

Arrested Kisses

by Nix Winter



This is a work of fiction. No cops were harmed in the creation of this story. Names, characters, and events are either the product of the author's imagination or used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual places, events, locales, organizations, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental and beyond the intent of either the author or the publisher. And we don't own Los Angeles either.

All rights reserved.

Thank you :)

Copyright 2005 by J. Nix Winter

Cover art copyright 2005 J. Nix Winter

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted by any means without written permission from the publisher.

If you like this book, please tell someone about it.

Independent art is the life blood of culture.

www.darkfedora.com

Dedication

For London

For Layla and Jamie, may life always be full of joy for you

For JJ, just cuz you're awesome!

I woke up in the hospital once and he was holding my hand, sleeping with his head on the bed. I realized then that I hadn't lost colors, they'd just changed. There was the sound of his breathing and that made the same feeling as the yellow sunshine or the happy green grass that time I ran barefoot across College Park. He was alive.

White is the day we got married, when I couldn't feel the ground under my feet, as if I had wings. I'd never felt that color in all my life before that, so white I felt like my soul would become a sun all it's own.

Red was the first time I got angry at him and screamed. That was red and black and jagged, and he just made this little mumbling sound and said he was sorry. And red became the color of a fire, warm in a fireplace, comforting, and I understood that I could really tell him just what I thought, and I didn't have to yell. I've never yelled at Taylish since.

Black is the color of learning how to navigate this level of my life. You see, I'm a gamer, 'hardcore', and sometimes in a game the rules change. One level's not like the last. On this level, I just can't see. That's all. So I see the color of his hair with my fingers, silk, golden, warm, scented like him, sweet and a little like the tea he drinks all the time. The the darkness of this level, his face feels Japanese, almond eyes, soft lashes, soft lips. I remember though, how pale he was, how his hair made him look paler, rebellious gold that he didn't get from any god of his ancestors.

I'm supposed to write this essay about how being blind has made my life different.

So many things changed that night, the night I lost my sight. Being blind is supposed to be this bad thing, but I can go where I want now. I can do what I want. I am touched only when I want to be. I eat what I want. I laugh every day. I can go back to school and I can leave for school any time I want. I like these colors better than the ones I had before.

There wasn't enough for an essay, really. Daniel had his computer play it back to him, corrected a couple of type-o's and wondered what he should add. His credits from Hong Kong would not transfer and they'd made him take his ged before they'd let him into college. Amy had helped him study. The things he hadn't known were much bigger than the things he had known. He'd passed and felt really stupid for being so proud of what anyone in his new country could have done easily. Amy never made him

feel like a stupid whore, never said he wasn't just made him feel like the world was where it was supposed to be. Taylish had been supportive too, even if he'd missed a lot of the GED quest due to a case that had him on loan to Narcotics. As far as Daniel was concerned, Taylish's police department had as much politics as Royal's gang ever had, but Taylish promised him that they didn't just kill people they didn't agree with.

He wanted to add to his essay, 'I don't mean to sound ungrateful, but losing my sight is the smallest change in my life. Just teach me to count money and how the buses run.' Of course, he knew that the people at his college thought they were being so nice, and they were. They just had it all wrong. His new life was better than anything he could have imagined.

If he could get Taylish to stop worrying over the whole blind thing, it would be even better. So he couldn't see? He could find his way around fine.

He didn't want Pastor 'Peace' Morgan staying over just because Taylish was afraid to leave him alone. It irritated, caged him, even though he knew it came from love. And so sleep danced merrily away from him and worries for how Taylish was shadowed his thoughts, though he refused to give them grounds.

Taylish had been taking care of himself for a long time. Daniel refused to think about what Taylish had been doing when they first meet, with a bullet hole still in him. Really, being blind wasn't that bit of a danger. Not as bad as a solid hero complex anyway.

The knock on the door was soft, and Daniel paused in his typing. His first thought was fear. For so much of his life a knock on his door meant work, the kind of work that a gangster pretty boy was expected to do. His heart raced and his teeth clenched, until he blew air into his cheeks. He had married a habitual hero and he wasn't going to let himself be a coward, not for anything. Fingers patted across the desk until he reached his phone, and then his other hand found his stick. Another reason he didn't want a guest in the house was he didn't trust anyone except Taylish not to leave crap in the middle of the room. It wasn't like Peace wasn't thoughtful, kind, helpful, but Daniel still hadn't forgotten that box of bibles. Well, there was also that it was a new apartment.

All of their boxes had been packed into the second bedroom, so there

was nothing out in the open yet. He wore the clothes he'd come home from college in, jeans and Gackt tee-shirt he'd nicked from Taylish. So quiet as a mouse, he slipped passed where Peace slept on the couch, to the door.

