. "Oh, fuck, yeah. Lemme find the uh... I was just jerking off the other day..."

A couple of boxes got jostled and searched, Ty hooting as he came up with a tube of lube.

The thought of Ty sitting in his papasan, stroking himself... "Oh, Ty, I'd pay money to see that. Were you thinking of me?"

Ty took off his glasses, set them aside. "Yeah. Yeah, I like to think about you and me in your bed..."

"Yeah. You looked good there, baby. You know I've thought of tying you to the bedposts?" Hell, it wasn't something he'd ever thought of actually doing, but the fantasy? Hellacious good jacking material.

Ty flushed a deep dark red, cock bobbing, just slapping that flat belly. "Abe... Sweet fuck."

The top of the lube came off, Ty getting his fingers slick.

He spread himself wide, hips rising. "Yeah. I keep thinking about you, baby. All stretched out, those muscles you work so hard for just straining. Makes me blow like a fucking cannon."

"You... you think your bed would hold?" Two fingers pushed deep, spreading him wide. Ty wasn't playing, was focused and wanting, eyes just burning.

His thigh muscles shook, his belly tight as anything. Abe breathed into it, relaxing to let Ty in. "Hell, yes. It would. And you'd just thrash and beg for me, baby. Think of all I could do."

Ty eased up a little, meeting his eyes, the wild look faded some. That free hand stroked over his thigh, petting. "You good, love?"

Damn. He grinned. "You know it, baby. I'm so good it's not even funny. Be even better with you all inside me." He reached down, stroked his cock a little, thumbing the slit.

"Uhn..." Those fingers pushed deep again, Ty leaning down to lick the tip of his cock, tongue just slipping over him.

His cock jerked, his legs shooting straight out like he'd been shocked. Abe thrashed, starting to pant, sweat starting to bead up on his skin. "Fuck me, Ty. Come on. Need you."

"Uh huh." Ty settled in between his legs, dragging him up on those strong thighs, cock nudging his hole. "Been needing you."

He'd go into the "why didn't you call/come by" again later. Right now he was kinda not able to talk. Abe grabbed Ty's hips, pulling, lifting up. Greedy, that was what he was.

He got a low cry, Ty rocking back and forth, filling him up, stretching him wide. Those strong hands were at his waist, moving him, holding him.

"Ty!" Yeah. Abe just lost it, humping up, trying to get as much as he could. He touched every part of Ty he could reach, from hips up to chest, arms and shoulders, stroking and scratching.

Ty's hands landed on his shoulders, pulling him into each thrust. The futon creaked and groaned, the pad sliding beneath him.

Fuck. He just wrapped his legs around Ty's waist and rocked, trying so hard to get the right angle, the right... oh, fuck, there. He saw stars as Ty hit his sweet spot.

"Yeah. Yeah, love. So fucking tight." Ty was damn near growling, eyes just staring down at him.

"You. I. Damn." Abe lost it. Just lost it, his breath hitching in his chest as he came, squeezing down on Ty with everything he had.

Ty grunted, forehead landing on his shoulder, hips just driving that cock into him.

Holding on, he encouraged Ty all the way, babbling all sorts of shit like "I love you" and "yeah" and "why didn't you call me?"

"Wanted to. Wanted to come home. Fucking scared me." Ty lost it, just pushed in deep, crying out as heat filled him.

Oh, fuck. Fuck. Abe held Ty as he came, stroking that strong back, kissing Ty's neck. Lord, they were a fucked up pair.

Ty relaxed down against him, holding on tight, panting. "Damn. I. Abe."

"Yeah. I know, baby. I brought you Greek pastry." Food was always better than fighting.

"Oh... Really? Does that mean the hotel's gonna be done by Christmastime?"

"Everything is done now but the rugs and the art hanging, man." The place looked fucking stunning. "I thought we'd go by before they did the grand opening. Oh, speaking of that, wanna be my date?"

"Congratulations, Linc!" He got a deep, hot kiss, Ty's eyes just smiling for him. "When? I'm not going on my normal vacation, so I'm all yours."

"Should be right around New Year's. Hell, I get my bonus? I can afford to take us on vacation." Holding Ty close, he rolled them to their sides, resting his forehead against Ty's. "It's that bad?"

"I have enough to last eighteen months, at the current rate." Ty sighed. "I'm looking into more illustration work, more design. John's fingers aren't deep into those pies."

"I can help, baby. If you'll let me. Not with money, or anything. But I can send business." Hell, he was proof that Ty new his shit.

Ty smiled over at him, the look a little lost, but real. "Can I leave Lucy at your place? I'm getting a cheap bike to commute and she's not safe here or at James'."

"Of course you can. You could come stay some... Blinky would love it." He figured he'd better play it casual, even if he wanted Ty to just pack up and move in.

"You think? You..." Ty looked away, then back. "You gonna be around there at Christmas?"

"I am. I did my duty at home this year, and I want to spend Christmas with... well. With you, baby, if you want." Sap. Big, fat sap. But it was the God's honest truth.

"Oh. Yeah. Yeah, I always go to Aruba, but I... Oh, hell, Linc. I don't want to go be with strangers. I want to be at home with you." Ty's cheeks just flared, hot and red as could be.

His chest and face prickled with heat, a pleased smile just stretching his face. He gave Ty a squeeze, kissing his bright cheek. "Good. We'll make a big old turkey or roast or something, and feed the dogs tidbits and sing along with the radio..."

"Yeah? Cool. I can do that." Ty stroked his belly, grinning a little. "I didn't mean to piss you off. About the moving."

"You should have told me, Tiny." So there. He'd rub it in with the Tiny. "And I could talk to John. He can't just go around ruining people."

"Yeah, he can. And don't. You're doing good." Ty nipped his bottom lip. "And I'm not tiny."

"No, you're not." Abe grinned, turning to get his hip off... whatever that was under the futon. "So, you wanna eat Greek with me? Celebrate that hungry bitch being done?"

"Yeah. Yeah, more than almost anything." Ty nodded, kissed him good and hard, before rolling up and heading for the kitchenette.

Transfixed for a moment by that ass moving away, Abe finally got up and went after it, heading over to open the wine. "So should we do dinner one night with James and Scott? It would be nice, I guess."

"Yeah? Not... not here. James jumps and squeals." Ty winked over, dug out some paper plates and a corkscrew.

"Oh, no, I figured we'd go out. I can afford it." Not that he wanted to shove that down Ty's throat either, but he wanted to take them all out on the town, just for the hell of it.

"Hey. I got cash in the bank. I just... Better safe than sorry, you know?" Ty leaned against the wall, looked over at him. "I've been giving it a lot of thought, man, giving in to John. He's offering me a small fucking fortune, but..."

"But it's not you, baby." God, no. Corporate Ty? Would just fucking wither and die. "I think you ought to move more into the art."

"Yeah. I want to; James is willing to hang with me, too. I just... It's a fucking risk."

"Of course it is. But it's better than staying with what you're doing until you run out of money and then trying to start over." The cork finally yielded with a pop, and he tilted his head as he poured a glass. "Hell, I bet the old bat at the hotel would hire you to do the actual design, now I've done all the shit I like to do."

"I've got some book covers, too." Ty nodded, dishing out the food, that defeated look gone. "Of course, James says I'll have to throw out all my black and wear colors if I become an artist."

"As long as it's not lime green and pink, baby." Mmmm. Moussaka. Damn. Abe sniffed, just loving how it smelled like sex and food. He popped a stuffed grape leaf in his mouth as he handed Ty his wine. "Oh, that's good."

"I was thinking lavender." Ty drank deep, moaning a little at the flavors. Oh, there was something decadent about eating naked with this man. "Oh. Yum."

"See? Be glad I didn't pick out the wine." He slid over, got a fork out of the carton so he could get a bite of spanakoupita. Oh, man. Pastry. Spinach. "You gotta try this."

Ty opened his mouth, let Abe feed him a bite. "Oh..."

Fuck, yeah. Ty was just so sensual when he let himself go, when he stopped trying to be so damned... John. Abe wasn't one for deep thought, tended to make decisions on the fly, and he had decided Ty was gonna be Ty and to hell with John.

Damn it.

But that could wait until after supper.

"Olive, baby?"

"Mmhmm..." Ty grabbed one, fed it to him, fingers tracing his lips for a second. "They good?"

"Salty. Juicy. Really good. Here, taste." Leaning in, he kissed Ty good and hard, letting their tongues tangle. Letting Ty taste.

Ty moaned for him, moving closer, hands landing on his waist. They shared another olive, Ty offering it to him in those kiss-swollen lips.

The bright, sharp taste flowed over his tongue, and he swallowed it down, kissing Ty some more, the salt and heat just enough to make him groan. His cock tried to rise, and he almost laughed, figuring he should at least have some real food first.

"Come on, bring it over to the futon. We can take our time. You can tell me how amazing it feels to be done with the hotel." They got settled, Ty's blankets around them, the food in easy reach.

Yeah. Perfect, all spread out like finger food, with wine and napkins and shit. He fed Ty some eggplant. "It feels fucking fine, baby. I loved the work, but all of the politics and shit? Man."

"Yeah, I hear that. Still, I heard that a certain newspaper was doing a full two-page spread on the new and beautiful glory..." Ty licked his fingers clean, eyes dancing a little.

"Yeah? Gee, would that be my publicist in action? You rock, baby." Grabbing Ty's hand, Abe licked his fingers too, searching out every flavor. "Have I thanked you?"

"Once or twice." Ty smiled at him, winked. "You're good at what you do, Linc. I just knew who to talk to and made you moisturize."

"And trim. And shave." Trimming and shaving. Now there was a thought. The little bits of cheese in with the olives were way briney. Damn. His nose hairs might have curled. "Whoa. Watch the cheese."

Oh, that laugh was worth the price of admission. Ty stole a grape leaf, leaning back as he chewed, giving him a good look at that built body.

Uhn. Now that was a feast in itself. He dribbled a little oil from the olives on Ty's belly, leaning down to lick it off each ridge of that six-pack.

"Oh..." Those muscles rippled, moved for him, flushed a sweet rosy pink. "Abe. Damn."

"Mmhmm. You got the cutest belly button, Tiny." It just... begged to be nuzzled.

"Not tiny. Or cute, Abie."

"Sure you are. Cute, I mean. At least there." He let his slick fingers trail down over Ty's cock. "Here? You're just fucking gorgeous, and not a bit tiny."

"Mmm... You've got the best hands." Ty spread a little, a deep purr sounding.

"They're just working hands, baby." Rough with nicks and cuts and scars, his hands weren't anything special. Not like Ty's. Ty's made magic with charcoal and paper. "You're the artist. You amaze me."

"No arguing. Just touching." Ty stretched, winked at him. "You make things good, even if you are a pushy bastard."

"And a redneck, yeah?" Ty was always calling him a redneck. Amused the hell out of him as they came from the same side of the tracks. He popped another piece of cheese, his eyes crossing a little.

Ty's laugh just rang out. "You know it."

Somehow? It had stopped sounding like a complaint.

"Mmm." Sharing the burn, he kissed Ty deep, still just feeling the man up, slipping under to cup Ty's balls. So soft, so hot, goddamn, the man just killed him.

Ty spread wide, pushing into his touch, body reveling in it.

"Oh, baby. You..." Just blew him away. That was what Ty did. Beautiful, stubborn, grumpy asshole that he was.

"Yeah. You do it for me, Linc." Ty licked his lips, eyes burning.

"Good. Damned good." He pushed at Ty's hole, the soft-soft skin there so fascinating, the way Ty opened for him making him catch his breath on a happy fucking moan. Ty pulled one leg up, spreading for him, easy as pie. Goddamn.

"Damn, baby." He just slid his fingers right in, slick as they were with olive oil. He could ignore the parsley.

"Mmhmm." Ty nodded, licking those lips, body just taking him in.

"Love how you look, baby. Love how you are when I do this." Searching, he found that spot inside that that made Ty buck and moan.

Ty's shoulders rolled up, left the futon, body just rocking on him. "Oh. Oh, there. Linc."

"Yeah." Fuck. Those muscles rippled, Ty's belly and chest flushing deep red. Abe bent to kiss Ty's throat, licking sweat.

Ty rode his fingers, throat working, the futon frame creaking.

He watched and worked his hand as long as he could before he had to be inside. Had to. So he slicked up, got ready to push in, meeting those eyes he loved so much. "Ready, baby?"

"You know it." Ty reached up, cupped his jaw in one hand, thumb brushing his cheekbone. "More than."

That was all the invitation he needed, and he pushed in, eyelashes fluttering on his cheeks as he moaned at the feel. "Oh, damn, Ty. You. I. Oh."

"Yeah. Us. 's good. Swear it. Love me, now. I'm needing."

Nodding, he braced on one hand, touching Ty with the other, turning Ty's chin so he could kiss him, lingering as his hips started moving.

This time it went slow and sure, both of them rocking and sliding, always touching, both just right there.

The platter of olives and cheese went tumbling to the floor as the mattress slid on the frame, and Abe chuckled, nuzzling Ty's throat. "Makin' a mess."

"I'll clean. Hell, I'll pack a bag and we'll go home. Your house. Whatever." Ty grinned, squeezing him. "Just don't stop."

"Not gonna..." Like he could when he was buried balls deep in the hottest place he'd ever wanted to be? It still boggled his mind sometimes that this was Jefferson Ty freaking Bonham. And that he was crazy in love with the man. He pushed harder, his breath starting to come short when he realized what Ty had just said.

"Home. Fuck, yes."

"Oh. Oh, yeah..." Ty arched, teeth sunk deep in that bottom lip, eyes rolling. "Just like that."

Resting his head in the hollow of Ty's neck and shoulder, Abe went to town, his back and thighs starting to burn, his orgasm rising up his spine.

He could fucking feel Ty getting close, hot and squeezing, muscles trembling and tremoring around his cock. Reaching between them he stroked that sweet prick pressing against his belly, rubbing Ty off even as he hollered and shot, filling Ty deep.

Ty held on, heat wet on his fingers as that husky voice whispered to him, soft and low, making all sorts of promises.

They flopped together, the mattress finally giving up and just sliding off on the floor, taking them with it like a river raft or something. Abe hooted. "Woo! Even your bed is trying to get rid of us."

Ty goosed him, laughing. "Hey! This place? *Not* an investment."

"No way, no day. You ready to pack up the food and wine and head out to see Blinky?" They could even take the papasan.

"Oh, I got them some bones at the store, too." Ty nodded, looking around. "You mind if I bring my art box?"

"Not one bit. You know I've got that porch on the back that's the laundry room right now. We could build that out a little, make you a studio. It's got great light." He said it casual-like, pushing a take out box off his foot.

Ty stilled, looked at him, just searched his face. Then he got a slow, wondering smile. "Yeah? You... you think there's room for my table and chifforobe?"

