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Mya

Loose Id



RUSHING TOWARDS PERFECTION

Mya

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Chapter One

Damon Hendrick firmly believed every man should own at least one piece of jewelry that fit his personality and style. In his book, too much jewelry looked garish and showed poor taste while a man who wore no jewelry -- not even a fine watch -- was suspect. A man that didn't show a little pride in his appearance was definitely not the type who caught Damon's eye.

Until he met Yukihiro.

Damon's family knew he was gay, but he tended to take their concern as mocking.

"So when are you going to find Mr. Right?" his sister would ask. "Lord knows you have plenty to choose from. Hardly any good men out there for sistas anymore."

His mother would chime in. "It ain't right but, well, you are my baby boy, so I'll accept whatever you bring through the door. I gotta. So, dating anyone?"

Damon's usual response was a groan. They were accepting, but not entirely reserved.

That fateful Halloween he met Yuki, he was dating a fine brother, Andre Green. While Andre was exactly the fun, chatty, and slim type Damon usually liked, he was more into public causes than intimate ones. He had insisted they attend a costume party sponsored by a

local bar. Damon had been dressed as a gladiator; Andre as a policeman. Yuki-hara was dressed as a geisha. He was the sexiest geisha Damon had ever seen.

Never one to approach another man's date and definitely not one to disrespect his own, Damon couldn't stop staring. Yuki didn't seem to mind one bit. Maybe it was the drinks; more than likely it was his cock that gave Damon the boldness to follow Yuki's suggestive nod of his head.

Damon slipped from his date's side and followed the geisha into bathroom. He didn't know who made the first move. No words were exchanged before they kissed, before Damon knew how well their bodies fit together.

They left the party together and were in his bed within the hour. Costumes were destroyed, face paint smeared, and sheets ruined in the hurricane of their first tryst. Yuki was still in his bed the next day when Andre called to curse him nine ways to Sunday.

Yuki-hara Masimoto was different from anyone Damon had ever dated. It had little to do with the color of his skin. For one, he was definitely the most persuasive person Damon had ever been with. A simple pout or glare, and Damon would change his mind regarding his staunchest decision. Yuki got Damon to try all sorts of new things: cuisine, books, spas, yoga. He wasn't into nightclubs or going out, and he showed Damon how interesting staying at home could be. There was also the matter of Yuki's enjoyment of spanking.

Damon had never had a lover so into that.

Great sex, reading a book on the sofa, enjoying a meal...those things were only enhanced by Yuki's presence. Despite not being able to comprehend how a tryst turned into a relationship, Damon was certain that he wanted more.

Staring at the black velvet box in the hands of the jeweler, Damon felt certain he had made the right selection for a man who wore no jewelry. He pulled out his wallet to purchase the platinum band with an amethyst in the center, despite the shocked hiss from

his best friend Curtis. "Be quiet, Curt. I didn't say anything when you dragged me here to get a bracelet for *your* boy toy."

Curtis cocked his head and looked at his friend. "Man, don't even try to play that shit. You know I was just trying to get Sean in bed. Yuki, on the other hand, couldn't be kept out of --"

"Save the whining about your failed macking attempts," Damon interrupted. "I'm just getting it for his birthday. He should have something nice."

"Kid yourself all you want. It's two steps away from commitment bands or whatever they're calling them these days."

Used to Curtis's overreacting, Damon sucked air through his teeth. While the ring he had chosen was nice, it was nothing compared to the one he would have bought if commitment were truly on his mind. Still, the thought of having Yuki all to himself did give him a thrill.

"Hold on." Bringing up his fist, Curtis counted off with his fingers. "You've been dating him for what, three or four months, which is definitely a record for you. You two are going on a weekend trip to Toronto. You're buying him jewelry. Let's not forget how you two act when you're together." Curtis gave a worried shake of his head. "Oh, I'd say it was damn serious."

Damon couldn't deny that. "Nice is what it is."

"Don't get me wrong, Damon, but 'Yuki' and 'nice' don't *even* belong in the same sentence."

You have no idea how true that statement is, Damon thought, his mind swimming with images of the night before. A playful slap on the ass had turned the slender Japanese man wild. Damon didn't mind giving Yuki a few more, especially as he fucked him over Yuki's leather couch. Damon conceded, "Okay, naughty is a better description." Holding out his hand to accept the receipt and pen the sales clerk offered, Damon bent over to write his

signature. "It's the best description, really. And that in itself means nice, so try not to be so obviously jealous."

"Whatever, Mr. Whipped."

"I am not whipped."

"Yeah, you are. Hell, I didn't have a clue where you were for, what, two weeks in November? Then I come to find out that not only did you dump Andre, but that you were spending nearly every night with Yuki. Now, I'll grant you, a week...I could understand that, but even still, you usually call a brother."

"Are you still bitter about that?"

"Hell, no," Curtis scoffed. "I'm not going to stop you if you're ready to take the next step. I will, however, be over tonight to pick up your black book though, okay?"

"You have your own. Besides, trans-friend dating is a no-no." Damon returned the receipt and received a decorative gift bag along with his credit card. "He probably won't even like it."

"He will." Curtis followed Damon as he left the jewelry store.

As they walked through the mall, Damon held the gift bag close to his hip. He figured he looked like a teenager worrying over his first valentine. "You really think he'll like it?"

"He'll like it. He'll *love* it. He loves you," Curtis deduced. "In fact, I think he's crazier about you than you are for him. Maybe this is in response to something he gave you? What was it, a necklace, a watch, what?"

Spotting the steakhouse where they planned to have lunch, Damon responded, "He didn't give me anything."

"Nothing but his supple body every other night for the past few months."

Holding the restaurant door open for his sour friend, Damon couldn't help but smile. "Don't you worry about his supple body, okay?"

Curtis walked past Damon with a suspicious squint. “Yeah, fine, but you know I’m expecting an invitation to the ceremony.”

“It’s just a birthday gift, Curt. Hell, I bought you an MP3 player last Christmas, didn’t I?”

“Yeah, you did. But --” Curtis held up his finger. “-- you didn’t buy me a damn thing when we were dating. You can’t tell me you’ve ever done anything like this for any of the tricks you messed with before Yuki.”

Damon was relieved to see the hostess appear behind the podium sifting for menus. He didn’t want to acknowledge the truth of Curtis’s words, nor did he wish to think of how significant that made his current situation. “Two. Non-smoking, please.” He waited until the hostess walked ahead before responding to Curtis’s accusations. “Fuck buddies and friends are two entirely different species.”

“So are friends and lovers, man. Play tough if you want to, D, but it won’t be long before you’re moving in together, happy home and all that.”

Flushing at the thought, Damon was glad he was walking in front of Curtis. Had his friend seen the look on his face, Curtis would have known that Damon had already contemplated happily-ever-after.

Chapter Two

Damon kept the ring hidden in his desk drawer at work as he went back and forth with himself on the decision to present it. *It was too soon*, Damon told himself. He was being too presumptuous. Curtis had been right -- he had never given anyone such an expensive gift. There was something about Yuki and the feelings he inspired that made Damon want to secure his hold on his lover.

While there was no question Yuki was into him, Damon had no idea how much.

Upon arriving at the snowy Canadian resort, Damon gave Yuki the dazzling 2-carat amethyst sitting in a masculine platinum band. It was a bold statement for their still developing relationship, and Damon couldn't have been more nervous.

"I thought that you'd like it." Unpacking his suitcase, Damon pretended to be nonchalant. "I saw it in a jewelry store and thought of you. If you think it's too soft, or don't like it or something, I can have it exchanged."

Yuki said nothing.

His heart in his throat, Damon was almost afraid to look up from his folded clothes. Curiosity got the better of him, and he turned to set eyes on his lover.

Yuki had the ring on his finger and stared at it intently.

Damon rambled on. "I thought about getting something darker but I thought that color was more you. It's warm, you know? And it's your birthstone, right?"

"It matches my ass." Yuki held the stone up so that he could see the stone shimmer more by the ceiling light. There was a wide grin on his features. "Well, it did. The bruises are starting to fade. It's a good thing we took pictures though."

Get to the point, why don't you? Damon froze with a knit sweater in hand. "Well...we can fix that this weekend." His voice was uneven, influenced by the recollection of the incident.

"I hope so." Still staring at the ring, Yuki's smile grew wider. "You kinky man."

Damon wanted to laugh at the absurdity of the Yuki-hara's words, but couldn't. Although it had been on a dare from Yuki, Damon felt guilty for getting too rough during their last tryst. It wasn't like him, but Yuki had enjoyed it so much. "I am not kinky. I'm one of the most vanilla guys you know. Straight fucking and sucking are the norm for me, babe."

"There's nothing straight about you." Moving to Damon's side, Yuki slid one arm around Damon's back and placed his ring-dressed hand against his chest. "And I'll tell you something else. You're not *all* that vanilla. You like it just as much as I do."

"It is hot," Damon admitted.

"It is, but then so are you -- damn hot." Yuki's fingers found the top button of Damon's shirt and plucked it open. "You can unpack later, if you want."

Damon hadn't expected to jump right into bed. He'd only just arrived at the resort. "Damn, Ki," he muttered. "You know, I have plans for tonight. Don't want to rush things."

It wasn't often that Yuki invoked such coquettish behavior. He pushed his fingers into the opening of Damon's shirt. "No? Not even for something quick?"

"You were the one that made the dinner reservations. I remember something about not liking surprise parties and all that. I was willing to cook you a nice dinner with wine and everything but noooo..."

"You can't cook, Damon." Damon couldn't refute the statement.

Pushing his hand under the hem of Damon's shirt, Yuki's fingers caressed a taut six-pack. "It's all right, though. You have much more important talents."

Speechless, Damon turned and gazed into Yuki's jet black eyes. Grabbing the Asian man by the hips, he replied, "Just because I messed up one pot roast doesn't mean --"

"A pot roast... How about the pancakes, or the crispy lasagna?" Yuki's words didn't sound malicious. "Be honest. You just don't want me."

Nothing was further from the truth in Damon's mind. Certainly there was more than enough proof swelling in his trousers and he pressed it against Yuki's crotch. "Stop playin', boy. You know how much --"

"How much, what?" Yuki prodded. "How much you want to cook me a soufflé?"

"Don't joke." Damon sighed. "You know damn well how much I want you."

Yuki removed his hand and stepped away from Damon. "I don't know. All that talk about cooking and waiting..." Walking over to his suitcase, Yuki began removing clothes and placed them in the closet on hangers. "There was a time when you wouldn't have waited. I think I'm losing my sex appeal."

Damon wasn't amused by Yuki's attempt at humor, or his quick departure. "That is not true, Ki, and you know it. Come here."

"Oh no, you were right. We do have plans. Go ahead and finish unpacking," Yuki advised with a wave of his hand. "I should have done the same already. I only got here an hour before you did, and instead of unpacking, I took a nap and that's just me being lazy. Oh, and I'll need a shower before we leave --"

"Yuki, come here."

Yuki ignored him. Fishing in his luggage for his toiletry kit, he set it on the dresser.

Damon walked up to Yuki and seized him from behind, wrapping his arms around the slender man. "I believe I told you to come."

Yuki didn't attempt to struggle; in fact, he pushed back, rocking his ass against Damon's groin. "I'm not some geisha you can order around," he chirped, his black eyes meeting Damon's brown-black eyes in the dresser mirror. "I'll take the lavish gifts, but that doesn't mean you can just talk to me any kind of way."

Damon growled back. "Really? I can't just talk to you any kind of way, huh?" Deciding to give Yuki a taste of his own medicine, Damon had an idea. "I could release you. We could finish getting unpacked, shower and get on with our plans, as you said."

"I didn't say anything, and if I did, it was utter bullshit." Leaning his head back upon Damon's shoulder, Yuki wiggled his ass against the prodding erection, rising steadily for him. "Did I say something? Anything? I don't think I did."

Damon's fingers found Yuki's zipper with ease. The sound of metal teeth slipping apart was almost obscene as Damon pushed his hands past a cotton waistband. The damp, satiny head of Yuki's prick fit easily and eagerly into his hand. "I didn't hear anything. Did you say something?"

"Oh, yeah," Yuki moaned. "Now that I think about it, I did say something. I think that I even remember it now."

Having found the pale almond flesh of Yuki's throat, Damon nibbled his way up the shell of his lover's ear. "What? What was it?" he breathed hotly. *Just name it and I will give it to you.* "What does my lover want?"

Yuki closed his hand around Damon's hand and lifted it from his shaft. Moving out of Damon's hold, he pushed his pants and underwear down his legs. Kicking both off, he grinned. "I want you to show me how much you want me."

Entranced by the perfection of Yuki's slender body, Damon had no reply. No matter how many times he saw Yuki naked, the beauty always mesmerized him. Brown nipples, dark black thatch of hair surrounding Yuki's brown cock, contrast of pale almond skin -- Damon couldn't get enough. He stood completely still as Yuki walked over to the bed.

The slender man pulled his shirt over his head and toed off his socks. Stretching out upon the bed, Yuki lay on his stomach with his legs spread wide. His hair was just long enough to cloak his wicked glance as he showed Damon a surprise indeed. “For example...” Yuki began.