He hated that his hand shook as he reached for the door knob. The simple freedom to open the door when he wanted too, it was both terrifying and delicious. In that moment of stillness he was sure he could hear a woman crying on the other side of the door and his thoughts went to his lost mother, the woman he'd never known. Had she been on the other side of a door crying sometime?

Slowly, he opened the door a little and the sound of a woman crying rushed over him. The edge of his sunglasses touched the door frame and he whispered. "What's wrong?"

"Does a cop live here?" She asked, smooth southern accent, rich voice. It made him think of a genteel black woman, with full lips and a neat wool skirt, a little hat with a feather.

"Why?" He asked, telling himself he wasn't afraid to have opened the door. No one was going to punish him. "Are you okay," he asked, genuinely concerned.

"It's my Annie. She's gone off to that bar with her boyfriend again and he's going to get her into trouble something awful. I just know he's going to hurt her," she said, and before Daniel knew it, she had his hand and then her arms around him, whispering, as if it were the darkest of secrets, "You're the cop, yes? You'll help me? Annie, she's got trouble with the law already and I don't want her to get taken away from me. I love her, but I ain't been as strong as I could. I'll be better please, if you help me get her back. I'll be strong."

"Shhh," Daniel whispered back, stroking braided hair that reminded him of what Maya's hair looked like. "I'll help you. I'll find her. You're a good mother. It's really good to love your child."

She wrapped her arms around him, pushing the door open a little more, holding him and for a moment he could pretend she was his mother, his mother loving him. "Thank you! I have a photo. You saw her when you moved in. She was the one singing so loud."

“She has a beautiful voice. Tell me what she looks like? What was she wearing?”

“She's as tall as I am, soft hair dyed purple. She's half white and she's pretty, big eyes, loud voice. He says he's going to get her a chance to sing all he's gonna get her is knocked up. And she's only 17, Lord help us, she's going to get arrested.”

“It's okay, I'll find Annie and bring her home,” Daniel said.

“Your husband wouldn't mind you going out so late? I'm sorry if I cause you any bother.”

“No, no,” Daniel said, realize she thought he was Taylish. That's what you get when you go only on your eyes. “It'll be alright. What's your phone number? I'll call you when I find her.”

She gave him her number and he memorized it. That was something else he'd learned from his early life as a gang property. Important information must be saved, without paper.

“You be safe now, okay? That boyfriend of hers is a mean one.”

“I can take care of myself, trust me,” Daniel said, shoving her gently back out into the darkness that their burned out hall light gave them. “Just go home and let me take care of it.”

“You're the nicest come cop I ever met! I'm so glad you and that nice blind husband of yours moved in!”

Daniel let his stick fall behind the door and reached out to the woman again, one hand holding to the door frame so he didn't lose where he was. She reached back to him and he pulled her close, holding her close and wiping away tears with the hand that had held the door. “Every mother should love their children the way you do.”

She laid her head against his chest and he rubbed her back. Somehow she didn't notice his glasses and he wanted so much to know if his mother had loved him like this, at least a little. “Give me your number so I can tell you if Annie comes home,” she asked.

Daniel gave her his number, a slight guilt and doubt nagging at him. He should just call Taylish, but Taylish was finishing up a big case and

would be coming home. If Daniel asked him, he'd send someone, and a real cop might really have to arrest the woman's daughter.

Peace rolled over on the couch and took a deep sleep filled breath. The need to not be caged, to be a hero of his own, to prove that he could do what he needed too filled Daniel. He'd won his freedom and this mother had held him and asked him for help. Granted, she thought he was Taylish, but he could do anything Taylish could do!

His shoes were right where he'd left them, on the little smooth shelf right by the door. He leaned down and picked one up. Leaning against the wall, he quietly slipped on one of the little black Chinese cotton strap ons. He'd just slip out and right back. He had his wallet in his pocket and his cell phone, which he shoved into one pocket. He'd just go to the bar, find the girl with the loud and pretty voice, and bring her home.

He was getting his other shoe on and reaching for his stick when it fell, hitting the hardwood floor with a slap. Daniel grinned into the dark, a sheepish apologetic smile that no one could even see. Then the lamp clicked on and Peace took a slow breath, the kind of breath that Daniel had labeled 'dragon breath'.

“Happy waking, Father,” Daniel said, tightening the buckle on his shoe. “Didn't mean to wake you.”

“Obviously,” Peace said, his back cracking as he stretched, and then yawned. “Where are you going, Daniel?”

'Nowhere' seemed like a hopelessly ridiculous answer and Daniel had never really learned to lie well, except for clients, and Royal, okay, everyone he'd ever known, except now, now he knew new people. “Going to the bar to get a neighbor girl back for her mother. Wouldn't be but a minute.”