"And the futon and the papasan. Lord, think how Blinky and Sheila will love that." He smiled back, feeling like a big old dork, but just loving that expression so that he couldn't help himself.

"You sure about this, Abe? You sure you want this? Me?"

Serious as a heart attack, he looked Ty right in the eye, reaching out to touch his cheek. "Never been more sure. Come home with me, Ty."

Ty nodded, stubble just tickling his finger. "I can do that. I can so do that."

"Cool." Relief and amusement mixed, and Abe chuckled. "Just think how much time you wasted by not calling me, Tiny."

Yeah, yeah, he had to rub it in.

"Abie, don't make me turn you over my knee and beat you."

"Oh, baby. Promises, promises."

They'd fight. And he had a feeling the John situation was far from over. But for now? Abe would settle for getting Ty where he belonged. Home with him.

Chapter 9

The chifforobe fit okay, so did the drawing table and Abe was right, there was a metric fuck-ton of light.

There was the lingering smell of fabric softener, though.

And they had to move the washer and dryer and he was going to need a dresser for his clothes and...

Sweet Christ, he was living here.

With Abe.

Ty sort of swallowed hard and sat, watching the dogs on the porch. They'd put the futon out there and the beasts thought they were kings. Still felt weird, watching the pups sleep on his bed.

What the fuck was he doing? He hadn't lived with someone since James -- never with someone he was fucking. Someone he was in love with. What if he fucked it up? What if he screwed up? What...

Fuck, thinking made his head hurt.

"Hey, baby." Abe came out, handing him a beer. "You sure you want the futon out here? We can put it in the guest room. The mutts don't go in there."

Damn, that Abe and his mind reading.

He smiled up in thanks for the beer, scooting over to give Abe some room. "The pups sure like it, though, makes them feel special."

"Yeah. Blinky? You can tell he loves how it smells like you. He keeps licking it." That grin was just wicked, Abe leaning down to lick his throat before sitting.

"That beast is something else. I'm damned fond." He grinned over, sort of leaning into Abe's arms.

"Good. He adores you." Those arms went around him, warm, strong, just holding on. "Me too. Sappy, huh?"

"Yeah, but good to know. I don't want to fuck this up." He wasn't used to having someone, someone involved with him.

"I don't either. We're gonna fight so bad..." Funny thing was, Abe didn't sound put off by the idea. He sounded positively smug.

He chuckled, shook his head. "If we do, you're sleeping on the futon with the dogs."

"You think? It's comfy at least." They sipped on their beers, watching Sheila chew Blinky's tail. "So do you think you can work in there?"

"Yeah. Yeah, actually. I do." He was sort of surprised, but he thought he could. There was a view, a breeze. "I want to bring some of my plants in, but yeah."

"Knock yourself out. Hell, knock out a wall. Just draw up whatever you want and I can make it happen, Tiny. Oh, the reception is the day before New Year's Eve. You didn't sell your tux, did you?"

He jumped when Abe pressed a sweating beer bottle against his neck.

"Cold!" He chuckled, reached back to pinch one of those fine thighs good and hard. "Nope. I still got it. Black and white shirt both."

"Oh, good." Abe jumped too, laughing against his nape. "Sexy bastard."

"Mmm..." Oh, man, he was sensitive there. "You're gonna look so hot, everybody knowing you made that hotel shine."

"She's a beauty. She's just sparkly these days." Yeah. Abe was justifiably proud. Ty'd gone over with him a day or two ago, and damn. Just, damn.

"All dressed up for Christmas, she's just right." He loved the lights, the big-assed tree in the lobby. Ty rolled his eyes at himself. Lord, he'd be singing carols pretty soon.

"Mmhmm..." Oh, Abe was getting all distracted back there. He could tell from the kisses on the back of his neck, his shoulders. "Christmas. Turkey. Mashed potatoes."

"Mmm...I like mashed potatoes. We gonna have a tree?" His nipples were getting hard and it wasn't from the chill in the air.

"You know it. Wanna go out to the tree lot soon? We'll pick out something not too lopsided. We can do popcorn. Or, if you want, I have a big old fake tree up in storage." The mindreading thing worked in his favor sometimes, as Abe reached around to tweak one of his nipples, rolling it between thumb and forefinger.

"Oh..." He leaned back, licking his lips. "Real trees smell good. Fake ones don't shed."

"We could have both... one in the front room, one..." Trailing off, Abe pushed him down sideways, sliding around to straddle him and take a kiss. Fuck, Abe was hard and hot through his sweats.

Oh. Oh, look at that. He reached out with both hands, dipping into Abe's sweats and pumping.

"Uhn. Ty. Baby. We were... weren't we talking?" That sweet cock pushed right into his hands, wet at the tip, so hot compared to his skin.

"Uh huh. Talking. Trees. We're gonna have trees." He worked the tip, moaning low as he rubbed the precome in.

Eyes as green as a Christmas tree just stared into his as Abe humped his hand, one hand next to his shoulder to brace on, the other tracing his pecs, pinching his nipples. "Oh. With popcorn... and uh. Tinsel. Sheila doesn't eat it."

"Popcorn? But popcorn's good." Silly dog. Everybody liked popcorn. With butter. Oh. Butter and a little sugar, right there on those thighs...

"No, tinsel."

Oh. Ew. Better to concentrate on Abe's thighs as they slipped free of the sweats, gold hair brushing his hands.

The papasan creaked, rocking beneath them. He leaned back a little, balancing them. "So fucking fine, Linc."

"Me?" Abe tugged at his shirt, making an impatient noise. "You're the hot one, Tiny. Just cut and beautiful."

"Pushy." He stripped off his sweatshirt right quick, shivering at the chill in the air.

"Yup." They warmed right up as Abe stretched out on him, rocking against him, skin rubbing his. "It's this thing. You make me really hot, and then I get impatient and want and then you tease me... you see? It's a vicious cycle."

"Oh. That works. I like teasing you." He grinned up, fingers just pressing in Abe's slit.

A soft noise came against his throat, Abe moaning for him. Abe pushed against him, riding his hand. "Good."

"Yeah. Good. Want you to come for me. Want to smell like you." It was easy to say that shit when they were like this.

"Oh. Oh, baby. Soon." Yeah, it was easy to see that look in Abe's eyes this close, too, the one that told him Abe was about to blow. All it would take was touching him right *there*.

"Fuck!"

Yeah. Abe came for him, shooting right into his hand. Just like that.

"Mmhmm..." He rubbed Abe's come into the long shaft, into the skin of his belly. Oh. Oh, hell yeah.

"God." Head lolling, Abe flopped on him, making him grunt. "That was a heck of a beer and tree discussion."

"Uh huh. Did we decide anything?" He grinned, nibbling on Abe's jaw.

"Two trees." Lifting his chin, Abe gave him better access, one hand just sort of wiggling into his jeans. "Popcorn and tinsel. Turkey. Gravy and potatoes... Bones for the dogs."

"Pecan pie, lover. That's important."

"Always a good thing, baby." Abe shifted, rolled them a little, getting a good grip on him. "So is this. You're so hot, Ty."

"Oh, fuck me, yes." He spread a little, hips rocking, pushing into Abe's touch.

"No. This time I'm gonna suck you." Sliding down, Abe got his jeans down around his hips, nuzzling the trail of hair on his belly. "Smell like heaven, baby."

"Oh." The touch of Abe's lips made his muscles tight as rocks. "That's something else, Linc."

"Mmm." That was all he got in reply, Abe licking at his lower belly, working down. Those work-rough hands pulled at his thighs, spreading them as wide as the jeans would allow, and his beard stubble... oh, Christ, that sent shock waves up Ty's spine.

He whimpered, lips parting on a low moan as his head went back. Nothing felt like those lips on him. Nothing ever.

The base of his cock got sweet, stinging kisses before Abe worked up to the tip, tongue pushing at his slit, gathering up his taste. One finger slid beneath his balls, pressing the sensitive skin behind.

"Yeah..." He shuddered, entire body curling toward Abe's head. "Oh, love. I. Oh."

He got a flash of Abe's eyes before those lips ran down the length of him, wet and soft, closing around him and sucking. God Almighty. He thought his head might just blow off.

Everything in him was focused on that mouth, that heat. He groaned, promises and threats just pouring from him.

Abe gave him everything he wanted, licking and sucking his cock, dropping down to suck at his sacs before surprising him with a sharp bite to his thigh.

"Fuck!" Ty shifted, cock slapping his belly. "Toothy redneck."

Breath huffing on his balls, Abe laughed, the sound rich and husky. "Wanna eat you up."

"All yours. Anything you want; just don't stop." Ty stretched up, bare back rubbing against the soft material.

"I want all of you for sure..." Fuck if Abe didn't just swallow him down again, all the way to his pubes.

All sorts of things flashed through his mind -- fantasies, perversions, dreams -- all of them working with that mouth on his cock to shove him head-first over the edge.

Abe swallowed him right down, mouth and throat working, eyes fluttering shut. The man just looked as blissed out as he felt.

"You know how much I fucking love you?" He reached down, fingers tangling in that soft hair.

"Mmm. If it's half as much as I do you, Tiny? I'm a lucky, lucky man." His cock got one last lingering kiss before Abe slid up to wrap around him, shivering a little. "Gettin' chilly."

He nodded, tugged a blanket over them both. "Fixin' to be Christmas, Linc. 'sposed to be."

"Oh. Better."

Abe chuckled as they snuggled, because it was like the blanket pull was a sign to Sheila and Blinky to come on over and flop on top of them.

"Beasts." He reached out, loving on the beasts. Their beasts.

"Yeah. But they're warm."

They snuggled even deeper, just slow and easy and happy.

"Yeah." His hand was on Abe's hip, their legs tangled up under the pups. Hell, yeah.

"Don't forget the cranberry shit, baby. We need cranberry." Sounding sleepy as all get out, Abe melted against him, just boneless.

"Mm-hmm. Whipped cream." He snuggled right in, eyes closing. Smelled good, like home. Like Abe. Just right.

Abe wandered out into his front room, just blinking at the light spilling through the windows. He braved it anyway, and plugged the lights in on the big live tree he and Tiny had gotten. It had paper chains and pictures of the dogs and popcorn hanging on it, along with this amazing 3-D star Ty had done for the top.

It smelled and looked like home.

His smaller fake tree had gone in the bedroom, so they'd have twinkly lights to fuck by, and James and Scott had given them no end of shit about it on the home tour at supper the night before.

Oh. Supper. Today they had all sorts of shit to cook. Abe let the dogs out, listening to them bark as they streaked off, and went to make some of the fancy coffee Ty had gotten at that Whole Foods place. Sure tasted good with a shot of Jack and some whipped cream.

He avoided looking at the giant pink glass vase that James had gotten them. Jesus, that thing was phallic. Maybe Tiny should take it into the office.

Ty chuckled. "Linc, you keep looking at that thing like it's fixin' to jump up and fuck you."

Grinning, he flipped Ty the bird over his shoulder. "I looks like it could. I mean, I'm all for cock, Tiny, but that thing looks like an alien probe."

"It's like one of those weird ass art dildos, all right." Ty grinned, sauntering in wearing a little black robe. "And pink. You think he was trying to tell us something?"

"I think he thought black might be too much." God, he could just imagine. "Did you look at the tree?"

He'd stuck a bunch of stuff under there, lots and lots of silly little shit, wrapped individually.

"Not yet, no." Ty came over, hands sliding around him, warm and sure. "Merry Christmas, Linc."

"Mmmm." Yeah. That was the good stuff. Presents and shit were cool, but Ty warm and firm against him, slippery robe sliding, was what life was about. Fucking A. "Merry merry, Tiny."

That little line showed up, right on schedule. "Not tiny, redneck."

Abe leaned and kissed it, right between Ty's eyes. "Mine. So, do we want decadent breakfast? Or frozen waffles and then snuggling with intent?"

"Waffles and coffee. We're planning a big dinner." That line smoothed, those eyes warm and shining, the wire-frame glasses still in the bedroom on Ty's side of the bed.

"You got it. We've got some sausage thawed too." Had to have something for the dogs. They'd pout if there wasn't fried pork fat of some kind. "I'll do that if you break out the toaster."

"Cool." Ty turned the little radio on, humming and shaking a little as he worked, tight ass just peeking out from the bottom of the robe as he bent.

Oh, fuck him raw, that was a sight. Abe slid against that sweet ass a little as he went by, heading to the fridge for sausage and milk for the coffee and some butter.

"Mmm..." He could just see the last few falling leaves, the roots that made up the edge of Ty's ink. "You're warm."

"So are you, baby." Yeah. Smoking hot. He grinned, humming along with Ty and with the radio. So easy in his bones. So good.

Waffles, coffee, sausage, Ty even poured orange juice -- it was a fine fucking morning. "We eating in the front room?"

"You bet." They had paper plates doubled up so there wouldn't be dishes, and Abe let the dogs in so they could mill about his and Ty's legs as they went on in to sit on the huge old davenport he and Ty had bought at the flea market not too long ago.

Ty settled damn near in his lap, legs over the top of his. "Man, look at all the stuff under the tree."

"Amazing, huh?"

Tossing Sheila a bit of sausage, he balanced his plate on Ty's belly so he could touch while he ate. The best of both worlds.

"Fucking perfect." Ty nibbled, eating with his fingers, licking them clean. "You know, I never thought I'd have this. I've spent the last ten holidays in Aruba, playing."

"This is better, right?" Okay, so he wasn't usually one for needy handholding, but he needed to know. It was hellacious better for him than sitting in his house with a beer and a bucket of KFC.

"This is..." Ty shrugged, reached out to cup his jaw, thumb stroking his cheek. "Yeah. Yeah, way better."

"Oh, good." Blinky licked Ty's toes, making everything shake a minute, and Abe just hooted, nipping at Ty's finger and thumb. "Someone wants some meat."

"Would that be you, Linc?" Abe fed both dogs a bite, low laughter just filling the air.

"Well, I'm all for it, Tiny. You know it." Hell, yes. In all forms. He wiggled a little, scooping up some waffle and maple syrup. "But I'm all for ripping into presents and watching the dogs eat ribbons too."

"Ribbons are *not* dog food." He couldn't hide the grin. Those dogs? Were so not living the redneck life. Sheila came back from the groomers with nail polish, for fuck's sake. She pouted for a month.

Still, Blinky didn't smell like whatever that dead thing was anymore, and it made Ty happy, so it was a win-win. He fed Sheila a bit of waffle just for thinking about the polish. "Nope, but they'll try. Of course, with the amount of t-o-y-s you and James got them..."

"Puppies deserve Christmas, too, Linc." Ty smiled up, unabashed. The damn pups had more chew toys and bones than an entire pack could eat.

