

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS



PERFECTING

Pearl

RUBY STORM

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



www.ellorascave.com

Perfecting Pearl

ISBN # 9781419908866

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Edited by Pamela Campbell.

Photography and cover art by Les Byerley.

Electronic book Publication: March 2007

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PERFECTING PEARL

Ruby Storm

Chapter One

The only reason Sean still sat at the end of the bar and ordered another beer was because he simply had no other place to go. At least here at the Sunset Lounge, he was with his own kind.

“Own kind,” he mumbled inaudibly against the blare of the speakers. He glanced up and watched the disco ball spin to cast flashes of light over the gyrating bodies of the men who danced. Sean was gay, but did that separate him into some special group of subhuman species? His turquoise eyes cast about. At least here within the four walls of the club, he didn’t have to think about what he said first, how he said it and who might hear it. For crissakes, it was 2005, not the Middle Ages. People were out of the closet, or so went the term to describe a lifestyle where one need not be afraid to celebrate one’s own sexual preference. As he thought about it, he realized his own “coming out” hadn’t been that difficult.

Things could have been different, though, if his parents had been alive. His mother would have been fine with it but Sean couldn’t imagine how his father would have taken the news. Jacob Pearl had been too much the “man’s man” and would have never understood. His parents had been killed in a car accident and it wasn’t until after their joint funeral that he’d found the nerve to tell his sister, Ellie, the truth.

A smile whispered across his mouth. Ellie. Somehow she’d already guessed before he’d even told her. Of all the people in the world, she was the one person he had needed approval from. Fuck the others who whispered behind cupped hands and treated him differently. She’d been happy that there were no more secrets between them.

He glanced sidelong when his best friend, Tom Little, slipped into a chair beside him. Sean had to grin when the man winked at the bartender, struck a feminine pose

and wiggled his empty glass to get it refilled. Looking around, Sean wondered where Tom's targeted conquest had disappeared to. "So where's your dancing partner?"

Tom sniffed and affected a sweet smile. "All he wanted to do was dance." Placing a hand on his chest, he sighed. "*This* boy is looking for something more than that. I plan to dance between someone's ass cheeks tonight, then have him stroll between mine." He glanced around, his lips pinched with dismay. "Prospects aren't looking too promising tonight."

Sean shook his head of dark, short wavy hair and sipped his beer.

"What?" Tom questioned in feigned surprise. "A weekend without a good fuck is no weekend at all. Say," he leaned closer, "if you weren't my best friend, I'd be tempted to drop a mickey into your drink, take you home and have my way with you." His finger traced a pattern down Sean's muscular arm. "Such a shame. A big, handsome, strapping hunk like you wasting your time here at the bar when you could be dry-humping some young stud on the floor."

"Fuck you," Sean laughed. Tom never ceased to amaze him as far as the man's sexual promiscuity went.

Tom spun on his stool, his slim shoulders bouncing to the beat of the music. "Anytime, honey." His eyes continued to follow the tight asses passing by until the music halted. Slipping gracefully from his seat, he turned and hooked his arm with Sean's. "Come with me. I want to show you something."

"If it's your dick, I'm not interested."

Tom giggled happily. That's the only way Sean could describe it because Tom's feminine affectations would never allow a manly chuckle.

"Well, it's not mine, honey, but you have to see what the owner of this place has set up in the back."

"I'm not doing any drugs, Tom."

“Don’t be silly. I wouldn’t put you in that position. But, hmmm, talking about positions, that’s what I want you to see.”

Sean’s interest was piqued now. “Ten minutes. Then I’m leaving. I’ve had enough of this music.”

He rose and followed Tom through the crowd to a dimly lit hallway. Men lined the way, some talking, some kissing, some smoking joints. At the end was a large metal door. Tom knocked and waited. After it opened a few whispered words were exchanged and Tom and Sean were allowed to enter.

Shock immediately registered in Sean’s eyes as he cast his gaze about.

“Something, isn’t it?” Tom asked.

Sean was speechless as they shuffled up to huge glass panes that split the room in half. Others stood by them, peering into the interior of three separate cubicles to watch the antics beneath flickering black lights. The whole thing seemed surreal as Sean paused at a window.

“This is called the fluff room,” Tom whispered. “Whatever you want to watch, you’ll see it here. Hell, I’ve got a full-blown erection already...” Anything else he was going to say was lost as he peered through the glass to ogle three buff men participating in a heated sexual display. Dragging his eyes from the sight before him, he glanced at Sean and studied his friend’s features in the eerie light. “The owner has kept this a surprise. He opened for viewing last night. Pretty spectacular, don’t you think?”

Sean simply stared through the glass. A naked man bent over a rail, his legs spread wide to accommodate a man who fucked him wildly up the ass. Another stood in front of the rail, fucking his mouth.

Sean swallowed. For as much as he wanted to tear his gaze away, he couldn’t. He watched corded thigh muscles flex with each hard thrust. His hands fisted, almost feeling as if he were the one with his fingers tightly clutching a narrow set of hips as he buried his dick deeply.

The breath rattled from his constricted lungs. Familiar heat burned deep in his belly. It was a natural reaction, one he couldn't halt whether he struggled against it or not. His cock got harder with each imagined stroke.

His hand flicked through his hair as he cast a cursory glance about him. Apparently the other voyeurs in the room were experiencing the same hot emotions as he because they were already pairing up, stroking covered crotches, kissing.

Was that what he'd been reduced to? Standing in a darkened room with the scent of marijuana burning his nostrils as men fucked for others' enjoyment? To possibly link up with a complete stranger simply for the sake of sex?

He straightened, his jaw tight. "Let's get out of here."

"Well, I can see that tonight's crop of young studs are already finding a fuck partner," Tom sighed. "But hell, it's only Friday. Maybe I'll have better luck tomorrow night. So, sweet thing, let's go somewhere quieter and have a bite to eat. Although, I'm rather concerned about my waistline." He rolled his eyes and pursed his lips. He turned away then glanced over his shoulder. "Does my butt look big in these pants? Hope not. The only thing I want to look big is my cock."

Sean shook his head again. Tom was about the biggest drama queen he'd ever met, but nothing could discount the man's loyalty when it came to friendship. He grabbed his friend's arm and pulled him from the room.

* * * * *

"So," Tom spouted as he daintily chewed on his burger. "When are you *really* going to get out there?"

"What do you mean 'out there'? I thought I was 'out' already."

With an exaggerated sigh, Tom leaned back against the booth's cheap vinyl. "Don't play games with me, Sean. How old are you?" He tapped his forehead with a flourish as if trying to come up with the age, then raised a palm for silence. "Oh, yes. Twenty-five. Good job, great body, *fantastic* ass and out of the closet for four years but still

totally and completely alone. Why? Because you smile and shake your head when someone is doing their dandiest to put the make on you." Tom waggled his finger beneath Sean's nose. "How's a fine, studly piece of man-flesh like you going to get it on when you play shy? Let me ask you this. When's the last time you had any great sex, like the kind we watched tonight? Come on, lover boy, spit it out."

"Don't you have better things to do than to worry if I'm getting any sex or not?"

"I have absolutely nothing better to do than badger you." Tom's soft lips curled sweetly. "You know you hardly ever go out unless I pester you. And most times I leave you at some gay club to find your own ride home, because I end up in the arms of some hunk who looked like he had a roll of socks balled in his crotch. Thank god it's usually the real McCoy. Say, wait a minute. You know, I've always assumed that you have private little sex-fests. We've known each other since our first year of college. In all that time, I have never seen you bat your baby blues at anyone. What gives?"

Sean shrugged and dipped a fry into his catsup.

Tom gasped. Then he gasped again, then his mouth sagged open. "You! Oh my god. Are you a virgin?"

Sean's big hand scrubbed his jaw. He looked everywhere but at Tom.

"That's it!"

"Keep your voice down, would you?"

Shoving his plate aside, Tom tapped the center of the table with a firm fingertip. "Details. I want all the details. Are you a virgin?"

Sean shrugged with a building smile. How could he not? Tom's mouth was all pinched like a sour lemon. "Depends on how you define virgin. Have I had sex? Yes. Has a man ever fucked me? No."

Another gasp from Tom. If Sean kept this up, the man would end up with an asthma attack. Before he could say anything, however, Tom's eyes widened.

“Tell me, babycakes, how in the fuck do you know that you’re gay then? Not that it matters to me.”

Sean’s sense of humor dimmed as he stared across the table. “How does anyone know? Is there an exact moment that it reveals itself to you? Is there that one second in time that stops you dead in your tracks and suddenly you know?”

Tom sat back, realizing that Sean was serious as hell and really wanted the answer to his question. “Come on, Sean. I don’t know about you, but for me it was always there. When I hit puberty, it wasn’t the sight of some young blonde’s titties that gave me a weeping hard-on. It was the sight of a wet swimming suit outlining a big dick that had my blood pounding.”

Sean played with the edge of his napkin, rolling it between his fingers as he contemplated Tom’s response. “I wish it could have been like that for me. I always buried those feelings back then. Fuck, Tom, I come from a family of big strong men who worked in the mines. Hard labor, hard drinking, and hard loving with their women. You don’t know the times I heard my father talking about ridding the world of queers.”

Tom snorted, then tipped his head. “Ah, the plight of so many young boys on the threshold of discovering their sexual appetites. So, you said you were a virgin, yet you aren’t. You fought those feelings, didn’t you, and found a girl to fuck instead. Hey, before we go any farther, how come we’ve never discussed this before?”

“Because you never shut your mouth long enough.”

Tom waved airily. “Well, it’s either talk or cock, my friend. And since you and I don’t share the latter...” He leaned over his bent elbows, clasped his hands together and rested a smooth chin on his clasped fingers. “So, tell me. How was your first time with a...woman?” He snorted quietly. “I can hardly even *say* that, let alone *think* it. A woman. Pussy does absolutely nothing for me.” He noticeably shuddered.

Sean leaned back in the booth and crossed his arms. “Oh, man...it was a joke. At first, I found myself all hot and bothered...cock hard and ready to go. I was seventeen and in the backseat of my parents’ sedan. It was prom night. Isn’t everyone supposed to

lose their virginity on prom night?" He sighed in conjunction with a wry smile. "Things were going pretty well. I had her naked and on her knees. Then I closed my eyes as I pressed my dick between her legs and pictured a male ass in front of me instead of the pussy that was there."

"Ewww," Tom breathed out. "Talk about a dick softener."

"You're not kidding. I made up some excuse. Can't even remember what it was anymore. Things like that kept happening to me right through my senior year. I finally quit asking anyone out on dates. I did manage to keep it up, though, that first year of college. I think I was always drunk enough that I didn't care what I stuck my cock in. One time this chick had just given me a blowjob in the bathroom of the house where we partied. I was hard and I wanted to get off. After that I banged my brains out all night long, but never found any joy in it. And I kept repeating that scenario weekend after weekend. I figured the more pussy I fucked, the less I would think about fucking a guy in the ass. Didn't work. I couldn't figure out why those types of experiences continued to remain unenjoyable until I was approached by a guy one night. He told me he thought I was pretty. I told him to get lost. He said not until he'd had the chance to suck my cock."

Tom leaned forward. "Okay, now you really have my interest. Did you let him?"

Sean nodded. "Yes, I did. Why? Because suddenly the idea of this guy wrapping his lips around my cock had me so hard I thought I was going to burst. That was the night I finally stopped listening to the demon that had been after me for years—the one that said I had to bury my feelings and emotions when it came to sex. That night was the first time I ever fucked a guy in the ass."

Tom's jaw dropped.

"Well," Sean laughed, "that's the first time you've ever been rendered speechless."

Snapping his mouth closed, Tom shook his head and cleared his throat. "Fuck, you got me hot just talking about it. Hey, wait a minute, sugarboy. You said you're still a virgin."

“I guess I am. I’ve never been on the receiving end.”

“Well, as much as I’d like to give you a sample of what you’ve been missing, we both know that’s not going to happen. Good lord, can you imagine the two of us in bed?” He rolled his eyes dramatically. “Although, if you ever need a test drive, just say the word. Friendship has lots of possibilities. All the sex, but no commitment. So, on that note, it will be my divine pleasure to find someone who *will* roll in the hay with you.” He giggled inanely. “I’m going to assure we get that cherry of yours popped good. Come on, stud, we’re going to go work out a plan.”

* * * * *

The plan Tom forced down Sean’s throat was nothing more than what Sean had already tried. Endless nights at gay clubs where he would turn down subtle and not-so-subtle overtures by promiscuous men who were only looking for a one-night stand. Singles’ meetings for gay men at private homes. Yeah, those were something. It seemed those parties were held for every wallflower in the area. Finally, he’d had enough and refused to frequent the club scene or private parties. Sean didn’t want a one-night stand. He wanted someone he could spend his life with. So the days turned into weeks and the weeks into months.

The holiday season rolled around and without much enthusiasm, he headed out one Saturday morning to begin some Christmas shopping. His list was short. His sister, Ellie, and of course, Tom.

He’d spent quite a while in a department store selecting a bright red sweater that he was certain Tom would gush over and promise to wear. He’d already picked up the items for his sister, so he decided to treat himself to lunch before heading back home.