There's a sound that Daniel had only been able to make by sucking his cheeks in tight and opening his mouth. The sound happened a few times and he imagined Peace sucking his cheeks in, opening his mouth to say words that had just gotten swallowed. He did appreciate Peace. “Father, please do not concern yourself. It is simply a bar and only one block away.”

“In the pitch of night, Good Lord! It's nearly midnight. Daniel

Morgan,” Peace said, hitting the coffee table as he stood, sounding very like he must have said Taylish's name. “I do not believe you are about to go out in the middle of the night. Are you drinking?”

Daniel's eyebrows arched, and he imagined big anime eyes going wide on the front of his sunglasses. Peace Morgan was the most tolerant and kind of men, working hard for world peace and Daniel knew he loved his son, loved even his son's husband, and yet, that tone of voice made Daniel want to hide. “Now you see here! If I wanted a drink, I'd go in the bed room and get one! I told you where I was going.”

Just because he wasn't going to yell at Taylish didn't mean Peace wasn't going to get an ear full if he took that tone with him.

“Daniel, it's just not safe,” the lecture started, and the low pulsing of something that was going to be slow warming up and stay going for a while. “You have to accept the limitations that God has given you. I understand that you want to remain active and I admire that! I do! You're so dynamic and full of life, but even a sighted person should not be out at midnight going to a bar. All manner of people are found in places like that!”

Daniel was very glad of his glasses then, and that they really didn't display the big anime expressions he imagined. He forced his face calm and bowed very slightly. “Esteemed Father, please accept my apologies. We will call the authorities to help the girl. Can you please make me some tea to calm my nerves? I might not be able to find the tea pot.”

“Now that's being rational! Daniel, you know I love you, right? I love you and you're my child as much as Taylish is. I should show you the reports of what happens in other countries. The statistics are just horrible! Of course, I'll make tea for both of us. Were you up this late doing your homework?”

“Yes, Esteemed Father,” Daniel said, squatting down, reaching for his stick, listening for the sound of Peace's footsteps towards the kitchen.

“Really, you can call me Peace,” Peace said, sounding very like his voice was in the kitchen. “Everyone does. Did I tell you that Tay's mother gave me that name?”

Well, yes, actually, he had, but Daniel didn't mind hearing again. He

liked hearing about Taylish's mother. At the moment though, he had to do something. Silently his fingers moved up the door to where Taylish had put the hook for his keys. "I love that story," Daniel said truthfully, but then he was out the door, as very quietly as he could.

It was fifty steps to the sidewalk and Daniel could tell he'd cleared the apartment shelter when the wind danced over him. They say it didn't get really cold in Los Angeles, but it did get a bit cold to someone who hardly ever went outside before. And hot too.

The tip of his stick found the one step down to the main sidewalk and he slowed, searching the area beyond the stop with the rubber marshmallow of his stick. Then he stepped down and held his lip between his teeth as he started on the 73 steps to the corner of the block. He reached for the pole that had the walk button on it. There could have been a foot or ten between himself and the pole and for a moment he panicked, afraid he'd gotten too far one direction or the other, but then his hand found it, searched down its rough metal skin to the large button.

The walk sound was just going off when he heard Peace calling his name. Daniel tapped down the road and stepped into the crosswalk. He hadn't even heard any cars idling. He also hadn't counted the steps across the road. When he and Taylish had walked around the block, walked to college, and back, his blond husband had made a particularly funny joke as they were crossing the street. Taylish was too funny for his own good sometime.

And it made the crosswalk seem like it could span the distance between heaven and earth, step, step, tap, tap, step, and it just seemed like it would go on forever. He was going in a straight line. He knew he was. And this wasn't one of those funny crosswalks that went diagonal at the last minute or something.

"Daniel! Wait," Peace called as the walk signal stopped chirping.

The tip of his stick hit the sidewalk and Daniel took a deep breath. Careful, he checked the sidewalk then stepped up. He turned and smiled, crooked. "Light's turned. I'll meet you at the bar, Peace!"

"I'm going to call Taylish!"

"And tell him what?" Daniel smacked the tip of his stick against the

sidewalk. “Tell him that I went for a walk? I am not a prisoner!”

“I didn't mean it that way! Daniel, Lord forgive me! I'm sorry,” he said, his voice sounding like it was coming closer.

“Are you crossing against the light? That's a misdemeanor, Peace!”

“Be quiet,” Peace said, now on the same side of the street as Daniel. “Very well. Let's go get this girl and go home.”

“I thought you were going to call Taylish and make sure I stayed in the apartment like a good little cripple,” Daniel said, holding his stick too tight, suddenly very angry.

“I'm sorry,” Peace said. And there it was, that same thing that Taylish did, that genuine request for forgiveness.

Daniel took a deep breath, slowly let it out. “Well fuck me. How can I stay angry at you then?” He took Peace's arm, grinned. “We'll make better time that way.”

“You're not a cripple. Your spirit would never let you be.”