Even if Sheila went through twice her weight in them when she had pink toenails. Frustration was hell on a dog. "They do. So do we. Have I mentioned how good it is?"

"Once or twice. Tell me again." Ty leaned up, begging a kiss.

He gave it. Oh, it wasn't like they didn't fight. Fuck, he still had the bruise on his ass from their last tie up about John, as Ty had pinched him so hard it had made him squeal like a pig. This kiss, though, was all happy and a lot horny.

Ty moaned, the sound all about wanting, and then, just about the time they were getting hot, Ty backed off. "Presents."

"Mmhn?" Oh, right. Paper. Silliness. "Right."

Shit, his belly was all sticky where they'd smashed the paper plates against him as they kissed. "Just let me toss this shit and wash the syrup off."

"Ooooh... syrup." Ty's eyes lit up and he slid down, tongue dragging along the sticky mess, tugging Abe's hairs.

He laughed out loud, hands rubbing over Ty's head. "Mmm. You're better than the dogs, baby."

Oh, ho. He got a nip for that, sharp and stinging. "Be good, redneck."

"Good?" There was a crepe paper bell hanging from the ceiling, red and green turning in lazy spirals. His momma had sent about fifty of the damned things. Abe had a great view of it as he tipped his head back and arched his belly up.

"It's hard to be good with your mouth on me, Ty."

"Not my fault, Abe. You taste... Yeah." Ty kept licking, fingers moving to Abe's thighs.

Abe spread, loving the play of Ty's fingers on his skin, needing more. His cock rose, heavy between his thighs, his balls drawing up and making him shiver.

Ty cupped his ass, thumbs sliding beside his prick, his balls, just petting as that mouth moved down.

His breath started to hitch in his chest. "Ty. Yeah. Oh, God, yeah."

Lord. He was pretty sure out of the corner of his eye he saw Blinky *eating* a paper plate, but he just couldn't care.

"Yeah." Ty's eyelashes tickled his belly, lips opening over the tip of his cock and just sort of inhaling him.

The whole room, the whole fucking world, went away. Everything but Ty disappeared and Abe let his hips rise up, let himself just beg for it.

"Please, Ty. Baby. Please. Fuck." Ty didn't answer, just nodded and starting sucking Abe's brains out through his cock, strong and steady. Sweet fuck. His belly pulled in, his ass tightened up, and Abe just started fucking Ty's face, needing it so bad he was shaking. "Love. Love you, baby."

Ty pulled away and he twisted, groaning in protest, and then those muscled as fuck thighs straddled him, Ty sinking down on his cock, just like that. "Abe! Love!"

His jaw dropped, his whole body shaking as he pushed up. "Ty. Holy Jesus, baby. I can't."

What he couldn't do was hold still, and he started rocking, his chest heaving as hard as his hips.

"Oh. Oh, that's... Yeah." Ty's hands were on his chest, head thrown back, riding him for all he was worth. So fucking fine.

Hands sliding up, Abe touched Ty's belly, his chest, pinching those hard little nipples. He rocked, let Ty ride him, the couch cushions sinking down under him. Ty squeezed around him, deep, happy sounds pouring out. One hand slid down his belly, reaching to work that thick prick. His own hand closed over Ty's, working them both up and down, and, oh, that was something. Really damned something. Abe wriggled, getting better leverage, and started really going to town, slamming up into Ty.

"Yes. Yes, love." Ty nodded, words pouring between them, Ty giving it up, giving him everything.

Abe looked right into Ty's eyes as he came, and a man couldn't ask for a better fucking Christmas present than that look, all wonder and need and holy hell hot. Abe groaned, thrashing, daring Ty to come with him.

Heat sprayed over his hand, his name just echoing through the house.

"Now *that's* the way to wake up on a Christmas morning."

"Uh...uh huh." Ty nodded, moaning as he leaned in.

Abe stroked Ty's back, grinning up at the ceiling some more. "Blinky definitely ate that plate, Tiny."

"We'll buy more."

"Uh huh." But Ty could deal with the icky part. Abe pulled him close. "Maybe we ought to nap a bit."

"Mmm. Napping is good. I like that."

The crinkling sound of tearing wrapping paper made him lift his head and growl, tossing a pillow at Sheila. "Or maybe we ought to open presents."

"She's too smart for her own good." Ty looked over, nudging Blinky's butt. "And don't you start, shithead."

Blinky turned right around and started licking all sorts of Ty's parts, wagging and looking anxious. God, that dog loved Tiny. Abe understood why.

"Okay, get off me, muscle man, and we'll let them each unwrap one. I bet they leave us along after that."

Ty tumbled onto the floor, grabbing Blinky and wrestling with the pup, loving on him until that tail was beating the floor. "Was Santa good to you, beast? Did he bring you bones and toys and a new bowl with your name on it?"

Abe watched for a minute, grinning like an idiot, before getting up and getting Ty's robe and his own sweats. Fun as it was to go naked, it was not so fun to get stomped on the balls by a big doggie foot. Then he went and grabbed Sheila's collar. "C'mere you. No tearing up my presents. I've got bacon for you. A whole bag."

Ty cackled as Sheila's head tilted and she sat, almost vibrating she was so still.

Yeah. His baby girl knew that word. Hell, even Blinky knew bacon, because he came and sat next to Sheila, tail thumping. Abe grabbed the wrapped bag of bacon treats and waggled it, watching their eyes move.

Ty just hooted, the sound ringing out and making Abe grin. Lord. What would James say if he knew Tiny could make that noise.

The dogs had suffered enough, so Abe unwrapped the treats and opened them, tossing two to each dog and watching them run off to eat. Lord, lord. Abe patted the floor next to him.

"Come open a few before they get back, baby."

Ty nodded, grabbed a square box and handed it over to him. "You, too."

"'kay. Here, you take this one." The first one was simple, just some of those Prismacolor pencils Ty liked, but it was nice to be able to sit and watch Ty's face.

Ty opened up the package, eyes lighting right on up. "Oh, excellent, thank you!"

He got a warm, long kiss, then his box was pushed into his hand. There were four wood knots in there -- ebony, ironwood, bacote, and walnut.

Oh. Abe ran his fingers over the ironwood, feeling how smooth it would be when he polished it up. The walnut told him all sorts of stories when he held it, letting him know it would become a face. Damn. Abe grinned.

"Oh, man, Ty. These are fucking great. Thank you."

Ty grinned like a fool. "I figured you could find a use for them, Linc."

"You know it." He took a kiss, leaning to really let Tiny know how he felt about them, tongue pushing in.

Ty's hand cupped his jaw, eyes just shining. Damn.

It wasn't the pencils or the wood. Yeah, okay, that kind of wood. Abe knew that. It was all of the other good stuff that they had. The dogs, the hot sex, the house, the whole together thing. Even the fights. It was all that. The kiss went even deeper, just stretching until they had to breathe.

Ty rested against him, forehead to forehead.

"Mmmm. Never have opened presents this way before for sure."

"Nope, I like it. We should make it a tradition."

"We should." He nodded happily, handing over another present. Yeah, put Tiny off guard with the art stuff, then sock it to 'im with the wee box with the nipple clamps.

The markers were grinned over, the papers actually earned him a hard kiss. In return he got a set of carving tools and a couple of CDs. Not bad, not bad at all.

"Okay. Here. Try this one." He tossed the lurking mutts a few more bacons, not wanting them to interrupt.

"Yeah?" Ty tore off the paper, eyebrows flying up when he saw the clamps, shiny against the black satin of the box. "Oh, man. Look at those..."

No sense getting all embarrassed. He'd bought the damned things after all. Abe decided to attribute his hot cheeks to being horny. "You like them?"

Ty pulled one out, holding it up to the light. "Oh, they're something else. They're gonna look so hot."

His nipples went tight and hot. "Yeah. After the other day. Well. I went looking." God, the look on Ty's face was worth it, for sure.

"Oh, fuck. I know what we're doing this afternoon..." Ty leaned down, licked one nipple with that hot-as-fuck tongue.

Abe jumped, petting Ty's back. "Mmhmm. I was just thinking that. After we get all the food in the oven we'll have, oh. Two hours?"

"Oh, yeah. I? Can do amazing things with two hours."

"I knew that about you, baby." Shifting, he adjusted himself, grinning sheepishly. "I like it too. Should we let the dogs have a new t-o-y?"

"Yeah. I got one more for you, though." Ty handed him a big-assed flat piece from behind the tree. He got the paper off, eyes going wide. It was Ty's ink, painted on a big canvas and framed, his own tat integrated right in so they looked like they were designed together.

"Oh. Ty." Damn. Oh, damn. He just stared at it, his mouth sort of hanging open. It was them, for sure. Together. And right from Ty's hand. He bowled Ty over, kissing him hard and deep.

"Thank you."

Ty nodded. "Love you, yeah? Damned pushy redneck."

"Mmhmm. You know it, you nutbag." He grinned down, kissing some more before nodding. "Love you too. Wanted you a long time. Got you now and I'm not letting go."

"John's not gonna be happy to hear that. He thinks you're a bad influence." Ty winked, eyes reflecting the lights from the tree.

"I am." John was an old fart, and Abe refused to kowtow. "I want you to be unstressed, Tiny. And happy. So I'll poke and push and fight him tooth and nail."

"I'm happy. Not tiny, but happy." Ty's lips brushed his jaw.

"Not tiny at all." He stroked the nape of Ty's neck, seeking out the sensitive spots. "Happy is a fine thing."

"Mmhmm." They basked, leaning against the big-assed sofa, all sort of tangled together.

"So." He grinned, pushing a wrapped bone at Sheila with his toes. "Who gets to stick their hand up the turkey's butt?"

"Ooh! Turkey fisting! What more could a man want?"

"Fisting..." Now there was something. Something. Huh. "Have you ever..."

"Well." Ty sort of blinked at him. "Yeah. I mean, I've done, not been done because, you know, that's... Big. Real. And I didn't do real. Before you."

God. Abe held himself still when he wanted to just bounce off the walls. That might cause Tiny to clam up, and he loved what he was hearing. Abe stroked Ty's belly, pushing the robe aside, letting his fingers catch on the little hairs.

"Did the guy...did he like it?"

"Yeah. He was flying. It was... I don't know." Ty moved closer to him, almost cuddling. "His partner was there, watching, and I sorta wondered about that, about why, but at the time? I was just about trying stuff."

"My wild child." He nibbled Ty's shoulder, right there where it met the body, knowing it made Ty shiver. "I bet it was a control thing. But who knows? I just like the doing."

"Uhn... yeah. Yeah. I... I had some times, before I settled, met John."

"You said." Sometimes he just burned with curiosity. Especially when he was licking at Ty's piercing scars, wondering what they would have looked like. Still, he was glad Ty was settled enough to want a more quiet life. They'd both sown their oats.

"That was something else." Ty grinned, hands petting and stroking. "What about you, Linc? You ever seen it happen? Done it?"

"Nope. Not outside of porno movies and the internet." Yeah, yeah. Who didn't look at that shit? "I did some fun stuff, but I never had the urge, I guess."

Ty nodded. "I didn't catch at all, not from just random guys. It wasn't my thing."

This from the man who rode him like he was a prize bull not an hour ago.

Abe liked it all. Pitching. Catching. But with Ty? Jesus, he loved it. Any way he could get it. He licked his way to Ty's collarbone. "I'm a little oral."

"Mmhmm... you? Oral?" Ty moaned, stretched. "You're something else. I'd let you in, you know? Give it all up."

Abe moaned, biting Ty's throat. "You would. God, baby. You would. And it might just kill me."

"Mmhmm..." Fingers tangled up in his hair, Ty getting hot against him.

"I could just see it, Ty, you all stretched around me." He could in his mind's eye, and it made him hot as all get out. God, he just wanted to eat Ty up.

"Abe." Fuck, his name sounded like a prayer, just like that.

"Uh huh. So good. I can almost feel you." He moved, pushing the robe again until it fell off, bending to lick one of Ty's nipples, to bite at it.

Ty arched right into him. "Not gonna wait 'til this afternoon for more, you keep that up."

"That's okay. We can eat supper late instead of having dinner in the middle of the day. Or whatever." Yeah. He nuzzled into Ty's armpit, breathing deep. Hot.

"Mmhmm. Works for me. Just don't stop, Linc."

"Won't." Pushing Ty down on his back, Abe bent over him, licking down Ty's ribs to bite at his hipbone, running his tongue over the spot where the muscle cut away just underneath. Ty's cock filled, the scent of his skin strong and male and just hinting of soap. Abe waited, held off on that prize, just nudging it with his chin as he worked across to the other hip, sucking at the top of Ty's thigh.

"Shit, Linc. Your mouth. So hot." Those muscles went tight as a boar's backside.

"Mmmm. I like the way you taste." Better than sausage and waffles, even. He scraped his chin along Ty's inner thigh, his morning whiskers catching, before running his tongue up under Ty's balls, lifting them.

"Uh huh. Abe. Linc. Feel you." Ty spread, legs moving a little.

Opening up wide, he took Ty's sacs into his mouth, first one side, then the other, sucking gently. Fucking wonderful. Ty tasted musky and wild, so hot it was addictive.

Ty stilled, deep little moans filling the air, making him ache. Abe shivered, closing his hand around Ty's cock as he lifted Ty up with the other hand, tongue slipping down to press Ty's hole. Nah, he wasn't obsessing about the fisting thing one bit.

Ty's fingers traced around his wrist, a deep groan echoing. "Fucking give you anything, Linc. All of me."

Damn it, Tiny would do it, too. Abe nodded, just licking the sensitive skin, knowing Ty would still be a little sore, so not pushing it. Then he lifted up and sucked Ty's cock right down, lips meeting his hand. Just boom.

"Oh, sweet Christ." Ty's belly rippled, the man sitting up, curling around his head.

One finger slid right inside Ty's hole where Abe had wet it before, and he tightened his lips around Ty's prick, just pulling. He loved making this man feel good, loved the way Ty called his name and squirmed.

He could feel Ty's cock swell, feel that body tighten and squeeze around his finger.

A moan escaped around Ty's prick, and Abe sucked harder, just demanding that Ty come, needing to taste. He stroked up as his mouth slid down, and he pushed a second finger inside, crooking his fingers just so.

Ty jerked, filling his mouth, entire body just shaking.

Abe sucked it all down, licking gently as Ty shuddered, moaning as Ty's body pulled at his fingers. "Oh, baby. Ty."

"Yeah." Ty shifted, moving slow and easy, riding his touch.

He slid up, kissing and licking all the way, until he reached Ty's mouth. "Hey."

"Hey." Ty kissed him like the man meant it, tongue pushing deep, fucking his lips.

God. Merry Christmas to me, he thought. He arched against Ty, just happy as a clam. His hands traced that sweet tat, just like they did every time he could reach it, feeling Ty's muscles moving under his hands. Built bastard.