Damon’s eyes widened, his wildly beating heart staggered as he stared at the black rubber plug seated firmly inside of Yuki’s body. “Fuck, Yuki. You had that on the whole way?”

“I wanted to be ready for you. I was a bit impatient, so I went to the Underground Players shop and bought it. I even wore it on the flight up. It was wild. The turbulence was awesome.” Rising up upon his hands and knees, Yuki added, “If you think that I was being presumptuous, though, you can always spank me for being so...what’s that word you used...crass?”

Damon had no words as he approached. His broad hands went to Yuki’s flanks, spreading the cheeks wide for his inspection. The plug was both erotic and offensive. It occupied *his* space, enjoying the warmth that should belong to him alone. Jealous, Damon took hold of the plug and pulled slowly.

Yuki dropped his head and moaned as the plug left him open and exposed to Damon’s gaze. “You think I’m too forward?” Yuki wiggled his ass to further provoke, squeezing and relaxing his cheeks wantonly.

Damon’s answer was a stinging slap to Yuki’s right cheek. The teasing might have played a part, but the long, shuddering sigh of his lover had a lot to do with Damon’s hand striking the curved buttock. “You are a bold little thing.”

“Oh. Oh, that’s good, and I am *so* bold.” Yuki bucked forward. “More...”

Damon struck the other cheek. He held little back, hearing the approving moans below him. Five hard slaps to one side were followed quickly by five to the other. Spurred on by

every sigh, moan, and gurgle of encouragement, Damon brought his hand down until he could see his handprint in a rose-colored hue on Yuki's ass.

Yuki begged with both his voice and the swivel of his hips. "Don't stop. It's good."

Damon obliged. His cock ached, swelled against his zipper as his desire built with every blow. "Not gonna...I have no intention. But I do have something extra for you." Damon replaced the blunt sting of his hands with the gentle wetness of his tongue and lips.

Yuki fell apart, howling as Damon pushed his tongue inside.

Damon was an expert with his tongue. He hadn't known that before Yuki, but he hadn't wanted to worship anyone's ass as much as he did Yuki's. Narrow, tight, and almond had little to do with Damon's enthusiasm; it was the way Yuki keened and wailed, clenched and shuddered that drove him to voraciousness.

Damon caught Yuki as he attempted to slide his hand between his legs and give validation to the rigid erection there. Damon pushed Yuki's hand away. *If I can't do it, neither can you, babe.*

"Nande kuso? You're evil...so fucking good but evil," Yuki sneered.

Although he hardly knew a word of Japanese, Damon understood Yuki's impatience well enough. He spread Yuki's ass cheeks wider. Using his thumbs, he opened Yuki for a more thorough, more attentive prodding. Replacing his tongue with two of his fingers, Damon licked a slick trail down over Yuki's smooth ball sac. He chose the larger of the two globes to fit between his lips and suckle.

"Aishiteru. Ikasete...need you..."

Stating the obvious? The way Yuki pushed back against him, Damon knew his lover needed something -- immediately. Pumping long, careful fingers into Yuki's inner channel, Damon found him to be more than ready. A timely thrusting motion pared with the scissoring of Damon's fingers, and Yuki's voice took on his rare, aroused and threatening tone.

"I'm ready enough, Damon!" Yuki snapped. "Come on...just..."

"Just need it, don't you? Fuck, I love how hot you get after I tongue your ass...after I spank you good!" Damon gave a parting lap at the base of Yuki's cock before complying. Moving back, he made a motion to grasp Yuki's hips. "You want something so bad; well, I have it."

Agile, Yuki slipped from Damon's grasp. Turning over onto his back and opening his legs with his feet braced upon the edge of the bed, Yuki made his preferred position known.

Damon grinned down at his lover. The sight of Yuki's black eyes shimmering with lust, the sight of his lips swollen and rouged spurred him on. "You want it like that, eh?"

Chest heaving, Yuki nodded. "Hell, yeah. I want to see you while you're fucking me."

Removing his hands from Yuki's body, Damon begun to undress like a stopwatch was involved. "You ain't got to worry about that, baby. I'm going to make sure we both feel good."

Yuki's eyes followed every movement Damon's fingers made, from the plucking open of buttons, to the shoving of fabric and definitely to the revelation of skin the color of mahogany.

Damon wasn't arrogant, but the lust so visible upon Yuki's features told him the hours spent at the gym every week were well worth it. As he unzipped his trousers then pushed them off, Damon knew where Yuki's attention was. For that, Damon could only thank genetics.

More out for need than for show, Damon took his cock in hand and stroked the stiff muscle slowly. He found Yuki staring avidly. "Where is it?"

Yuki motioned to the dresser. "In the kit..." he said hoarsely.

There was no need to ask his lover what was in the kit. Yuki always made sure to have Damon's preferred brand of condoms and lube. He knew where to get all of the good stuff.

Heading to the dresser, Damon found the kit and took what he needed. He grabbed a golden foil square and ripped it open to reveal the slick, greasy latex. He had it pinched and unrolled down his purple cockhead before reaching for one of three travel-sized bottles of lubricant. "We're going to be so late for dinner, but I could give a fuck," Damon teased, approaching Yuki at the edge of the bed.

Yuki ran his fingers over his hairless chest, down his belly to take hold of his prick. "You can eat my cock if you want. Want to taste it?"

Damon didn't need to be asked twice. He broke the tab on the lubricant and coated the width of his shaft before joining Yuki on the bed. Burying his head between Yuki's pale thighs, Damon thought Yuki's speech was too coherent for his liking.

There had been times in the recent past when Yuki had claimed to be self-conscious about the size of his cock but with Damon, it was never really an issue. Just slightly under average, the entirety of Yuki's shaft was a perfect fit for the heated cavern of Damon's throat. Going down to the soft, black hairs, Damon sucked up from the root to the tip.

Already leaking, Yuki bucked upwards, his thighs rising to frame Damon's head. Yuki demanded more and Damon gave it -- more tongue, more saliva, tighter suction. Damon tried to hold Yuki still, but beneath him, Yuki was out of control.

Yuki moved his legs up to Damon's shoulders and clamped down. Half off of the bed, he went silent. Damon knew what Yuki's silence meant -- that he was holding his breath to prevent himself from coming. Damon also knew that it was inevitable. Yuki was already near the verge. Cupping his hands beneath Yuki's ass, Damon prepared himself for what was to come.

Dissolving into monologues of Japanese vulgarity, Yuki had a death grip on the bedspread and an even tighter grip on Damon's head.

Jet after creamy jet of Yuki's seed splashed against Damon's tongue, and he savored every rich drop. When he drew away, it was to the sounds of Yuki's sighs. He licked the softening shaft before caressing tense legs.

Damon had discovered that after a potent orgasm was the perfect time and condition for Yuki to be taken. Weak and boneless, Yuki lay ready. It was hedonistic for both men, but especially for Damon. "You're so spoiled. You're going to just lie back and enjoy it, aren't you?"

Yuki shuddered. "Oh, I'll come to life in a minute...two minutes, maybe..."

Damon took hold of Yuki's legs and hiked them high upon his shoulders before lining his covered shaft up with the small brown bud. "Do you think I really care?"

Eyes closed, a wild grin spread out across Yuki's face. "You do."

Beginning the slow shove inside, Damon watched as Yuki went from eyes-shut exhaustion to gasping renewal. "That's it, babe. Wake up for this dick." The hard slap to Yuki's left butt cheek helped to revive his lover.

Damon went slowly. The pressure of heated flesh welcoming his cock was no careless pleasure. Yuki was nice and relaxed, but still it took patience for Damon to invade him all the way. He gave Yuki moments to adjust and gave himself time to breathe. *Feels so fucking good*, Damon mused to himself. Speaking aloud proved much more difficult. "H-how's that? Was that wanted you wanted?"

"Mmm...almost."

"Almost, huh? You want me to move?"

Yuki nodded.

"You want anything else?"

Yuki was barely able to get the words out. "Your hand, you...move."

Damon hissed as Yuki's body clenched around his cock, and used his hips to drive their pace. He knew how to rise to a challenge, just as surely as Yuki could issue one. Faster, harder, Damon grabbed Yuki's thighs and bore down. "You want it like that, do you?"

A nod was the only answer Yuki gave.

"You want it harder?" The palm of Damon's hand met Yuki's flank with a resounding crack. "You want it *harder*?"

"Yes! Yes, harder! Spank me...fuck me...Damon."

Above him, Damon was no saner. Focused only upon his lover's sweat-sheened body, Damon was both intent and enraptured.

Yuki reached out to Damon, and Damon seized Yuki's hand, weaving dark brown fingers between pale golden ones.

"Damon!"

"Yeah, I know baby, I know." Damon squeezed Yuki's hand tightly, racked with his own body's release. "I --"

Yuki gasped at the exact moment that Damon's reserve collapsed. They came together, Damon squeezing Yuki's hand so tightly that the gemstone ring bit into the palm of his hand.

It only heightened his pleasure to know that Yuki wore the ring. *His* ring.

Chapter Three

The *maître d'* was in no mood for explanations when Damon and Yuki arrived an hour and a half late. Yuki's hair was still wet from their hasty joint shower, despite Damon's warning of a chill.

In thick bulky sweaters, the two sat down at window side table overlooking a dark, snowy landscape. When the waiter arrived, Damon ordered two of the biggest steaks the restaurant served for Yuki and himself. He also ordered salads, steamed shrimp, stuffed baked potatoes, and a bottle of red wine.

Yuki only nodded to the speculating waiter. Concentrating on his ring, Yuki twisted it around on his finger.

Damon was pleased to see his lover so taken by the ring, and so relaxed. He grabbed his napkin and unfolded it in his lap. "Scared it's going to tarnish any minute now, huh?"

"No, not at all," Yuki replied. "It's gorgeous and it's mine, just like you." Unfolding his napkin, Yuki met Damon's eyes. "Unless this ring *doesn't* mean we're in a relationship?"

"A relationship? A monogamous agreement with you?" Damon spoke up before Yuki could even misconstrue his questions. "If I had known I could have had you with jewelry, you'd have had diamonds the first night we met."

“I should be offended at that.”

“Because you know it’s true.” Damon smiled. “I can’t make it through a day without you on my mind, without getting brick-hard at the thought of seeing you.”

Yuki raised a hand to his wet bangs and pushed them off of his forehead. “If it’s any consolation, I feel the same. It’s almost scary. Surreal, even.”

Damon raised a questioning brow. “How fast all of this is occurring?”

Yuki nodded. “And how fast I want it to go.”

Sitting back in his chair, Damon frowned. “You want this affair to be over and done with before it gets too reckless?”

“Not at all.” Yuki became silent as the waiter arrived with a cabernet sauvignon in hand.

Damon kept his tongue as well, watching the fall of red wine into goblets. His gaze locked with Yuki’s, both men anxious to speak.

The waiter asked how they would like their steaks.

“Medium rare and medium well,” Yuki replied curtly before he waved the waiter away. Turning to Damon, he continued. “What I meant is that I want you to move in with me. It’s too fast, I know, but it’s how I feel. I’m already in love with you.”

Trying to wrap his head around what he had just heard, Damon paused. “Really?”

“Certainly.”

Yuki could be obstinate, even stubborn at times, but if there was one thing the Japanese man didn’t do, it was bullshit. “I mean, someone might think it’s too fast or something,” Damon said.

Yuki lifted his wineglass and took a sip. His look became serious. “Do you think that way?”

Damon didn't know what to think. From their first meeting, he had been a vessel of emotion where Yuki was involved. "No, not really. I mean, if anything, I gave *you* the ring."

"But I asked you on this trip. Was that too forward?"

Chuckling, Damon combated the frankness of Yuki's tone. "It could have been just for us to be alone together."

Yuki shrugged. "Even in a crowd, you and I are always alone, Damon. That's what I like about being with you. Sometimes, it's sexual, but I'd like to think that you and I wouldn't irritate one another doing nothing."

"You're right about that, baby. The idea of being around you in clothes for long periods of time isn't *that* strange."

"I agree. Not too strange at all." Failing to keep humor out of his voice, Yuki lost his battle with calmness and began to laugh. "Can we get the food to go?"

"I'm sure we can."

* * * * *

Sitting on the edge of the bed, Damon had been trying to get off the phone for nearly fifteen minutes. His mother's curiosity, interspersed with random doses of gossip she felt he needed to be aware, of had kept Damon tied up. Cursing himself for even bothering to take the cell phone out of his coat pocket, Damon's attention was on the door to the bathroom and the sound of the shower.

He thought about joining Yuki but guilt kept him away. While it had been Damon's idea to use Yuki's body as a dinner plate, Yuki hadn't shied away from it. He had lain prone while Damon licked and chewed, savored and sampled flesh, food, and the combined juices.

It would have been exponentially more pleasurable washing *au jus* and cum off of Yuki's body than hearing about his sister-in-law's possible infidelity. Damon pretended to be

interested and kept the phone to his ear. Despite his resolve, he found himself still on the phone when Yuki emerged from the bathroom.

Yuki smiled at him, using the majority of the towel to dry off his damp hair. The rest of his body glistened.