“And you're not really and asshole, same reason,” Daniel said, grinning again.

“Don't use such profanity. It isn't becoming.”

“Oh come on. It doesn't hurt anyone and it makes me feel better. Haven't you ever just wanted to? To like spit out your anger in some ball of words that would be acid if they were real?”

“No, because the chances are too good that acid words will hurt someone,” Peace said.

Daniel sighed. “What if you hurt people and don't mean to.”

“If we confess the lord is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,” Peace said, patting Daniel's hand where it rested on his arm.

Daniel had wanted to believe what Peace believed. Before the wedding, when he'd been living at Peace's place, he'd really wanted to

believe. He was doing good to really believe that Taylish loved him, to believe in his own trust in Taylish. He'd work on a God he couldn't see in time.

“And fuck,” Peace said, and Daniel could hear the blush in his voice, “It's not the damn word anyway. It's the way someone might feel about the word. You haven't done anything wrong.”

“Peace, we need to turn here. The bar is half way on this block.”

The music was loud, even from half a block away. It was disturbingly similar to a Hong Kong club from the distance. “Is there a line?”

“A line? Where?”

“To get into the club,” Daniel said.

“No, no line.”

“Are you dressed like a priest or anything?”

“Certainly not!”

“Good,” Daniel said, slipping his glasses off and sliding them into the pocket on his sleeve.

The door man was the kind that you could smell before you got there and the place went down several notches in Daniel's mind. This was no great British college pub. The smell was more like cheap cologne and leather, sweat and spilled alcohol.

The unmarked squad car purred to life. Maya hadn't been supposed to tune it up, but she had to do something to look like she belonged at the run down garage across from the club where Taylish was working undercover. Their targets, a small time gang trying to bring illegals in from Mexico for sex trade, were now on their way down town in black and whites. What Taylish really wanted was a beer and Daniel in his lap, far from his father, and to watch the football game he'd recorded last Sunday. All he had to do was throw his dad out, and well, it was just a little past midnight, he'd

make it up to him next Sunday, or something.

“My mother wants me to meet someone,” Maya said, throwing the car into fifth as she merged into traffic.

Taylish tried not to grind his teeth. “As long as it's not me,” he said, rolling down his window and sticking his arm out. “Meeting someone might not hurt you.”

“Yeah, well, that's not all she means. I should just tell her I'm a Lesbian and that I'm planning on getting artificially inseminated. What I really need is to meet a nice man like Daniel.”

Taylish took a deep, slow breath, and leaned his head back. Air flowing over his hand, between his fingers and before he knew it he was smiling. Daniel. If he closed his eyes, he could feel Daniel sitting his lap, fingers reading his face. The soft pads of his fingers against his lips as Taylish told him all the highlights of the day. Daniel had his own life, his own concerns and goals, but he still made Taylish know that he cared about Taylish's life and experience.

A shiver danced up the Taylish's back. Daniel's laugh and the way he listened to everything, caught more things than Taylish did sometimes, it made Taylish homesick, even though he'd been home the night before. When he worked, he was someone else, often several someone else's. He became what he needed to become in order to get what he needed. When he was with Daniel, there was nothing he could hide. “I can't wait to get home.”

“You haven't heard a word I said, have you?”

“Maya-san,” Taylish said, formal and only a little teasing, “We caught the bad guys. It's very early in the morning and all I want to do is go home to my husband and get laid, watch a little football, and believe that the bad guys will wait for me to have my three days off. I'm sorry your mom's biological clock is louder. You think she would have been done when she got you.”

“Oh my god, what kind of thing is that to say? How can you be the most agile of undercover officers and still be such an insensitive prick?”

“I am not on duty right now,” he said, wishing he had a cigarette. “I'm

tired. Alright? You did a great job the last couple days. Really. You're good at what you do. Why do we get off duty and you turn into one big ball of 'oh my god my family is driving me nuts!' Get some balls, will you?"

"Oh you're one to talk, making excuses for why your dad should stay at your place while we were on this case," she snapped.

"It's a new apartment! He's always trying to do things for himself, and that's great, but what if he goes out in the middle of the night to get milk for shit's sake. I don't know. He might! Don't look at me that way. Okay, so you want to know something endearing and emotional and all that psychobabble crap? I love him and I need him and I'd just sit down and not get up again if something happened to him. He's like a part of me. So. Okay. I paid to have my dad's house fumigated. I didn't lie."

"And you're saying I did lie?"

"You're the one that said you ought to tell your mom you were a lesbian. You could always just get knocked up. That'd get her a grandchild."

"I thought Daniel was the one raised by wolves. What kind of a fool thing is that to say anyway?"

"If I could. I would. I'd get knocked up and make Daniel bring me tea and rub my feet. Damn, Maya, don't you want to feel life growing in you? That must be the greatest thing."