His built bastard, holding and touching and stealing his breath.

He rested his forehead against Ty's, hips rocking to push his cock against Ty's skin. "Happy, baby. Ty. Tiny. Love you."

"Love." Ty nodded, hand on his ass helping him move, holding him close.

So close. His cock throbbed, making his belly and ass clench tight. "I gotta."

"Come on. Come on, Linc. I'll smell like you all day."

"Oh, fuck." He came so hard, so good, that he just wailed. Hell, the sound might even embarrass him later.

They just slumped together, panting so hard they'd make the dogs proud. "Oh. Christ. Merry Christmas, Linc."

"Merry Christmas, Tiny." He kissed Ty's throat, laughing as the sound of dogs crunching bones filled the room. "Merry Christmas to hell and back."

Ty groaned, stretched out on the sofa. "I'm never fucking eating again, Linc."

Turkey and dressing and cranberry stuff and pie and rolls and, oh, *God* he was going to have to spend a month in the gym.

Maybe two.

Even the puppies were swollen and napping, curled together in a pile.

Abe nodded, flopping on the floor and resting one cheek on his thigh. "I hear you, baby. That was a hellacious good feast. I look like a python. You can see the bulge in my belly."

Ty nodded, chuckled. "It was amazing. That turkey? Was gigantic. We'll be eating leftovers for a month."

"Yeah." Abe stroked his leg idly, fingers light and gentle. "That's good though. Oh! And we have to do the wishbone."

"Oh, yeah. How do you do it? Longest piece wins? Shortest?"

"Longest. Supposed to be good luck for the rest of the year." Abe burped, making Blinky and Sheila look up a moment. "We need to get black-eyed peas for New Year's."

"Oooh. Yeah. With pot roast instead of salt pork, though. I fucking hate salt pork." He reached out, petting Abe lazily. God, that blond hair felt good.

"Mmhmm. And we can have cornbread. I like cornbread." How they could be talking food after what they'd just eaten. Heaven help them.

"Oh, yeah. We can invite James and his dancer, maybe play cards?" God, they were... homey. It was vaguely creepy.

"Hey, that's a good idea." Didn't sound like his own personal redneck was appalled, so maybe that was okay. "A coconut pie and we're set. Mmm. Pie. That pecan was a masterpiece."

"Uh huh. Even if I'm never eating again." Ty grinned, starting to rub Abe's neck.

Abe laughed. "Yeah. Not." Moving closer, Abe leaned up to kiss him, easy and happy.

Mmm... pecan pie kisses. He smiled, pushed closer, enjoying that sweet and rich and butter and cream.

"All of the taste, none of the calories." They both laughed into the kiss, Abe's hand coming up to cup the back of his head, pull him down for even more.

He dove in, taking his time, loving on Abe with all he was. Damn, the man was pure sex.

He got as good as he gave, Abe licking his lips, biting at them. Those rough hands slid down over his neck, one cupping his throat, the other rasping over his nape.

"Mmm... c'mere, yeah. Snuggle with me." That's why they'd bought the sofa, because they'd fit -- well, that and Abe had a little woodworkergasm over the pine.

It took some wrangling, but soon enough Abe had scrambled up half on top of him and half between him and the back of the couch. They pressed together all along, Abe fitting him like a jigsaw puzzle piece.

"Mmmm. We should stay like this for at least a month." He stroked Abe's hip, Abe's thigh. "I might have to move at some point to get those nipple clamps."

"And lube. We'll need lube, Tiny." Abe nuzzled his shoulder, lips slipping over the hot spots.

"Mmhmm. Lube, the old soft sheets..." He wasn't sure what was more exciting -- the thought of Abe's hand in him or the way it excited his lover.

"Yeah. Would want it to be right, baby." He could feel how hot Abe's cheek was against his shoulder, how Abe was smiling.

"You'd make it right." He petted Abe's head, humming low. "You'd make it good."

"I'd take my time. You know? Touch you all over first. I like the way you feel, Ty. Your pretty muscles." Abe put his money where his mouth was, touching him everywhere he could reach.

"Would you want me on my back or on hands and knees?" Talking about it was almost hotter than the touching.

Green eyes flashed up at him, Abe's face flushed a deep red. "Hands and knees is easier I guess. And I could see your tat. But I'd want you on your back. Your face when you come, Ty. Oh, fuck, it's amazing."

His own cheeks went hot, lips parting. "Abe. Christ, the things you say. I'd want to see. To remember."

"Both of us should see that, baby." He got a kiss, Abe's tongue slipping in. "Both of us should watch my hand inside you, a little at a time."

Oh. He might have whimpered, might have cried out.

"Fuck, Ty. I can almost feel how tight you'd be." Abe barely touched him now, at least not with his hands, just watched him, those eyes fever bright.

"I'd feel you for days, filling me up. Touching me." He whispered the words against Abe's lips. "I don't let anyone all the way in, nobody but you."

"Wouldn't want anyone else to. Ever." There was something about Abe in possessive mode...

"No. Nobody else." Just Abe.

"Fuck, baby." Breathing hard, Abe shifted against him, not rubbing, just getting closer. "The way your belly would ripple? And the way your cock would tremble for me? Jesus."

"You'll be able to feel my heartbeat, all around you." He remembered that, remembered thinking the man watching was a fool, to share that.

"Shit. I. Oh, that might kill me." Now he felt Abe's cock, hard against his hip. Pushing and poking.

"No. Gonna make you fly. It'll make you come, just from watching."

"Yeah. Oh, hell, yes. You will." Abe panted, breath falling on his skin. "You will, baby."

"Fuck, you're hot. I can feel you." He turned his head and caught Abe's earlobe, bit it.

"Make me hot, Ty. I just can't believe it sometimes." One of Abe's legs slid up over his, the hair rasping, skin just on fire.

"Yeah, my own personal redneck." His home, truth be told.

"Yours, Tiny. So, so yours." Abe bit back, teeth scraping his shoulder.

"Oh..." That gave him goosebumps, the sting sweet enough he'd forgive the Tiny.

This time.

"Gonna touch you inside, Ty. So deep." Abe touched him on the outside now, just lightly pinching his nipple.

"So deep I'll feel you forever." Oh, man. They were gonna have to do it on a Friday just to have the weekend to recover and not come every time they saw each other.

"And I'll always know what it's like to hold you in the palm of my hand." Abe reached down, cupped his cock.

"Yeah." The word just whispered out of him and he brought their mouths together, tongue tracing Abe's lips, teeth.

Abe just kissed him, moaning, hand moving on him. God, Abe just gave him everything.

Heat flooded him, the images of what they were thinking about doing flashing through his mind.

The kiss ended because they had to breathe, but as soon as Abe drew in a deep breath he was all over Ty again, licking and nibbling, whispering about slick skin and the heat inside him and how amazing it would be.

"Driving me crazy, Linc. Want it, so bad. So much." He nipped Abe's ear, tugging a little with his teeth.

"Makes me crazy just thinking about it." He could tell. Abe was just panting. "Kinda scared too."

"I trust you." He nodded, fingers working one of Abe's nipples, rolling and squeezing.

"I know. I'm not sure *I* do." But Abe was gasping, rolling against him, the hand cupping him hot and a little rough, but not painful. Never painful.

"Then we'll do it... Oh. Oh, fuck me." He shook, lips parted as Abe drove him higher. "We'll do it when you're ready."

"Okay, baby. Soon. But now... yeah, I wanna fuck you." They were both up again, both just shaking with it.

"Yeah. Yeah, Abe. Need." He nodded, spreading out on the sofa.

"Fuck." Abe looked around, looking desperate as hell. "Where in hell did we put that lotion?" That was his Abe. Eye on the prize, and his comfort.

"Uh... Little wood box?" One of the best parts about living with a woodworker was the random boxes.

"Oh." There it was, right there on the coffee table, and Abe got it, fumbling a little but looking so triumphant when he got it open that it was fucking hilarious.

"Mmm." He pulled one leg up, exposing himself to Abe's eyes.

Those green eyes widened, Abe moving back between his legs, just staring. "God, Ty. You just."

Yeah, he could tell Abe was right there, because Abe trailed right off and reached out instead, wet fingers circling his hole.

"Mm-hmm." He stretched, body rocking, reaching for Abe's touch, Abe's fingers.

One of those fingers just slipped right in, Abe's eyes watching right where it disappeared, intent as hell.

Oh, Christ. Abe made him feel like the sexiest thing ever, made him feel fucking hot.

That one finger worked him, opened him until another slid in alongside, pushing wide.

"Mmm..." He closed his eyes, started rocking, started riding that touch.

"You know it. Fuck, you're hot, baby. Hot and tight." Cool lube surprised the hell out of him as Abe squirted more on him, a third finger pushing and pushing, teasing him with what they'd been talking about.

It made him moan, sink further into the cushions and spread wide, letting Abe in.

"Oh, God. Ty." Abe looked fucking blown away, just awed, eyes heavy-lidded and hot. "Love you."

"Uh huh. Love. Linc. Damn." He was just soaring with it, body shifting and sliding and taking everything Abe offered.

The fourth finger and Abe's thumb teased him, brushed his hole, making him shiver, but Abe pulled away, reaching down to slick up that thick cock. "Want in. Now."

"Yours. Yeah. Come on, now." He was acting like a slut for it, just begging.

Abe blinked, then moved fast, lining up and pushing into him, just like that. They slid and locked, Abe fitting him just like he was meant to.

His moan was pushed right on out of him, sweet as honey. His hands wrapped around Abe's arms, holding on, just feeling.

"Ty. Baby. Love." Abe really started moving, rocking them, the couch creaking in the best way. In and out Abe thrust, sweat dripping down on him.

He just nodded, his whole focus on his ass, the stretch and heat and pull inside him.

God, that heat. Abe pounded him, grunting as he pushed and rubbed, finally reaching for Ty's cock and pulling.

"Yeah. Yeah. Fuck." Everything inside him got all tight and blistering hot, his whole body aching.

"Ty." It sounded torn right out, Abe moaning as his hips slammed against Ty's so hard it stung. Abe filled him up, liquid heat pushing into him as Abe shot, that face above his flushed and damp.

It was the look in Abe's eyes that pushed him over, that look that was all about him, about them. It was more than anyone could bear.

Abe held him, stayed in him, just staring down at him as they caught their breath. "Damn, Tiny."

"Uh huh." He just sort of nodded, blinked, watching. "Uh huh."

"Never eating again. But we're definitely gonna do... the other."

"We are. On a Friday."

Chapter 10

Abe kinda wandered around the kitchen, shoving the puppers out of the way every time he turned mid-pace. It was like they hoped bacon would just fall from his hands.

It was amazing how fast he got used to having Tiny home for supper. Usually if Ty was going to be late he called, so Abe didn't start dinner and then have it go bad. Damn it, where was he?

He heard the motorcycle roar up, gravel just flying, scattering. Uh-oh.

Someone was in a rotten mood. He sent Blinky on out first, knowing that cold wet nose and those big eyes would make a world of difference.

Abe waited a good while, then he heard the clank clank clank of the weights in the garage. Lord, lord. Fast as they were going, Tiny was gonna hurt something.

And Lord knew, he didn't want the man to pull a groin muscle or something.

Abe went looking, heading out to maybe cut Ty off at the pass. "Baby? You okay?"

Ty was down to his briefs, sweat already pouring, muscles just standing out. "No. No, I'm not fucking okay."

Neither was Abe. He was gonna have a fucking seizure from the hotness of a pumped Ty. He had to clear his throat to talk.

"What's up?"

"Fucking John came up to the office. 'Heard you lost your house, Jefferson.' 'Heard you lost the Gerardi account, Jefferson.' 'Think your James might need a real position, Jefferson?'"

Those weights went up and down and up, over and over.

Oh, that old fart. Jesus. Abe went to spot Ty, waiting until those strong arm muscles shook before wrestling the weight back up on the bar. "Not gonna let you hurt yourself over him."

Ty was panting, muscles standing out, bulging. "I'm so fucking pissed off, Linc. I just wanted to beat the fuck out of him."

"I bet you did, baby." Hell, he wanted to for making Ty so damned mad. Abe leaned down, stroking those tight pecs. "Anything I can do?"

Ty's nipples went hard, muscles like rocks. "Be careful, Abe. I'm riled up."

"So?" Like he couldn't live up to the challenge? He tweaked one nipple. Hard. "Of course if you can't take it, Tiny..."

Ty actually growled, standing up, chest slapping against his. "Not. Tiny."

He puffed up a little too, giving Ty the bigger target he needed. "Yeah? Prove it."

Ty pushed, hands fisting in his shirt, the cloth giving those muscles not even a bit of trouble as the buttons let loose.

Damn. His breath whooshed out, that strength just fucking making him hot as hell. "That's a good start."

Those hands dragged over his chest, pulling at his skin, his nipples. "I'll show you a good start."

"Bring it on, baby." He remembered at the last minute he was supposed to be letting Ty blow off steam, and he stepped back, taunting just enough. He hoped.

Ty followed, eyes hot, hungry, devouring him and he got herded toward the weight bench.

He let it hit his knees and sat down, spreading his thighs and tilting his hips up. "Come on, Tiny. Show me what's what."

Ty grabbed his hands, held them against the bar of the weights, pressing them against the cold metal. Ty's mouth crashed down on his, tongue pushing in, taking him.

Abe grunted and let Ty have him, opening right up. He pushed right back with his lower body, though, half struggle, half rub.

Ty pushed back, forcing him down, but controlling it, not hurting, not bruising. Always fucking holding back.

The one person Ty shouldn't have to hold back with was him. He scraped his short nails down Ty's back, pulling out of the kiss. "Come *on*, Ty. Show me how bad you want it."

"Pushy bastard." Ty's fingers tangled in his hair, tugging his head back, teeth sharp on his throat. "Beautiful fucking bastard."

"Yours. All yours, baby." One leg rose, wrapped around Ty's thigh. "But I need you, Ty. So bad. Give it to me."

"Yeah. Yeah, Linc." Ty pushed down against him, just grinding them together, rocking him into the bench.

That was more like it. That was what he needed, and more important, what Ty needed. He tilted his head back, offering more skin, more everything. Ty's mouth fastened back onto him, toothy and sharp, just pulling the blood right up to the surface, marking him.

"Fuck, Ty!" God. His nipples throbbed, his cock rose high and tight, and Abe lost track of what he was doing this for and just started... well, doing it.

Ty put his hands back up on the bar, face pushing into the soft hairs under his arms, one hand tugging and tearing at his jeans.

Yeah. He held on to the bar so hard his fingers hurt, rolling his hips and sucking in his gut to give Ty more room. His moans came loud and strong, and Abe almost grinned at himself. God, he was a slut.