“Mom, I’ve gotta go. There’s something wrong with the fireplace,” Damon lied with an infusion of excitement. He hung up before she could ask anything else concerning the fictional blaze. Instead of allowing the phone to stay on vibrate, he turned it off completely.

“I thought that you were going to turn that thing off.”

“It was my mother. She had already left four messages, and I assumed that somebody must have either died or hit the lottery. I couldn’t resist.”

Yuki walked over to the bed. “You *did* tell her that you’d be out of town for a few days?”

“Yeah, I did. She wants to meet you.”

“Right.” Turning around, Yuki handed him the towel. “So it begins.”

It took Damon more than a moment to remember what towels were for. At eye-level with the cutest little ass he had ever seen, the last thing that Damon wanted to discuss was family. “Are you worried about meeting her?”

Yuki turned his head back and looked at Damon. “Dry me, Damon. Use the towel.”

Bringing the towel up to the center of Yuki’s back, Damon took his time, rubbing the terrycloth over small sections. He couldn’t reach Yuki’s shoulders, but it wasn’t up that he wanted to go.

“Should I be worried about meeting your mother?”

“Yes. She seems to think I’m hiding you from her.”

“You are, aren’t you?”

Damon brought the towel down around Yuki's hips. He wanted to save the best parts for last. "Well, you're hiding me from *your* folks."

"Mine are in a different country, but I would be happy to let you meet them."

Wiping down Yuki's legs, Damon used his close proximity to appreciate the warmth and the scent of cocoa butter radiating from Yuki's flesh. "Do they know you're gay?"

"My older brother Hiro is straight and married. He has a son and is upholding the family name quite well. My father dotes on him more than me anyway, and he definitely dotes on money even more. As soon as my father finds out you're an investment banker, he'll come around."

Damon finished up with Yuki's calves, deciding a playful pat to the bottom was needed. "Oh, so that's it," he exclaimed. "You're only with me because I'm successful, because your dad will approve."

"He won't be too happy about you being dark-skinned, but oh, well."

He had heard the Japanese tended to be xenophobic, but somehow it still stung to hear his skin color would be an issue. "I'm black."

Yuki turned around and took the towel away from Damon to finish drying himself. "You're of African-American origin and I said he wouldn't be too happy about it, not that he would disown me or embarrass you because of it. Hell, he'd be just as grumpy if you were Caucasian. My father would prefer me to be with someone of Japanese descent -- male or female -- but he *will* accept you and your beautiful mahogany skin. And don't worry, that's not the reason I let you have me, either."

Damon heard Yuki's words but he wasn't really listening. His attention was on Yuki's thorough drying of his cock and underneath his balls. It took him a moment to register what Yuki had just said. Looking up, Damon raised a questioning brow. "Let you have me?" he repeated. "Why you let me have you?"

Yuki nodded, hardly acknowledging the shock in Damon's voice. "Mmm hmm."

Mouth agape, Damon waited for an explanation. His mind couldn't comprehend the arrogance of the concept, even though he knew Yuki had a knack for being frank. Damon loved it when Yuki used that knack for others but when it was applied to him, it stung. Deciding to turn the tables, Damon crossed his arms over his chest and harped back. "What if I said that I didn't want you? How would you know that I'm not just using you for sex? Let me have you...I could be letting *you* have *me*."

"No, no, no, Damon." Tying the towel around his waist, Yuki raised his gaze and gave his full attention to Damon's ire. He set his arms around Damon's shoulders and smiled down at his lover. "While I'd like to explore being on top with you, you bring out the bottom in me."

Was there any response to a reply like that? The simplicity of it stunned him and excited him all at once. While he would have liked Yuki to mention something about his intellect, his sense of humor, or his kindness, Damon couldn't find fault with Yuki's reply. "Is that all? Nothing about my charm, my intelligence...just that I'm good at being on top?"

"Oh, that's a lot," Yuki grinned. "There is more. There's my trust, my fondness for you, my attraction to you... Get all quizzical if you like, but I can assure you that I need you as much, if not more, than you need me."

Damon put his hands on the back of Yuki's thighs. Pleased to hear Yuki's proclamation, Damon was swayed. "I don't know about all that. I think we may be even."

"You think?"

"I do," Damon admitted. "In fact..." Damon slid his hands under the towel and found Yuki's ass. He didn't get to keep his hands there for long as Yuki pulled back and away from him.

"Damon! I just got out of the shower."

It wasn't a good enough excuse. There had to be something else. "So? Are you sore?"

Yuki shook his head no, but Damon didn't buy it. "Okay, so I am just a little exhausted, but it's a happy exhaustion. We don't all have the stamina of a bull. Anyway, I brought dominos; I figured we could play a few games before bed."

"But we could play as many games as you like *in* bed too, you know? It doesn't have to be anything too intense."

Yuki walked over to his suitcase and dropped his towel. He chose a pair of pajama bottoms and pulled them on before pulling out a wooden box filled with dominos. "We won't. We can try something really wild there later."

Damon didn't have a clue as to what Yuki meant. He was too busy cursing the inventors of pajamas. "What?"

Walking over to the fireplace, Yuki sat down on the faux fur rug. "Snuggling. Now, come on. We can play over by the fire."

"Okay, okay," Damon said, getting up from the bed. "But only because you put on clothes."

* * * * *

When Damon awoke the next morning, he hadn't expected to do so empty-handed. He had fallen asleep with Yuki in his arms after playing several rounds of dominos. Afterwards, he and Yuki had climbed into bed and actually went to sleep.

He hadn't known just how exhausted he was from traveling, from the first day of their vacation together, but when Damon looked at the clock, he didn't recognize the display of 10:15. Usually an early riser, he rarely slept past six-thirty in the morning.

Their room was large, decorated in a conglomeration of modern and rustic styles. It was very spacious, and the dominant colors of maroon and steel gray gave the space a measure of class. It lacked any sign of his lover though. The bathroom door was open, but the lights were off.

After a moment it occurred to Damon that Yuki might have left. Pushing off the covers, he sat up. He noticed the paper lying on the floor beside his boxer shorts. Written on pad of resort stationary, Yuki's note read:

If you're looking for a ski bunny, find him on the bunny slopes. Eat breakfast first though!

~Ki

Damon chuckled as imagined Yuki in a bunny outfit, hopping. The vision was motivation for getting dressed quickly and heading to main lodge. He grabbed a bagel with cream cheese and an espresso at the lodge's breakfast bar, and ate on the way to the tram.

Like a predator scanning for sport, Damon admired the conditions of the day, the clear blue sky and the crisp air around him. While his choice in vacation spots had included islands with temperatures above eighty, Damon didn't mind the snow. It was rare for him to see so much snow, but the beauty of the environment only made his hunt for Yuki more interesting. Exhilarated by the pursuit, he had to give it Yuki; he would never be bored in a relationship with the Asian beauty.

After renting skis, an instructor directed Damon to a trail of snow-covered ferns. He didn't know what to do with the equipment but put on the boots and set off in the direction of the beginner slopes.

Yuki surprised him before he could even reach the sign. "Hi there, sexy. I will be your instructor for today," Yuki said behind slick, black goggles.

Had he been with anyone else, Damon would have spent the entire day at the lodge sipping spiced alcoholic beverages and watching sports. Since he was with his own private ski instructor, he was more than willing to slip, slide, fall and whine. The occasional warming kiss and lewd promise helped.

Chapter Four

Despite his athletic lifestyle, skiing took a measure of coordination Damon was unfamiliar with. Overall, the day had been fun. Pulling off his snow-dampened clothing, Damon felt relieved to get back to the room. “I am so sore.”

Yuki shut the door behind them with laughter in his voice. “You weren’t bad out there at all.”

“Right, I only fell...six or seven times.”

“That you owe more to your bravado. I told you to take it easy.” Yuki sat down on the sofa and took off his boots while Damon did the same. “A nice soak will help.”

Damon agreed with a sigh. “Yeah, a nice hot bubble bath will be just what I need.”

Sucking his teeth, Yuki sat back on the couch. “Damon, there’s a Jacuzzi on the balcony. It was one of the reasons I chose this place. There’s nothing like soaking outdoors at night...looking up at the stars,” he mused.

Damon didn’t feel half the enthusiasm Yuki seemed to emit. “Are you serious? It’s cold outside, really cold.”

“And the Jacuzzi is hot.”

Crossing his arms over his chest, Damon looked at the opened double doors, which led to a hot tub sitting dead center of the balcony. Watching Yuki saunter through the double doors and outside to lift the cover off of the tub, Damon spoke up. "Oh no, babe! I don't do Jacuzzis in winter."

Yuki turned on the water. Leaning over the rim, he adjusted the jets and temperature on the wood and fiberglass tub. "It's the best time, actually. My father's home in Kyoto has one. He uses it when clients come over to entertain. It's so refreshing."

"Pneumonia isn't so refreshing."

Yuki groaned as if he couldn't believe what he was hearing. "You are not going to catch pneumonia. Now, off with your clothes and on with your swim trunks."

Well, at least he didn't mention skinny-dipping, Damon thought to himself. Still, the idea was much too absurd for him to consider. "Oh, no, hon, I didn't bring any. Black folks do not get in a hot tub while there's snow on the ground."

"We're on the third floor, Damon. The view is breathtaking, and the water is hot. I brought an extra pair of trunks for you, just in case. I thought you might not bring any."

"How thoughtful," Damon muttered obstinately. Reaching for the remote, he turned on the television. Pretending that he didn't see Yuki walk back into the room, Damon focused on the French-Canadian news.

Yuki undressed and put on his swimwear, a tight white thong. Grabbing one of the fluffy robes provided by the lodge, he slipped it onto his shoulders and went to the courtesy bar.

Damon pretended to be caught up in a report about glaciers, but he followed Yuki's every move. *He's really serious.* When Yuki stepped in front of the television with a bottle of brandy and two tumblers, Damon couldn't deny the minx.

"If you're good and come out with me, I'll sit on your lap and share my brandy with you."

Despite the protest ready on his lips, Damon's cock twitched at the thought. The idea of getting into a Jacuzzi when there was still snow on the balcony railing wasn't too inspiring, but Damon suspected being with Yuki would prevent him from freezing. Looking at Yuki as if some unfair manipulation was afoot, he frowned. "Ki --"

"I can understand if current events and Canadian politics are more interesting."

"That's not true, but --"

"But what?"

Damon blamed it on the white thong and robe causing Yuki's skin to glow golden. Turning the television off, he wondered why he even pretended that he wasn't totally under Yuki's spell.

* * * * *

A Jacuzzi, snow, and brandy -- the combination seemed perfectly logical to Damon, especially as he withdrew his tongue from Yuki's mouth and opened his eyes to the view. Surrounded by steamy water and warm limbs, the chill winds were the only thing keeping him from being overheated. With Yuki seated on his lap, Damon felt sure Heaven would have to be as good in order for him to go. Glistening dark eyes stared at him like he was the only being in existence.

Reaching over to the edge of the tub, Yuki found the bottle of brandy and poured more into his tumbler. Handing the drink to Damon, Yuki smiled proudly. "You like it, yeah?"

The undulating currents in the hot water made any chill he might have felt irrelevant. To Damon's surprise, he had begun to think that Yuki's idea had been a good one. It helped to have Yuki's weight upon him and the heat of the brandy within him. "I do. It's not bad at all. It's relaxing."

Smug, Yuki commented. "You're not cold at all, are you?"

Damon slipped his arm around Yuki and squeezed his narrow waist. “Nope. I’ve got the liquor, the water’s great, and you’re warming me up just fine.”

“Reminds me of home.”

Damon took another sip of the brandy before passing the glass to Yuki. He watched closely as Yuki savored the amber contents. “Reminds you of someone, maybe?”

“Is that jealousy I hear?”

His first instinct was to nod, but due his relaxed state, Damon pondered the question a bit longer. He came to the conclusion that jealousy was only the tip of the iceberg. “Blame curiosity. I mean, this trip is supposed to be for us to get to know one another better, right?”

Yuki directed a seriously inquisitive look toward Damon.

“Well, I want to know about you. I know where you were born, what you like to do, but I want juicy details. Who was your first?”

Rolling his head to the stars, Yuki muttered. “This is revenge for dominos, isn’t it? Payback?”

Sure is. “Tell me, who was he? Was it a she? How old were you? Spill, babe.”

“I was fourteen when I had my first lover. He was a Chinese boy.” Yuki shared both words and the tumbler. “His parents were merchants like mine, but they were much more successful and well traveled. He was a sophisticated one.”

With the brandy going to his head and Yuki’s ass shifting over his cock, Damon’s questioning was simple. “Was he cute?”

Yuki almost spat as laughter expanded his chest. “Not at all, but I learned how to give a hand job from him.”

Damon couldn’t resist squeezing Yuki. “You learned well. I should be grateful. You’re quite talented in that area.”

“That means a lot from someone I had to virtually relearn the skill for,” Yuki teased. “How about you? Who was your first?”

“Rick Washington, quarterback on my high school football team.” Unable to reminisce about the man without grinning, Damon added, “He was my own personal receiving end.”

Yuki shoulders dropped slightly. He didn’t seem half as jovial as Damon had been. Yuki took a hearty swallow before asking, “He was good, yeah?”