"Only a gay man would say that. Oh yeah, swollen feet and big old breasts, hips that will never see jeans again, bleeding for weeks after. Sure, yeah, greatest feeling ever. My mother told me all about it."

Taylish laughed then, head tilted back, long legs stretched out against the floorboards. "I wonder if Daniel would be the mother, take care of a baby, and I could come home every night. I'd go back to being a beat cop and come home every night and pick my kid up and tell them how much I loved them. I wouldn't be like some parents. I wouldn't be off chasing around the world trying to make it better. No. I'd be home."

"At least between cases. Hey, our phone's ringing. Can you get it out of my pocket?"

“Oh hell no, I am not sticking my hand in your pocket,” Taylish's left hand rose, two fingers together like they had a cigarette between them still. “I went through sensitivity class. I'm too smart for you!”

“Shut the fuck up and get the phone!” She snarled, both hands on the wheel. “It might be important.”

Their car lacked a police radio, which was good because cb's were very much out of fashion and drug dealers shot people with police radios in their car. “Fine, fine! Don't take a joke.”

“Hello,” he said, closing his eyes and hoping it wouldn't be anything like his captain wanting a report filled out tonight, instead of a few days from then. “Detective Morgan.”

The dispatcher about snorted something out her nose, and Taylish hoped it was soda, something with lots of fizz. “You answered!”

“You rang,” Taylish quipped, and then sat a little straighter as Maya glared at him. “What's going on?”

“There is a large scale altercation in the vicinity of your new address, Detective Morgan, and I know you'll be off duty soon. I was wondering if you might like to check it out. There are a couple other cars already on their way.”

Much more serious now, “Taylish shifted. “What's the address? What kind of altercation?”

“Bar room brawl. There are three ambulances on the way as well now, and a couple of fire trucks.”

“Christ. Do I ever get a break? Thanks, Emma! Thanks a lot.”

“No problem, Tay.”

“What is it,” Maya asked, taking the exit nearest to Taylish's place.

“You think your mom is a pain? Just wait till you hear what Peace has to say about a barroom brawl being three blocks from our new apartment. I can just hear the lecture now. He thinks Daniel is some kind of fragile soul. I swear he thinks Daniel is the son he never had.”

“Oh wow, jealous much?” Maya asked, brown eyes watching Taylish squirm while they waited a stop light through.

One booted foot propped against the dash and he laid both arms over his bent knee. “I’m not jealous of Daniel. Maybe, maybe a little. My dad is always gone, always out saving someone, but he has time for Daniel. Maybe he just thinks that Daniel needs rescuing or something.”

“I think it's just that you're such a prick. You always act like you got some big fight going on with your dad.” The light turned green and she hung a right. “Where too?”

“Well, for a starter, I'd think, the flashing lights up ahead might give you a clue, as you're so damn good with the obvious.”

“Fuck you, Taylish,” Maya spat back easily, more friendly than angry. “And damn, that is a lot of lights.”

The fire truck was just getting there and Taylish found it just a little odd, surreal to have a barroom brawl in this part of town. It wasn't like it wasn't a good place to be, three blocks from the university. He was going to have to watch Daniel around all those college boys. “Maya, I'm tired of taking care of people.”

“You shouldn't have married a blind guy then, uh?”

“No, it's not that. He takes care of himself. It's that, I guess you're right. I'm a prick,” he said, slamming the door and talking to her over the top of the car. “I just always have to be on top of what Peace and Daniel are thinking, what they're doing. I guess it's like being at work, always got to know what the perps are doing next.”

She pulled her badge out of her back pocket, and smirked. “Makes you a good cop.”

“Makes me a shitty relative. Come on. Let's get in there and see if we can help mop this up. I want to go home and make it up to Daniel. I will not be a prick today,” Taylish said with a laugh, his own badge now strapped to his wrist.

They got to the entrance though and found it closed, with a couple of

uniforms waiting for a battering ram.

Behind the doors, which some brilliant person had locked from the inside, the place sounded like a mosh pit gone bad.

“You have someone on the back door,” Maya asked, looking the building over, looking for another way in. “Any idea what's going on in there?”

“Know the same thing you do,” Officer Kelly said, shrugging. “Brawl broke a little after two. Some frat boys and some hazing. Dumb asses. You'd think their parents would get more for their money. We're just waiting for the battering ram.”

Wanting a cigarette was like having your teeth itch on the inside and know that only that one thing can fix it. Taylish twitched at his hair, eyed the building, tongue between his cheek and teeth. “Nee, so how long you think that's going to take?”

“Probably about forty minutes,” Kelly said, shrugging. “It's just a bunch of stupid frat boys.”

Maya's nose gets all pinched when she's displeased, and it always makes Taylish wonder if she's going to have little fox fangs when she snarls. That cop she was about to lay into if he didn't shut his mouth though had been on the force longer than her, she'd just gotten wild lucky, that was all, and been good when she got that break.