Ty shoved his jeans down, then looked up at him, eyes glowing, hungry. "Want to draw this. Want to eat you up more. Don't let go."

"Not gonna." Ty drawing him was about the sexiest thing there ever was. Right behind that look in Ty's eyes. 'Course he'd bet he looked just as needy.

"Beautiful son of a bitch." Ty growled, spreading him wide and leaning down between his thighs. "Smell so fucking hot, Linc."

"Gonna taste me, baby? Touch me there?" Yeah. Oh yeah.

"Yeah. Need." Ty's thumbs dug into his thighs, bruising as they spread them, as that mouth brushed over his shaft, his balls.

His skin broke out in goosebumps as every muscle in his body went tight, screaming to move and touch and take. He let Ty run the show, though, let him set the pace.

"Mine. You're mine and I fucking love you, Abe." Ty rumbled, then took his prick in deep, sucking hard enough to steal his breath.

Damn. That was...was that a squeal or a whimper? He'd think about it later. Right now he just let Abe take him in, his hips rising and falling sharply.

Ty's hands cupped his ass, encouraging his motions, his thrusts. His cock slipped deep, Ty swallowing around the tip before backing off again.

His arms strained against the weight bar, pulling down as his lower body went up over and over. He neck and shoulders held his weight, that and Ty's strong arms. He couldn't talk anymore, just pant, shaking like a fucking leaf. Over and over Ty pulled and swallowed and squeezed, driving him higher, not letting him relax, even a little.

"Ty..." He groaned it out, not even knowing what he was begging for. Finish me off or fuck me or something. God.

Ty's hands moved, both thumbs pushing inside him, spreading him wide.

"Fuck!" That did it. Abe just lost it, shooting so hard he saw stars, his whole body bucking and rolling.

Ty panted, forehead against his belly, hands just holding him. "Damn."

"Gonna fuck me, Tiny? Really make me feel it?" He unclenched one hand, ruffled Ty's hair.

"Mmhmm." Ty nodded, climbed up onto the weight bench. "There room here?"

"Barely." They'd make do though. Abe wasn't moving anymore than it would take him to get Ty inside. "But it'll do. Come on."

"Bossy." Ty licked his palm, then got his cock slicked. "You sure you're ready?"

"Yeah." Even if he wasn't, he was. Or something like that. He was so damned relaxed from coming that it was now or nap. "Now, Ty. Right fucking now."

Ty leaned in, bit his bottom lip good and hard as that prick stretched him, filled him. "Yeah. Now."

"Uhn. Baby." The burn was there, but no so bad he couldn't take it. Made it better, actually, knowing that Ty needed him that badly. He wrapped his legs around Ty's back.

Ty wasn't careful, didn't ask, just rested that forehead against his shoulder and went to town. Abe took every thrust as it rocked him, rocked the weight bench. His cock twitched, making him look at it in amazement. Damn. Ty took him, lips finding one nipple as those hands found the bars of the bench, muscles going tense and hard.

Damn. Ty knew what got him. So knew. Abe grunted, pressing up to take more. They generated a shitload of heat between them, Ty's belly slick against his own. "Ty. I need you to... gonna. Damn."

He was already so close he kinda hurt, and he clamped down on Ty hard, squeezing down with his body. Abe keened, heat just flooding him, Ty's hips punching his ass, belly rubbing his cock.

"Oh, baby. Just. Right there." Ty jerked against him and damned if his cock didn't just let go, weaker, but coming, no doubt about it.

Ty slumped against him, heart pounding.

"Mmmm." Stroking Ty's back gave him a good feel of hot, sweaty skin, and that was the best appetizer for supper a man could have. "Better?"

Ty nodded, tongue dragging on his chest. "Uh huh. You good?"

"I am so good you wouldn't believe." Abe laughed as his belly rumbled. "Hungry. But good."

"Mmm. Hungry. I could handle eating."

"Cool." He thought on it for a minute. "How about we order in. Open that good bottle of wine?"

"Yeah? I'm so there. We could call and shower before they got here."

"We could." That was more like his Ty. Damn that old fart John anyway. He patted Ty's ass.

"Come on, Tiny, let me up and we'll order what? Italian? Chinese?"

"How about greasy, normal old pizza? We could get breadsticks and finish the cheesecake in the fridge."

"Oh, that sounds fantastic." It did, too. He loved it when Ty went all plebian. "Let's do it."

"Cool." Ty stood, helped him up, the hunted look gone from those eyes.

"You know it." Kissing Ty's cheek, he took one of those pretty hands and led Ty back into the house. Looked like they were just in time for supper after all.

If James complained about the smell one more time, Ty was going to fire him.

He was tired of the white and the black and the boring and damn it, if there weren't any clients? He wasn't going to pretend.

So he was in jeans and a t-shirt, painting the walls a warm gold. James was about to swallow his tongue. It was too fucking cool.

"Smells like paint. Hey, James. Is he in?" He heard Abe come breezing in, and he sounded damned pleased with himself too.

"He's in there. He's lost his mind. I blame you." James was chuckling, the sound carried in with Abe.

"I'm all for the blame." Sailing in, Abe grinned at him, coming to pinch his ass. "Hey, Tiny, how's it hanging."

"Not tiny." He grinned back, winked. "I'm good. I wasn't expecting to see you today. Nice surprise... Abie."

"I had to stop by and tell you about the mantelpiece I just got commissioned. You know the Lerner Mansion? They want me to replace the piece in the main hall."

"No shit?" He felt the grin just get huge. The Lerner Mansion was special -- a bigger honor than the hotel. "Oh, man. Congratulations! Have a seat. Tell me all about it."

"Well, it was old lady whatsername. From the hotel?" Abe bounced into Ty's desk chair. "She recommended me. Said even if John thought I was uncouth as all get out, I was good. And Ty. Man. I get to use all sorts of real wood. No expense spared."

John thought his Abe was uncouth? Motherfucker. Ty was going to have to go down and beat him to death. "Have you decided what you're going to do, yet?"

"They want something reminiscent of the one that dry rotted. Frothy Victorian curlicue. So I'm doing some serious curves, baby." Abe spun in the chair, looking all of five years old.

He chuckled, starting to paint again, trying not to think about John. "I told you, those ladies are the key to all sorts of magic."

"Uh huh." The chair squeaked and suddenly he was in Abe's lap, feet kicking a little as he tried to get his balance. Abe nibbled his ear. "Hey."

"Oh. Oh, hey." He blinked up into a pair of happy damned eyes. "You did good, Linc."

"Hey, you did it. And I, uh..." Those cheeks went red, Abe kissing his cheek. "I might have volunteered you to refurbish a couple of art deco murals. You'll get paid a pretty penny."

"Oh." His eyes went wide, searching Abe's. "Shit. You... You didn't have to put your ass on the line, Abe, but... thank you."

Abe looked right back. He might try to avoid that eye contact at first, but Abe never hid for long. "I didn't put my ass on the line, baby. You're the best fucking artist."

Nobody ever said that. Nobody ever saw that. Not in years. "I..."

He just didn't know what the fuck to say.

"And you're painting your walls. I'm fucking impressed." Abe swatted him, jolting him out of his shock.

"Yeah. Yeah, I'm tired of the stark, you know? I wanted some color. Thought it would go with my desk." Needed some color.

"Want some help? Two sets of hands will get it done quicker. We could do lunch after." God, that smile was something.

"I'd love that." He leaned in, nuzzled Abe's ear. "We could do lunch then go home and light a fire. Celebrate right."

"Oh, hell ,yes." Abe groped rather than swatting the next time.

He grinned, maybe nipped a little. "We could get some blankets, spread out by the fire."

"We could. Have some of that pear brandy?" It was sounding better and better all the time.

"Get some chocolate." He met Abe's eyes. "It's Friday. We've got all weekend."

"Then we'll need lube. Lots and lots of lube."

Abe's cheeks were bright, green eyes so hot.

"Yeah. Yeah, Linc." He stroked Abe's nipple through the soft shirt.

"Shit, Tiny. If you don't watch it James'll get an eyeful and I'll be doing you in the chair." Yeah, he could feel Abe through their jeans.

"James doesn't get to watch."

"No. But at some point I won't care who sees." Grinning, Abe nipped his lower lip. "We should get painting."

Ty nodded, rubbed their noses together. "Okay, okay. Grab a brush, Linc. We'll bash all the white."

"You know it, Tiny. Best offer I've had in ages."

"Yeah." Yeah, him too. Him too.

Chapter 11

They had pear brandy and chocolate. They had a fire. They had kisses and flushed cheeks and swollen lips.

And they had lube. Lots and lots of it.

Abe thought maybe he was ready. If Ty trusted him... well. He'd have to trust that he would never, ever hurt his Tiny. He grinned, feeding Ty a bite of dark chocolate.

"Good, huh?"

Ty nodded, licking and sucking his fingers clean. "Uh huh. Luscious."

"Yeah." Fingers. Huh. Everything came down to his hands now, and he was getting really hot thinking about it. Worry aside. "Uh. I. You know what you want to do?"

Ty leaned in, licking his lips, eyes just burning. "I want you. Inside me."

"Uh huh. I meant that. What you were talking about before... I'm ready if you are." Oh, he was making so much sense. But his face was so hot and his cock was hard as a rock.

Ty just took one of his hands, brought it up to that hot mouth and kissed it, teeth scraping along the base of his thumb. "Yeah, Linc."

He jumped, his whole body so sensitized he could come from Ty licking his lips. Maybe he ought to take the edge off. He didn't want to be shaking and coming and... well, yeah.

"I think I might be a little het up, though, Tiny."

Ty laughed, goosed him good and hard and pushed him back. "Not Tiny, Abie."

Of course, when those lips wrapped around the tip of his prick and sucked? He wasn't going to argue.

"Oh, fuck, baby." Grabbing Ty's shoulders he thrust up, trying to get more. That mouth moving on him was his whole world, just shorting out his brain.

"Mmmhmm." The sound vibrated through his cock, settling right in his balls. Thank God the sofa was wide enough to hold him while he rocked.

They'd been so smart, buying that damned couch. Belly muscles tight, thighs trembling, Abe went to town, hips pushing up and up. He could feel Ty's chin against his balls, feel the rough-slick of the sofa under his back like its own caress.

Then Ty's fingers slid under his balls, tapping his hole, sending shocks through him.

"Fuck!" Shuddering and shaking, he came hard, right into Ty's mouth. "Oh, baby."

Ty licked him clean, the aftershocks making him shiver and twist some.

The ceiling had some cobwebs on it. They were the first thing he saw when his eyes rolled back down out of his head. Then he saw Ty, scooting up to give him a kiss. Abe kissed right back, arms circling Ty's back.

"Mmm... tasty." Ty snuggled right in, muscles pumped and hard.

Tracing each one with his fingers, Abe grinned, blinking a little. No nap. Nope. "You're amazing."

"Just yours. Want you so bad." Ty straddled him, cock hard in the loose sweats, pushing against his belly.

"You want the edge off too, baby?" Hell, yeah. He could do that. That cock begged to be touched and stroked, and Abe pulled it out of Ty's sweats, stroking hard and fast.

Ty's eyes rolled, hips pumping into his hands, cock full and slick and swollen. "Fuck. Fuck. Good. Linc."

"Uh huh. Wish you could see yourself right now, baby. Fucking decadent." One hand on Ty's ass, he pushed Ty into his hand, letting that cock slide back and forth, squeezing the tip on each backswing. God, he loved the way those heavy muscles flexed, giving him a show.

"Just need. Your hands. Fucking dream about them." Ty arched, hips snapping, driving good and hard.

"Saw that drawing you did of them. Never looked at my hands that way before." Ty made him... awed. Just fucking awed.

"Magic. Fucking magic..." Ty's eyes rolled, heat spreading over his fingers.

"Oh, baby. Yeah. Tiny." Abe pulled Ty down for a kiss, just loving his heat and sweetness.

Ty moaned, the kiss sloppy and lazy. "Not. Tiny."

"Just mine." They lounged for a good while, Abe licking a tiny spot of chocolate off Ty's chin. "So, do we need to do anything? To get ready?" he asked finally.

"You want to do it down here or in bed?"

"In bed. I think." They'd have more space, less chance of dropping off onto the floor. No way was he gonna chance it. "I can bank the fire and all."

"Cool. I'll go get in the shower and all. Meet you in the bed." Ty stood, winked. "Be naked."

"I will." Yeah. He could do that.

He waited downstairs a good ten minutes before going up though, just to make sure he didn't lose focus and try to crawl in the shower with Ty. He banked the fire and put up the chocolate and brandy and gave the dogs bacons before heading up and getting out the candles and lube and shit.

He wanted this to be good.

Ty came in, whistling and damp, a little towel around his waist, belly tight as a washboard. "All squeaky clean."

"Inside and out?" Hell, that was an impertinent question. But then he was a mouthy redneck.

Ty cackled, turned and wiggled that tight ass for him. "Come and see for yourself."

"Oh, now. You come here." The bed was all turned down, everything warm and glowy and just right. Just right. He'd clipped his nails even.

Tiny moved right into his arms, cock starting to push at the towel. "Do you have wicked plans for me?"

"I do. Now, I uh... I looked it up on the Internet. You want it on your hands and knees, or your back?"

"My back. I want to see." Well that was sure.

He nodded, reaching out to trace Ty's cock under the towel. "Okay, baby. Then lose this," he whipped the towel away. "And spread out."

Ty crawled up into the bed, propped up on the pillows, legs sprawled. "Okay, I'm ready for you. Come get me."

That was gonna make him fucking drool. Ty on his knees would have been good, because of the tat. This was better. Abe knelt on the bed, crawling over and grabbing the lube out of the bowl of warm water on the bedside table.

Ty's eyes dragged over him, Ty's cock visibly firming, bobbing. Oh, man. That felt good, knowing -- seeing -- how much Ty wanted him.

Bending, he kissed the tip of Ty's cock, sucking it just a little, stroking that ripped belly with his free hand. With the other he worked that little tube, finally giving up and having to screw the top off using both sets of fingers.

Ty reached down, fingers stroking his hair. "It's gonna be good, Linc. It always is with us, yeah?"

"It is." Breathing deep, he grinned up, letting the usual ease between them just flow. There wasn't a goddamned thing to be worried about. "So good."

Ty nodded, free hand idly playing those sensitive little nipples, giving him a show.

"Fuck, Tiny." He fumbled a little, eyes glued to that fine sight. "Keep distracting me..."

"Just making it good for you, too." Ty spread a little wider, hole exposed to him. "And I'm not tiny."

"This part is." He touched Ty's hole, fingers slick and wet finally. Stroking with one finger, he watched Ty's face, wanting to see every part of this.

Oh, man. He loved how Ty gave it up. Ty hummed, hips shifting just a little. "Mmm..."