“Yup. Damn good until he found Jesus, a girlfriend, and twin babies in the same year.”

“Pity. Was he as good as me?”

Damon knew fishing when he heard it. “Now whose turn is it to be jealous?”

“Answer the question.”

“No, he wasn’t as good as you, but he was...hot.” Not wanting to get into trouble, Damon dropped his hands to Yuki’s ass, holding him tight enough to prevent a jealous escape. “Anyway, who was your best lover besides me?”

“An older man. Japanese,” Yuki responded curtly. “So what made Mr. Washington so hot? Was he African-American? Big cock? Bubble-butt?”

Tilting his head, Damon stared at Yuki. There was definite animosity in his tone. “Yes, yes, and yes. He was also weighed a hundred pounds more than you. He was my first, and you’re my now, my best, and my only.” Finishing off the tumbler, he handed it back to Yuki for a refill. “So, about this older Japanese dude. What made *him* so good?”

“He showed me a lot about sex.” Reaching over Damon to get to the bottle, Yuki seemed to be more focused on filling the tumbler than answering Damon’s question. “He taught me a lot about life too.”

Damon wasn’t interested about life lessons, not at that moment. “Did he used to spank you?”

Squirming on Damon’s lap, Yuki took the first sip from the refreshed glass. He downed half of the tumbler with one swallow. “No.”

Swatting his lover’s rump was difficult because of the churning water, but it got Yuki’s attention nonetheless. “Yuki? Tell me. Did he make you like a good spanking?”

“He didn’t.” Yuki muttered finally. “I spanked him.”

Blinking, Damon might have suspected Yuki of lying had it not been for the look of seriousness upon his golden features. He had to grind his teeth to prevent laughing. The image of Yuki taking the upper hand wasn’t wholly unfeasible, but Damon had seen nothing to indicate that Yuki even liked being sexually dominant. Damon asked, “And did you like being on the giving end?”

“Before I met you, I did,” Yuki admitted.

Damon didn’t understand. The way Yuki spoke led him to believe their relationship held different significance for Yuki. “What’s so special about me? Is it just because of my height, my build...my skin color.”

“Damon, it has nothing to do with your color. As for your size and strength, I’m a third degree black belt in Aikido and Kendo.” Sliding an arm around Damon’s shoulders, he winked. “I’m not intimidated by you, hon. I’m madly aroused by you, though, and you do hit nice and hard.”

“A third degree? That -- that’s deadly isn’t it?”

“Does it matter?”

“Well...no.” Damon had a vision of Yuki he carried with him in his mind. In it, Yuki always submitted to him, praised him for his strength, and showed a measure of vulnerability. That principle was often fodder for fantasy. That vision of Yuki needing him dissolved as Damon read the truth in Yuki’s eyes. It was if someone had told him he was holding a dragon and Yuki was bound to sprout scales and wings at any moment. Unconsciously, his hands fell from Yuki’s body, heavy and empty in the water.

Yuki noticed the departure. “You think less of me?”

With Yuki’s voice laced with disappointment, Damon panicked. “No. No. Of course not, babe.”

Finishing off the rest of the tumbler, Yuki didn't seem buy Damon's answer. "Liar. Now you think I'm even kinkier for wanting to be submissive, don't you?"

Things were straying far off course. Damon wasn't quite sure what was being told to him or how he should process it. Yuki looked at him, *to* him, for an opinion and Damon only prayed that he could come up with the right one. With a makeshift smile, he asked, "How do you know I don't have a few kinks myself?"

Yuki succeeded in preventing audible laughter, but his wide grin gave away the humor he wanted to hide. "What if I said that I wanted to be tied up while you spank me? What if I said I wanted you to fit me into a cock ring, maybe nipple clamps and a satin gag, so that I couldn't talk back when you told me what a whore I looked like?"

Damon didn't know what to say. He wasn't sure he had heard Yuki correctly. Then he realized that he had. A little slap and tickle was one thing, but what Yuki had mentioned was more advanced than that. "Are you serious?"

Yuki backed off, moving to get off Damon as well. "I did say 'what if,'" he snapped.

Hands springing to life, Damon closed his arms around Yuki's back. The slender Japanese man struggled only for a moment. It was a half-hearted display put on merely for irritation. Having no wish to see the proof of black belt prowess, Damon lightened his tone. "Yuki, you have to understand --"

"Understand what, Damon?" With an irritated toss of his ebony mane, Yuki sighed. "You might as well know that I'm some sort of freak now, before we go any further."

Tightening his grasp, Damon crushed Yuki to his chest. "No, you're not. Spanking is not freakish and you are not a freak. You're just...creative."

"Freaky creative?" Still tense, Yuki responded, "Be honest, and tell the truth. I'll be honest and tell you that I --"

Caught up in the pause of Yuki's voice, Damon was curious. "That you what?"

Yuki looked very much like the geisha he had been when Damon met him “That I packed a cock ring and a hair brush...some nipple clamps.”

Damon swallowed nervously but had no reply.

Yuki wasn't patient enough to wait for one. He climbed down off of Damon's lap and stood up amidst the swirling water. Curling his thumbs around the band of his swimming trunks, he pushed them down. His excitement, his enthusiasm for his fetishes was obvious in the upstanding heft of his cock. That got Damon's full attention. “You can think what you like, but if you make my ass nice and hot...I'll let you fuck it.”

Whatever Damon thought took a back seat to what he felt. His palm flexed as if it already held the brush, and his dick pulsed. *He is a black belt. If he doesn't want it, he's more than able to stop me*, Damon told himself.

“That's nothing really kinky. You've done it before, and I thought you liked it,” Yuki commented.

Damon couldn't shake the feeling that he was being guided into unfamiliar territory. It was an easy enough path to take when the road was paved with Yuki's hot body. “I do. I do like it.”

With a look of compassion on his features, Yuki beckoned to Damon. “Hon, don't stress over the big picture. Examine it as you experience it, okay? As *we* experience it. You know that I wouldn't suggest something you didn't enjoy.”

If Yuki had been the devil, Damon was sure his soul would have been long gone. Yuki made a good case. *What was a little slap and tickle after all*, he thought. “Yeah, sure.”

“Come with me.” Yuki turned, giving Damon an unashamed view of his ass as he climbed out of the hot tub and headed back into the room.

Despite the role he was about to play, Damon knew that he was not to be the one in control. Rising up from the Jacuzzi bench, he ignored the voice in his head that told him to

take things slow. He denied the suspicion that things weren't as easy as Yuki stated them to be. The one thing he wouldn't deny to himself was his ability to handle Yuki's desires.

Halfway inside the room, Yuki called, "Don't forget the brandy and the glasses, baby!"

Damon didn't.

Chapter Five

Damon sat on the edge of the bed with a towel around his waist. Warm from the fire, he watched Yuki rummage through his suitcase. Something deep inside him warned that he was getting in over his head, delving into territory both gray and controversial. Like an illegal drug, Damon knew the rush would be worth it -- the experience would be everything but ordinary -- yet the possibility of addiction worried him. He was already certain he had never been with anyone remotely like Yuki and doubted he ever would. That realization scared him far more than the silver hand brush and rubber ring Yuki pulled out of his suitcase.

Yuki brought the items to Damon. Catching his lover deep in thought, his demeanor went from excited to concern. "Damon, we don't have to do it if you don't want to."

Damon's gaze traveled over Yuki's face, down his chest, and across the breadth of strong, sturdy shoulders. "I want to do it," Damon said, taking the wide-back brush from Yuki. It was no light object; it would pack a nice wallop and lots of warmth. "You'll tell me if it's too hard, right?"

Smiling madly, Yuki leaned forward and kissed him. "I'll say a special word that will let you know if it's too much, okay?"

“A special word?”

“Yes. It’s something that I wouldn’t normally say during sex.”

Baffled as to what Yuki meant or what he could possibly yell out that wouldn’t be normal, Damon winced. “Like what? Why wouldn’t ‘stop’ work?”

Chewing his lip, Yuki went quiet. “I could be telling you to stop, but not be serious. I could be saying it hurts, that you’re hurting me, and really enjoy it...”

Yuki paused, but Damon wasn’t sure what to say. The dread of being in over his head rose anew as he wrapped his mind around the idea of Yuki yelling out things for no reason.

“It’s like role-playing. Like if I was the helpless servant boy and you were the dominating warrior who had captured me or something.”

Damon conjured the image with little difficulty. *Sounds kinky. Good but kinky.* “Okay. What’s the word?”

“Amethyst.”

“Amethyst,” Damon repeated to be sure. It took a second for him to recognize the significance. Amethyst was the color of the Yuki’s ring. “It’s perfect.”

“No, you’re perfect.” Yuki sat down and scooted to the middle of the bed. With the black rubber ring dangling from his fingers, Yuki spread his legs. “Do you want to see how to put this on me?”

Never so enthusiastic about education, Damon moved aside and watched Yuki fit the ring around both thickening shaft and plump balls. The sight of the black band separating yet engorging Yuki’s genitals made his pulse race. He couldn’t imagine how it felt for Yuki, but by the pink flush upon his cheeks and chest, Damon had more than enough evidence to know Yuki liked being restrained. Unable to resist touching, Damon sidled up next to Yuki and ran his hands over the satiny length of Yuki’s cock, feeling every pulse through its veins. “It looks nice,” he muttered. “It prevents you from coming?”

Yuki relaxed back on the bed and purred. Enjoying Damon's touch, he spread his legs wide for it. "It does. Sometimes, I come with it on, and it's...wild."

Damon was sure it had to be. Leaning closer, he could see a bead of awakening desire glistening from the slit of his cockhead. With the fruit of Yuki's sex so close, Damon yearned to taste.

With the brush in one hand and his other holding Yuki's taut thigh, Damon descended. Salty and plump, the flesh of Yuki's engorged shaft filled his mouth. Damon's tongue swirled around the veiny underside, while his lips worshiped the base of Yuki's prick.

Yuki moaned and his fingers curved around Damon's close-shaven scalp for support.

Damon rose and fell with a determination that made his lover whimper with every wet pull. Stroking the smooth back of the brush across Yuki's hip with promising caresses, Damon savored each movement and sound, and he yearned to amplify them both.

Yuki reverted to Japanese. Although Damon was unable to comprehend any of the whimpers and broken phrases, he knew what desire sounded like. He just wanted to hear it a little louder.

When he thought Yuki could take no more, Damon stopped, pulling away from his cock with a sloppy, saliva slip. "Turn over," he commanded. "You wanted that ass warmed. I can do that for you."

With a lazy smile painted across his feature, Yuki asked, "Are you sure?"

"Yeah. Now." Damon was certain of it. Coming to his knees at Yuki's side, Damon had cast all doubts aside. "God knows that I can't wait to get inside your pretty ass!"

"Mmmm. Yes, Sir." Yuki did exactly as told. Rolling over onto his hands and knees, he presented Damon with exactly what he wanted.

There was still some color left from Yuki's last beating, a tempting shade of mauve. Placing his hand where the brush would soon go, Damon caressed Yuki's narrow, petite ass.

Seems so frail and soft to the touch, but damn, I know it's not. Brush at the ready, Damon gave the first tentative slap with the brush.

It wasn't a hard blow, but it wasn't gentle either. It was a gauge.

Yuki barely flinched.

Damon hit harder with his next blow. Bracing Yuki's hip with his left hand, Damon struck the right cheek with the flat back of the brush.

A long, winded sigh escaped from Yuki's lips. It was music to Damon's ears, inspiring him to put Yuki to the test. He wanted to know Yuki's limits as well as his own and sought them with another hard *thwap* of the brush.

Yuki jerked forward, expelling a rough sigh. "Again, babe. Harder. More. Do it!"

Damon obliged with a swat to the right and another to the left. Growing more comfortable with handling the brush, Damon sped up the pace, adding more strength behind every swing until Yuki's voice became one long continuous melody of ecstasy.

He swung harder, quicker. "You like that?"

"Yes, that's good. That's so good," Yuki answered. "Sting is good..."

Before his eyes, Yuki's bottom changed from gold to rose. While he knew it had to hurt, Damon's mind was only on how hot Yuki's ass would feel against his hands and surrounding his cock.

"Damon?"

"What?" Without missing a beat, Damon responded.

Yuki moaned as Damon landed the brush against fleshy buttocks. "Can I..."

"Can you what?"

"Oh...can I...touch my prick? Can I?"

Damon shuddered. Hearing Yuki ask for something so personal only spiked his arousal. It felt powerful to grant permission, to wield the brush. He knew he would feel more

powerful once he was within Yuki. With two quick smacks of the brush, Damon responded. "You can."

When he finally stopped, it wasn't because Yuki's skin was near crimson; it wasn't because Yuki's moans had decreased to low gasps. Watching Yuki stroke himself, Damon stayed his hand out of jealousy. He cast the brush aside and moved from the bed with nothing but determination on his mind. "That's enough."

Yuki nodded as he dropped his head down to rest on his forearms, waiting quietly and patiently. "Hurry."