His step lighter, he headed out the revolving glass doors. A moment later he stared unbelievably when a man on his way in, and whose arms were laden with bags, accidentally snagged the edge of the door. As the stranger lurched out of the way and slipped on the ice, his packages scattered to the concrete.

Sean leapt out onto the sidewalk and rushed to the man who still lay on his side.

“Hey, are you okay?”

The guy nodded his head as he took Sean’s offered hand and rose to his feet. “I think so.” Brushing off the back of his pants, he surveyed the damage at his feet. Some of his wrapped presents had slid out of the bags. He quickly bent and began to stuff them back inside. “Hope nothing broke.”

Sean laughed, certain that the mishap wasn’t as bad as it looked, but he couldn’t help replying, “Are you talking about your bones or the presents?”

The stranger turned and stared, his azure gaze locking with Sean’s. Slowly a smile broke across his face. “Okay, I can see the humor in that. I meant the presents. I don’t think I broke anything. Although, my muscles will tell the story in the morning and it might take the entire day for my bruised ego to disappear.”

Sean had to drag his gaze away because of the sudden pounding of his heart. What was it? The smile? The way the stranger’s eyes sparkled above his clean-shaven, square jaw? The thick dark hair curling about his scalp? Whatever it was, Sean was acutely aware that his hands trembled and his stomach churned a bit as he bent to help gather the rest of the scattered packages.

Once everything was back where it belonged, the man reached out a hand and flashed a smile. “Thanks for your help.”

The touch of the warm palm sent a shock wave up Sean’s arm. His lips parted, then he snapped them shut. “No...no problem. Hope you’re not hurting in the morning.” He stepped back. Not knowing what else to say, he pulled his gloves from his pocket, slid them on and gathered up his own gifts. “Well, guess I better keep moving.” Sean nodded one more time and turned to head down the busy street. He’d taken three steps when a husky voice called out.

“Say! Excuse me!”

Sean glanced over his shoulder, then slowly turned. The blood buzzed in his ears.

The man grinned. “You know. The least I could do is buy you a cup of coffee for helping me out. That is, if you have time.”

Sean smiled back. “It’s not necessary. I’m wondering if it wasn’t my fault for pushing the door into you in the first place.” He could have kicked himself for throwing away the opportunity. Opportunity? What opportunity? It was a simple offer of a cup of coffee – nothing more, yet something about this stranger touched a chord deep inside him. Wishful thinking?

The other guy shrugged. “Either way, it doesn’t matter. I was going next door to the café to have something to eat as soon as I was done here. It’s no big deal if I eat now or an hour from now.” He waited, his infectious grin widening despite the cold wind that washed down the sidewalk. “The offer still stands. I hear they serve a real strong cup of coffee and a great burger.”

Slowly, Sean nodded as he pursed his lips and closed the distance between them. “All right, coffee sounds good. And I was planning on lunch before heading home. I guess it would also help if we knew each other’s name. I’m Sean Pearl.”

“Terrence Winston. Nice to meet you, Sean Pearl.”

* * * * *

It was there. It was palpable, but both Sean and Terrence – or rather, Terry as he had insisted – treaded lightly. For over thirty minutes they laughed and discussed jobs and the holiday season, but not once did either mention a wife or girlfriend. The conversation simply flowed easily as if they’d known each other far longer.

Beneath the comfortable exterior, Sean did his best to hide his excitement. As he sat and listened to Terry, his mind raced. To say he was attracted was an understatement. Every time Terry smiled, the gesture went straight to Sean’s stomach. His fingers itched to trace through the man’s dark, waving hair. He felt like he sat on the edge of a cliff, leaning over as a wave of something akin to vertigo charged through his brain. For the first time in a long time, he was...happy, comfortable. That was the only way to explain

it. He even found it hard to swallow the hamburger he'd ordered. Terry, on the other hand, ate with gusto.

The intense lightheartedness was not a figment of his imagination. How could he be so attracted to Terry when he wasn't even sure the man was gay? Terry was masculine to a fault. Nothing about the man indicated that he was anything other than heterosexual, yet it was like sniffing the air and catching a scent.

Sean's eyes surreptitiously cast about. The other patrons in the café weren't staring or whispering behind their hands—something that always happened when he was with Tom whose feminine flamboyancy always called attention. At the moment, it was as if Sean and Terry were simply two regular men who had met for lunch.

That idea crackled through him and Sean's blood instantly ran cold. Two *regular* men? Since when had the conclusion been made in his mind that straight men were regular and gays were not? If he'd said something like that out loud in Tom's presence, Tom would have gasped loudly, then proceed to give him a tongue-lashing that probably would never be complete. Instant shame replaced the chill. Sean was gay and Tom continually pressed him to remember that, to be proud of who he was and to quit hiding it behind the auspices of what society called the norm.

A smile flitted across his mouth. Yeah, Tom would give it to him good if he sat there at the moment. Then he would probably rise to his feet with his nose in the air, slap Sean across the face for his idiocy and sweep away through the tables like the Queen of Sheba.

"You're smiling."

Sean blinked. "What?"

Terry leaned his elbows on the table, clasped his fingers and rested his chin on them. "I was just wondering why you were smiling."

"I was thinking about a friend of mine. For some reason, he popped into my brain. Quite the character, but true to himself and true to those around him. Normally when I'm out in public with him, he calls attention to himself with all the...the antics he's so

capable of. It's kind of nice to just sit here and know that I can have a pleasantly quiet meal."

Terry's gaze lowered. "Are you enjoying the food? You've hardly touched it."

Sean shrugged. "Guess I wasn't as hungry as I thought."

"Is there a reason?"

Sean shrugged again, then stared across the booth. *Say it! Tell him...*

Terry glanced at his watch and sighed loudly. "Well, I suppose I should head out. My brother and his wife invited me to dinner tonight and I still have a few errands to run." Flipping some bills onto the table, he rose and reached for his woolen overcoat. But instead of shrugging it on, he hesitated and finally lifted his eyes to watch Sean gather up his belongings. "I really enjoyed meeting you, Sean. It seems strange that I didn't know you an hour ago and now I feel like we've been friends forever. That's nice."

"I have to agree. It's been nice getting to know you."

Terry stuck his arms into the sleeves of his coat, shuffled the packages into his grip, and slowly exhaled as his gaze came up. "I would really enjoy doing it again, but I have to tell you something. Most times my inner radar talks to me – and most times it's right. I'm gay, Sean, and currently I'm single. I'm hoping you are too, because I would love to see you again. I haven't enjoyed myself like this in a long time."

Sean's heart rapped out a frantic beat. His brain buzzed as a streak of relief shot through him. Terry had been honest and the reason must be that he felt an attraction also. "I'd like that." He stared into Terry's eyes. Now he knew.

A wide grin broke across Terry's face. "Here's my card. Why don't you give me a call in the middle of the week and we can set something up."

Chapter Two

Sean's fingers scraped through the thick hair at his temple as he stared into the mirror. Turning his head, he finger-combed the other side, happy that he'd visited the hairdresser that morning and looked a little less shaggy. Stepping back, his gaze washed over his naked form. Tipping his head, he studied himself closely, his eyes following the smooth breadth of his chest, over the bluish veins that traced across his muscular forearms, and then lowered to where his cock poked out from the neatly trimmed pubic area. Instantly, a shot of what Terry's cock might look like flashed through his brain. Shaking his head, he reached for his underwear and pants.

He would finally see Terry for the second time tonight and the thought had had him stumbling in a flurry all day long. The corner of his mouth turned up happily as he slipped his long legs into his pants. He had managed to wait all of one day before pulling out Terry's card and phoning the man. That had been last Sunday night. They'd spoken to one another every day since because they hadn't been able to get together. Too many work commitments on both their shoulders, but the intimate conversations had only pulled them closer.

Sean firmly believed the discussions had been a form of foreplay. There hadn't been any sex talk, but that didn't matter. Both men knew what would eventually happen. Both understood where their new friendship would lead them.

As an adult, Sean had never picked up a stranger simply for the sake of sex, as Tom did on a regular basis. Sean had always struggled to get to know the man he was dating, to discover some thread of soul that would bind them, but in the end, he'd always walked away because his heart hadn't participated.

Terry was different. Terry was like a breath of fresh air in a stale room. He was funny, yet serious when needed. Sean had told him things he'd never discussed with

anyone. Things like how it felt to discover one was gay and the emotions and struggles that followed. Of how Sean's sister had always supported him, but that his parents had died not knowing the true details of his life. And as he relayed each fact, Terry was there to encourage Sean and let him know that there was nothing foolish about the initial fear of admission in regard to his sexual orientation. Terry also shared intimate details of his life which further cemented an unspoken, tentative bond.

Sean's hand stopped in midair as he reached for his shirt.

Would they make love tonight? For as slow as he'd cautioned himself to take the relationship, the exhilaration of finding someone who understood his every fear was as exciting as it was overwhelming. And Sean admitted to himself that every time he pictured Terry's broad shoulders, the man's sexy eyes or even thought about his large hands wrapping around his cock, it was like a punch in the stomach. Sean had ridden a fine line of sexual frustration all week long.

His blue gaze darted to the clock beside his bed. He had less than an hour to get dressed and get himself to the Sunset. Terry said he would be waiting by the door.

Sean grinned inwardly. Tom was going to be bowled over when Sean walked into the club with a date.

* * * * *

Sean stepped out of the cab, his eyes glued to Terry's broad back as the man stood and laughed with the bouncer at Sunset's door. The hair on his arms prickled when Terry swiveled around as if sensing that the person he waited for would be standing on the sidewalk.

"Hi, Sean!" Terry strode forward with his hand out. Instead of shaking Sean's hand, however, he clutched it tightly, leaned forward and pressed a kiss against Sean's cheek. "It's so good to see you!"

The kiss shocked the hell out of Sean and heat roiled through his stomach. It was hard to believe that this meeting with Terry was an actual date and not just a pick-up. It was like floating on air.

“Are you ready to go inside? I’ve been waiting for this all week.”

Sean nodded and followed him up the steps and into the club.

Lights flashed, music blared and bodies writhed to the tempo as Terry leaned in closer, hollering above the noise. “Where do you want to sit? The bar or a booth?”

“A booth is fine,” Sean returned. A moment later, Terry took his hand and led him across the room. The intimate gesture warmed Sean’s heart.

They had just sat down when Tom appeared out of nowhere. The man’s flamboyancy shone brightly via his pink silk shirt, low-cut bell bottoms and black eye liner which made his eyes appear rounder under his bleached-blond hair.

“Sean, you bad, bad boy,” he drawled with lips pursed, though his fascinated gaze raked over Terry instead. “Is this why I haven’t been able to coax you out at night?” Ignoring Sean’s stutter, he held out his hand to Terry. “Tom Little, but don’t let my last name fool you. Friend extraordinaire to Mr. Pearl. I see that Sean has kept an amusing little secret from me.”

Terry sent Sean a quick glance, one that twinkled with humor, then grasped Tom’s extended palm. “Nice to meet you, Tom. I’m Terry Winston. Sean has told me a lot about you.”

“Well, he hasn’t told me a *thing* about you! And don’t you believe anything out of his mouth, sweetie. I’m so much more of a bad boy than he gives me credit for.” Sliding into the booth, he elbowed Sean with a wink. “So how long have you been seeing Terry?”

Knowing Tom wouldn’t let up until his questions were answered, Sean sent Terry a grin along with a shrug, then leaned back. “We met by accident last week.”

“A near accident,” Terry cut in. “I slipped on a patch of ice, my packages sailed across the sidewalk and I was on my ass before I knew it. I looked up and there was Sean. After collecting my things, we had lunch, talked some this week on the phone and decided to get together again.”

Tom tapped the table’s surface with his manicured finger as a wide grin split his face. “Fate...isn’t it something? I’ve tried to find this handsome hunk a date for the longest time when all I would have had to look for was a patch of ice.”

“Tom,” Sean quickly interrupted as he wiggled on the seat. “Don’t you have someone waiting on the floor?” He wanted Tom gone and Terry all to himself. There would be plenty of time to answer questions in the morning—that is if he decided to answer the phone and endure Tom’s interrogation.

“Ah, the lovebirds want to be by themselves.” Already Tom’s gaze drifted through the mass of gyrating men as he stood. “Okee-dokee. I can take a hint. Nice meeting you, Terry. Take care of my little stud-man.” He then pressed an audacious kiss on Sean’s cheek.

“I plan to,” Terry returned with conviction.

Sean’s heart leapt as he stared at Terry when Tom swaggered away. The look of promise in the man’s eyes heated his blood.

Terry reached across the table and took Sean’s hand in his. “I can see the surprise in your expression.”

Sean’s gaze lowered to Terry’s big hand holding his so gently, but he remained mute.

“Don’t be shocked when I tell you this,” Terry stated, “but I’m hoping that tonight is the beginning of what will be mutual affection from you. We connected that day in the coffee shop. With each conversation we had this week, I became more and more excited about tonight. When you stepped out of the cab I knew I’d made the right decision to see you again.”

Sean finally met the hopeful eyes across from him. He'd felt it too – that burgeoning bewilderment to have actually found someone who resided on the same plane of understanding. It had not only blindsided Sean, but had sent him into a tailspin of desire. All week long after their phone calls ended, he'd simply lain on his back staring at the ceiling. Every word they'd spoken had filtered through his mind like a cherished recording. He'd been there too many times, however – hopeful that maybe he'd found the one person who would make his life complete, only to have it blow up in his face.