“Never a cop when you need one,” Tay sad, smirking, standing with his hips to the side, low cut jeans leaving his belly button visible and his skin tight crop top showing off lean muscle definition. From his back pocket he pulled a pair of very thin gloves, microfiber and Kevlar. “What? You expect me to wait all day? I have a home to go to now.”

Maya's cheeks puffed out. “Oh yeah! How am I going to explain to Daniel that I got you into a barroom brawl on the way home.”

“You just drove me here, baby,” Taylish teased, enjoying the offended look on the face of the officer they'd been talking too. There were times when unorthodox just worked better. “Just gonna go up this pipe to that window. I'll open the door and Officer Kelly can arrest all the troublemakers. How's that?”

Officer Kelly's partner, a sharp ferret like Asian man, was standing with them now, along with a firefighter who had her arms across her chest. "We should just wait. The forward squad will be here soon."

Tay's grin could have been bottled and labeled 'get your ass in trouble', cocky and flippant. It made him ageless, the essence of male. No one ever said that heroes were always careful. It was a brick building and easy to climb, with the solid pipe there to hold too. The cloth of his shirt got tight against his arms as his muscles worked. He didn't really like heights, but the second story really didn't count as high, he told himself.

He reached the window quick and pulled himself in. "No smoke," he called back. And then it occurred to him that he might have just climbed his way into a burning building.

"The breaker just went, the power's off," One of the firefighters said.

"Wait, let me get the glasses," Maya said and ran back to the car. She opened the trunk and ran back.

Tay held his hand out. She hesitated. "Well, how did you expect to get it up here. Toss."

"You better catch it, ass!" She tossed though and six thousand dollars of equipment up towards Tay.

He did, easily and quickly disappeared into the building. If it was a burning building, at least the fire department was already here. He made a mental note to himself to ask why the fire department didn't just kick the damn doors in. The glasses she'd thrown up to him fit over his head like a jeweler's glass, putting a single infrared lens over one eye.

The mission was just to make into the bar below, open the door, and let the uniforms arrest all the idiots without causing too much property damage. That was really less out of concern for whatever sap owned this place and more for what his dad would say when he saw a busted in door. He could just see himself explaining that. Resentment rose in him for all the things he wasn't really responsible for that he tried to make up to his dad.

Once he got out into the hall way, the sprinklers were going off as well

and it too a negative amount of time for him to be soaked. If there wasn't a fire, and his gut told him there wasn't, when he found out who pulled the fire alarm, he was going to kick their ass.

The hall opened on to a balcony that overlooked the pub like bar. His mouth opened to yell for them all to freeze when a figure on the bar caught his attention. Even in the dark, seeing only the outline in red and outline, he knew that body. Slim, graceful, one leg behind the other, braced like some martial arts master, his Daniel defended the top of the bar in some twisted king of the hill game. It was Daniel. Taylish knew this no matter how impossible it was. It was the way he moved, like the rest of the world just hadn't touched him and he'd fallen out of some video game somewhere. He stood there, a unseen witness to how very helpless Daniel wasn't.

Three other persons, men by the size of them surrounded him and made occasional grabs for him. Those grabs were smacked away easily with that stick that Daniel used, the solid one, five feet of flexible fiberglass that was better than any bamboo staff ever wanted to be. There was another person behind Daniel, smaller than him and clinging to him close enough to give Taylish a flash of jealousy.

He knew he should call out, stop the fight, but secretly watching Daniel swing that staff, the power in his shoulders as he hit, both hands on his staff, the end sweeping easily the hand reaching for his leg. Then he spun, laying the staff hard across the face of someone who'd actually grabbed the person behind him, sending that man back into a rack of glass ware. It was only seconds, but he wasn't a cop right then. He was a person watching his lover be a dangerous panther. Desire bypassed any reason he had and tingled along his manhood. Daniel was so beautiful.

Then his reason kicked back in. Assault and battery.

And just when the morning was sliding towards total shit, a voice rose over the din of the crowd. "Daniel! Where are you?"

His eyes tracked that voice home, and there, in the middle of a barroom brawl, at three in the morning, was his father, Pastor Peace Morgan. It was his father, lean, but stocky, stiff and holding both hands up as a pair of smaller figures wrestled each other past him. The water from the sprinklers was making everyone slip and fall.

“Tay? Where are you?” Maya said in his ear, “The battering ram is here.”

“It's okay, I'll have it open in a minute. Maya, Daniel's in here.”

“Oh god! Is he okay? How did he get in there?”

“Well, I'm guessing he walked. He's holding his own pretty well. Give me another minute to get the door open.” Taylish said, taking the stairs down, not calling out for everyone to freeze. The people after Daniel seemed very determined and he didn't want to distract his lover and get him hurt.