It was so easy to slip that first finger in, hot and tight, but easy. Ty was like a fucking inferno in there, and the way it made red creep up Ty's belly and chest was just priceless. "You're fucking gorgeous."

"Just want you, want to feel you everywhere." Ty's cock bobbed, balls starting to draw up.

"Uh huh." The trail of hair on Ty's belly just beckoned his fingers, and he stroked it up to Ty's navel and back down to wrap around Ty's cock. He pushed another finger in, feeling Ty's body stretch around him.

Ty rocked, riding his fingers, moving good and steady on him, toes just curling.

He waited until Ty moved easily, until he could slip his fingers in and out effortlessly before putting in a third, adding more lube. "Okay, baby?"

"Mmhmm. 's hot, love." Ty was into it, eyes closed, moving, dancing.

Damn, he wished Ty could see himself like this, could draw himself for Abe to have a picture forever. He stroked, in and out. In and out.

Ty's lips parted as he pushed deep, a little shudder rocking those muscles. "Oh. There."

"Yeah? You like that?" He touched that spot again, fingers pressing and loving. Ty just shook for him, making him feel like a god. "Want more?"

"Yeah. Yeah, Linc. More." Ty's eyes opened, met his. "Feels fucking good, but I want more."

God, those eyes. They burned right into him. Abe nodded, squirting on a little more lube before sliding in the fourth finger, feeling Ty stretch impossibly wide. "Oh. Fuck."

"Uh huh." Ty drew his knees up, feet flat on the mattress. "Love."

That changed the whole feel of it, the whole angle, and Abe drew in a breath. Fuck. Good. He worked his fingers, stroking Ty's belly with his other hand.

Ty was breathing in time with his fingers, just panting for him. Ty's hole gripped his fingers, the tight belly rolling.

So beautiful, his Tiny. So unaware of it. "Gonna put my thumb in now, baby. Breathe for me. Really deep breath, hold it, and then let it out when I tell you."

"kay. 'kay Linc." Ty stretched a little, breathing in deep, eyes just shining.

He waited a beat, making sure everything was just right, his hand in the right position. Then he put his hand flat on Ty's belly, pulling his other hand half out and tucking his thumb under. "Now."

Ty's breath whooshed out, stomach shifting under his touch, body pushing down towards his hand.

And just like that he slid in all the way to the widest point of his hand, Ty seeming to pull him in.

"Again, baby. I need to get all the way."

Another breath in, another out and Ty's low groan filled the air as Abe slid in, all the way to his wrist.

Just like he was meant to be there, Abe fit. Just like that. He moaned, starting to shake a little, his own breath short and sharp.

"Jesus Christ."

"Abe. Oh, love. I... You have me. Holding me." Ty's eyes were huge, watching, staring.

He was staring too, back and forth from Ty's face to the place where his hand disappeared inside. He could feel Ty's heartbeat. "Inside you now. I can't even. Fuck."

"Your hand. Oh." Ty chuckled softly, the sound a little wild, the action vibrating around his hand.

"Uh huh. Inside." Slowly, so slowly, Abe moved his hand, the fingers just barely wiggling.

Ty's eyes got even wider. "I feel that. Oh. Abe. Damn."

"I know." Every movement brought a ripple inside Ty's body. Every last one. Abe tried to breathe, tried to control his body. His cock fucking ached. Cock. Ty's. Slipping his free hand down, he gave Ty's a quick stroke.

Oh, sweet fuck. Ty went tight, clamping down on him, shoulders coming up off the mattress. "Abe!"

"Ty. Baby." He moved again, both hands just sorta going in unison, the fingers of one spreading, the other tightening down to pull on Ty's prick. "So fucking pretty."

"Oh, fuck. Don't want it to stop, but I... Oh. Abe, need to come."

"I know, Ty. I know." It couldn't last. Not something that strong and that tenuous. "S'okay. S'okay, baby."

"Love. Oh, I love..." Ty shuddered, ass rippling around his fist. That pretty cock jerked, seed spilling onto his fingers.

Abe watched, just fucking spellbound. He'd never seen anything so good. Never.

"Love you."

Ty relaxed back, blinking as his legs slowly dropped. "In me."

"I promised, didn't I?" He waited, feeling Ty relax around him, barely able to breathe. He didn't want to hurt, but if he couldn't have both hands to work his own cock soon he might just die.

"Mm-hmm. Never gonna see your hand without getting hard."

"Mmm. God." There. His hand slipped out with the application of a wee bit more lube, and Abe sprawled next to Ty, kissing him and humping his own hand. "You just blow me away."

Ty's hand joined his, working him. "You're hot. Damn."

"I need. Oh, you got no idea how you looked." It was burned on his brain. It took all of five seconds of Ty's hand on him for Abe to come like a ton of bricks, a strangled shout bursting out.

Ty moaned, lips on his cheek, body just plastered to his.

He curled in, stunned into silence for the first time in a long while. A long, long while. Ty felt good against him, warm and damp and boneless.

It didn't take long for Ty to drift off, one hand curled around his waist, holding on tight as if he'd go anywhere.

He did raise up a little to blow out candles, but that was it. They'd clean up later. Right now all he wanted to do was rest up and think about what it had been like to hold Ty in the palm of his hand.

Chapter 12

Ty felt like he'd been on a marathon workout. His abs, his thighs -- all of him felt well-worked and well-used. Of course, he was also walking like a bit of a cowboy. Only natural after Abe'd put his hand in him .

A hand.

Fuck him.

Just the thought -- not imagining it or reliving it or replaying it -- just the *words*, were enough to make his cock jump and start to fill.

Damn.

He got settled in the shower, steam billowing, eyes closed. Just being there. Not thinking.

Not.

"You getting started without me?" Abe's voice was full of that smile, the one that made him crazy. He could hear it.

"Me? Would I do that?" He couldn't help smiling, couldn't help how his prick just woke up and paid attention.

"Mmhmm. You're a stubborn one, Tiny. If you think you need to go it alone, you do." Brushing up against him, Abe reached past for that fancy body wash stuff James had given them for a housewarming.

He reached up, fingers brushing Abe's wrist, the soft moan surprising him. Damn. "We don't have any plans this weekend, do we?"

"No. We decided not to. Something about having all weekend." Abe nuzzled the back of his neck, cock slipping against his ass.

"Uh huh. Good plan." He spread a little, pushing back against that sweet prick.

"I thought so." He got a stinging bite to his shoulder. "I think you might be a little sore for that, baby."

"Yeah?" He shivered at the bite. "I feel like I've been all revved up."

"You feel good, that's for sure." Petting him with one hand, Abe uncapped the soap with the other, starting on his chest. "I love the way your skin feels. The way you look."

Ty leaned back, his own hands sliding down Abe's thighs. "That's how I feel about you. I itch to draw you."

"Maybe when we dry off. I can do naughty things for you and you can draw me." Abe washed his chest and belly and cock, nice and easy.

"Mmm..." He turned his head, lips trailing along Abe's stubble.

"But for now, this is nice, yeah?" Nice didn't cover it when Abe's cock nudged his hole, making his nerves sing.

"Uhn." He nodded, teeth sinking into his lip. Most definitely more than nice.

"Uh huh. Fuck, baby. Ty." Rubbing harder, Abe pushed and pressed, the friction just killer. Those hands worked him, rinsing him off, turning him into the warm spray.

He was jittering and throbbing, eyes closed as he just sort of felt. "Linc."

"Tiny..." Nipping, licking, Abe rocked them, panting. He could feel it the moment that Abe went from easy and happy to needing.

"Uh huh." He nodded, his whole fucking body tight. "Want."

"You sure, baby? Don't want to hurt you." Abe's thumb brushed over the head of his cock, pressing the slit.

"I'm on fire for you, Linc. Please." He went up on his toes, gasping.

"Got me. Now." The soap stuff was just slick enough to ease the way, and he didn't need any stretching, just Abe's cock, pushing right into him. Abe moaned, resting against his back, the water hissing around them.

"Oh, sweet fuck." He moaned, lips parting. Oh, it felt fucking amazing. Fucking stunning.

He felt Abe nod against his shoulder before Abe started moving, in and out, just letting him have it. Their skin slid, wet and good, the heat between them building up and up.

He braced himself on the tile, his hips rocking back, taking every fucking thing Abe had to give.

"Love. Fuck, Tiny, I love you." Words just came pouring out like the water in the shower, all of the words Abe hadn't really said the night before. Of course the way he'd been babbling, maybe Abe couldn't get a word in edgewise.

One of Abe's hands tangled with his, the other steadying his hip as Abe slapped against him. Fuck. Fuck, yes.

Abe's chest pressed against his back, their hips rolling back and forth. That asshole redneck bit him, hard, pulling up a bruise just above his tat, making goosebumps pop out on his skin.

His fingers clenched and he groaned. Almost. Almost there. "Fuck. Again."

"Uh huh. Like that?" Oh, oh fuck. Abe hit that spot in him, the angle changing just enough, and bit down harder, breaking the damned skin.

He shot, entire fucking body going rock hard as he grunted.

Abe followed fast, pumping into him, groaning and panting and hanging on for dear life. "Oh. Baby. Yeah."

Ty just nodded, panting, eyes rolling. Fuck, yeah.

The water shut off, seemingly by magic, but he knew it was Abe, pulling them out and drying them off with fluffy, soft towels.

"Still wanna draw me?"

"Oh, yeah. Over and over again." It was his own favorite kink.

"Cool. I'll bring the food." Eating in bed? One of Abe's favorites.

"I'll grab a pad and my pencils." Oh, yeah. He was feeling it now. Feeling it deep.

Thank goodness they didn't make plans for the weekend.

Now was the perfect time. Ty was out looking at the murals Abe had put him in to restore. The ballet boyfriend was out of town. James was in the perfect mood to go to lunch when Abe swept in on a Thursday afternoon and offered.

"Hey, sweetheart. Let's go to lunch. I'll take you to that new French place."

James smiled, hand sliding around his arm. "French, darling? My, my, my. You're either in trouble or you want something. Are you buying the wine, too?"

"I am. Come on. Indulge me. I want to gossip." James shouldn't be able to resist that hook at all. Not one bit.

"Oooh! I'm in. You go first." The weather was crisp and dry, so they walked, James' bright yellow cape-like-thing unavoidable.

"Me?" He grinned sideways. "Okay. I bet you don't know the old ladies haven't interviewed anyone *but* Ty for the art."

"No shit? He's a stud and sweet as pie. Did you see he wore bright blue the other day? To the office, no less?" James sighed dramatically. "I was so proud."

"He's getting there." The new French place had a patio. "Wanna sit outside?"

"That works." James knew the maitre d' -- of course -- and they got seated immediately, right by a sweet outdoor fireplace that killed the chill. "Oh, this is luscious."

"It's not bad." There was something besides quiche on the menu. Hallelujah. "So, your turn. Why didn't Ty tell me he'd moved?"

James tilted his head. "Oh, now. That's a hard one with a lot of answers, darling. Pride, some. He knew you were stressed out. It all happened fast. If I had to pick one? I'd tell you he's been hiding so long that it never really occurred to him to say." He got a shrug. "He wasn't living there. The living happened at the office and with you."

He thought on that a minute. Maybe. "It just felt like he didn't trust me, you know?"

"Trust you? Abraham, darling. You got to see the studio. No one saw the studio. Never." James reached out, patted his hand. "This thing with John? Driving him crazy, is all."

"John's a crusty old bastard who needs to learn that he can't own people." His temper flashed and Abe sat back, trying to get over it. "What kind of wine?"

"White, of course. Red has tannins." James ordered something light and froofy and weird, along with a salad.

Salad, for fuck's sake. Bless his heart. Abe ordered salmon and potatoes before starting in on the crusty bread, shredding it with his fingers. "So you really think he... I mean. I get all tied up in knots over him, James."

James sat back, the aging queen suddenly replaced with a serious, sharp man. "Abe, I've known him since he was twenty. I've never seen him so much as date the same man twice since John sank those hooks into him and got rid of that little Greek boy Ty liked so much."

He wasn't gonna focus on the Greek boy. Nope. "Then I'll take your word for it, huh? It just... well. It floored me when I showed and he was all moved."

James nodded. "He's worried. He's worried about me, about losing the building, about finding out they were right when they told him in school he could choose to starve and be himself or be what they wanted and succeed. That's where John caught him -- in a summer seminar, of all things. Can you imagine? I go to Italy for a few months, come home and my laughing, goofy artist roommate is suddenly taking diction classes and wearing black. Pod people, I tell you."

"God. John has done a lot of good. He really has. But this one he fucked up on." The wine came, and more bread. This time he ate some, staring at the chunk he bit from. "This is good."

James laughed. "As much as you're paying, darling? It should be."

The wine was sipped, James nodded his approval. "John isn't trying to be evil, Abraham. I think Ty's his little Frankenstein's monster. John remade him in his own image and forgot the little redneck had a brain."

"Ty's not a redneck." He snapped it out without thinking, defending Tiny like he was meant to. Then he laughed, patting James' hand right back. "That would be me."

"I? Am from Savannah, you big lug. You *both* are rednecks, compared to me."

"I knew you had to be from someplace froofy." The food came and he leaned back to let the waitress serve. "So tell me, is the ballet maven good in bed?"

"Dancers are incredibly flexible, Abraham." James winked, grinned. "Your turn. Whatever did you do to Jefferson to make him sing in the office?"

His cheeks heated and he stabbed a piece of broccoli. "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Of course you don't. Well, please, do it weekly. He's been an absolute *doll* to work for."

"I don't think we can do that weekly."

Shit. Time to stuff salmon in his mouth. Oh. Creamy sauce. Some dill, nice. The fire was nice. The wine was good. He and Tiny would have to come here.

"You realize I'm going to have to wheedle it out of Jefferson, don't you?" Oh, yeah. Like that was going to happen.

"Oh, I want to see you get Tiny to talk, James. That'll be the day." Abe snorted. "He won't even tell *me* shit."

"Yeah, well. He didn't tell the boys in Aruba about his work; he didn't tell the guys at the gym about Aruba. You? He tells people about."

His fork hovered right outside his lips as he stared. God, he was learning and learning. And he was damned proud. "I tell everyone about him. Hell, I introduced him to my dog."

"Yes, I know." James pursed his lips. "I bought some damned bones and chew something-or-others along with acrylic paint and spray adhesive today."

"Oh, how beneath you. More wine?" James adored Sheila and Blinky. Abe'd seen him feeding them Oreos when James thought no one was looking.

"Yes, please." James sipped, picking out bits of frizzy looking lettuce and eating it. "I wish you could have seen him when I met him, Abraham. Hair down to his waist, a cigarette hanging out of one corner of his mouth, skinny and pierced and very 80s hair band."