“How about I get us a drink? Doesn't seem like we're going to get a waiter anytime soon.” Terry's eyes coasted about the smoky room. “Then I think I'd like to dance. How does that sound to you?”

“I'd like that.”

Sean watched Terry move around the dancing men until he disappeared. His hand scrubbed across his jaw, more in an attempt to hide his happy smile than anything. He couldn't believe it. The many times he'd tried to put himself into a setting that would lead to meeting someone special, and all he'd had to do was help someone up from the sidewalk.

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The heated music slowed. Instead of heading back to their table, Sean and Terry slipped languorously into one another's arms. The tempo had stayed fast and pounding up to this point, but still they'd managed to brush lightly against each other, the sensual physical contact heightening their pleasure as the evening passed. Now the perfect opportunity to get close had just presented itself and neither would throw it away.

Sean linked his wrists behind Terry's neck and was no longer surprised at the desire that spiraled straight through his gut. It had happened with every light touch and each sexy smile that Terry sent his way.

Terry pulled him closer. Their mouths almost brushed as their eyes locked. The small space between them closed tightly when Terry bumped his growing cock against

Sean's. The contact was electrifying for both men, something they'd waited for the entire evening.

Terry's excited gasp flowed over Sean's cheek as he smiled. "May I kiss you?"

Soundlessly, Sean's hands shifted to cup the other man's cheeks. This was what he had waited for, wasn't it? He drew Terry's mouth to his and without hesitation, let his tongue drift across the seam of his full lips.

Terry was there to meet him with a quick dart of the tongue. His large fingers slid down from where they rested against Sean's waist and splayed across his tight ass cheeks. His erect cock nestled hotly against Sean's crotch.

They kissed, each nipping at the other, residing in a sexual haze that had built, flame by sizzling flame, throughout the night. Hands drifted across firm muscles, exploring, seeking that first journey of discovery.

Terry's lips moved across Sean's firm jaw until they rested beside his ear. "Let's get out of here. I want you, Sean. I've wanted you since the first moment I saw you."

Excitement blistered through Sean. "Where...where do you want to go? My place or yours?"

"I'm closer. Come to my apartment and stay. I want to make love with you all night long."

Sean tilted his head and kissed Terry soundly on the mouth. His fingers kneaded Terry's firm ass cheek in promise of what the night would bring.

Holding hands, they made their way to their table, scooped up their coats and headed into the night.

Chapter Three

Sean's heart pounded against his ribs. The deafening rush of blood through his veins beat within his ears. They would make love. Though the two men had shared nothing more than heated kisses and wild caresses, he knew tonight would be the hottest sexual experience he'd ever known. His light blue gaze lifted to watch Terry insert a CD into his player. A moment later, soft, soothing music filtered out. As his gaze coasted over Terry's broad shoulders, it hit him that Terry was proud of who he was. Sean would never hide his sexuality behind meaningless, detailed mistruths again.

"Make love to me, Terry."

Terry's eyes glowed with tenderness when he turned. His lips curved softly as he crossed the room and reached out a hand. "Nothing would make me happier than to hold you in my arms. I can't believe we found one another."

Nodding, Sean breathed in deeply. He had no reservations. "I feel the same. It's just...right, isn't it?"

Terry reached out to cup Sean's cheek, watching as the other man's eyes fluttered shut with the gentle caress. "It is." His hand drifted down the hard expanse of Sean's chest to rest his palm over a rapidly beating heart. "That connection is here inside you, crying to get out." He stepped closer and slipped his arms about Sean. "I want to take this slow. I want to enjoy. It's been a long time since someone has made me feel the way you do."

The erect line of Terry's penis against Sean's groin was intoxicating, beautifully sensual. His own cock swelled and crazily he wondered if Terry could feel it. His brain raced as an excited thrill rushed up his spine. His whole being centered on the moist lips that hovered near his mouth.

And then? Terry's lips pressed forward, a slow, languid caress, part exploration, part seeking of acceptance. His mouth moved over Sean's, teasing and nipping as his hands slid down to rest over his buttocks.

His breath filled Sean's nostrils, evoking an excited gasp of air. His circling hips further built Sean's hot arousal as their tongues flicked against one another. Rigid cocks ached to be freed as hips surged forward in anticipation.

"Terry..." Having the other man hold Sean in such an intimate embrace was like coming home, like discovering the one most important thing in his life that had been missing. Never, ever, had he felt such a rush of sexual pleasure and anticipation.

Terry heard his whispered name. It was what he'd been waiting for. His tongue immediately forged inside Sean's mouth as he angled his head, dancing wildly when Sean groaned low in the back of his throat. The two clung hungrily to one another as their tongues clashed crazily, their hands clutching as their cocks ground against each other in perfect promise.

"I...I feel like I'm going to come already," Sean mumbled against Terry's lips. "Oh, god, Terry...please stop. Please let me tell you something."

Dragging his mouth away, Terry braced his forehead against Sean's as his fingers threaded their way through the other man's thick waves. They were both breathing heavily, their hearts racing.

"What? I'm not going to guarantee how long I can behave. You're too sexy, too perfect and I want to bury my cock in your ass."

The statement nearly brought Sean to his knees. He clung to the other man. "I-I want the same thing. I want to feel you sliding into me, but...but I'm a virgin, more or less."

Terry's head jerked back as he stared. "A virgin? We talked, Sean. You told me you've been with other men. I don't understand."

Sean read the confusion in his eyes. "I *have* been with other men, it's just that I was always the giver, never the receiver. I've never had a cock in me." Incredulously, he

watched the smile spread across Terry's face. "I'm glad now that it never happened. I'm glad you're going to be the first."

"Oh, baby, you just sweetened the pot for me." Soundlessly, Terry took Sean's hand and led him to the bedroom. Once there, they embraced tenderly. "We're only beginning, Sean. Just take a breath. I want your first time to be perfect."

Sean's hands trembled as he cupped Terry's face, pressing intimate kisses across his cheeks. "I want it to be perfect too," he murmured when Terry smiled and ran his tongue over his lips.

The muscles of his chest quivered when Terry reached out and ran his palms across the taut material that covered it. The light touch was exquisite, loving, just before his fingers slipped lower. Sean was certain Terry was going to rub his cock. The idea tightly constricted his belly as sparks of heat shot through his groin.

But instead, Terry grasped the hem of Sean's shirt and slowly pulled it up and over his head to bare his chest. "You don't know how many times I've seen you like this in my mind and ached to touch you, to run my hands over your skin, to anticipate making love to you."

"Terry..."

Their eyes locked. Sean's nipples peaked hard when Terry's heated gaze raked his body from head to toe. He watched, trancelike, when Terry leaned forward, licked one dark nipple, then covered it completely and sucked hard. At the same time, his fingers brushed down past Sean's trim hips, lightly teased over the throbbing bulge between his legs, then back up to rest gently on a hip.

"I want to see you naked," Terry whispered as his fingers found the snap of Sean's jeans. A moment later, he pulled the zipper down one metal tooth at a time, drawing out the experience to heighten their arousal. "But first..." His hand slipped inside Sean's boxers.

Sean's head fell back as he gasped for air. Terry gripped his cock in a warm hold, his thumb flicking over the tip of his penis.

“Your cock is dripping. Do you like this?”

“Terry...” Sean gasped and swallowed hard. It was a struggle to meet his eyes with the man stroking his cock inside his shorts. Nothing he’d ever encountered before could compare to this. He almost called out to beg him to continue when Terry’s hand suddenly disappeared.

“Take off your pants.”

Sean kicked off his shoes and immediately shoved them over his hips, taking his shorts too as he dragged the clothing down his muscular legs. Slowly he stood, his cock hard and throbbing as it curved upward.

“Now, take off my clothes.” Terry smiled.

Sean grinned back as he began to slowly unbutton Terry’s shirt. “I really do feel like a virgin. My hands are shaking and my heart is racing.”

Terry’s hand came up and he wrapped his fingers around Sean’s wrist to stall his actions. Staring into his eyes, he ran his tongue over his lips to moisten them. “You are a virgin. You might have been with other men, but you’ve never had another man’s cock deep inside your ass. I’m going to fuck you tonight, Sean, and you’ll never experience anything better than that.”

Sean leaned forward to capture Terry’s mouth. “I want it, Terry. I want your cock in my ass. I want you to make endless love to me... Then I’m going to do the same to you.” As they kissed, Sean opened Terry’s pants with an urgent need to see him naked, to feel the man’s cock in his hand. Soon...

Terry quickly undressed as they chuckled between light kisses and strokes against each other’s bare skin. Both men’s erections were hard and dripping pre-cum, but Terry quickly took over as the loving aggressor when he sank to his knees.

Sean’s breath thickened in his throat when Terry pressed his palms against the inside of his knees to spread his stance, then traveled a sensuous path up his inner thighs, swirled his fingers around his balls, and then took Sean’s cock in his hands. Sean arched forward and expelled the breath he held.

“Your cock is beautiful,” Terry stated reverently when he glanced up. “So beautiful, and hard, and big.” He opened a drawer beside the bed and grabbed a condom. Ripping the package open with his teeth, it didn’t take long for him to roll it down Sean’s erection. He pulled from the base to Sean’s dripping tip and back. “You like this, don’t you?”

Sean’s head lolled as he struggled to concentrate on what Terry had just said. It was difficult when streaks of heat infiltrated his belly. His balls tightened with an ache of anticipation as the other man nuzzled them with his lips. “Christ, Terry, you’re driving me crazy...”

Continuing to slowly stroke Sean’s hard length, Terry looked up. His long fingers squeezed around Sean’s cock, applying slight pressure. He watched Sean’s eyelids lower. Another squeeze around his cock and Sean inhaled with complete satisfaction. “I want to enjoy a nice long, hard fuck from you tonight. But first...”

Sean’s cock twitched in Terry’s grip at the taunting words.

Terry smiled. He wrapped his mouth around the head of Sean’s cock, hearing the shocked groan of pleasure echo around him. Firming his grip, he nibbled down the entire length of the throbbing shaft in his hand, hating the fact that the thin latex separated him from Sean’s hot skin, but hoping beyond hope that the day would come when there would be no barriers between them. His tongue swirled around Sean’s tight scrotum, then back up until he opened his mouth and drew in the cock head. That was something he’d dreamed about and now it was actually happening. Sean’s cock filled his mouth.

He sucked harder, knowing that despite the rubber, Sean could feel the suctioning power of his mouth. He set a rhythm that Sean’s hips followed, nibbling harder, sensually massaging the cock in his hand.

Suddenly the drive of Sean’s hips changed. He jerked quick strokes against the back of Terry’s throat, grunting with each short thrust forward. Terry continued to suck crazily at Sean’s bouncing cock as his hand slid around to grasp the curve of one firm

ass cheek and hold Sean's body closer, loving how perfectly the muscles contracted with each swing of the man's hips. Terry couldn't wait to get inside his ass. His fingers tightened at the base of Sean's dick, holding his body close as he sucked.

A growl left Sean's lips when the orgasm hit him. Terry kept Sean's cock firmly rooted inside his mouth as he stroked his lover to completion.

Trembling with satisfaction, Sean's harsh panting resounded around them as his fingers entwined in the soft head of hair at his crotch. "Oh, fuck..." he mumbled as the last threads of his orgasm cooled. "Terry...it's been so long since someone sucked me."

Terry stood and pulled him into his arms. His hands stroked the dampened skin of Sean's back. His own cock ached for release, but that was only going to happen when he was deep between the ass cheeks of the other man. Whipping the bedspread back, he guided Sean down. Without a word, Terry slid over his body and began to kiss him. Spreading Sean's legs with a nudge of his knees, Terry's hard cock surged against Sean's lower belly. The hair on their legs rasped against one another as their bodies squirmed to get even closer than they were.

Sean clutched at Terry's ass to hold him secure as Terry balanced an elbow on either side of his head to stroke Sean's moist lips with his thumbs. They stared into one another's eyes.

"I love the feel of your ass," Sean whispered with an astounded smile as he caressed Terry's skin. "You lying on top of me is sexy as hell."

Terry grinned down. "And the night has only started." He rolled his cock against Sean's and they continued to kiss until Sean's cock began to swell once more. Their tongues whipped against each other. Small moans emitted from their throats. Terry broke the lusty embrace as he rolled from Sean's body and stripped the used condom from Sean's cock. He reached for a tube of lubricant. Turning, his eyes glowed dark. "I can't wait any longer. Roll over to your stomach and get up on your knees."

With a pounding heart, Sean did as asked. His cock was rock-hard again. He lay there with his ass in the air and his head on a pillow, waiting to be taken. Joy such as he'd never known flowed through him.

He started in surprise when he felt Terry's hand on his ass. The air left his lungs when a moment later, Terry pressed his lips beside his caressing fingers, then slowly kissed over the firm muscles of his back.

"I'm going to prepare you, Sean. At first you might feel some pain, but it will be wonderful. I guarantee it. Are you ready?" He squeezed one ass cheek and continued with erotic licks against the line of Sean's spine.

"Yes" was the breathless reply. "Oh, fuck yes..."