Maybe it was people from Daniel's past that had come to cause problems. Taylish had never been murderous in his life, not really. If someone from that gang came for Daniel; he'd kill them.

When he got to the door, there was a solid metal handled mop put through the door handles. He pulled it out and threw both the doors open with a flourish. Thoughts of Daniel had already fought to the surface of his mental process, Daniel kissing his neck, both of them sweaty, using the back of a patrol car as a bed, and well, there hadn't been that many people outside the bar when he'd gone in.

Bright spot lights hit his face and he threw his hands up to block them. Cops, uniformed and wearing riot gear ran by him on both sides, and his stomach dropped. So many bad ideas all one after another. He spun.

There was Daniel on the bar, holding his staff in both hands, light around him as if he were a red headed angel there, hair clinging to his cheeks. Tee-shirt wet and clinging to the curves of his muscular body, blue jeans dark and wet, perfect legs, and god, Taylish wanted those strong legs wrapped around his waist, holding him. The riot crew's entrance had stopped the brawl and started a rat scramble for exits. Daniel stood where he was, frozen there with his stick in his hands.

Gravity pulled Taylish, back through the confusion, and up onto the bar. His first step was loud against the polished wood and Daniel flinched, looking for some possible attacker. “Daniel.”

Relief softened Daniel's face and Taylish was there, a hand sliding down his cheek before he had a chance to say anything. His face was so

soft under Taylish's hand as the side of his thumb moved over his cheekbone, down to where there was just enough red stubble to need to be shaved. Daniel's eyes were emerald, so rare and sometimes Taylish imagined they still tracked him, watched him. Both of them were wet, but Daniel's body was hot enough to warm Taylish through their wet clothes.

Daniel trembled as Taylish pulled him close. Confusion and chaos rained around them. The sprinklers shut off as Taylish caressed his cheek against Daniel's cheek, warm and life.

“Have you come to arrest me,” Daniel asked, voice a whisper against Taylish's cheek. “Are you going to put me handcuffs?”

His voice didn't have the slightest fear in it, instead it was sultry, low, inviting, and Taylish's body responded hard. His fingers caressed down Daniel's bare arms, bringing his wrists together and holding them across each other. “Oh yeah, have to put you in half cuffs and strip search you. Daniel, where did you learn to fight like that?”

“Aki no Tenshi,” Daniel whispered back, pressing his body closer, hard to hard. “You might have to be rough with me, show me how powerful you are.”

“Oh man,” Taylish groaned, and their words disappeared into a kiss. Bigger than Daniel, it was still Taylish's turn to tremble, arms wrapped around his lover. Daniel pulled at his lips with his own. The tip of his tongue traced along Taylish's and then pushed into him, circling, owning the kiss. Innocence and spice, Daniel's kiss stole Taylish's breath as the red head bit softly at his lips between dancing with his tongue. The art of kissing woke in Taylish something more primal and less skilled, until he had bore down, taking Daniel's mouth with his own, filling his smaller lover's mouth with his need and worry and pride and a kiss that left no room for breath. He was shaking as he pulled back, his Daniel held tight in his arms. “I love you, Daniel.”

“I love you too,” Daniel replied, fingers trying to caress the strong hand holding his wrists.

“Excuse me,” Peace said, interrupting, irritated. “I think I'm about to be arrested. Perhaps you could take just a moment and tell this very nice officer that I'm your father.”

Taylish grinned down from the bar at his father, who was probably wearing more alcohol than he'd ever consumed in his life. "Hi Dad," Taylish said, grinning. "Out for a walk were you?"

Peace's eyes tracked up and down his son, over skin tight shiny pants that were probably labeled 'product of Hell' somewhere, and the shirt that didn't reach down over all his ribs, the blue eyeshadow and flush color in his cheeks. Pastor Morgan's eyes twitched. Between clenched teeth he said, "It seemed like a good idea at the time."

"So," Sargent Mays said, looking from one Morgan to the other, "Detective. Morgan, is this your father?"

"Yup, Pastor Peace Morgan," Taylish said, refusing to let go of Daniel, almost proud of offending his father's ideas of public behavior.

"And yes, that is my son," Peace said, glaring. "He doesn't come to church often enough."

"I'm going to have to issue him a citation for disturbing the peace. Capt. says everyone gets them. Is this your husband?"

"Yup," Taylish said, rubbing Daniel's shoulder lightly, hoping that they'd both get to stay front to front because while Daniel's jeans might hide what was evident when they touched there, Taylish's stretchy shiny pants wouldn't hide it at all.

"One of the girls we picked up said he was defending her. I thought he was blind."

"He is. Doesn't seem to slow him down much," Taylish admitted. "Pastor Morgan and Daniel were clearly just defending themselves."