Damon didn't need to be told. He removed his towel and shorts before fetching the lube. Once back on the bed, he gripped the heated flesh of Yuki's ass, pulled it back to meet his arching shaft. The slippery pole of Damon's cock pressed against Yuki's crease. Before Yuki could even straighten his arms again, Damon was in to the hilt. Fingers splayed over the near feverish flesh of Yuki's buttocks, Damon hissed. "Damn, you're hot!"

"For you..." Yuki didn't allow Damon time to get comfortable.

The golden-bodied nymph writhed and pressed down upon him, daring him to be bolder. Placing his slippery hands on Yuki's hips, Damon felt as if the bottom of the world had just fallen out from underneath him. Yuki's body was feverish, especially his ass. The heat outside and within had him dizzy. "Damnit, Yuki. You need to be patient."

"I will..." Yuki said but could not comply. "Just...just move for me."

Yuki may have been on the bottom, but Damon was the one who felt like he was being fucked. Yuki moved on his cock, taking his pleasure as he pleased. Damon clutched at Yuki's sides to slow the spinning sensation. He wanted to savor the experience, but Yuki wasn't in agreement. *Oh, what the hell! You want it, you can have it!*

Establishing a relentless drive, it wasn't enough to plunge into heaven and withdraw into euphoria. Damon needed more. He needed to feel Yuki. His hands roamed the hot globes of Yuki's ass to curl around narrow hips. Damon found even greater warmth between

Yuki's thighs. Fisting Yuki's dripping cock while sucking on the side of his throat, Damon felt the screams emerge.

He didn't need the shouted words in Japanese, the sudden stiffness in Yuki's limbs or the splash of liquid heat against his fingers to alert him that his lover had been bullied and crushed by his orgasm. The sudden pressure preventing him from moving, urging him to join in was more than enough. And what a brilliant flame it was!

Chapter Six

From the sliding glass doors, he could see that it was snowing outside; thick, white flakes highlighted the gray morning. Damon spooned behind Yuki with the blankets piled atop them both. Despite the hours of rest, his limbs were still heavy from the night's exertions. He was in no rush to move from the bed.

"It's beautiful outside."

"The weatherman didn't say anything about snow." Damon yawned just above Yuki's head.

Yuki snuggled back against him. "I think it's beautiful."

Damon agreed, shifting under the heavy bedspread to view the digital clock display. It was just past noon, considerably later than his usual waking time. Not that Damon minded spending time between the covers. He needed a hot meal before he could truly concentrate on being lazy.

Waffles, eggs, and sausage weren't options at the late hour, so Damon's mind seized on blackened tuna with any combination of fattening side dishes as he bent to place a kiss on Yuki's creamy shoulder. The groan from beneath him was unexpected. "What's wrong? Are you sore, babe?"

Yuki groaned again.

“Oh, I know you must be now. No use faking it with me, but are you --”

“I’m fine. Really.” Yuki rolled over and wrapped his arms around Damon. “I’m better than fine, but would you think I was lazy if I told you that I want to lay in bed with you all day?”

“No sleigh ride, no movie and cider at the club house, no nature trail?”

“Nope.” Damon allowed Yuki to push him flat against the mattress. “But I’m sure that there has to be a sporting event or some highly predictable action movie that you’d like to watch in bed?”

Trapped by Yuki’s weight, Damon got the message. “I haven’t checked, but I can tell what you want to do, sleepyhead.”

Yuki frowned at the nickname, but laid his head upon Damon’s chest nonetheless. “I’m content and happy where I’m at, and I don’t plan on getting out from under these covers until dinner or unless the room catches fire.”

Ruffling Yuki’s hair with his chin, Damon couldn’t really blame Yuki for not wanting to leave the soft flannel sheets, feather stuffed duvet cover, and firm mattress. As they were naked underneath the covers, Damon didn’t want to leave the bed either, but it would be necessary if he wanted a full stomach. “So, I guess I should order in then?”

“Definitely. I can eat in bed. No problem.”

“You’re so lazy,” he teased.

“It’s because you’re so warm and I’m in the mood for hibernation.”

“I’ll feel the same way once I get a full belly. You know how I get.”

Unfurling himself from the center of Damon’s chest, Yuki raised his head. “I’ll let you go to make a phone call and to get the food when room service gets here, but that’s where I draw the line, young man.”

Yuki's tone of voice was both serious and sexy. Food took a back seat to the sustenance of pink lips as Damon leaned forward and pressed his answer against Yuki's mouth. "Yes, sir," he breathed.

Yuki parted his lips.

Sealing his lips to Yuki's, Damon heard no other demands. His tongue coiled around Yuki's, lips close and intimate. Submitting to the pull and massage of wet heat, Yuki moaned under the gradual intensity of Damon's hunger. He nearly forgot about food as his hands caressed slighter shoulders, satiny skin. Then his stomach growled.

Yuki laughed against Damon's lips. "I get it," he said. "You need to eat."

"But you're kinda getting hard again..."

"I can wait."

Flopping back down on the bed, Damon sighed. It really did feel great beneath the covers, and damn if the phone wasn't out of reach.

"Damon. I don't want you to think I'm playing a game, but I seemed to have skipped liking you."

"You're so easy." Damon rolled his eyes and grinned only because it was more manly than gaping.

Yuki balked. There was a slight hint of disappointment in his voice as he sidled up next to Damon. Resting his head on his hand, Yuki brow was wrinkled. "You think I'm easy?"

"No, I don't." His nervous laughter faded before Damon admitted, "I seem to have skipped liking you too, to be honest. This was a good idea, us getting away together."

"It was hasty, but I had a feeling about you."

"Really?"

"Really. I want someone I trust and love to explore things with. Most importantly, I want someone who I can give in to and I strongly suspect you're it."

Speechless, Damon was sure something was wrong with his heart. It was beating much louder than normal.

"I don't know what you're looking for in a guy, but I hope I'm close. We are in a relationship after all," Yuki reminded Damon. "I want there to be a time when we don't live apart and when we can share everything. I want you in my bed Monday through Saturday night and all day on Sundays. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I want the works."

Blinking back the realization that he very much wanted the same, it took Damon a few seconds before sound came from his mouth. "Damn, baby, I --"

Yuki shook his head, placing a finger to Damon's lips. "Don't make me any promises now, Damon. Not in bed, and not when I'm still out of my mind from a sound spanking and one of the best orgasms of my life. It's not fair to either of us. Let's just enjoy our vacation, okay?"

Reluctant to be silenced, Damon examined all the promises, oaths, and vows swirling around in his head. Influenced as he was by emotion and the feel of Yuki's nakedness, it really wasn't really the best time to make declarations. "Yeah, okay. Probably not best to make any epic declarations on an empty stomach for me either."

Yuki lay back down upon Damon's chest. "I'd like some sort of soup with lots of vegetables, some sort of fish too, please."

"Sure. Anything you want, baby." Meaning it in more ways than one, Damon wrapped his arm around his lover. Fast or no, Damon was certain he had never wanted another man like he wanted Yuki. The man pulled his strings like a puppeteer, but he could deal with it.

* * * * *

Despite Yuki's lethargy the day before, Damon wasn't surprised when he was shaken awake at six in the morning so they could be the first ones on the ski lift. It was Damon's turn to protest leaving the cocoon of covers, but the bait of Belgian waffles and coffee motivated him.

Yuki had planned the majority of their activities for the morning. Damon couldn't complain. It left their evenings free. The ski lift was actually fun and more romantic than he cared to admit. Suspended upon the broad bench, Damon surveyed the snowy wonderland with Yuki's head upon his shoulder.

Afterwards, they walked along one of the nature trails, engaged in a conversation about the possible benefits of annexing Canada. Absurd as he considered the topic to be, Damon felt very firmly that if the United States annexed Canada, they had to consider South America as well.

So involved in his rant, Damon didn't catch when Yuki dropped away from his side, until he felt the sting of a snowball hit his shoulder. He stopped and turned around.

"I had to do it." Yuki laughed, hiding a second snowball behind his back. "You were getting way too serious about the whole border patrol issue."

"I'm going to look even more serious when I'm beating your ass tonight," Damon threatened. "Now put it down...that one behind your back."

Yuki dropped the projectile and moved to Damon's side. They resumed their stroll. "Remember last night when you fed me soup?" Yuki asked after some distance, breath curling white in the air.

"Yeah."

"It's called aftercare, and you're a natural for it."

Damon's attention had been stuck on a rabbit, which nearly blended in with the white of the snow. Turning to face Yuki, he asked, "What are you going on about?"

Yuki mouthed slowly, "Aftercare. It's what a Dominant does for his submissive after they're done playing. I mean, I got it a day late, but I was much too worn out after the spanking to ask you for anything. Some use warm towels, massages, cakes, or hugs. I prefer soup and down comforters, I think."

Damon had to stop because he couldn't listen to Yuki and keep his footing on the snowy path at the same time. "I didn't know it was all part of some ritual. I thought you were just wanted to be spoiled yesterday."

"I did. I wanted the soft after the hard, and you gave it to me."

Damon might have been proud if he understood fully what Yuki meant. Yuki was grinning, his cheeks made rosy by the chill in the air. *It's so much more than sex for you, isn't it?* Damon thought while considering Yuki. "Did you used to do it when...you know...when you were in control?" It didn't bother him that Yuki used to be the one spanking, but the idea of Yuki caring for another man enough to feed him was a shade unsettling.

Yuki spoke candidly as there was really no one close enough to overhear them. "I was all about sushi and hot tea. It wasn't until I really got into soups and broths that I thought otherwise. Sushi is good though a little wild on the palate. It tends to invade the flavors of the experience. With a stinging ass and a stinging tongue from wasabi or even still the sourness of soy sauce, you can't really appreciate the sensations. Though, I might like to try that sometime. You feeding me sushi while I'm lying in your arms. I'd like that a lot after a good spanking."

It wasn't just the way Yuki discussed his kink as if it was some ancient art form with rules and traditions; it was the way he divulged it all with lovingness. Damon had been to enough pride events to know that S&M in the States was quite the intricate subculture. One he had never thought he would belong to until Yuki arrived in his life. Damon had tried not to be a fearful inductee, but he couldn't help wondering what was expected of him. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Sure."

"When was the first time? I mean with the spanking stuff. Who was it with and how did you learn about it?"

“That’s more than one question, hon.”

Damon shrugged. “Pick one.”

They walked for some time before Yuki spoke. “The first time, I was eighteen. It was with my Kendo instructor and he taught me all about it. He did *not* force me,” he added firmly.

There was more to it than that, Damon was sure. Starting to worry over the almost irritated tone that had crept into Yuki’s voice, Damon asked, “What did he do?”

Yuki stopped. Damon did as well.

Taking a deep breath, Yuki went from a frown to an almost eerie smile. “It was a scandalous, romantic affair; an older man and me. He gave up his body and his strength to me and I felt so important. By day, he haggled with my father over expensive furniture and by twilight I had him on the edge of his mat. I would push his kimono up around his waist and cane his ass until I had raised red welts and unbelievable heat. Then I would fuck him until he collapsed. He liked tea and sushi once I finished with him,” he added nonchalantly. “We would kiss, sometimes, and then I would go home and study for school.”

Damon paused trying to fit everything he had heard into some sort of order. “And you managed to learn martial arts through all that?”

“No. I *just* screwed from four until nine.” Yuki’s sarcasm was as obvious as the red glow on his cheeks. “Class ended at six.”

Yuki wasn’t being short with Damon, and he knew it. There was something that wasn’t being said. Damon suspected that were getting precariously near it. Earlier, he might have changed the subject, but standing vulnerable in a snowy forest with the man he was certain he loved made such a concession impossible. “Yuki, I just want to understand,” he said in his most reasonable voice. “You can’t fault me for that.”

“Understand what? Why I’m freaky?” Yuki laughed, his nostrils flaring. “It’s no great mystery. I wasn’t raped, molested, or bribed. I never got caught and I definitely knew what

the hell I was doing. Most guys were sucking dick in bathroom stalls or jerking off their high school buddies at that age.”

Damon didn’t buy the exaggerated explanation. “I think a cane is a bit more intense than that.”

“What do you know about canes?”

Blinking back his stupor, Damon wasn’t prepared to admit that his knowledge derived from an action movie.

“Right,” Yuki answered as if the question had been answered. His lips curled under his teeth as Yuki seethed. “If the S&M bothers you, I definitely won’t mention the *BDSM*. After all, it might really disgust you. You should tell me if you have a problem with it.”

“I don’t. Hell, I even enjoy some of the stuff myself, Yuki!”

“Then there is nothing to argue about. Everything is fine.”

Damon stared at Yuki. For a moment he considered dropping the subject entirely. *Can I allow him to have his secret?* Damon asked himself. *If I do then I’ll never have him.* “Yuki, I don’t have a problem with it but I’m starting to think that you do. I don’t know why I didn’t notice it before. There’s something you’re keeping from me, maybe even from yourself, and I just want to understand it before it blows up in both of our faces.”

“There. Is. Nothing. Wrong.”

Damon saw through every word and it hurt him. Shaking his head, Damon replied, “You don’t have to lie to me.”

Yuki snapped, “Don’t think just because we’ve been fucking for a few months that you know me!”

Unused to such a reaction, Damon stepped back. He looked Yuki up and down as if trying to figure out just who was standing before him. “Well...” It was all that he could say.