The touch of those caressing lips and massaging fingers disappeared. Sean rolled his head on the pillow, listening to the sound of gel being squeezed from a tube and a condom being ripped open. His knees were spread wide across the soft mattress as he waited on the precipice of lust and desire.

Then Terry's fingertip was back to press against the hollow at the top of his crack. The lube was chilly against his skin, but Sean's belly filled with heat. In his mind, he followed Terry's finger as the man dragged it sensuously down his ass crack and stopped at the tight sphincter.

Terry drew small circles around the puckered ring. "Just relax, Sean. I'm going to make sure you're ready..."

His voice washed over Sean's body as he continued to rub circles. Soon the tip of his lubed finger pressed firmer, breaching the tight hole.

"I can feel you clamping down. Just relax."

Sean's fingers curled around the pillow. Sensual, erotic... How else to explain? No one had ever slipped into his rectum before. Taking a deep breath, he forced his body to relax. His eyes squeezed shut as a finger slid deeper into his ass. He gasped for air and his eyes snapped open when Terry swiveled his finger and stroked upward. His heart pumped wildly as each brush against his prostate swelled his cock harder. Hot passion

curled inside his belly. His hips pumped. Sean's brow knit tightly as he struggled to thwart another orgasm, but his ass pressed backward and a groan of pleasure left him.

Terry understood what the internal stimulation did to his lover, so the strokes changed. Instead, his fingertips massaged Sean's anus, allowing Sean time to stave off the urge to come. But he couldn't stop himself from stroking Sean's tight balls with his free hand only seconds later.

Soon, Terry's finger slid in and out of the tight tunnel once more, twisting gently and always tender. He kissed the ass cheek closest to him, licking with soft flicks of his tongue.

Sean bit down on his lip when Terry slowly inserted a second finger, gently stretching him farther.

"Does that feel good?"

"Oh god," Sean sighed. "I don't want you to stop, but I want your cock..."

Terry adjusted his position, removed his fingers and crawled between Sean's legs. A small gasp flowed from Sean's mouth when the round bulb of Terry's cock pressed against his hole. His heart hammered, his gut clenched and he battled to keep his raspy breaths from turning into a groan of delight. He wanted to remember this moment—Terry's cock against his ass, throbbing to be inside him, ready to lead him through this virgin experience.

He shuddered when the burn of entry raced through him. Terry paused, letting Sean's body adapt, then tightened his hold on Sean's hips and thrust slowly again, each time deepening his slow, steady strokes until he was buried inside his rectum.

Sean grappled with the pillow, his forehead rolling against the softness as Terry fucked him gently. In and out—steady slow glides to the end of his rectum and back. The burning sensation slowly filtered away and was replaced by the same flame of desire he'd experienced only minutes earlier. Sean's hands flailed, finding the brass rung of the headboard to steady himself, gasping for air as his body began to move in

unison with each heady thrust into his ass. "Yes...oh, fuck yes. Fuck me just like that, Terry."

Terry instantly picked up the pace of his strokes. Sean met each one with a fervor of his own. Each glide of Terry's cock into his ass spiraled him closer to the flaming passion which threatened to erupt once more. Sean braced himself and squeezed his ass muscles, sucking at Terry's cock to draw him even deeper. The burning sting of the initial entry was gone. His head rolled against the pillow as he groaned. The bed shook around him. Terry's breath was hot across his back, his fingers clutching tightly around the trim ass spread before him.

They continued on, Terry continually driving into the welcoming ass before him.

Sean accepted each thrust with joy and with an open heart. His mind shifted like the sands of a rich kaleidoscope. First with a building love stronger than he'd ever known, then a rush of burning heat through his entire body as his balls drew tight. He needed to crawl from the all-encompassing burn, yet desired to be completely engulfed by the sexual fire. His hands grasped the top brass rail as he rose to his knees and thrust his ass against the steely shaft that pounded into him.

Terry reached around and grabbed Sean's cock. He stroked the length in tempo with each resolute thrust.

Sean slammed back time after time, wild now to meet each stroke of Terry's cock. His rasping breath filled his lungs. His limbs quaked, muscles clenched tightly, his ass burned as he rode the wave of Terry's passionate lovemaking, and then cried out as he came across the silken pillow he knelt upon.

Terry's strokes were steady, deep and determined as he rocked into Sean's ass, instinctively knowing his lover came hard. The thought excited him beyond belief. Sean's sexy ass excited him beyond belief. He drove in and let himself go, pumping semen into the condom and loving how the tight glove of Sean's ass squeezed at his cock.

Sean's forehead sank to the brass rail as he gasped, his chest expanding with the effort, his ass still a welcoming sheath to Terry's spasming cock. His heart hammered in his ears, his blood sang with excitement.

When Terry pulled out, Sean shoved the soiled pillow aside and slumped to the mattress, his limbs shaking and weak. Terry's teeth nibbled at his glistening shoulder. Sean's hand flailed upward to find Terry's hand as the man rolled beside him.

They said nothing, only continued to gasp for air as they floated in the warm aftermath of sexual satisfaction.

Finally, Sean licked his dry lips and crawled closer to Terry. Pulling his head close, he kissed him hard, his tongue flicking inside his mouth, over and over. His hand lowered to find Terry's limp cock. Stripping away the condom, he flung it to the floor and wrapped his hand around the soft flesh. Gently, he stroked it as he rose up on an elbow. His eyes searched the perspiring brow of the man who lay beside him, the man who had finally taken him over the threshold of desire. His gaze followed the straight line of Terry's nose and the curve of his cheek. "I love you, Terry. That was so wonderful."

Terry reached up, a smile softening his shadowed jaw. "Crazy as it is, I love you too. Come here..." He pulled Sean down until his head was nestled against his chest and pressed a tender kiss against his forehead. "Sleep. And when you're ready, I want you to make love to me."

They closed their eyes, each holding the other in the muted light as slumber overtook them.

Chapter Four

“Do you think she’ll like me?”

Sean chuckled, then squeezed Terry’s hand. “Of course she will. Ellie was excited as hell when I told her about us.”

Terry glanced up with a smile as he chopped lettuce at the counter. “She doesn’t think we’re moving too fast?”

Sean nuzzled up against Terry’s back and wrapped his arms around his lover’s waist. Silently he kissed the other man’s neck. “Ellie is a lot more open-minded than most people. She’s extremely happy for us. I know it’s only been a month since we met, but when I told her about you at Christmas, do you know what she said?”

Terry’s eyes closed as he enjoyed the pressure of Sean’s lips against his neck. “I seem to remember you telling me on like ten different occasions that she said it was about time you found that special person.” His breath feathered over his lips when Sean’s hands dropped to caress his crotch.

“You are special,” Sean murmured sensuously. “I think I suspected that fact the first time I touched your hand.” He stroked Terry’s cock through his pants. “Then once I had this in my grasp, I was certain. You make me hot, Terry. Hotter than anyone I’ve ever met. If my sister wasn’t going to show up shortly, I’d prove it.”

Terry swiveled in the heated embrace until he faced Sean. Wrapping his arms around the other man’s neck, he coaxed the waiting lips to his own as a streak of contentment washed through him. After darting his tongue against Sean’s and enjoying the way Sean’s danced against his own, he sighed. “I love you. I don’t care how fast it happened.”

“And neither does Ellie. So quit worrying about meeting her.” With one last peck on Terry’s lips, Sean moved to a cabinet and pulled out plates.

With trembling hands, Terry filled a bowl with lettuce. Damn, Sean always had the ability to set his heart to racing. "Are you going to tell her that I'm moving in here with you?"

"Of course I am." Sean paused as he opened a silverware drawer, turned his head and stared across the small space between them. "You still want to, don't you? We talked about this, Terry. It doesn't make sense for you to stay in your apartment. I've got this big house. We've been together almost every night. I can't stand it when you can't be here. I lie in my bed and stare at the ceiling wondering if you're missing me as much as I am you. All I can think about is how badly I want to fuck you right at that moment. It keeps me awake."

Terry set down the knife he used and moved closer. Cupping Sean's cheeks, he kissed him with bruising force as his hips pinned Sean against the counter. It was always like that between them. A sexual connection that neither had ever experienced, one that always swept them into an instant state of arousal.

Sean growled as he hugged Terry close, meeting each kiss with increasing fervor that never ceased to amaze him. Their hands raced through one another's hair as their excited groans echoed around them. Sean's heart pounded against his ribs when Terry yanked his zipper down and reached into his pants to stroke the velvety skin of his hard cock.

"How long until your sister gets here?" Terry breathed between wild kisses.

"Fifteen minutes...twenty..." Sean eagerly returned.

"I want to fuck you...right here, right now."

"Yes..." he groaned as he pulled open a drawer, dug around and quickly produced a hidden tube of lubrication. Only moments later, he had Terry's cock in his hand as he greased his hard length. Sean spun around and clutched the edge of the counter as he struggled for breath.

Terry wasted no time as he yanked Sean's jeans down over his thighs. With a quick shake of his foot, Sean had one leg free as he followed the pressure of Terry's hand

against his ass. Spreading his stance, he bent over the counter. Immediately, Terry's moistened cock nudged against his hole.

Spreading Sean's cheeks, he easily worked his penis in, loving the sound of his lover's whimper of joy as he pressed forward, pulled his cock back a bit, then slammed in again. "I'm glad we're done with condoms. I love how hot your ass is when I'm inside you."

There was no tenderness, just raw, hot emotion and Sean was there to meet each rapturous thrust inside him. They'd had sex so many times over the course of the month, but each time was hotter and more intoxicating. The reason was because they'd both gone to the doctor and received a clean bill of health. Now it was skin against skin, no more condoms, no worry, only a heightened passion that exploded with each sexual encounter.

Because of the many sessions of lovemaking, Sean was aware of the familiar tempest building inside Terry by each hard stroke and the sound of his breathing. Soon...soon Terry would reach around and grab his cock to assure that Sean came with him.

The breath caught in his throat when Terry's fingers tickled down his hard length before tightening his grip.

Terry's hips jerked harder and he banged wildly inside Sean as his hand found the same rhythm and all Sean could do was follow his lover's lead. Grappling at the counter, a bowl sailed to the floor as Sean's balls constricted. His eyes slammed shut and a line of heat jumped to life in his groin and raced through his cock until he was coming in Terry's hand. Terry growled with pleasure and shoved his dick as hard as he could into Sean's ass.

They orgasmed together, hot streaks of unnerving passion, one fiery pulse after the other until they were both spent and gasping for air.

Terry left his cock inside Sean as he grasped the man's hips to hold him close, bent forward and met Sean's searching mouth. Sean strained farther in order to drag his

fingers through Terry's thick hair. Their tongues flicked wildly and murmurs of love were shared.

"I couldn't wait until tonight," Terry whispered with a strangled groan. "The sight of your ass swinging around this kitchen always makes me hard." When he pulled out, Sean turned in his arms.

"If my sister wasn't going to show up momentarily, I would love to continue this in the bedroom. Tonight, Terry. I'm going to fuck you so hard when we're alone that you'll be begging for more."

A smile spread across Terry's lips. "Is that a promise?"

"Consider it a warning," Sean chuckled. "But until then, we better get in the other room and clean up damn quick."

* * * * *

Sean sat quietly at the table, his heart filled with joy. Ellie and Terry were like two long-lost friends. They easily interacted while talking about their college days, a shared interest in art and the fact that Terry and Ellie actually had mutual acquaintances. The dinner had gone better than Sean could ever have hoped for. Here sat the two people he loved most in life, and life couldn't be better.

The three cleaned up the dirty dishes together, laughing and teasing the entire time. Once the last of the counters were wiped off and the plates stacked in the cabinets, Sean poured three glasses of wine and they headed for the living room. Sean and Terry comfortably leaned against one another on the couch and Ellie lolled in a rocking chair.

"I can't tell the two of you how much I enjoyed the evening. The food was great, but the company was better. It's so nice to have finally met you, Terry, especially after the last few weeks of listening to Sean sing your praises. I've waited a long time for him to find someone. I'm glad it's you."

Terry smiled as he slung an arm over Sean's shoulder. His fingers gently caressed the man's upper arm. "Thank you, Ellie. Sean is easy to love."

“I have to say something here,” she said after taking a sip. “You two seem perfect for each other. I’ve watched the secret glances you’ve shared all night long. I know my brother and all I can see is complete joy on his face. So, have the two of you talked about the future at all?”

Terry chuckled. “You were right, Sean, when you said Ellie never beats around the bush.” He turned his grin in her direction. “Yes, we have talked about the future.”

“I’ve asked Terry to move in here with me,” Sean stated. “We’ve been together nearly every night since we’ve met. If he hadn’t had plane tickets purchased at Christmas, I’m sure the three of us would have been together at some point during the holiday.”

Ellie’s smile whispered over her lips as she glanced around what used to be her parents’ home. Being older than Sean, she had already been settled and in her own apartment when their parents were killed. She hadn’t wanted this house and was more than happy to see Sean move back in. Although they’d argued over it, Sean had finally won out and insisted she take her share of the house out of the money left to them.

He’d been rambling around in here by himself ever since. Now he wouldn’t be alone anymore.

“So what do you think?”

Ellie’s gaze met her brother’s. She was happy for Sean. “I think it’s a great idea. You two just seem to go together. If you’re waiting for my blessing, don’t. You already have it.”