"The pierced part? Gives me good dreams, James." Jesus. He could just. Uhn. "Yeah."

"So? Go have it done again. He's older, not broken."

"You think he would?" Grinning, he shifted in his seat, trying to ease the, er, ache. He buttered up some more bread, moaning a little at how good it was. He'd never been big on French food.

"Darling, he wore a color. In daylight. In the office. Anything is possible."

"Yeah. And he took the dog I gave him." He bounced a little, the day suddenly a heck of a lot brighter. "We'll get there."

James laughed. "Just remember, his sister? A harpy, and she seems to get pregnant simply by brushing against people."

"I know. I so know. I don't brush her." He winked.

"Excellent plan, Abraham." James chuckled. "Now. You've pumped me for information. Order something decadent. And chocolate. And if anyone asks, I didn't even eat a bite."

Chapter 13

Ty pulled his dress shirt from the closet, along with Abe's, putting them on the rack alongside their suits. He could hear the man caterwauling in the shower, Sheila downstairs singing along with him.

Goobers.

He chuckled and headed into the bathroom, stripping off his shirt. "You got a career in shower singing, Linc."

The song cut off and Abe popped his head out of the shower, blowing him a kiss. "You're my biggest fan, baby. Aside from Sheila anyway."

He leaned over, brushed some soap off Abe's lip before stealing a kiss.

"Mmmm. Hey there." Abe grinned, nipping his lip.

"Hey." He licked Abe's lips. "You smell good enough to eat."

"Lemony." He got another kiss, all citrus and Abe. "You keep that up I'll never get into that tux."

"We're doing good on time." He smiled, winked. "Still, you need to be on your toes tonight, not melty."

"And I would be. Melty. Or hard in my britches..." Abe slipped back in and rinsed off, finishing his song on a grand crescendo.

Ty laughed, taking his glasses off as they started to fog. "I'm thinking about a goatee. What do you think?"

"I think it might be nice and scratchy in the good places..." The shower went off and Abe came out, grabbing a towel. "It'll work for me. Maybe you should get pierced again."

It came out so casually, Abe not looking at him.

"Yeah?" His cock jumped, just like that. Oh. Damn. Wow. "I could do that."

"Yeah?" He got a real good view of Abe's ass as Abe bent down to mop up water with his towel, cleaning up the floor. "Cool."

He reached out, felt Abe up. "You have a preference to what gets done, Linc?"

"Uhn." Abe spread like the slut he was and pushed back. "Huh?"

"What do you want pierced, love?" He leaned in, nuzzling the small of Abe's back.

"Oh. Uh. I want things to play with, baby. Like I do with your tat. So uh. Yeah... there." Man, Abe was gonna be melty anyway, they kept this up. As it was, Ty figured Abe had reached the incoherent stage.

"Mm-hmm. Nipples? Cock?" He leaned down, licking along Abe's crease.

"Yes, please." That ass wiggled as Abe reached out to brace himself, pressing up against Ty's lips. "That would. Oh, baby. Might kill me if I saw that."

"You'd have to come with me. You'd have to hold my hand." He grinned, tracing a lazy circle around Abe's hole.

"I would. I might squeeze it off." Balls drawing up tight, Abe moved, circling in the other direction. "But I'll hold anything you want."

"Mmhmm." He pushed in, fucking Abe nice and steady, hands holding onto those long thighs.

Shaking, Abe rocked back against him, arm starting to move rhythmically. Oh, yeah. Good.

"Baby. Can you get a ring? That would be fucking cool."

"Mmm... " Yeah, yeah, he could do that. He reached up, petting those tight balls, thumb rubbing behind.

"Fuck! Ty..." That groan just echoed. Abe rubbed and rubbed, shoulder jerking hard as Ty jacked his cock.

Oh, hell yes. He pushed harder, thumb and tongue. Come on, Linc. Give it up. Gimme.

Abe gave it, moaning and shaking as he shot, the smell of come hot and strong.

"Mmmm..." He grinned, resting his head against Abe's back.

"Jesus, Tiny. Gonna kill me."

He reached up, goosed Abe. "Not tiny."

Not trying to kill the fine motherfucker either, but he had priorities.

Abe peeped and almost toppled over, catching himself just in time and laughing like a loon. "Uh huh. What were we supposed to be doing tonight?"

"Uh... monkey suits. Party. Admire your hotel."

"Oh. Right." Groaning, Abe straightened up, turning to haul him up and kiss him. "Do you need a shower now?"

"That's not all I need." He rubbed, just a little. "But it'll do."

"I can always give you a hand..." Oh, that wicked, wicked grin. That was something else.

"Just one?" Fuck, he did like to play.

"Oh, I can use both." Muscling him into the shower, Abe turned the water back on, warm spray hitting his skin. Then one of Abe's hands closed right around Ty's cock and started jacking.

"Oh." Oh, that was better than playing. Way better. He spread, rocking a little. "So where do you want the ring?"

"Here." Oh, man. Right at the tip, Prince Albert style. Abe's thumb slipped across his slit over and over.

"Mmm... you'd like that, like it inside you." He arched up, electricity zinging through him.

"Hell, yes. Jesus, I can just feel that, baby." Abe's other hand joined in, pulling at the base of his cock.

"Uhn..." Yeah, yeah. Don't stop. He just moved and bucked, riding it.

"And I would play with it with my tongue, you know? Over and over, pushing and pulling." Pushing and pulling, that was what Abe was doing now, hands moving against each other.

Ty just nodded, hand gripping Abe's shoulder. "Fuck, yes. Yeah, Linc. Like that."

"Yeah, Ty? Yeah..." Oh, that was good. The way Abe touched his balls, his cock, bent to nip his neck.

He just gave it up, heat pouring out of him, balls drawing tight as stones.

"Oh, baby. You're so fucking hot." Abe kissed him, loved on him, rinsing him off.

He slumped against the tile, panting. "Melted me."

"Uh oh. No melty. We have to go be social and shit." The water went freezing cold, Abe laughing and hightailing it out, leaving him dripping.

"Oh, you *bitch*!" He laughed and hopped out, wrapping himself in a towel. "That's it. You have to wear a pink tie for that."

"Oh, and can I wear the plaid cummerbund?" Oh, God. The old ladies' aid society would shit a pink twinkie.

"No. No. The one with the pretty flowers and lace edging."

"You're an asshole, Tiny." Snapping him with a towel, Abe hooted and wandered off into the bedroom, ass swinging.

"I'm not tiny, Abie! I could kick your ass and make you love it."

"Promise?" The tux got a once over, Abe wrinkling his nose. "Man, do we have to?"

"Yeah." He grinned over, nodded. "You deserve the recognition, Linc."

Fuck, he was proud.

"You deserve at least half. You got me the job." The bed dipped as Abe sat. "I'll just watch you get dressed first."

He tossed Abe some tighty-whities. "You just want to watch my ass."

"And your tat. And your dick." He got a leer before Abe bent to slip on undies and pants.

"You want to take the 'stang?"

He got his socks on, his slacks.

"Yeah." Shirt, studs, cuff links. Abe cleaned up well. "Goddamned tie."

"C'mere. James showed me." He got Abe's tie all nice and bow-y. "We staying until midnight?"

"I think we have to. But then? This is mine." Grabbing his ass, Abe twirled him around, giving him a kiss that stole his breath.

"Make sure you're somewhere out of the way by five 'til, Linc. That midnight kiss belongs to me."

"You got it, baby. And no letting John corner you. I want you." Damn. Yeah.

"You know it. Starting the year like we intend to end it." He grinned, smoothed a stray hair.

"Come on, redneck, grab your hat and let's go party."

"You know it." Abe looked like a man about town. And a redneck.

It was gonna be a good night.

His baby was a hit.

Abe had watched people ooh and ahh all night, had listened to it over and over, and had shook more hands than he ever wanted to touch again.

The lobby, reception area, and dining room and lounge were all decked out, the woodwork gleaming, the rail to the grand staircase shining. God it looked good, the grain of the wood just standing out so pretty.

Grinning, Abe avoided a couple of old ladies who had cornered him earlier. It was almost midnight and he was looking for his other baby. He and Tiny had gotten separated almost immediately, and now Abe was looking for that kiss.

Ty wasn't on the little dancefloor, wasn't at the bar, wasn't even at the coat check. Fuck. Where in Sam Hill did the little shit go? He was just about to slip from curious to pissed when Ty came in the front doors, red-cheeked and tight-lipped.

Oh shit. Abe headed over, catching Ty by the arm when he would have stormed right past.

"Hey, Tiny. What's wrong?"

"Hey. How's your party going? Did I miss midnight?" Those eyes were hard as crystal behind Ty's glasses.

"No, baby." The arm under his hand was like rock. Abe drew Ty into a nice little corner in reception. "What happened?"

Ty shook his head, then looked up at him, damn near growling. "Oh, Linc. Fuck. That son of a bitch. He thinks he's going to use you to get to me. Tells me he'll come down on you if I don't give him what he wants."

He tilted his head. "John? You mean John?"

Ty nodded. "Like I'm going to lie to you, tell you 'oh, I'm going corporate'."

It started to dawn on him what Ty had just said. Abe saw red. "That son-of-a-bitch. He tried to use *me* against you? Where the fuck is he? I'm gonna let him have it."

"He's gone home with his wife. Shit, Linc. He's threatening to say shit about you, fuck shit up." Ty shook his head, rumbling. "I should just do it. Quit fucking fighting him."

"No." Oh, hell no. They'd leave town first. Go somewhere John's arm couldn't reach. "We'll take James and his dancer and hit the road if we have to. But he's not gonna fuck *us* up, baby. No way."

Ty blinked, just looked at him. "Fuck us up? John can't do that. I'm talking about your business, Linc. Not you and me."

"I can always work somewhere, baby." Oh. Oh, the sparkly people in the next room were starting to count down. "It's midnight, Ty."

"Oh, cool." Ty took the glasses off and reached for him. "We'll deal with the bullshit later. C'mere."

The stroke of midnight hit and Abe went right to Ty, pulling him close and kissing him silly, telling him volumes about how John could go fuck himself and how Abe cared.

Ty answered him, close and strong and holding onto him tight. Yeah. Shit, yeah.

They ended the kiss with Abe's hands on Ty's ass and his thigh between Ty's legs, pressing against the front of those fancy pants.

"Oh, man. That? Is a happy fucking New Year kiss." Ty gave him a look. "Can we go home now?"

"Hell, yes. Or we can just go fuck in your car." He grinned, goosed.

"And mess up the interior? Hell, no." Tiny grinned at him, shaking his head. "Lucy's a virgin, remember."

"Good thing you aren't." Abe squeezed. "Let's go home, Tiny. I'll get John settled later."

"We'll worry about that tomorrow. Tell me you were the belle of the ball." They headed for the door, Ty right beside him.

"I was. I was very nice. I kissed cheeks so caked with powder that you couldn't even feel the skin." Ew. God, what women did to themselves. He grabbed Ty's hand as soon as they were outside.

"You had much to drink?"

"Nope." He'd been saving up, not wanting to get all... unable to perform. "I kinda wanted to make sure we could celebrate."

"Cool." The keys were tossed over with a grin. "You can drive her."

Well, damn.

He caught the keys, staring. "You sure?" Not that he was gonna turn it down. Lucy was a sweet beast, and Ty. Fuck, if that didn't mean. Damn.

"Yep. I've never once got to just ride for a minute. Want to see how it feels."

"Then hop in, baby. We'll ride." Grinning ear to ear he got in and started her up, that heavy purr working through him. Damn. Yeah.

Ty nodded, one hand on his thigh, grinning. With that bow tie untied and the dress shirt opened

at the throat, Tiny almost looked at home. And fucking sexy. Of course, that could be the car. Abe hit the highway and opened it up, as they were a little early for the drunks. Sweet.

"Oh, fucking sweet." Ty laughed, just laughed good and loud and long. "Just what I needed, Linc."

"Yeah. Yeah, I think you needed to be out." Patting Ty's thigh, he laughed too, right out loud. "Fuck, she's a sweet ride, Tiny. Almost as good as you."

"Only the best for my redneck, Abie."

"Then it's a good thing I got you." Man, they were getting silly and a little sappy, but it felt so good to poke and laugh and play. The relief that the night had gone well kinda made him giddy.

They got out away from the city, out where the sky was black as pitch and he could see stars. "The hotel's fucking beautiful, Abe. A showpiece."

"You think?" It meant a lot to him that Ty liked it. A lot. "She's something special."

"I do." Ty nodded, stretched out a little, grinned. "So what's next?"

"Tonight? We take the puppers the steak I smuggled out. Then we fuck like rabbits. Professionally? Your office building needs that stair rail."

"You have surprisingly good plans, man." Ty laughed, reached over to untie his tie for him. "Blinky and Sheila will appreciate it too."

"I bet." His foot hit the gas a little heavier, just goosing it up. Shit, that car hugged the road.

They got home, his adrenaline flowing, heart just pounding from the sweet little ride.

He no sooner threw it into park than he was reaching for Ty, pulling him across the console for a kiss.

"Mmm... Happy fucking New Year." Ty's hand wrapped around his nape, held them together.

"Same to you, baby." They kissed again and again, lips and tongues meeting. Ty tasted like whiskey and heat. Yeah.

"Mmm... Let's go in. Lucy's not built for loving."

"Yeah. And the dogs need their New Year's treat." Home. Settled. It was weird how damned easy it was these days. And it amazed him when he thought on it how easy Tiny had told him what was wrong.

Hell, how Ty had come looking for him. How Ty had just reached for him.

He went to toss the keys over and Ty waved him off. "Those are yours. In case you need them."

"You got me keys?" Okay, he looked like an idiot standing there, probably, keys outstretched and steak baggie in his other hand. But he just couldn't help it.

"Yeah." Ty went sort of still, then reached for the steak and whistled up the dogs. "You don't have to keep them, if you don't want to, Abe. 's okay."

"No! I mean, hell, yes I want them."

He reached for Ty, but something really furry and drooly came between them for a good five minutes while they fed and scritchd. Then he dragged Ty inside and kissed him stupid.

Ty sorta blinked up at him, grinned and started working his shirt open. "Somebody's hungry."

"Hell, yes. You just. I." Fuck. Talking was overrated. Goddamn. Pushing Ty back against the door, Abe kissed him again, licking his lips.

One of those strong legs wrapped around him, tugging them together. Yeah. Tiny knew. No talking necessary.

They struggled to get out of the clothes, wrestling all the way up into the living room and their couch, just getting naked and touching and loving. Tiny was fucking gorgeous, all muscle and tat and sweet skin.

"Yeah. Fuck, you smell good, Abe. Real." Ty nuzzled up under his arm, fingers petting his belly.