“Well, what?” Yuki laughed but showed signs of irritation nonetheless. “I want a future with you, not a past.”

Damon countered with some attitude of his own. "You should know better. You should know that you can't have one without the other, Yuki. I can't give you a future if I don't know what fucked up your past. If I made a mistake without even knowing it... Yuki, I want a solid relationship with trust. You remember that word, don't you?"

Lowering his gaze to the snow-covered ground, Yuki said nothing.

Damon stepped forward. He reached out and put compassionate hand on Yuki's shoulder, then pleaded with the hurting man before him. "You can trust me, babe," he began, only to have Yuki jerk away.

"Get your hands off of me! If you don't believe me when I tell you that nothing is wrong, there is nothing to talk about!"

Damon blinked back his surprise, refusing to believe that the wild man in front of him was the same man that shared his body so willingly and lovingly. Instead of letting go, Damon held tight. "What the fuck, Ki? This isn't you. I know that it's not. Please, don't shut me out. Just yesterday you were telling me that you loved me and now --"

Yuki moved so fast that Damon no longer questioned his skill in martial arts. Seated in several inches of snow, Damon had no idea how he had fallen. He only knew that his shoulder and his knee throbbed with pain.

Looking at the sudden look of shame in Yuki's eyes, Damon knew he'd made his point. He didn't need to say another word, even after Yuki turned away and set off without him.

Chapter Seven

Damon returned to the lodge. He didn't head immediately to the liquor cabinet like he planned. Instead, he took off his snow gear before he visited the decanter of Scotch.

Sitting at the requisite desk that every establishment of lodging seemed to have, Damon gazed out of the window trying to get a handle on what had happened between Yukihiro and him. *What have I gotten myself into?* he wondered. Something was wrong despite Yuki's claims of denial. Someone had hurt him, and Yuki apparently didn't want to deal with it.

He wasn't one for drama and certainly would never have tolerated being with someone who was. It would have been so easy for him to just drop the issue. He didn't have to know everything about Yuki. But he wanted to. Damon had to know what had happened. He had to. Yuki hadn't meant to hurt him; Damon had witnessed that in the man's eyes, but whatever it was that haunted him was strong.

He wondered why he hadn't seen it before, some trace of it at least. The pace of their infatuation was more than likely the culprit. Considering his haste to have Yuki to be the main reason for his blindness, Damon knew that if he truly wanted Yukihiro for his own he would have to be stronger.

He finished off two tumblers before ordering room service. Hours passed. Damon spent them alone. Wondering if he would have to spend the night alone, he stripped down to his shorts and climbed into bed to watch an action flick on television. Under the covers and nearly asleep, it was past ten when Damon heard the doorknob turn.

Yuki came into the room with hunched shoulders and soft steps. His posture said “sorry” even more than the crease in his brow.

Damon pretended to be intrigued by rolling maneuvers and wing-mounted machine guns on the screen but inside his heart was doing back flips. He was glad Yuki came back, but as to how they would address the heavy silence between them, Damon was clueless.

He watched Yuki pull off his heavy ski jacket, boots, and jumpsuit. His eyes followed his sulking lover to the suitcase that held his belongings and then to the shower, silent all the while, but not arrogantly so. Damon felt a twinge of hope but resolved not to be the first one to wave the white flag.

Crossing his arms over his chest was the only confrontational gesture Damon showed as Yuki walked past the television to get to the bathroom. His eyes met Damon’s fleetingly, before Yuki quickly looked away.

Some twenty minutes later, Yuki emerged from the bathroom surrounded by a mist of steam smelling like cocoa butter, one of Damon’s favorite scents. Yuki’s skin looked pale, like buttery gold. The only thing he wore was a pair of white boxer shorts, another of Damon’s favorites. Damon didn’t know if Yuki’s intent was on seduction, but he certainly felt as if that was the case.

Yuki walked over to the bed and starred down at Damon tucked beneath the thick spreads. “Are you going to move over? Can I get in or should I just take the couch?”

Damon blinked matter-of-factly. “I *could* take the couch.”

“But you don’t have to.”

“You don’t really want to share a bed with a man who you don’t want touching you though.” Pushing the covers down, Damon refused to let Yuki off so easily. Sitting up, he moved his legs over the side of the bed. He didn’t need to risk the allure of cocoa butter and a warm body to cuddle with. They needed to talk, not snuggle down underneath the covers.

Yuki chewed his lip. “Damon, you know I didn’t mean any of that, don’t you? It was the introvert in me trying stubbornly to hang on. I’m sorry.”

Too easy and not enough, Damon thought silently. Yuki sat down next to him on the bed, and as stern as he felt, Damon could not bring himself to get up.

“I didn’t see you at dinner,” Yuki muttered. “Did you eat?”

“I ordered room service. Cod stuffed with crab meat and a vegetable medley or some crap like that.”

“Was it any good?”

“It was okay.”

“I had lobster. Alone. Some guy tried to hit on me, but I blew him off.”

Damon looked at Yuki, trying to figure out how they had arrived at casual conversation so easily. The fingers of his hand flexed as he suppressed the urge to touch Yuki, to pull his lover into his arms and assure him that things were fine. Then Damon recalled that Yuki was a black belt and didn’t necessarily need coddling. “Alone? Really? I don’t feel so bad then.”

Yuki sighed exasperatedly. “Damon, this is supposed to be a vacation for the both of us.”

“No. It’s supposed to be an opportunity for us to get to know one another better, but I guess that’s not going to happen. You can’t really get to know someone if they keep pretending that there’s nothing wrong.”

Yuki laughed nervously. “Damon, really, I don’t want you to think that what we have is in some way influenced by something traumatic in my past. I have always liked things a

bit wild. If you don't like the spanking and the toys bother you, then we don't have to do any of --"

"I don't have a problem with the toys or the spanking or any of that, Yukihara!" Attempting to rise up from the bed, Damon was thwarted by Yuki's hand on his shoulder. Damon wasn't the type to react defensively but he didn't know what Yuki would do. Glaring at Yuki, he stated, "What's done between consenting adults is one thing. You keep telling me that you trust me when it's obvious that you don't."

"But I do," Yuki insisted. "More than you know, Damon. It was just something stupid that I did. It's not even worth mentioning. What you and I have is what's important."

"Exactly," Damon agreed. "You can have the bed."

Yuki used both arms to keep Damon from leaving the bed. "No, please. Come on, please, Damon."

Held against the warm chest of his lover, Damon sounded upon the edge of defeat. "I'm listening."

"You're really going to make me talk about it?"

Damon thought of a better way to put it. "And I'm really going to listen," he said.

Yuki clung to Damon. "The first time I wanted to be on the bottom wasn't good, but it wasn't bad either," Yuki began, his face against the back of Damon's shoulder. "The second time was okay. The third was fine."

"And the fourth?" Damon suspected that therein laid the problem.

Breathing against Damon's back, Yuki's voice was filled with sorrow. "It wasn't so good."

Tense, Damon knew that it was going to be bad. He could tell from the uneven timbre of Yuki's voice. "Tell me, Yuki. Tell me who hurt you." Trying to turn around, Damon was seized with the desire to see his lover's face.

Yuki tightened his grip, preventing Damon from moving. “He didn’t hurt me. I let down my guard. I trusted an asshole and paid the price for it. It was my fault.”

“What?” Damon pulled at Yuki’s clasped hands. He could feel moisture against his back and needed to see Yuki, to hold him and verify that he didn’t truly believe such foolishness. “No. It wasn’t your fault, Yuki! Whatever it was, it wasn’t your fault.”

“You’re wrong, Damon. It was my fault. You...” Voice cracking in his urgency to explain, Yuki continued. “You don’t understand. You don’t know. My father always told me that it was only fools who gambled with their lives and their money. I gambled with my life, and nearly lost. That makes me a fool.”

“You gambled with me.”

“I didn’t let you tie me up the first time we had sex,” Yuki said bluntly. “I wasn’t looking for someone to dominate me when I met you. I wasn’t stupid and naïve and --”

Damon pulled Yuki’s arms from around him and turned around. Yuki’s eyes were red and glossy and he saw a look on Yuki’s face he had never seen before: fear. “I don’t care what you did, Yuki. It still wasn’t your fault. I know you can’t believe that.” Pulling Yuki into his arms, it was Damon’s turn to hold on.

Yuki struggled, but it was a weak attempt. “I let him tie me up. I allowed him to beat me, to take advantage of me. I dropped my guard down around someone who had no respect for me or even the art.”

“You told me that you were never raped.”

Yuki answered dryly, “Victims are raped; idiots are taken advantage of.”

Damon felt sick. His stomach churned at the unconceivable crime against his lover. “I don’t understand. How can you even think that you had anything to do with causing something like that?”

“Because I went there for it, Damon. I sought out Christopher for that purpose. So what? Things got out of control. He wasn’t a top. He was a sadist, and it was my fault for

being too careless to see that. Anyway, I learned my lesson. The Japanese are not ones to wallow in blame and self-pity. It was my fault.”

Damon had his own preconceived notions about Japanese people, but none of them mattered. Yuki wasn’t Japanese in his eyes; he was his lover. The thought of Yuki being denied his sorrow was harrowing. “I’m sorry but still, it’s not your --”

Interrupting, Yuki was quick to deny pity. “Oh, no! Don’t feel sorry for me. Feel sorry for *him*. The instant I got loose, I broke his leg, his arm and his nose. And I suspect he’ll have to wear full dentures.”

Wishing he had met the animal that hurt Yuki with a baseball bat in hand, Damon sneered. “It’s what the bastard deserved. I would have killed him for that shit.”

Swallowing hard, Yuki admitted that he had tried.

“Did you ever tell anyone? Talk to anyone about it?”

“I didn’t have to. After that, I went back to being in control. I was best at it anyway. I always showed respect to my lovers. I never showed pity, but I made it an experience, an art. The finest geishas in Kyoto couldn’t have done better. I gave them the experiences that I would have liked to have myself. Allowing someone to have me and give me that experience was like a secret I had to keep ignoring until I met you.”

“Me?”

“Damon, I don’t want you to think I’m stupid. I know what trauma can do, and I am not ignoring what happened. I’m working my way through it, and it is working. No therapist is going to help me more than moving forward...and you.”

Damon didn’t want to ask what was so special about him. “And now that you’ve met me, what do you expect?” His tone wasn’t harsh or confrontational. Damon wanted to know solely because he wanted to know what he could provide. “Honestly. I’m not the prime example of domination, if that is even what you want from me. Hell, I barely knew what all of it was about until you started teaching me.”

“And what a good student you are.”

Damon winced as the summation of their relationship became clear. Yuki had been teaching him, and Damon had learned with zeal. A part of him felt as if he had been fooled, like he should have been told earlier. “So you’ve been teaching me all along?”

Yuki cast his head to the side as if considering what should be said. He raised his hands and placed them on Damon’s cheeks. “I love you, Damon. Some things should only be shared between lovers, and I was hoping that my desires could be shared with you.”

I love you, Damon. He liked the sound of that. Damon didn’t doubt that Yuki loved him, but his mind attached conditions to Yuki’s love. Looking into Yuki’s eyes, Damon wondered if clauses even mattered. “How do you know that I’m the right one? Are you basing your judgment on whether I’m a good student, on whether I’m nice or...” He truly hoped that the correct answer would be the last. “Are you basing it on the fact that I love you too?”

Wiping what remained of tears from his eyes, Yuki smiled. Damon couldn’t resist the blush on his cheeks.

“I’m purely selfish as you know,” Yuki smiled. “I’m basing it on the fact that I’m crazy about you. It’s nice that you like me, but it really is all about me. Now, can we share the bed?”

“It’s all about you?”

“Well, not all of it. If you say you don’t love me, I’ll have to stalk you for a bit but...”

“I get the point.” There was nothing else Damon could say. As straightforward as Yuki sounded, Damon rather liked the explanation. Even if he hadn’t, Yuki had already grabbed the edge of the duvet cover.

Before Damon knew it, Yuki pushed him back and climbed over him. Wiggling beneath the covers, Yuki’s grin was that of a cat with cream. Damon turned off the light and

got back underneath the covers. He slid in beside his lover, his body instinctively molding around Yuki's. He could feel his lover's smile even if he couldn't see it.

"I like this bed. I wish we could take it with us when we check out tomorrow."

Damon laughed at the sudden statement. "Would we keep it at your place or mine?"

"We could keep it at mine. You're there all the time anyway."

Damon knew where he wanted to keep it, and it wasn't at his place or Yuki's.

Chapter Eight

Damon couldn't wait to get back to their room, especially after a sleigh ride with a seventy-something hetero couple from Naples, Florida. It really took the cake when the wife remarked on Damon's and Yuki's skin color. "You're a couple aren't you? You two look so nice together with your dark brown skin and your yellow skin," she had said.

Damon didn't think of Yuki's color as anything but golden. Yellow didn't begin even begin to describe his lover's hue.

Yuki didn't mind seem to mind the couples' commentary. With a smile on his face, Yuki spent the majority of the winter wonderland tour with his head resting against Damon's shoulder.