* * * * *

It didn’t take long for the two lovers to settle in together. Sean’s days were filled with happiness. And his nights? Well, his nights were filled with an all-consuming passion. Whether they fucked in the bed, on the floor, or in the shower, their hearts were linked.

Throughout January and February, Ellie watched her brother flourish beneath the mantle of Terry's love. Sean had struggled for so long to hide the fact that he was gay, and even after he'd come out, still he'd found no happiness. Not until Terry. If only she could find a partner such as him. To be able to look into another person's eyes and know the comfort of having found a soul mate would bring her immense joy.

She was tired of being the third wheel—or fourth when Tom was invited to round out their homey dinners or weekend get-togethers, that is, if they could drag him from his endless nightclub searches for the perfect ass. The more she protested that she didn't mind a bit if Terry and Sean did something without her, the more they insisted that she include herself in their outings.

It was after one such night that Terry and Sean found themselves alone after having spent the day with both Tom and Ellie. Terry set four empty wine goblets into the sink with a chuckle.

"What are you laughing about?" Sean asked from where he sat at the small kitchen table.

"Nothing in particular. I was just going over the day in my mind. Tom is quite the character. I can't believe he's still alone, can you? He has such a wonderful sense of humor. Both he and Ellie are goodhearted people who have so much to give. I love spending time with both of them." He turned and leaned a slim hip against the counter. "Did you notice tonight that Ellie made mention more than once about some guy in her office? Some Derek whose been working on a project with her? I was watching her face. Every time she said his name, her eyes softened. She just seemed different. Think she's falling in love?"

Sean left his chair and strolled over to Terry, immediately pulling him into a warm embrace. The back of one finger stroked Terry's cheek. "I guess I was paying too much attention to your ass most of the time. If what you say is true, good for Ellie. I'd love for her to find what we have."

He kissed Terry lovingly as his hand slipped to the man's crotch. "I've been thinking about this moment all day," Sean murmured against his mouth.

Terry chuckled. "I know, I could tell." His head tipped back as his eyes closed and an encouraging groan rumbled in his throat. His cock hardened at Sean's touch. His hips pressed forward. "I've been thinking about your lips wrapped around my dick all day. Let's shut off the lights and go to bed."

Sean's fingers were already loosening Terry's belt. "I don't think I can wait that long." He sank to his knees, zipped open Terry's pants and gently shoved his boxers aside to free his erect cock. Glancing up he met Terry's shuttered gaze. His tongue drifted sensuously over the tip of his lover's penis. "I love you, and I love your cock." He wrapped his lips around the engorged end and sucked.

Terry gasped with satisfaction as he cupped Sean's head close with one hand and clutched at the counter with the other. He pumped into Sean's mouth, wincing with pleasure.

Flicking his tongue one last time into the slit of Terry's penis, Sean kept his lover's cock clasped in a tight hold as he stood and guided Terry to a kitchen chair. Pressuring him into a sitting position, his lusty gaze twinkled as he shed his pants and underwear. A quick movement had his shirt off. Tossing it aside, Sean straddled Terry's lap and yanked off his shirt to bare his chest. Dipping his body, he teased the tip of Terry's cock with his balls, dragging them slowly until Terry's blissful snarl sounded around them.

"We're going to do this without any lube?" Terry choked out.

Sean leaned to the side and slid the butter dish close. He smiled knowingly.

With the breath clogging his throat, Terry coated his fingers, then his cock. All the while, the two locked stares as they anticipated the ensuing sex.

Terry's greasy fingers slid over Sean's ass cheek, enjoying, a second later, how Sean's eyes widened as his anus was fingered. Grabbing his cock, Terry guided it to the hot opening, finding it a little more difficult to breathe when Sean slid slowly downward until he was filled.

Sean sat impaled, feeling at the moment that they could never be closer. Once again, he was wrapped around Terry's cock and it was if he encompassed the man's soul.

He stayed that way until demanding hands settled more firmly around his waist. Sean hovered on the edge of sanity as Terry began to surge upward.

Sean's legs flexed hard as he moved with his lover, slowly at first until hot spikes of passion slithered through his belly. He ground mindlessly with the need to change the speed of his erotic glides to a quicker, more tortuous slide up and down Terry's cock.

Suddenly, Sean wasn't in command any longer as sizzling streaks of need raced through his dick. Sensual thrusts brought him closer and closer to the edge. He watched Terry's features tighten through shuttered eyes. The sight sent cum pumping onto the man's belly as warm orgasmic spurts heated his ass.

* * * * *

One afternoon a few months later, Sean and Ellie sat at his kitchen table discussing some remodeling that would start on the upper floor of the house. For some reason she didn't seem all that interested. Sean finally shoved aside the plans he'd scratched out and sat back in his chair.

"Are you not feeling well? All I'm getting is some noncommittal grunts from you."

"I'm pregnant," Elli stated out of nowhere.

Sean stared incredulously at his sister's blurted announcement. "Ellie?" He moved closer beside her and clasped her chilled hand. "How?" He shook his head. "Wait. I didn't mean to sound naïve. I damn well know how it happened, but who? I didn't realize you were seeing anyone."

Ellie covered her mouth with her free hand and took a moment to capture her wavering emotions. Finally she took a deep breath and met her brother's compassionate gaze. "It was stupid, Sean. I was stupid. I met a man. He works for the same company I do, but he works out of the Seattle office. He and I have been working on this p-project.

Late meetings, dinners, lunches... Do you remember when I went out to Seattle in May?"

Sean nodded, nausea tightening his stomach as he watched Ellie struggle to maintain some semblance of calm.

She shrugged, loosened her hand and dug around in her purse for a tissue. Sean sat quietly and waited for her to continue. Once she wiped the tears from her cheek and blew her nose, she finally met his gaze once more. "One thing led to another. I knew it was there – that special intense, heady emotion that jumped between us. It sizzled every time we were in the same room. Then...then I had to fly out to Seattle for some meetings. Normally someone else in the office traveled with me. That time, I went alone. Derek came to my hotel room to drop off some meeting notes." She shook her head as her gaze floated about the kitchen. "I had just gotten out of the tub after a good long soak and was in my bathrobe. I don't know how it happened, but suddenly we were in each other's arms and – I guess you can figure out the rest."

"Honey," Sean said quietly as he leaned closer and pulled her into his embrace. "How do you feel about this Derek? Have you told him?"

Ellie nodded her head, wiping her cheek with the back of her hand. "I love him. I really thought we could work this out. So I talked to him yesterday."

"And?"

The tears started again. "He...he wants nothing to do with me. Why? Because his wife would be none too happy that he'd had a fling."

Sean's eyes fluttered shut as he hugged her. His jaw tensed. "You didn't know he was married?"

Her head rolled against his chest. "If I had, I never would have allowed him to touch me. He never told me, Sean. Here I thought I might have met the one person I'd been waiting for all my life. He played me for a fool. I-I actually thought he felt the same way."

“Ell, I don’t want to sound like I’m preaching, but wasn’t birth control used by either of you?” He said it quietly, hoping to lessen the silent accusation of his question. Jeez, how could Ellie have left herself open to pregnancy or to disease?

“I know – stupid. I was so stupid, so fucking, fucking stupid. One minute I was in his arms and the next we were on the hotel bed. I was so caught up in the moment that I never even thought about it. After three months of thinking about him, of hoping... Once he started kissing me, I never thought of anything except how wonderful it was to be in his arms. How fucking irresponsible is that? God, Sean. I’ve never done anything as reckless as this. The one time I throw caution to the wind and...and I end up pregnant.”

Or worse, Sean thought. Pregnancies could be dealt with. AIDS couldn’t. Even he and Terry had not had sex without condoms until they’d both been to the doctor, then waited for a clean bill of health.

He leaned back, using his thumbs to gently wipe the tears from her cheeks. “So now what? Whatever you do, Ellie, I’ll be right beside you. I promise. So will Terry. He loves you as much as I do.”

Her hands came up to cover his gentle fingers. She looked deep into his eyes and knew that she wouldn’t be alone – no matter what she decided.

* * * * *

“That lousy bastard,” Terry spouted when Sean finished his story.

Sean leaned over the edge of the bed, dimmed the bedside light, then cuddled against Terry’s naked shoulder. “Ellie is devastated.”

Terry’s fingers drifted over the skin of Sean’s upper arm as he stared silently at the muted halo created by the lamp on the ceiling.

“I told her that no matter what, we would be here to support her.”

Terry heaved a sigh. “Of course we will.” It was an automatic reaction to pull Sean tighter against his length. He drew so much comfort and strength from his life partner.

That's what they were. Partners for eternity, soul mates who understood every action of the other and never questioned. Somehow fate had brought them together and it saddened him to think Ellie had thought she'd found the same thing only to have it plucked away in a single moment. He rolled to his elbow, dragged one muscular thigh across Sean's and stared down. "We'll be there every minute of every day."

Sean reached up and drifted a finger over the other man's full bottom lip. "I told her that. I love you, Terry."

Terry dipped his head and gently caressed Sean's mouth with his own. His heart warmed with the love that filled it. "Don't ever stop saying it."

"I won't. And I love how you love Ellie."

A wry grin touched Terry's mouth. "She's like my sister too." Then his tone turned serious. "She's got a lot of hard decisions to make. Has she even hinted at what she's going to do?"

"No." Sean's lips pursed for a moment before he shook his head against the stark white pillow. "But I have a feeling we'll have to learn how to change a dirty diaper."

"What?"

"She'll have this baby, you mark my words. I know her better than she knows herself."

Terry's mind churned for a moment as he looked down. "This might sound a bit selfish at Ellie's expense, but it would be wonderful to have a baby around, don't you think? It's not that I want to see Ellie burdened with single parenthood, but we'll be here to help her."

"You amaze me," Sean chuckled, then forced Terry onto his back. Terry's eyes widened when Sean's hand drifted down over the flat of his belly, grasped his cock and began to stroke it to hardness. "I never doubted for a second that you would feel any other way."

"Um, are you talking about your sister or about my cock?"

Sean belted out a laugh. "How is it that one minute we're discussing a very serious matter, and the next," his thumb rubbed across the damp tip of Terry's erection, "all I can think about is how hard and inviting your cock is."

Without waiting for Terry's answer, Sean dipped his head and nipped at a rigid nipple. He loved the sound of Terry's quiet growl as he moved lower, pressing intimate kisses over muscled abs. He continued on, teasing the skin beneath his lips until he ran his tongue the length of Terry's cock.

Terry's fingers swept through Sean's hair, and he spread his thighs wide, waiting, knowing Sean would suck him, would devour his cock and send him into a tailspin of sexual delight.

"Ahh..." he groaned when the tip of Sean's tongue darted into the slit of his penis. "Yes," he murmured with eyes closed and head thrown back. "Suck it hard. Make me come."

Sean's hand began a fine rhythm meant to entice, to draw Terry to the edge of reason. With each stroke upward, he would tighten his clasp and suck hard, loving the taste of Terry's juices in his mouth. Then he would follow his fingers with a swirling tongue back down the velvety shaft, but always...always he would nip his way back to taste his lover once more.

Terry's hips surged time and time again until fine goose bumps raised the hair on his arms. Sean's mouth sucking him was sweet torture – something he would never tire of experiencing. "Yes!" The one word caught in his throat as the flickering heat deep in his groin burgeoned into a hot flame. His ass muscles clenched with each upward thrust, his heart pounded wildly. He flailed to race his fingers through Sean's thick hair as cum exploded from his cock.

Sean was there to milk his orgasm to completion, licking and swallowing, feeling the hard cock in his hand pulse to completion.

Terry's breath came in harsh rasps of satisfaction. His fingers curled around Sean's scalp as the heat of his orgasm threatened to engulf him. His lover pulling at his cock was as much heaven as it was hell.

And just as his shudders softened, Sean rose to his knees, dragged Terry's legs up and draped them over his own shoulders. His eyes darkened with passion as he stared down. His fingers, slick with Terry's cum, moistened his own cock in preparation. "I want you to see my face when I'm fucking you."

"Fuck me," Terry answered in a throaty whisper, then spread his knees wide. He loved having sex this way. To see his lover's eyes the exact moment when Sean filled his ass. To witness Sean's expression of love and lust as he pounded deep was Terry's own fulfillment.

The tip of Sean's cock caressed his hole slowly, teasingly, until the glistening head slipped past the first tight muscles.

"Fuck me hard," Terry whispered. "Fuck me now..."

Sean swung his hips forward and buried his cock, pulled almost all the way out, then drove deep again. His fingers tightened around Terry's ankles as he stroked into the dark tunnel of his welcoming ass. The bed frame rattled against the wall. A fine sheen of perspiration dotted Sean's forehead as he strained, always forward, always struggling to go as deep as he could, his balls slapping against the firm buttocks of the other man.

Terry was half hard again. Sensuous flames sizzled through his groin once more, building rapidly, carrying him higher and hotter as each second passed. His fingers clawed at Sean's forearms, anchoring him as he stared up into the other man's strained, yet seductive features. One final thrust into his ass pinned Terry to the mattress and Sean's cock pulsed inside him.

Their gasps still mingled as Sean fell beside him on the bed. Tongues danced and hands slipped over dampened skin as they held one another close. Heartbeats slowed

as the softness of the night overtook them. Sean reached down, pulled a quilt over their naked bodies and with murmured words of love, they drifted into sleep.