"You feel like heaven." Or hell, because he'd bet heaven didn't go for the kind of shit he and Tiny were about to do. Leaning down he sucked hard at Ty's neck, licking the spot when he let go.

"Oh, right there. Fuck, yes." Ty's hand slipped down, fingers wrapping around his prick.

"Jesus." His hips jerked, his cock throbbing. "Baby. Yeah. Good."

"Mmhmm." Ty's lips wrapped around one nipple, suction sudden and fierce.

"Ty! Fuck. Gonna be over too soon, you keep that up." His hands cradled Ty's head, holding him close as he humped up into Ty's hand.

Ty mixed it up though, keeping him just enough off balance with hands and lips that he didn't fall over the edge.

Abe squirmed and panted, fucking begging for it. His Tiny. Christ, he was hot. Abe's belly went tight, his balls hard. His legs fell open to give Ty better access.

"Fuck, you're fine." Ty's eyes met his, serious as a heart attack. "So fucking fine."

Then Ty shifted, cock sliding and rubbing along his crease, hips matching the rhythm of that hand.

Nodding, he touched Ty's cheek, just watching those pretty eyes as they rocked. "You're something special, Tiny. Swear to god, you get to me."

He pressed back against Ty's cock, grunting as it pushed at him.

Ty nodded, belly muscles tight and rippling for him as they rocked and shifted.

He put one hand flat on Ty's ass, pulling hard. "Love you, baby."

"Yeah." He got a wild grin and a kiss to match, those eyes rolling. "Love..."

"Uh huh. Yeah. Come on." They had time to play long and hard later. Right now they could be fast and desperate.

Ty nodded once, head just snapping as heat sprayed over his ass, his thighs, the scent of sex sudden and so fucking sweet.

Fuck! Groaning, Abe let go too, the feel and smell of Ty making him jerk and shake and shoot so hard his eyes rolled back.

"Uhn. Love. 's good." Ty leaned against him, nuzzling his jaw.

"Hell, yeah." That was all he could force out. Abe just melted against Ty, holding him close. He was about killed.

Ty nodded, snuggled right in. "Too heavy?"

"Uh uh. Just right. Gimme a half hour and we'll do it again. Only with fucking." He grinned at the ceiling, thinking of those car keys in his pocket and of Ty just blurting out what was wrong and... yeah. Maybe less than a half hour.

"You got yourself a deal, Linc."

"Cool." Yeah. They'd get some munchies, head upstairs. Fuck like bunnies. "Happy New Year's, baby. Let's hope it keeps on like we started."

"It will. You. Me. Pups. Good rides. We're gold."

"We are that, baby. We surely are."

And he'd make sure to tell John to kiss his ass.

Tomorrow.

Abe was still sleeping and he was sketching, smelling the black-eyed peas in the crockpot and

sipping his coffee. There was a game on the TV, turned down low, Blinky snoring beside the bed. Life was remarkably not bad.

He'd thought he was going to bust a vein last night after John's little announcement. Damn it. He knew John felt like he'd been groomed and made to take over, to be John's right hand man, but...

Hell, he wasn't corporate.

He didn't want to go play that game. And threatening Abe? So fucking low.

He shadowed in the curve of Abe's belly, smudged it with his finger.

That belly rippled as Abe moved, snorting a little, mouth and fingers working in that yeah, I'm awake, uh huh way. One bright eye blinked open at him.

"Hey. You're supposed to tell me you're drawing me so I can enjoy it."

"Mmm. Mornin', glory." He leaned and got himself a kiss. "I'm drawing."

"Mmhmm. So if I hafta get up and pee, now is not the time?" Abe sniffed. "Oh. Black-eyed peas. You put the pork in?"

"Yep and go ahead, I'm pretty much done with this sketch. You get cornbread and dessert duty."

"Cool." Rolling out of bed, Abe bent and gave *him* a kiss this time, grinning as he wandered off. He was back in no time, the show just as good coming as it was going. "You? Are looking fine, Tiny."

"Not tiny, redneck." He grinned, whacked that fine fucking butt with a pillow.

Abe just wiggled to beat the band, all sorts of things bouncing. "Nope. Not a bit. I keep telling you it's just an expression of my undying love, baby."

Lord, lord. That man was in a good mood.

He chuckled, tugged Abe in close. "You are a bastard. Happy New Year, Linc."

"Happy New Year, Ty." Abe kissed him, smiling against his mouth, just laughing and happy. "It doesn't get better than this."

"You know it." He settled in close, relaxed and warm and feeling good. "You have any resolutions?"

"I do. Gonna love you into a puddle every chance I get. And I'm gonna get you free of John. One way or another."

"He's something else." He sighed, thinking. "Besides going over and beating him, I'm just not sure what to do."

"Oh, now there's a plan." He could see Abe actually considering that. Pushy redneck. "I could go talk to him."

"And say what? Quit threatening my lover? That doesn't bode well for me being a reasonable adult, Abe." He shook his head. "We have to be professional and... I don't know. Maybe I ought to give in, the money's amazing."

"No. You're no corporate ape." God, Abe was making monkey noises, just cracking him up. "I think you ought to just consider changing professions. Didn't old lady Landau say last night she wanted you to do those murals?"

"Yeah." Man, it was a scary thought, to try to make it as an artist. "I have to make enough to keep James. I owe him that and, well, hell, he does the books."

"And he could do them for both of us, yeah? Unless you mind sharing..." Kissing his throat, Abe went on. "I was thinking, if we packaged ourselves right we could go into new design as well as restoration work."

"Yeah? That would give you an office in town, somewhere to meet clients. I own it, free and clear, so we don't have to worry about that."

"Uh huh. And if we have to pool our resources to pay James for a bit until we become fabulously successful? So be it."

So confident.

"And if you're suddenly stuck with a less-than-fabulously-successful artist? That's cool with you?"

"Oh, baby." Drawing back so he could see, Abe looked him right in the eye. "I want you happy. Sane. Not wearing black. Not that I don't want you any way I can get you, but I would rather be poor rednecks than stressed out assholes."

Oh, man. He was one lucky son of a bitch. "Poor rednecks with two spoiled dogs and a kick-ass sex life."

"And a car from hell. And a flaming queen of a bookkeeper." He got a kiss, long and hard and deep, Abe holding him tight-tight.

"Yeah." He pulled his glasses off, put them aside. "You forgot great tattoos and the combined ability to bench press 450 pounds."

"Mmhmm." Fingers tracing his tat, Abe nodded. "And the soon-to-be-pierced parts. We can't forget those."

"No." His cock jerked, pushed against Abe's belly. "No, we won't be forgetting that at all."

"Oh good. I'm thinking here." Abe pinched his nipples. "And here." The tip of his cock got a squeeze. "I asked about that ring before, yeah?"

"Mmhmm. When I was making you moan and ride my tongue."

"Oh fuck, Tiny." Jerking against him, Abe moaned, cock going hard against his thigh. "That was good. Damned good. I can't wait to ride you with that."

He nodded, lips finding Abe's ear. "Fuck, yes. You'll feel every inch and it's likely to kill me."

"Kill us dead..."

They rolled, Abe straddling him, pressing down nice and hard.

"Be a hell of a way to die." Ty spread, wrapped his legs around Abe and squeezed.

"Oh, yeah. A good way to go." Their cocks lined up when Abe moved just so, rubbing, their balls pressing. "Was thinking we could get me something too."

"Yes." He nodded. "You're so sensual, Linc. You'd be a ball of need."

"Need you." Hips rocking, Abe pushed up to get better friction with their lower bodies, head going back.

"Yours." He grabbed Abe's ass and pulled, toes curled as they got it, got the perfect spot. "Right there."

"Fuck. Yes. Yeah, baby." That was just amazing, the way they could rub and push and make each other feel good without even have to work at it.

He leaned up, bit Abe's throat hard enough to mark, to taste that salt of Abe's skin.

A deep groan was his answer, Abe going past verbal pretty damned quick this morning. Those hands held him hard, digging in and leaving bruises.

He damn near curled up, muscles going taut and hard, their big bed just groaning.

Abe nodded, head bobbing, harsh sounds coming from him as he moved. "Uhn. Tiny..."

"Not. Fucking. Tiny." He bit again, shooting hard, balls tight as stones.

It took maybe three more thrusts against him before Abe grunted and came, just as hot and wet as he was, their come mixing on their bellies.

"Not tiny."

"No. Not even a bit. Just yours, yeah?"

"Just mine, Ty. Keeping you for good."

Kissing his cheek, his lips, Abe dropped down on him, snuggling in.

"Okay, then we're solid." He heard somebody score a first down on the TV, smiled. They had time before they needed to get up. They had plenty of time.

Epilogue

"James, my lovely, I've come to steal Tiny."

Well, he'd come to drop off a load of checks and paperwork, too. He came to the office at least once a day now, sometimes staying up to four or five hours. Look at him, with a business and shit.

"Abraham, darling." He got a kiss on the cheek and a smile. "He's singing in the studio. You must have been *very* good to him last night."

"Every night is a good night these days, James." The piercings had healed, and damn. Oh, damn. He kissed James soundly on the chin and pinched his ass, heading past to get to Tiny's studio.

Ty was painting a huge canvas, wearing nothing more than a pair of old sweats, music blaring as he sang along. That tattoo -- with a tribal addition ringing the trunk that matched his thigh -- just moving and shifting.

He had his own little tree of life growing out of his thigh ring now too. They were a matching pair. Abe wandered over and waited for Ty to dip paint before pants-ing him. "Hey, baby."

"Hey!" Ty's ass was pretty in those tighty-whities. "You are in a place of business, you know?"

Yeah, like they hadn't fucked right where Ty was standing.

"Uh huh. And if you had clients scheduled to be anywhere near here you'd have clothes on." The brand new papasan in the corner called to him and he planted his ass on it. "That's a rocking painting, Tiny."

"Thanks. It's a commission for the lobby of that new bank building." He nodded. Ultra-modern and metallic? Yeah, he could see it. Of course, he preferred the sketches on the walls -- him. Every single one, and his virtue was safe because no one was allowed in the studio.

No one but him.

No one saw him like his Ty. Period. "Nice. I came to make you eat, but maybe we should order in."

Abe grinned, popping the top button on his jeans.

"Oooh... You got something there for me?" The brush got dropped into turpentine, Ty wiping his hands off.

"Mmhmm. Just for you." The zipper sounded loud-loud as he pulled it down, scraping.

Ty locked the door, taking the long route over to him, eyes just burning. "I can smell you, Linc."

"What do I smell like, Tiny?" His hand slid right into his jeans, disappearing under the denim as he touched himself. "Like us this morning? Like Coppertone? I was out working in the yard after you left."

"Not tiny." Those fingers twitched, Ty almost going for the sketch pad. "You smell like home."

Letting his legs fall apart a little, Abe shifted, rolling his hips up and pulling his jeans down a teensy bit. "Mine. You gonna draw me? Huh?"

"Draw you or suck you dry? Choices, choices." Abe could see the muscles in Ty's belly roll for him, tight and fine.

The flush that spread up Ty's belly fascinated him, the little rings glinting against the hard brown nipples just fucking gorgeous.

"You could do both. Get down here close and draw, then suck."

Ty nodded, got the pad and pencil and settled between his legs, up close and personal. "Show me what you got, Linc."

"Mmkay." Fuck. Oh, fuck, he loved it when Ty looked at him so intense like that, so ready to take down every detail. He lifted his hips and slid his jeans down the rest of the way, down around his thighs so his cock was out, fist wrapped around the base.

"Oh, yeah. Don't move." The sound of the pencil scribbling just made him harder; he could damn near feel it.

And he could definitely feel Ty's breath, hot on his skin, brushing him with every move. He twitched, wanting to stroke himself, but Ty'd said not to move. He held still.

"Move your fingers down for me, yeah? Just cup your balls." When he got it right, Ty moaned, nodded. "Yeah."

Muscles quivering, Abe sat there and watched Ty sketch him, his breath coming hard. Every time Tiny tilted his head it was like a caress.

Ty's lips were open, tongue coming out over and over, just begging to taste him, to take him in.

"Ty..." He groaned it out, needing to move so bad. Just needing the hot and wet and suction.

"Yeah. Yeah, I did..." The pencil fell as Ty pounced, mouth dropping on him like a ton of bricks.

"Fuck!" His hands came right up without any thought, cupping Ty's head and pushing up into those sweet lips like there was no tomorrow.

Ty groaned, sucking and swallowing, pulling him in deeper and deeper, hands tugging at his ass.

No way was he gonna last. No way. He was gonna blow any minute. Especially when Ty's fingers slid against the little ring behind his balls.

Then that ring got a tug, a twist and it was all over but the crying.

He shot hard, his balls drawing right up as he bucked and moaned, giving Ty everything he had.

Ty sucked a long, slow motion all the way up his cock, leaving a soft kiss to the tip before sitting back. "Damn."

"Jesus, Ty." Shaking his head, he traced Ty's lips with his thumb, just staring into Ty's eyes. "You send me, baby."

Ty smiled, kissed his thumb, sucking the tip a little. "Feeling's mutual."

"Gonna come up here and let me do for you?" Yeah. He could stand that, for sure. Touching his Ty. Making him come.

Ty climbed right on up, straddling his thighs and leaning down for a kiss, lips swollen and hot.

That kiss went so deep Abe swore he felt it in his throat like the burn of good booze. He cupped Ty's ass with one hand, helping him move, and used the other to pull that sweet, thick cock out.

Not tiny at all.

Ty groaned as he got a good hold, eyes just rolling. The solid ring in the tip was already wet, Ty's hips rubbing it right against his palm, making all sorts of demands.

He flicked the little ring with his thumb as he stroked up, letting his palm pull against it on the way down. Hot, slick, so damned good.

He loved that sound he got, too -- rough and raw and still a little surprised, like Ty wasn't used to it yet.

Grunting happily, he stroked and pulled, bringing Ty up for another kiss. He just loved it, loved Ty.

Hot and hungry, perfect, it wasn't long before Ty was thrusting, panting into his lips, humping his hand.

"Mmmhmm. Come on, Tiny. Wanna lick you off my fingers."

That did it, Ty's eyes going wide, heat spraying as the cry rang out.

Damn. Yeah. He held Ty tight until the spasms stopped, then brought his hand to his mouth to keep his promise, licking and sucking each finger.

Ty just watched, whimpering low. "You're so fucking sexy."

"Me? Oh, baby." They'd argued this one too many times. "So. Thai? Italian?"

"Mmm. Thai. And then carrot cake."

Oh. That sounded familiar. "That mean you won't dump it on me?"

"If I do, I promise to lick it off. Fair?"

Oh, those eyes were bright with the new contacts, wicked.

"That? Sounds like the best plan in the world." He grinned, kissing Ty hard. "It's a date."

And then? They could head home. Where they belonged.

End.