It was as if the night before -- their argument -- had never happened. Yuki hadn't made one mention of it. Although Damon knew why, he certainly had no plans of forgetting. Yuki had survived a serious crime, and Damon knew that its venom still infected Yuki on some level.

Throughout the sleigh ride, Damon's mind filled with ways in which he could help Yuki deal with the past, to realize that he was not at fault. He couldn't shake the idea that a certain amount of guilt and self-punishment were involved.

When they got back to the room, however, Yuki did his damndest to prove Damon wrong.

As soon as the door was locked, Yuki was in his arms, seeking kisses. His hips moved flush against Damon's, his arms seized Damon tightly around the waist. Yuki's lips caressed his with a sweet seductiveness that made Damon dizzy.

Damon looked for an excuse to stop Yuki's dominance, but Yuki's hands, caressing his back, traveled down to cup his ass, his mind was swayed. Reasons were irrelevant as Yuki showed his dominant side, bruising his lips and bullying with his tongue.

Slanting his head, Damon took control of the momentum. He pressed Yuki back against the wall and made it clear that he wanted to know Yuki's taste and heat just as much as Yuki did. Pushing Yuki's tongue aside, Damon plunged between his lips, flicking tip-to-tip against the muscle. He took Yuki's hips in a tighter grip than Yuki's and pressed both his cock and his thigh against Yuki's quivering form.

Yuki moaned into his mouth. It was the sort of sound that always made him hard as nails. Damon captured him by the shoulders and took what he wanted until breathing for both of them became difficult.

Synchronous panting ensued upon their separation. Damon looked into Yuki's eyes, searched their dark depths, fascinated by how he was reflected back in them. If anything, Damon could never deny that Yuki wanted him.

Raising his hands, Yuki framed the outline of Damon's jaw. Toying with the stubble he found there, Yuki had a mischievous glint in his eyes. "Put my wrists behind my back, and make me keep them there because I can't."

Damon grabbed Yuki's wrists and pulled them behind Yuki's back, one over the other, and held them at the small of Yuki's back. "Like this?"

Yuki nodded eagerly. His cock was hard against Damon's thigh, leaving no doubt that Yuki was aroused. "Yeah, like that. Make me kiss you."

Taking direction like an actor on the stage, Damon leaned down and brushed his lips against Yuki's. It was meant to tempt and tease but at the last minute, he seized the pink flesh of his bottom lip and sucked it, hard. "Mmm." Yuki pretended to struggle. Damon pretended not to tolerate it. "Don't know what's gotten into you..."

"But you like it. You *love* it," Yuki growled back. "Unzip me with your free hand."

Damon easily fit both of Yuki's wrists into his right hand, but the dexterity needed to pull the steel zipper down evaded him. The lack of ambidexterity added to the desire to get at Yuki's hot, naked erection made him clumsy.

"Yank it down," Yuki hissed. "Come on, Damon. Get into my pants. You can do it!"

"Fuck," Damon swore. Becoming hotter by the second, nothing aroused him more than a challenge. Yuki was nothing but. His very words summoned Damon's dominating nature, lack of education notwithstanding. Such things as nibbling Yuki's jaw, biting his throat and squeezing Yuki's wrists were things he *needed* to do.

Shutting Yuki up by successful pulling down the zipper, Damon yanked down long johns before he got to his prize. He did so forcefully, finding Yuki's flesh hard and slick in his palm. Stroking Yuki from base to tip, Damon heard gasps and sighs. "You get me so hot...so hot," Damon panted. "I'm so crazy about you, baby."

"Me too...crazy about you more..." Exposing his throat as much as he could, Yuki tried Damon's grasp, yanking his arms to break free.

Damon held fast.

"That's it. Don't let me get away with anything. If you want me, take me. Make me yours, Damon."

"Plan to, babe."

"What are you going to do? Are you going to throw me to the floor and take me? Are you going to give my nipples rug burn? Make me come onto that fake carpet?"

Damon didn't know what option he wanted; they all sounded good to him. Releasing his hold on Yuki's wrists and his slippery cock, Damon attacked Yuki's clothing, yanking down the thick jacket down his limbs, snatching the thick wool sweater over and off Yuki's head.

The most important thing at the moment to him was seeing Yuki naked, and joining him in nudity.

He dropped to his knees, determined to see his mission through. Damon tugged Yuki's pants, long johns and underwear down to his hips before he noticed the bruises.

Yuki's wrists were red and purple, and there was no mistake as to how they had gotten that way. Passion began to fade as Damon instantly recalled why the sight of the bruises disturbed him. He looked up into Yuki's eyes, trying to find the evidence of self-punishment that he knew had to be there.

It wasn't. There was no sign of weakness, no trace of ghosts from the past, nothing but passion and wanting in Yuki's gaze. He seemed to be fine. Inside, Damon was breaking. He could understand what differentiated him from the man that had hurt Yuki, but he didn't understand what would in the future. "Is there a safe word for me?" he asked.

In that moment, Yuki's gaze did take on a sorrowful glare. "I'm not made off glass, Damon."

Damon took hold of Yuki's wrists, lifting them so that the bruises could be witnessed by both of them. "I know, I know, but I just..."

Pulling his wrist out of Damon's hold, Yuki was visibly upset. He bent over, pulled his pants back on then stepped past Damon in a huff. "Fuck...I knew it! I knew I shouldn't have told you..."

"No, Yuki. It's...it's not you I'm worried about." Standing up, Damon grabbed Yuki by the arm and pulled him into the cage of his embrace. It was a dangerous effort and although he could see aggression flare in Yuki's eyes, Damon was not afraid of anything physical.

“What if I get carried away, Yuki? What if I smacked you too hard or hurt you or -- Yuki, I would never forgive myself.”

Yukihara’s eyes lowered to the ground. Taut lips softened after a moment. Yuki seemed to relax. “I am so selfish,” he said finally. “Just thinking about myself and not how you felt. It is unfair.”

“I didn’t say that.”

Yuki shrugged. “It’s not for you to say that. I *am* being selfish, Damon, and that’s the truth. I just keep pushing you. You’re more tolerant than you should be.”

Tolerance isn’t the issue if it means that you might seek someone else. You are mine and I have to be tolerant, Damon thought, hugging Yuki against his chest. “Look, it’s me. I’m jumping the gun. You did say you were teaching me. I should be patient.”

Yuki shook his head, emotion making itself obvious in his trembling frame. “Damon, Damon, Damon,” he muttered to the ceiling. “You have no idea what it means for me to admit weakness.”

“There’s nothing weak about you.”

“There is, Damon. I want...I *need* for you to help me. How can something that I love, something that makes me feel so alive,” Yuki wondered aloud. “How can something so intimate and pleasurable be tainted because of one bastard?”

“I don’t know.” Damon raised his hand to wipe away a stray tear. “I just know that it’s not bad. It’s *different*. It’s something I need to wrap my head around, is all. Baby, I want to help you forget that man more than anything. I just need a little help is all.”

Yuki gave a weak nodded.

Damon took hold of Yukihara’s left hand, rubbing his thumb over the ring. With a smile, Damon warned his lover, “I have no intention of letting you go or letting you hurt. We’re in a relationship, remember?”

“Yes. We are.”

“Yeah, and I’ve never loved anyone like I love you. That’s just one of the things that scares me about this.”

“What’s the other thing? Things?” Yuki raised his hands to his eyes.

“I want you to be with me *so* much. I’m impatient, and that scares me.”

Yuki chuckled weakly. “I’m scary.”

“You’re not. You’re my boyfriend and my lover, and I like spanking you. I like holding you and learning from you. I saw the bruises and I thought...”

“That they were kinda sexy?”

Damon nodded. It wasn’t an easy thing to admit. “Okay, so...yes. It does. It gets me hard and that’s a bit scary.”

“There’s nothing wrong with feeling that way,” Yuki said, looking at his wrists. “I don’t think there’s anything wrong with *me* thinking they’re sexy either. They only last a little while, and they keep the memory of you so...fresh in my mind.”

“It does?”

“It does, and it’s so sexy to me.”

Warming from the waist down at the admission, Damon asked, “I just keep ruining the mood, don’t I?”

“You slowed it down a bit, but you didn’t ruin it.” Rubbing his crotch against Damon’s, Yuki backed up his statement with more than words.

Moving his hand to Yuki’s waistline, Damon was glad to discover that Yuki’s pants were still loose. Curling his fingers around the denim waistline, around the cotton of the long johns, Damon eased them both down. “I want to enjoy the last night of our vacation. Can we?”

“I was thinking...maybe we could get something to drink and get into the Jacuzzi again. I could sit on your lap and you could try holding my wrists behind my back again.”

“I’d love to,” Damon replied.

Chapter Nine

Yuki tested the ropes, but Damon was sure that there was no way he was breaking free this time. Both wrists tied to the bedposts, Yuki was a trapped beauty for him and his pleasure alone. He wore two sterling silver nipple clamps, the amethyst ring, and a plain leather cord around his throat. He had ropes around his wrists and his ankles.

Damn, I'm lucky, Damon thought to himself as he took his time kissing Yuki's stomach. It didn't matter that Yuki couldn't seem to relax with Damon teasing the insides of his thighs. There was little that Yuki could do save moaning.

"You're so sexy all tied up," Damon spoke honestly. Yuki's eyes had reached the lust-addled vagueness that made them look like inkwells; his lips were rouged from nibbling and kissing. A fine sheen of perspiration made Yuki's golden skin glow, and Damon was so proud he could have that effect on his lover, a ravaged effect.

Their counselor had advised them to take things slow, but neither of them ever took anything slow. Damon had learned quickly how to handle his lover. He had read books, DVDs, and even attended a seminar advertised at an adult novelty shop. It wasn't his aim to have a Ph.D. in the subject, but Yuki certainly appreciated his growing education.

Trailing his tongue up the center of Yuki's stomach, Damon veered off to the adorned right nipple. Flicking his tongue against what little flesh the metal clamp did not cover, he heard a sound similar to a hiss, and felt Yuki pull against his restraints.

Yuki shuddered, testing the ropes' strength. He whimpered, begged, and praised, at times, simultaneously.

Having Yuki trussed up and on display for his enjoyment had become a covetous pleasure to Damon, one that he understood from the first time he and Yuki had agreed to do it. The level of trust and power Yuki gave to him was too precious to be wrong.

Closing his palm over Yuki's left nipple while his tongue flicked at the right, Damon encouraged every moan, every shift and quiver of Yuki's body beneath him. The rope seemed to only exaggerate just how tense and hungry Yuki was. "I know you want something..." Damon taunted. "...something like my dick in you or my mouth on you. Well, you know how you can have it, right?"

Yuki pressed his lips shut, but a long whine, muffled though it was still escaped. "I -- I'm not...I'm not going to beg."

"You will. You always do." Certain of his words, Damon moved up to Yuki's throat, kissing and sucking on the column as if he could encourage the words to come. "I just need to warm you up a bit or maybe I need to take these off."

Yuki tensed, his body went rigid as Damon reached for the clamp. "Ah! Damon! God..." Freedom unraveled him, swift and wild.

"Hmm?" Smiling wide beneath Yuki's chin, Damon moved to the other nipple, gingerly removing the other clamp as well.

Yuki mewled pitifully, nuzzling against Damon's shoulder as best as his bonds would allow.

Damon stroked Yuki's shoulders. "I asked you if you needed something, baby."

"Only you."

“Me? Just me?” Damon asked. Yuki could have demanded Damon to do any combination of lewd acts, could have directed Damon with a command. He had done it before. This time was different. “I can give you that.” Damon smiled. It was up to him to carry them both to completion, and Damon knew exactly what was needed.

He cupped Yuki’s cheek, taking from the tender lips not one, but several kisses, each one deeper and longer than the first. Thrusting his tongue against Yuki’s, coiling it around, he gave suggestions for all that his body wanted to do.

Yuki was the one who ended the contact, pulling his wet, swollen lips away from Damon’s. “Damon, you should get the lube.”

Damon smiled, taking just one more kiss before leaning over to the nightstand to get the clear bottle. Popping the cap with his thumb, he filled the cup of one palm and replaced the bottle.

Yuki waited, arms hanging, legs spread apart, completely exhausted.

Damon coated his hand, massaged the lubricant onto his cock, up and down the purple-brown flesh with a firm hand.

He caught Yuki staring at his dark purple cock and smiled. Nothing was quite so exciting as desire, knowing that Yuki wanted him so bad as to ratchet his color from gold to a reddish-bronze. “Do you want to be a bad boy, lover? You want to tell me what I can do for you so badly, I can tell.” Moving his hand to Yuki’s cock instead, Damon had only to stroke the shaft once to realize that Yuki was past readiness. “Have patience. Soon,” he promised.

Hips bucking desperately with demands he couldn’t seem to voice, Yuki finally ground out some measure of nonsense. “Running...fucking...low.”

“What is? Your patience? That has gotta suck, lover.” Abandoning Yuki’s cock, Damon’s fingers sought lower, over firm globes, over the plump perineum and down against the clenching bud. Pushing a finger inside, Damon wasn’t surprised by the heat and the pressure that surrounded him.