Chapter Five

“Hello! Are you two Christmas elves fucking under the mistletoe or is it safe to come in? Speaking of that, can I join?”

Hearing Tom’s voice, Sean poked his head through the kitchen doorway with a wide grin and watched him close the front door with a kick of his foot as he balanced the many presents in his arms. Rolling his eyes, he laughed out loud. “Nice outfit. Did you hold out a cup and collect any money on the way over?”

Tom lifted his chin with a haughty sniff, set down his packages and peeled off his striped red and white knit scarf. His bright red jacket was next. “I’ll have you know that I received more than one compliment on the way over. It’s Christmas, Sean,” he stated over his shoulder as he slung his prized coat over a peg. “Now you...well, you look like the Grim Reaper all dressed in black.”

Whatever Sean had planned to retort was lost as he belted out uncontrolled laughter when Tom turned. The man wore a white sweater embroidered with Santa and numerous elves on the front. Tiny bells were stitched in place atop every one of the elves’ pointed hats. “Where in hell did you find that sweater?” He shook his head as he met Tom in the middle of the room and welcomed him with a hug. Leave it to Tom to come up with the outlandish holiday outfit. “No wait. I don’t even want to know. Merry Christmas.”

Tom locked him tight within his embrace. “Merry Christmas to you. I can’t thank you enough for the invitation. Is Ellie here yet?”

Sean’s mind immediately pictured his sister’s pregnancy-rounded shape. It would be only days now until the birth. “She’s on her way. Come on, Terry is in the kitchen.”

Tom closed his eyes and drew in a deep breath. “Good god, it smells like a five-star restaurant in here.”

They linked arms and headed back to the kitchen to find Terry crouching before the open oven, basting a turkey. He glanced up with a friendly nod. "Hey, Tom." His eyes coasted across the sweater and he chuckled. "Merry Christmas. Did you park your sleigh outside?"

"Well, honestly." Tom grinned. "Here I went and purchased something festive for the holidays and all you two can do is laugh. Personally, I love it."

Terry rose, closed the oven door and gave him a kiss in welcome. "It looks perfect...for you." Patting the man's lean belly, he chuckled again. "By the time I'm done feeding you, you'll round out that sweater nicely and look the part of old St. Nick."

Tom took an offered glass of wine from Sean and brushed Terry's hand away. "That's all I need. It's tough enough trying to find someone to lay me, even looking as good as I do."

Sean rolled his eyes for a second time and refilled Terry's wine goblet just as the front door opened again. "That must be Ellie."

* * * * *

The men finished cleaning up the dishes, insisting that the very pregnant Ellie remain seated. She felt the queen with all the adulation and attention they lavished on her throughout the elegant Christmas dinner. Now she waited in the living room in a cushiony chair beside the beautifully decorated tree.

Next year at this time, the four of them would become five. Her hand drifted lovingly over her swollen belly as the baby kicked. What an odd lot their little group was. She almost felt guilty. If it wasn't for her advanced state, Terry and Sean would have traveled to Terry's family home upstate. Instead, they had mailed their gifts, telling Terry's family that they refused to leave her when she was so close to her due date.

She wiggled deeper into the chair and rested her head against the back. Closing her eyes, she hugged herself. Only days now and she'd be holding her baby in her arms. Sean, Terry, and even Tom, would be at the hospital. She imagined the three of them quarreling over whose turn it was to hold the child and giggled. They would be wonderful uncles. Of that she had no doubt. She sighed with contentment. For as frightened as she'd been when she'd first discovered her pregnancy, those emotions had completely disappeared—as had Derek—and all because of the three wonderful men in this house.

“Ready to open up presents?” Sean asked. “Hey, you feeling okay?”

Ellie lifted a hand and pressed his palm to her belly. “Feel that?” She waited until the baby rolled and watched a grin spread across her brother's mouth. “Every time you talk, the baby responds.”

“Good. It'll be practice for when he or she is a teenager.”

“When Jess is a teenager,” she returned.

“You've picked a name?”

Ellie nodded. “I've looked at so many baby names that my head is still spinning. I like Jess. It's a good name for either a boy or a girl.”

“Sounds good. Jessie Pearl. Sounds like a hero or heroine out of a western movie. Jess.” He nodded his head. “I like it.”

Sean started to move toward the couch, but Ellie stayed him by linking her fingers with his. “Thank you, Sean. Thank you for the past months.” Her eyes shimmered with tears. “I love you. I love all of you for how you've taken care of me. I love you for the promises you made. You're a wonderful man and I'm so proud that you're my brother. You're going to be a wonderful godfather.”

“What? Oh wow, Ellie. I hadn't even thought about that!”

“Well, honey, of course you and Terry are going to be the godparents.”

He bent and pressed a gentle kiss to her cheek. “Thank you, Ellie.”

“For what?”

“For never judging me. For never looking down on my life choices. You’ve always stood at my side and accepted me as I am.”

A wistful smile ghosted her mouth. “I’m so happy for you. My hope, dear brother, is to find someone to love me as much as Terry loves you. And if that never happens, I will happily live with it because of this baby. Funny how this has worked out. You couldn’t have convinced me of that six months ago.”

“See? I told you everything would be all right. Is there anything you need before Tom begins his stint as Santa Claus?”

She laughed, feeling well of spirit and completely happy. “Yeah, you can sneak me a present.” Her gaze flowed over the huge mound of presents beneath the tree, many with her name on them. The guys had outdone themselves. Ellie was certain that whatever was missing in her nursery at home, she’d find within the brightly wrapped packages.

Tom appeared with a floppy Santa cap perched on the top of his head. Terry followed in his wake and soon the living room was covered with ripped paper and crushed bows. Numerous baby gifts were piled alongside Ellie’s chair. Tom continually gushed over the brightly colored shirts he’d received, and Sean and Terry chuckled over the gag gifts they had exchanged.

Sean sat back and surveyed the mess. “Guess we could clean up this clutter. Ellie, why don’t you leave everything here and we’ll deliver it in the morning so you don’t have to be hauling anything.”

“I’m pregnant, Sean, not helpless. I’m perfectly capable. You’ve done enough.”

“Shut up, dear sister. I’m not going to worry about you slipping on the ice while carrying a heavy load. We’ll take care of everything in the morning.”

“Hey, I have one more surprise.” Terry rose from where he kneeled on the floor and retrieved a small hidden package from the tree’s thick branches. He joined Sean on the couch. “This is for you.”

“Terry...” Sean admonished.

“Open it. I’ve been waiting for this all day.”

Sean’s hands trembled as he ripped open the paper. With a glance at his smiling lover, he opened a small velvet-covered case. His lips parted, but he was speechless. Nestled inside was a stunning pearl set within a gold heart and anchored to a masculine gold chain. His gaze locked with Terry’s. “It’s beautiful. You’ve given me so much. I-I wasn’t expecting anything more.”

Terry smiled softly, reached for the necklace and withdrew it from the box. “Turn around.” He draped the pendant carefully around Sean’s neck and locked the chain’s clasp. “There’s a legend that goes with the pearl,” he stated quietly when Sean turned back and took his hand. “Pearls are considered to offer the power of love to the wearer. Also protection and luck. It’s portended that the gift of a pearl between two people cements their love.” He lifted Sean’s hand and pressed a kiss against his palm. “I love you, Sean. You’re my pearl. I wanted to give you something special on this first Christmas we’ve shared.”

Both Ellie’s and Tom’s eyes filled with happy tears as the two lovers embraced tightly.

“I love you so much, Terry,” Sean whispered.

* * * * *

Sean stamped the snow from his feet. He’d just returned to the living room after walking Ellie to her car. Tom had left for the Sunset Lounge only minutes earlier in hopes of finding what he called a “last-minute sugarpalum to round out the night”.

“It’s a beautiful night out there,” Sean said as he hung up his coat.

“I was beginning to think you’d gone for a walk or something,” Terry commented from his sprawled position on the couch. “What took you so long?”

Sean’s heartbeat picked up. It was now or never. He crossed to his lover and sat on the edge of the cushion. His fingers clasped the pearl pendant that lay against his chest

as he studied Terry's handsome features. Wordlessly, he leaned forward and pressed a tender kiss against the man's mouth. "I love you."

Terry's hand cupped Sean's cheek. "I love you too. It was a wonderful Christmas."

"You really didn't mind not being with your family?"

"You're my family, Sean. We'll get up to see my parents later this month. Besides, we couldn't leave Ellie to fend for herself."

Sean's knuckle brushed tenderly across Terry's firm jaw. "Still, you gave up a lot. You gave up the tradition of being with your parents on the Christmas holiday. You always do that."

"Do what?"

"You always put me first. No matter what. It's because of that..." Sean's words drifted away.

Terry scooted to a sitting position, his brow furrowed because of Sean's sudden loss of words. "What, Sean? Is something wrong?"

A grin tugged at Sean's lips. His head wagged slowly. "Nothing could be wrong. Not when you're here beside me. You just asked me what had kept me so long before coming back in the house."

"Well?" Terry asked, still not sure what to think of Sean's strange behavior.

"I have another Christmas present for you. That's why I took so long. I had to make a phone call."

"We've got a phone on the table over there." Terry nodded. "Why did you feel you had to stand in the cold and use your cell phone?"

"It was a surprise. One that you're going to discover shortly. So before there's a knock on the door—"

"Sean, I don't need anything more," Terry interrupted. "I have you and I couldn't want for anything else."

“My gift isn’t something you can look at and tuck away in a drawer. It’s something different. I love you, Terry. And I know you love me. But I also know your life was quite different before you met me. You had someone new all the time. You reveled in your sexuality – and you gave up all that for me.”

Terry leaned forward and kissed Sean tenderly. “I didn’t give up that much. Look what I got in exchange. You’re the most important person in the world to me. I can’t figure this out. So where are you going with this mysterious behavior of yours?”

Just then the doorbell rang. Terry’s eyes swung to the clock on the fireplace mantel. “Who would be coming at this time of the night?”

Sean snorted a laugh.

Terry couldn’t help but smile. “What?”

“We are.”

“We are what?”

“Coming...at this time of the night. Okay, I better get this out quick before my guest freezes his balls out there. I have a gift for you. I’ve hired someone to come and join us tonight. A threesome.”

“What?”

Sean stood and pulled Terry up beside him. “Man, you’ve said that a lot tonight. Quit asking ‘what’ and listen to me. If you don’t want to do this, just say so. My feelings won’t be hurt.”

Terry smiled. “Why this? Why a threesome?”

Sean hugged him close. “Because you always put me first. Because you love me and only me. I wanted us to have something wild and crazy for us to remember when we’re old and gray.”

The doorbell sounded again.

“Well?”

Terry cupped Sean's head and urged his mouth closer. "I love you." Then he tilted his head and kissed him hard before releasing him. "Better answer the door. I'm really looking forward to this. Thank you."

Sean hurried across the room, thrilled that Terry was excited about the ensuing night. Opening it, he grinned widely. He'd spent the last three weeks searching for the ideal man to complete their threesome. The stud who entered the living room was the epitome of perfection and worth every dollar Sean had paid the "escort service".

"Terry? This is Rex."

Rex stepped forward and offered his hand.

"Just Rex?" Terry grinned as he shook the man's hand.

Rex smiled back, a dazzling display of full lips and straight, white teeth. His shaggy, shoulder-length blond hair was the perfect complement to his squared shoulders, trim waist and narrow hips. A bulge lined the zipper of his tight jeans. "Just Rex."

Letting go of Terry's hand, he stepped back and slipped off his jacket. "Why don't you two just sit on the couch? Or if you'd rather, we could go to the bedroom and you can sit on the bed while I strip."

Terry grabbed Sean's hand finding it difficult to believe that Sean had come up with something like this. But there would be no threesome in their bedroom—tonight or any night. That room was reserved for only the two of them. Leading Sean to the couch, they settled into the soft cushions and waited.

Rex looked about until he spied the CD player. Before he set his coat on a chair, he tossed a tube of lubricant onto the coffee table. He then took a disc out of the jacket pocket and slipped it into the player. Immediately soft jazz set the tone for the evening. Turning, he reached into the tight recess of one jeans pocket and pulled out a handful of brightly colored condom packages and tossed them beside the lube. "The only rules that I insist on is everyone wears a condom. Doesn't matter if you're giving a blowjob or getting one—or whatever else you want to do."

With that, his lean hips began to sway as he made his way to the center of the room. Quite efficiently and professionally he peeled away his clothes. First his shoes, then the silken shirt, then the tight jeans until only a black thong covered the huge bulge between his legs.

Still swaying to the soft music, he sidled up to Terry and stepped between the man's splayed thighs. Taking Terry's hand, he pressed it over the thong and surged forward. "I can't wait to see the two of you naked," he stated huskily as his cock grew hard. "See what the thought of the three of us together is doing to me? Why don't you join me?"

Terry and Sean stood as one. They disrobed quickly as Rex slipped the thong down his sleek muscular thighs and kicked it away. His cock was thick and hard as he waited and watched Sean pulled Terry into his arms. As a passionate kiss followed, Rex stepped behind Terry, grasped his hips and rubbed his cock against the other man's ass.