Damon added a second finger, and Yukihiro cried out. Testing the ropes anew with an arch that lifted him off the bed, Yuki's hips refused to remain still. It seemed as if Yuki had run out of patience. At the introduction of the third finger, Yuki opened eyes that were darker than pitch and glossy as lacquer.

Damon knew that the time for preparation was over. He removed his fingers and got up from the bed. Going to the foot of the bed, Damon untied the ropes around Yuki's ankles. Thanks to several how-to books on knots, he knew exactly which loop to pull, which strands to tie. For the type of fucking they were about to do, Yuki's ankles needed to be free and up on his shoulders, Damon was fairly sure. When he got back upon the bed, on his shoulders was exactly where Damon moved Yuki's legs.

Yuki helped Damon as much as he could, plying his heels to the muscles of Damon's back. He found his efforts swiftly rewarded. The blunt, fleshy head of Damon's cock prodded against his opening for only a few torturous moments before Damon guided the shaft all the way inside. Yuki's eyes pressed shut. His mouth fell wide with a silent scream.

Balls deep, Damon wasted no time with teasing and questioning, certainly not when his own hips barely kept still long enough for Yuki to get accustomed. Yuki squeezed his ass around Damon's cock, and Damon got the message as loud as if Yuki had demanded him to move and move now!

Damon gripped Yuki's ass, withdrawing slowly only to shove back inside. He wasn't sure who moaned the loudest, Yuki or himself; not that it mattered. The only thing that mattered was movement, gloriously back and forth, stroking within the warmth of Yukihiro's body. Damon closed his arms around Yuki's back, bending over to be as close as possible. He kissed at Yuki's chin and chest, which was nearly all he could reach.

Muttering in Japanese and English, Yuki gave Damon all sorts of praise and encouragement. He wanted more; he wanted harder and faster. He yelled his love for Damon loudly between gasps and answered every thrust with a shove of his own.

Damon listened, delirious with pride. Moving faster, thrusting harder, he knew that it wouldn't be long before Yuki came. It wouldn't be long for him either. Skin to skin, there was too much heat, too much pressure, for Damon to withstand the intoxication of it all. His cock yearned to spill with every inward thrust. Pushing himself to hold on just a little longer, Damon had one more thing to give to his lover.

Slapping Yuki's ass with a firm hand, Damon had no intention of getting up to fetch any of the paddles in their collection. His hand was good enough to warm Yuki's bottom, it was good enough to have Yuki screaming for more, and it was definitely good enough to have his lover erupt between their bodies.

Chapter Ten

Damon looked at the menu and thought about what Yuki would like for dinner. He had the feeling the chicken enchiladas with Spanish rice and beans were something that would be messy and hearty enough for Yuki to enjoy. Yuki enjoyed Mexican food with an almost obsessive compulsion. “I’ll have the steak and chicken fajitas with a side of guacamole. Can I also get the Grande Chicken Enchilada platter? I want to get that to go at the end of my meal.”

The waitress turned to Curtis for his order before taking both menus.

“So, how was your trip to Cancun?” Curtis asked with his hands across his chest. “Lots of surf, sun, and tequila, huh?”

Putting off his weekly meeting with his best friend was like putting off the flu. Upon returning home from his latest vacation, Damon’s answering machine was lit up with no less than three messages from Curtis wanting details. “It was...very hot.” It really wasn’t necessary to tell Curtis how enjoyable it had been to spank Yuki’s tanned ass with a palm frond.

Curtis wrinkled his nose. “Hot? Just hot?”

Damon nodded.

“Whatever. Did you give him the ring?”

“Yeah. He really liked it. We’re officially a couple. I even took him and my mom to Pertrelli’s for dinner.”

“How did it go? Was she all sweet and condescending at the same time? ‘My poor son, he’s gay but I am dealing with it, Dear Lord.’” Curtis laughed at his own imitation.

Damon winced. “Yeah, but unlike you, Yuki doesn’t pay her any mind. She made some comment about being sad that she wouldn’t have a daughter-in-law and Yuki told her that he was more than willing to wear an apron, go shopping with her, and bitch about my bad habits if she wanted. It was hilarious. My mother didn’t know whether to laugh or be offended, but she was definitely happy he isn’t a pushover. Hell, when he told her that he’s not always on the bottom, I thought my mom would choke.”

Mouth open, it took Curtis a moment before he could speak. “She knows what *bottom* is?”

“It doesn’t take a rocket scientist for that one.”

Curtis shook his head. “So the marriage? When is it?”

“We are not getting married. The best thing we can hope for is domestic partnership, remember?”

“Fuck that. You just can’t stop grinning. You’re bonafide whipped.”

Damon felt his face warm. There was no use denying the truth or keeping it from his friend. “We’re moving in together.”

“Why am I not surprised?”

When the waitress arrived with their drinks and chips, Damon was still smiling. “You know I’m going to need some help with the move, right?”

“Where are you moving to? His place?”

“Yeah, his place has a better view than mine and I like the hardwood floors. Besides, he also has the better kitchen.”

“D, you sure about this? I mean, really sure? That’s a big commitment, a big step.”

Damon took a sip of his drink. He appreciated Curtis’s concern, just like he appreciated his mother’s skepticism, but Damon was committed. He had purchased several books on rope tying, discipline, and the general practice of the BDSM lifestyle. Yuki had even shared a collection of notes with him he planned on publishing about aftercare. “I am *so* sure. I was sure when I met him. Don’t get me wrong, he has his issues. He’s stubborn, manipulative at times, but I have my issues too, and we’re working through them with our joint nymphomania.”

“I am so fucking jealous,” Curtis moaned, starting in on the basket of tortilla chips.

“It’s not all roses but it is nice. Waking up next to him does have its perks.”

Pointing a chip heavy with salsa at Damon, Curtis narrowed his eyes with an accusation. “You, my friend, are one lucky fucker.”

Damon pulled the chip out of Curtis’s hand and chuckled. “You don’t know the half of it,” he said, devouring the chip.

Epilogue

Damon wondered if Curtis had heard even one word of what he had said. He seemed far more interested in the decorations than in Damon's opinions about free agency in the professional football league.

"You two didn't waste any time getting settled in," Curtis commented.

Sitting on the sofa adjacent to Curtis, Damon begged to differ. It would have been much sooner if he'd had his way.

"You did a really good job mixing your things together. That suit of armor looks damn good next to the African painting."

Damon turned around to see what Curtis was looking at. It wasn't a suit of armor exactly. "It's one of Yuki's Kendo uniforms and the wooden sword beside it was his practice piece."

"Does he have real swords?"

"Two." Leaning in close to Curtis, Damon whispered, "They're in the kitchen behind the cutting board. I think it has something to do with having all the sharp instruments in one place. I thought that they should be displayed here in the living room, but since he's better at the keeping things organized bit, you know I didn't have shit to say. He rules the house."

“You’re right about that.” Yuki walked into the living room with a black lacquer tray. Setting it down on the coffee table in front of Curtis, Yuki sat down next to Damon. “I rule *every* room...”

Except for the bedroom, Damon silently completed Yuki’s comment. From the wallpaper to the furniture had been left up to him. Certainly everything they did together in the bedroom was his decision.

Damon scooted closer to Yuki, proving that the slender Asian had him under control as well. Partly. Damon had his own methods. He knew Yuki was wearing a butt plug and a cock ring. At *his* insistence. It was a game, a test of Yuki’s control, but it wore on Damon just knowing about the hidden toys.

He moved his knee against Yuki’s in an effort to get closer to the platter where an assortment of Yuki’s hand rolled sushi, pickled ginger, and a sphere of wasabi framed a bowl of soy sauce. Selecting a set of chopsticks from the side of the tray, Damon set his sights on the black-rimmed California rolls. Ritualistic, he added a bit ginger first, a dab of wasabi then dunked the artful morsel into the soy sauce.

Yuki all but hissed at him.

Damon could tell that Yuki was uncomfortable, aroused but uncomfortable. He knew by the way Yuki’s hips shifted every once in a while.

Curtis cleared his throat, reminding Damon that he wasn’t alone in the room with Yuki. They had company and needed to act accordingly. “Go ahead, man, dig in,” he said, gesturing to the tray of ornate seaweed-wrapped appetizers.

“Curtis, if you don’t like sushi, I can get something else,” Yuki offered, voice tinged with something akin to agitation. “Dinner should be done soon.”

“Oh, no. I love sushi.” Leaning forward, Curtis grabbed a pair of chopsticks and quickly made a selection -- a roll of cream cheese and salmon. Dipping the roll into the soy sauce, Curtis nearly dropped it before bringing it to his mouth. “Wonderful. You made these?”

Yuki nodded. "Damon cooks most of the time. So it's only fair."

"Damon? Cook? My God," Curtis gaped. "Did you have to call 911?"

That is so not funny, asshole. Rolling his eyes, Damon grabbed another piece of sushi for himself. It helped him hold his tongue even as Yuki came to his defense.

"He's been taking a class on cooking. He's actually not that bad anymore."

"Yeah, I've gotten all domestic and shit," Damon muttered.

"He made a lemon cake and lamb chops the other night, stuffed peppers on Monday. He also makes the best soup."

Mouth full of wild flavor, Damon almost choked at the compliment. He didn't even attempt to hide a bright, goofy smile. Yuki was distinctly making a reference to his aftercare specials. Yuki only wanted soup after a session, shiitake mushroom, chicken and vegetable soup, especially Damon's beef stew. Glancing at his lover, Damon shared a warm smile.

Curtis interrupted with a coo. "Awww. You two are so...Kodak moment."

Yuki blinked, turned his head and attention slowly to Curtis. "Now if I can only get him away from the television long enough to do some cleaning up around here, that would be a miracle."

"You look better in the maid's outfit," Damon joked. "With your little feather duster and all."

Yuki slapped Damon playfully on the shoulder. "Tell all my secrets, why don't you? Hmph. I don't have to put up with this." Getting up from the sofa to avoid the arm that sought to show him comfort, Yuki left Damon smiling and apologizing.

"Does this mean that I have to sleep on the couch?" Damon wondered aloud. Yuki crossed his arms in front of his chest to seem stern, but Damon knew that the couch was the last place either of them would sleep. Damon grinned and Yuki's guise parted to a smile.

"What it means is that I want pancakes tomorrow," Yuki answered finally.

It was an instant key out the doghouse for Damon. “With syrup, whipped cream and strawberries, babe.”

Yuki did lean down to kiss Damon.

It was a quick peck, which amused Damon. Trying to pull Yuki close for another, he wasn’t surprised when Yuki pulled back. The plug had been his idea, and watching Yuki’s color rise as he tried to avoid getting another kiss was nothing short of devilish.

Yuki scowled at Damon before heading to the kitchen. “I’m going to go check on dinner, Curtis. Don’t try to make any moves on my man.”

Damon had the feeling the slight bulge in Yuki’s trousers had a good deal to do with his sudden departure.

“Oh, no. I wouldn’t dare think of touching Martha.”

Looking at his friend as if he was thoroughly insulted, Damon gave Curtis the bird.

It was then that Curtis noticed the bling.

Setting down his chopsticks, Curtis leaned forward and held out his hand. “Let me see that!”

Damon obliged with a prideful grin. Setting his hand in Curtis’s, Damon splayed his fingers so Curtis could get the full effect of the magnificent ring.

“Damn,” Curtis drawled, “Amber, diamonds, *and* white gold?”

“Amber, diamonds, and *platinum*,” Damon corrected. “Yuki bought it for me.”

Shaking his head, Curtis admired the oval shaped center stone of amber. “You’re so lucky it hurts, man. Are you two committed already? I did tell you that I wanted to be invited to the ceremony, right?”

“It hasn’t happened yet. I mean, we’re committed, but we want to have a ceremony next winter.” *Preferably in Canada*, Damon thought. As much as he wanted to make things symbolic, Damon was more than satisfied with the living arrangements. Their relationship

counselor or therapist or whatever they called them these days agreed that cohabitation would only help them to truly understand one another.

It helped, all right, as Damon planned on “understanding” Yuki over the kitchen counter the second Curtis left. Gazing down at his ring, Damon wondered what a commitment band might look like. “Yuki says he wants matching necklaces but I’d like matching rings, something traditional.”

“Okay, so maybe Martha isn’t the right name for you.” Curtis let go of Damon’s hand and sat back against the sofa. “How’s Paris Hilton sound? Or Ivana? If anything, I told you that the bling you bought him last winter wasn’t just a birthday gift. You had plans all along!”

Feigning innocence, Damon couldn’t contain his devilishly incriminating smile. “I have no idea what you’re talking about?”

“Bullshit. You were ready to settle down then, weren’t you?”

Damon nodded as he thought about his first gift to Yuki. The ring had cost sixteen hundred dollars, more than any singular piece of jewelry he owned. Damon was determined that it would speak for him when he himself couldn’t form the words and it had. “Sometimes you just know who you want.”

 THE END 

Mya

Heeding her own muses rather than those that belonged to other writers and filmmakers, Mya enjoys crafting erotica and welcomes the opportunity to use her English degree for something other than covering a hole in the wall. She is an avid fan of Godzilla, werewolves and dragons. Mya also enjoys watching the Sci Fi channel while she writes about naughty things, paints, crafts, and plays video games.

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