"How do you want to do this?" Sean mumbled between hot caresses.

"Why don't we lie on the floor?" Rex returned as his hand slipped about Terry's waist. He found Terry's cock and stroked it gently as he bent to retrieve the condoms from the table. He urged Terry down as his hands traveled over the man's naked skin.

Once Terry was on his back, Rex kneeled beside him, gently took Terry's cock in his hand and stroked him until he was fully erect. Rex reached out and squeezed Sean's hand, then pulled him down beside them. "You are part of this, Sean. Feel free to join in anytime." Rex continued to pull at Terry's cock as his other hand traced patterns over Terry's flat belly. "I think it's time to get a condom on you."

Sean moistened his lips, surprised that watching another man touch Terry created a multitude of emotions within him. He couldn't help the sexual excitement that began to take over as Rex rolled a condom down Terry's shaft. His heartbeat picked up when Rex lowered his head and began to nibble at Terry's cock.

The look in Terry's eyes stole his breath. Love shone brightly when he urged Sean close and kissed him.

At first the kiss was tender, sweet, a melding of mouths. But as Rex's lips coaxed a heated response with harder sucks and nips, Terry reached up and ran his hands through Sean's hair to capture his lover's mouth in a savage kiss even as his cock rhythmically surged into Rex's mouth.

Sean responded instantly with a growl of satisfaction. Their tongues danced, masculine groans echoed, and then suddenly Sean moved away, much to Terry's dismay.

"Enjoy yourself, Terry," he whispered as his hand floated across the man's bare chest. "Let yourself go. Let Rex suck you until you come." When Terry settled back, Sean stood and rolled a condom over his own throbbing cock.

Positioning himself behind Rex, Sean ran a hand over the man's ass. Immediately, Rex widened his knees while still sucking Terry's cock, his hip bouncing in invitation. Sean spread his cheeks and squirted lube in his crack.

Rex groaned and sucked harder. Terry's eyes closed and his head fell back against the carpet as his hips surged ever upward.

Sean palmed his dick with lube, firmed his hold on Rex's hip and pushed inside the man's rectum. Rex lifted his head, eyes closed as his ass stretched around the cock slipping into him.

"Oh...yes! Fuck me, Sean!" He took every inch Sean offered and sucked at Terry's cock with the same rhythm as his palms stroked harder.

Each man entered his own sensual world, loving the feel of sucking lips and roving fingers and pulsing cocks. But only Sean and Terry sent a message of love with their eyes as the orgy continued. When Sean's head lolled backward and he bit his lip, Terry knew he was close to coming. He'd had too many intimate moments with his lover not to understand the man's body language. The sight only intensified his own physical response. Heat spilled through his groin.

Terry was the first to come. Hot spurts spilled into the condom. When his hips shot forward and he groaned, Sean banged harder into Rex's ass until he buried his cock and came hotly.

Ragged breaths and satisfied groans filled the room as Sean pulled from Rex's ass and slumped beside Terry. Trancelike, they both watched Rex rip at a condom package and hurriedly roll the latex down his cock. With dark shuttered eyes, he wordlessly rolled Terry to his stomach, jerked his hips upward and smeared lube in his crack. A second later he was fucking him hard.

Sean sat stunned, staring at Rex's flexing ass muscles and at the look of pure sexual satisfaction on Terry's tight features as he accepted each quick glide into his ass.

He needed Terry. He rolled closer, his heart beating wildly when Terry braced himself against the pounding into his ass, grabbed Sean and kissed him. His tongue swept the inside of Sean's mouth. It was a telling caress of hot love, of hungry urgency, a silent promise that Sean was the man he'd love forever. The intimate yet passionate fervor forged their hearts and their minds.

Rex groaned in orgasm, finally pulled out and sank to the floor. Only the sound of three men breathing harshly echoed in the room. But when hearts slowed and they all lay on the carpet together, it was Sean and Terry who held one another lovingly.

* * * * *

The next morning, Sean moved the shower curtain and stepped beneath the hot spray of water. Immediately his large hands slipped about Terry's waist, and he pulled him against his chest. "Good morning, sunshine. I never even heard you get out of bed."

Terry's muffled laughter whispered through the thick steam.

"Then I accomplished what I set out to do last night. I loved you and fucked you so long that I tired you out."

Sean nibbled Terry's shoulder as one hand slipped lower over his flat belly. "I was glad when we were finally alone again last night. I couldn't wait to have you all to myself."

Terry's head fell back as he leaned into Sean. The water pelted against his chest. His flat belly constricted when his cock was grasped gently.

"Did you have fun last night?" Sean asked.

"With you or with Rex?"

"Rex."

"Hmmm, it was strange. It's been a long time since I was involved in a threesome. I wanted to thank you for something and I forgot to do that last night."

"What's that?" Sean stroked him lovingly, his own erection nestled comfortably against the tight globes of Terry's ass.

"For giving me a great Christmas gift that I'll never forget. And I'm talking about *our* lovemaking for most of the night. Having Rex here was amazing, but it'll never compare to having only you in my bed." He felt Sean pull him closer. "I love you," he whispered through the steam.

"Then let me love you again..." The fingers of Sean's free hand tickled down the line of Terry's ass, massaging, skipping about to build the man's arousal.

Terry sucked in the steamy air of the shower and braced his hands against the wall. With eyes still shut, he spread his feet on the tiled floor. Sean's hand reached between Terry's thighs to caress his balls, then slipped back up until his middle finger was pressed firmly against the tight opening of his anus. His other hand continued to stroke Terry's cock as he slipped his finger into the tight tunnel.

"God..." Terry breathed as he clenched tightly. With Sean's hand stroking his cock ever harder, his mind swirled inside a sexual haze. An excited groan left his lips when the tip of Sean's cock replaced his finger. "Yes..."

Slowly, Sean stroked forward, his cock disappearing inch by delicious inch, deeper and deeper.

Terry met each soft stroke, surging backward and squeezing his ass muscles.

“I love being inside your ass,” Sean hissed as he picked up the tempo. “I love feeling you squeeze around my cock. Do it, Terry. Make me come...”

However difficult it was, he stood motionless, letting Terry slide on his erection. Sean closed his eyes, loving how easily his lover glided over his hard flesh. Terry’s ass sucked at him, teased him with each grind against his lower belly. Sean took it for as long as he could, struggling against the final release simply because the journey to sexual completion was so sensuously pleasurable. But when the fire shot from his groin, he grabbed Terry’s hips and thrust forward hard, buried himself as tightly as he could into his ass and felt the heat of orgasm spill out.

Terry knew the exact moment Sean came. He grabbed his own cock and jerked it until cum mixed with the hot spray of water. He was still gasping when Sean flipped him around, clutched his jaw and kissed him hard. They rubbed their cocks against one another and grappled to hang on tightly as their hearts slowed.

Terry’s mouth drifted away to tease one of Sean’s hardened nipples as his hand found the pendant against his chest. He lifted it, smiled, then met Sean’s gaze. “My pearl...that’s what you are. I love you, forever.”

* * * * *

“Are you ready to go?” Terry hollered through the open front door. Ellie’s presents were loaded into the trunk and the backseat of the car.

“Coming,” Sean answered from the kitchen. He pressed a fresh sheet of foil over a bowl, scooped it up and headed for the front room. “We’ve got so many leftovers from yesterday that I thought we’d take Ellie supper for tonight. She looked exhausted when she left last night.”

Terry eyed the size of the container. "You're going to toss that poor woman right into labor with all of that."

Sean laughed while shrugging on his coat. "Good, I'll sleep better. Every time I've crawled into bed this last week, I wonder if the phone will ring." He kissed Terry lightly on the cheek when he was handed his gloves.

"Well, it can't be too much longer. She looks like she's going to explode."

Sean reached for the bowl just as the phone rang.

"Leave it." Terry grinned. "It's probably Tom and you'll be on the phone for the next twenty minutes before getting a word in edgewise."

"If it's him, I'll tell him to call back tonight. I've got to check in case it's Ellie." Sean walked across the living room and picked up the handset. "Hello?" Instantly he tensed. "Really? Now?" His hand swept through his shaggy hair. "We're just heading out the door." He paused, listening for a moment, then grinned like an idiot. "Are you sure? We can be there in thirty minutes." Another pause. "Okay. Oh shit. I'm so damn excited. We'll head for the hospital. Yes, I promise. I'm going out the door right now. I even have my jacket on already. I love you too, honey!" Terry stepped close. Sean winked. "Terry sends his love too. Don't be carrying your suitcase. Make the cabbie do it." He laughed aloud at something she said. "I don't care. Don't you be lifting anything. Yes, I know, you have to get going. Ellie? If I don't see you until after the baby is born, know that I'm right outside your door waiting to see my nephew or niece. Love you, Sis. Okay, bye!"

He slammed the phone back into its cradle and hugged Terry. "She doesn't want to wait for us to pick her up. She figured by the time we got to her apartment and got her in the car that a good forty-five minutes would go by. She just wants to get to the hospital. The taxi just arrived. Damn, I so want to see her before she goes into delivery."

"Well, then let's get the hell out of here, Uncle Sean!" Terry yanked him along and they sped through the door.

* * * * *

It was all Sean could do to keep to the speed limit. He swore the entire time, glancing at his watch as he weaved through the freeway traffic. At one point, Terry thought he would leap right out from behind the wheel and direct cars on his own when traffic came to a complete halt. What should have been a quick twenty-minute drive turned into nearly an hour. Once there, though, they parked the car and raced through the big glass doors of Saint Benedict. Getting directions to the maternity ward, they hurried to the elevator and soon arrived on the fourth floor. Rushing to the desk, Sean yanked off his cap with a thudding heart.

“Hi, I’m Sean Pearl. I’m supposed to meet my sister, Eleanor Pearl. Is she in delivery yet or can I see her?”

“Let’s see...Eleanor Pearl...Pearl...” The heavy-set nurse flipped a page on a chart and glanced at the contents. “Eleanor Pearl...”

Sean ground his teeth as he waited.

“Nope. Are you sure you’re at the right hospital? There’s no Eleanor Pearl.”

“That’s impossible. I know I’m in the right place. We’ve planned this for months.”

The nurse shook her head. “I have an Eleanor Whitman that arrived not too long ago?” She glanced up. The woman had dealt with overexcited family members for far too many years. Most likely the man had given the woman’s maiden name.

“No, her last name is *not* Whitman. It’s Pearl. She should be here already. I talked with her an hour ago on the phone. She should be here. The taxi was already at her house to pick her up.”

“Mr. Pearl. Why don’t you take a chair in the waiting area? I’ll call down to the emergency room and see if they didn’t come through that door. If she’s arrived, I’ll come and get you. The room is halfway back to the elevator on your left.”

The tug of Terry’s hand kept Sean from spouting a retort, something that was very out of character for him. They retraced their steps to the waiting room.

“What do you think is going on?” Sean asked. He walked back to the doorway and peered down the hall. His stomach wound itself into a knot. Something wasn’t right.

Just then the service elevator doors opened. Two paramedics rushed out, wheeling a cart. In the center was a small bundle wrapped in a white blanket. They rushed past a speechless Sean, rounded a corner and disappeared. Suddenly, nurses raced after them, talking in a hushed tone and pushing medical carts.

Sean spun and nearly knocked Terry over. His cheeks turned ashen as he met Terry’s questioning eyes. Try as he might, he couldn’t force words from his throat.

“Mr. Pearl? Could you come with me?”

He spun back to see the same nurse who had asked him to wait.

“What’s happened?”

“Come with me, sir.” She headed for the elevator.

Both Sean and Terry fell into step behind her.

“Tell me! What’s happened?”

They rushed inside the elevator. The doors closed.

“Your sister is down in the emergency room.”

Sean’s heart plummeted.

Terry placed a hand on his shoulder, but stared at the nurse. “Was that Eleanor Pearl’s baby that was just wheeled by?”

“Yes.” Her eyes softened. “The cab that your sister rode in was broadsided on the way here.”

“Oh my god...” Sean breathed out. “The baby...”

“By the time the ambulance arrived, the baby was on her way. She was delivered at the crash site.”

“Ellie...my sister. What about Ellie?”

"I'm taking you to see her in emergency." She hesitated. "Mr. Pearl. Your sister was injured badly, but she's alive. The paramedics said she kept asking for someone named Sean. We'll be there shortly."

The doors opened and the three sprung into the tiled hallway. Sean raced around the nurse and headed out on his own. He skidded to a stop when he recognized Ellie on a table. Four doctors worked over her. There was blood everywhere. Tubes attached to needles in her arms draped her body. Another larger tube was being inserted down her throat.

"Ellie!" he screamed as he leapt through the door.

Someone grabbed his arm to hold him back. "You can't be in here!"

"That's my sister. Please!"

His arm was released, and he raced to her side. Her clothes were soaked in blood, her beautiful face covered with jagged cuts.

"Oh my god... Ellie. It's me, honey. It's Sean."

Her lids fluttered as she struggled to open them. The depths of fear in her blue gaze nearly brought him to his knees. She gagged from the tube now in place. Her lips moved, but nothing came out.

Sean grabbed her hand, sticky with blood and knew he needed to get hold of his emotions. If not for himself, at least for her. "Ellie. It's going to be okay. You're going to be okay. Don't be frightened. I love you. I'm here. So is Terry. We'll get through this."

Weakly, she shook her head on the pillow. A tear trickled from her eye, following a path of blood until it disappeared and became a red stain. Then she gagged again, her body heaving from the table as she fought to breathe.

"Do something!" he cried out. It didn't matter that Ellie now had six people already working over her. "Please, do something!"

Someone in a white coat stepped closer. When Sean met his sorrowful eyes, the doctor simply shook his head. "We were told she asked for you the entire time in the

ambulance, but with the respiratory distress, we had to insert a tube." He urged Sean away from the table. "They're going to take her up to surgery now."

Sean watched as Ellie was wheeled quickly and efficiently from the cubicle. The lump in his throat thickened. "What...what happened?"

"Someone in a pickup truck broadsided them. The trauma sped up her labor. The paramedics delivered the baby before they could even get her out of the backseat. The cab driver was killed. I imagine the police are talking to witnesses as we speak."

"The...the baby?"

"By some miracle, the baby is fine."

"I saw them rush by with her. It didn't look like she was fine."

"Standard procedure. They wanted to get her to pediatric ICU for a complete check. Sean? Is that your name?"

He nodded as Terry stepped from the doorway where he'd been listening.

"Sean, I'm going to be frank with you. Your sister has sustained some grievous injuries. Her lungs have collapsed, her leg is broken, she's lost a lot of blood, plus we suspect she's bleeding internally. We're going to do the best that we can. I'll have someone show you to a private room where you can wait."

"Can I please see her before you put her in surgery?" Sean returned quietly.

"I'm sorry, there won't be time. By the time we get up there, she'll be in already."

"I want to see the baby." His eyes came up and determination blazed within him. "Can someone please take me to the baby? I have to see her."

"Sure," the doctor replied. He motioned to a nurse, spoke quietly for a moment, then turned back to Sean and Terry. "Just follow Miss Johnson. She'll take you up to ICU. Whenever you're ready, she'll show you where to wait for word on your sister."

With a nod, Sean turned and left the room, struggling against the suffocating fear that enveloped him.

* * * * *

Sean rested his forehead against the glass separating him from the nursery, watching little Jessie's rosy lips pucker and unpucker. The dark circles beneath his eyes only intensified the ashen hue of his cheeks. Weariness such as he'd never experienced in his life caused his shoulders to sag.

Two days had passed since Jess' birth and the tragic accident. Two sleepless nights, also. Nights filled with grief that engulfed Sean and shredded his heart. He'd clung to Terry, trying to discover some sort of solace to ease the pain that rendered him helpless. Ellie had died on the operating table. Her injuries had simply been too traumatic for her to survive.

He rolled his head against the glass wishing for just one more minute to be able to hold his sister's hand and tell her how much he loved her. To tell her that he would love Jess as if the little girl were his own.

"Sean?"

He pushed away from the glass with a heavy sigh and glanced at the nurse who'd become his champion over the last days.

"How are you doing?"

"Fine," he returned absently.

"One of the day nurses told me that you're taking Jess home with you tomorrow morning. I'm so happy that your sister had everything written in a will." Ann Jacobson's heart had felt like breaking each time she'd seen him come through the swinging doors over the last few days. She'd come to know Sean much better than a lot of the patients and visitors who passed through these halls. Together, they'd worked side by side as Ann guided him through feedings and baths, explaining to him how to care for a baby.

The days had been filled with tension for the poor man. Social Services had showed up with all their intrusive questions and rules, and Ann had done her best to guide Sean in the right direction.

She sighed as her attention turned to the infant girl on the other side of the glass. "There would be no problem, Sean, if you wanted to leave Jess here until after the funeral. I'll take care of her in the morning if that will make things easier for you."

He rubbed his tired eyes. "I know you would, but holding Jess is going to make it easier to get through the funeral tomorrow. No, I'll be here early to get her. If I'm going to be a parent, then I might as well jump in with both feet." His bloodshot eyes met Ann's sympathetic ones. "I can't thank you enough, Ann, for everything you've done in regard to getting the Social Services to push for my custodial rights. I'm sorry I was such an ill-tempered smart-ass in the beginning."

She placed a warm hand on his arm, thinking about what had transpired. Ann was a free thinker, but she'd been around long enough to know that Sean being gay would have severely hurt his chances to gain full custody of his niece in a timely manner.

She'd immediately suspected even on the day of the accident. By the end of that first night, she was sure after having accidentally eavesdropped on a quiet conversation between Sean and his partner, Terry. She'd approached them both, sat them down and asked Sean his intentions. Discovering that Sean wanted Jess with him and not in a foster home until his sister's wishes came to pass, she gently explained to him that it would be in his best interest to visit the hospital alone without Terry at his side. The less he called attention to his sexual orientation, the better it would be for everyone. It was only for the duration until the final papers were signed.

Sean had exploded, refusing to listen to her reasoning. It was with Terry's help that he'd finally begun to understand what was at stake. She hadn't seen Terry since.

"No harm done, Sean. I'm so glad I followed my instincts and talked to you that first evening. You and Terry will make wonderful parents. It stinks that governmental offices aren't as open as they should be to gay couples raising children. Someday things will be seen a bit more clearly. The important thing is that Jess will be released into your custody in the morning and you can begin adoption proceedings."

The lump in Sean's throat kept him from responding, so instead he enveloped Ann in a warm hug.

When they drew apart, Ann wiped at her teary eyes with a tremulous smile. "Would you like to say goodnight to Jess?"

Sean nodded and followed her into the nursery. Once he'd donned a sterile robe, he took his tiny niece from Ann's arms and settled into a rocking chair. As he studied the tiny features of Jess' face, he wondered why he didn't feel panic, why fear didn't render him senseless. He should be frightened as hell of the responsibility before him, but instead peace settled upon his shoulders, the first he'd felt in days.

"I'll love you like a father, Jess. It'll be the three of us together. You, me and Terry." His heart constricted as an image of Ellie appeared in his mind but he struggled against the overwhelming grief and forced a smile to his lips. "You're going to have a wonderful and exciting life. And every day we'll talk about your mom so you'll know her as if she'd always been with us. That's a promise."

Tenderly, he cuddled her closer and kissed the little girl's fingers in a silent vow.

Epilogue

Eighteen years later

Not a cloud dotted the clear blue sky as robed students rushed about, greeting their families before commencement ceremonies began. Sean and Terry stood amidst the milling crowd, their eyes searching for Jess, knowing that somewhere in the huge group she was most likely looking for them.

“Sean! Hey, Sean!”

He turned his head to see Tom waving wildly as he bounced up and down, working his way through the mass of gathered families. His eyes cast about until he saw the bald head of Tom’s partner following behind him. Every time Sean was in the company of the two men, he was simply amazed that they were together. After all the years of Tom’s continual quest to find the “perfect” man, he’d ended up with Stanley Porter, a short rotund man with twinkling green eyes, the total opposite of the dream man that Tom had always aspired to. And Tom had never been happier.

“Well, how are the fathers of our valedictorian doing?” Tom asked as he hugged each of them.

“Nervous to say the least,” Sean returned as he searched the crowd. “Oh, there she is! Jess! Over here!”

As he watched her hurry through the crowd, it hit him how proud Ellie would have been at this moment. Jess was absolutely gorgeous with her turquoise eyes, full mouth and slender build.

She flung herself into his waiting arms and was quickly passed from one man to the other as they all found words of encouragement for the speech she would give during the ceremony.

Terry eyed a young man who suddenly appeared out of nowhere. The tall youth, cloaked in cap and gown, stood quietly, part of their intimate group, yet standing uncertainly on the fringe. After a minute passed, Terry garnered Jess' attention as she visited excitedly with Tom and Stanley. "Jess? Is there someone you want us to meet?"

Glancing over her shoulder, Jess smiled and reached out to draw the young man closer. "Oh gosh, I'm sorry, Andy. I'd like you to meet my parents. This is my dad, Sean, and my other dad, Terry."

As she chattered away about Andy and how he was the class salutatorian, Sean swallowed the lump in his throat at how easily the introduction had rolled off Jess' tongue. My parents, she had said. Jess was always so proud of the two of them and never hesitated to let people know. He smiled inwardly as he remembered the times she'd stated that she lived a more normal life with a gay couple as her parents than did most of her friends. Not that they hadn't had some perilous trials along the way, but time and years had changed a lot of the public mindset in regard to Sean's chosen lifestyle.

His gaze coasted lovingly over his daughter's beautiful face as she wrapped her arms around Terry's waist, and knew his life was about as perfect as it could be.

* * * * *

Sean joined Terry beneath the covers and was immediately welcomed into his warm embrace. "What a day. I was so proud of her that I could have cried."

Terry chuckled. "I did. Okay, not loud weeping like Tom's, but I didn't think the lump in my throat was going to go away. Jess gave a fantastic speech, didn't she?"

"Oh yeah," Sean sighed as he nuzzled his head more snugly against Terry's chest. "She's going to do great out in the world. It's times like this that I wish Ellie could be here to see what a wonderful soul she created." His fingers drifted across Terry's chest as he quietly thought about the past and everything that had led him to this moment. He chanced a peek into the future and wondered what it held. Whatever life had in

store for him, at least he would have Terry and Jess by his side. For that he was infinitely grateful.

He rose up onto an elbow and caressed Terry's cheek. "Remember all those days and nights throughout the past years when we had to sneak around to make love?"

Terry reached up and dragged a fingertip over one of Sean's nipples. "Oh yeah. Always seemed like Jess had someone here spending the night. That's going to change, isn't it? She'll be off to college and living her life while her two old dads are left behind."

"Yes," Sean said as he dipped his head and nuzzled the skin below Terry's ear. "But though we've aged, what I feel for you is still a heady emotion. Do you know that even today as I was watching you, I was still amazed that you have the power to make my heart beat faster, to make me want to yank you somewhere secret and kiss you until you're hard and ready to be loved? It astounds me that I wake in the morning thinking I couldn't love you more than I do. Then I crawl into bed beside you at night and realize that my love has grown deeper."

He leaned back to lock eyes with his lover. Terry's finger drifted to the pendant he'd given Sean so many years earlier. A gentle smile curved his mouth. "I understand completely what you're saying. The legend of the pearl was right. Every day I feel closer to you than the last."

"Jess won't be home until tomorrow..."

Terry's grin was infectious. "It's nice having the house all to ourselves." Lifting his hips, he shed his underwear, watching as Sean opened a drawer beside the bed and pulled out a tube of lubrication. "I should have just gotten into bed naked like you did. Old habits are hard to break. Once Jess heads for college, we'll have to make up a new rule. No one gets to wear anything to bed."

"Done," Sean laughed as he slid on top of Terry with one easy glide. As his knee spread Terry's thighs wider, he settled his hardening cock against his lover's, and nuzzled his lips gently.

They kissed, tender caresses against moist lips, both enjoying the intimate moment because tonight they would have hours to love, all the time in the world to play until their passion was slaked. Words of love were murmured over and over as tongues danced sensuously. Cocks ground softly against one another in promise until Sean pulled away, straddled Terry's chest and rose to his knees. He crawled upward until his cock hung only an inch from Terry's lips.

Terry opened his mouth and swirled his tongue around the engorged tip, enjoying the sound of how Sean's breath hitched in his chest. His lips clamped around the swollen head as his tongue worked the slit.

Sean began to fuck his mouth. Long, slow glides of pure ecstasy, his unadulterated pleasure ever-increasing with each suck and each nip against his shaft until hot sparks shot through his groin signaling an impending orgasm. If he didn't stop now, it would be too late. And they had an entire night in front of them.

He pulled back and waited. Terry reached for the lube. Only moments later, he palmed Sean's cock with the cool gel. Tossing the tube to the floor, he lifted his legs and wrapped them around Sean's waist.

His eyes closed and he shuddered with delight when Sean's cock slipped inside his ass, filling him completely. Only a fleeting thought of the pleasurable night that lay ahead tripped through his mind.

For now? He met the lusty gaze above him with one of his own, wrapped his fingers around Sean's taut ass cheeks and urged him to a faster tempo.

About the Author

Picture Ruby Storm with her hair on fire! Yup, that's her every morning when she bounds out of bed and heads for her home office. Ruby thanks her lucky stars that she's a full-time writer and a part-time matchstick. Although, there is a hint of a bulldog somewhere in there, too. Once she sticks her teeth into something, there's no turning back until it works.

Ruby loves to write, plain and simple. So much so that she took a leap of faith in herself and quit her 'professional' job, stuck her butt in front of a computer, and finally discovered what brings her true happiness. Her Romantica® stories for Ellora's Cave spans many genres: Contemporary, Futuristic, Fantasy, Paranormal, Time Travel and Historical. Be sure to check out her sweet historical romance series at Ellora's Cave's sister site, Cerridwen Press. All of Ruby's titles have received top awards for excellence in writing.

Some might think that the life of a writer is glamorous and enviable. This is what Ruby has to say about that: "Glamorous? Think of me in sweats and an old t-shirt just beneath that flaming head of mine, typing with one hand and beating out the fire with the other. Envious? Most times my 'new' job consists of long hours of dedication and damn hard work, cramping leg muscles from sitting too long, and a backside that for some reason is widening by the week. But I wouldn't change my life for the world!"

Ruby welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

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