"Yeah, and Daniel defended himself so well one of the guys has a broken rib. He's already admitted that he was trying to clobber Daniel, so I don't think there will be any charges from that. Detective Morgan, your family is really something."

"Aren't they though?" Taylish asked with a laugh. "Are they getting arrested?"

"Oh good Lord," Peace said. "It's Sunday morning."

“I suppose it is,” Sargent Mays said. “I ought to show up just to see how you explain this to your flock.”

“Hey! Whatever was going on, I'm sure they had a good reason for being here!”

“That is correct,” Peace said firmly. “We came here to help a young woman in trouble. It is not our fault that the gentleman she was with proved unpleasant.”

“There you go then,” Sargent Mays said, “Get out of here before I hear something I will have to arrest you for.”

Taylish jumped to the floor, then reached back for Daniel, his hands following up his legs so that Daniel could reach for him. Daniel put his hands on Tay's shoulders and Tay pulled him off into his arms. “I'm all for that. Dad?”

“I really think some of these people might need help still. There was a lot of anger. I'd like to stay and invite them to church. Taylish you should come. You as well, Daniel.”

“Sorry, Dad, just finished a long case, have a football game to watch and another this afternoon. But we'll see you later. And Dad, careful, uh?”

“I am always careful,” Pastor Morgan said. “Sargent Mays, will you be off in time to come to church this morning?”

“Oh now, see I don't know. It depends on how long it takes to book everyone that resisted,” Sargent Mays said as he was lead away by Peace Morgan, an arm around his shoulder. “What's the sermon on this morning?”

“The futility of violence,” Pastor Morgan said, grinning back at Taylish for a moment.

“Where is Peace going?” Daniel asked, lacing his fingers with Taylish's

“I believe he's going to go witness to the people who just tried to break a few bottles over his head. I think he may have enjoyed himself,” Taylish

said.

Hand in hand, they left the bar, making their way towards the corner. Maya caught up with them and Tay gave back the infrared gear he'd been using, and talked her out of a pair of handcuffs. Their partnership worked on many levels, but she was definitely the keeper of equipment.

Quietly, Taylish and Daniel got around the corner and closer to their apartment. "Is it morning?"

"Almost," Taylish said, "The sky is a little lighter."

"What color is it?" Daniel laid his head against Taylish's shoulder. "Is there pink?"

Taylish looked to the east, over the top of Daniel's head. "Just buildings. I can't really see the sunrise. Maybe from our balcony. Did you get hurt?"

"No. You mad at me?"

"Might be later," Taylish admitted. "You were very hot, up there on the bar. I really didn't know you could fight like that."

They reached the where the sidewalk turned towards their apartment. "I didn't either," Daniel admitted, "But it worked."

"It did. Don't do it again," Taylish said, opening their door.

"I'll stay home if you will. You going to rough me up a little, officer," Daniel asked, moving in behind Taylish, a hand sliding down the zipper of Taylish's pants, thumb rubbing over the hard member under the thin material. "Strip search me?"

Taylish turned and the door closed under his hand, as he pushed Daniel up against it, pinning him. He shivered, one hand sliding into Daniel's still wet hair as he trailed kisses across on cheekbone then the other. "There is lure to that, to fucking you hard with your hands cuffed behind your back," Taylish said, one hand returning Daniel's caress only taking it further, sliding easily into his jeans. The caress wasn't rough or demanding though. It was gentle, reverent. "But I want something more right now. Do you know how important you are to me?"

“Uh,” Daniel said, mind not quiet in gear as he pressed forward into Taylish's hand. “Let's fuck now, talk later.”

“No,” Taylish said, peeling Daniel's stick out of his and setting it in the corner with his lighter one. “No, I don't want to fuck you.”

“Yes, you do,” Daniel insisted, an edge of neediness in his voice. “Are you angry at me now?”

“No,” Taylish said, and he realized he'd never be angry at Daniel over this. “I am not angry. And shit, you have to teach me how to do that with a stick, how you knew where they were in the dark, but not right now. Right now, I want you to come out here into the middle of the room. Don't count the steps, just trust me? I want you to dance with me?”

“I trust you,” Daniel said, slightly defensive. “What if I want you to be rough with me? What if I want that?”

“Well, we can do that too,” Taylish said, drawing Daniel's fingers, which had gone stiff, to feel the smile on his lips. “I'll even spank you! But not right now. Right now, I want something else.”

“What do you want?”

“You'll see,” Taylish said, slipping his hands under Daniel's shirt, “Lift your arms. I'm going to make you naked and tell you how exciting it was to see you on that bar.”

“You could see me? I thought the lights went out?” Daniel wiggled out of his shirt, goose bumps scattering everywhere that Taylish touched.

“Had infrared gear, and yes, I could see you. You looked so powerful. I got hard just watching you move. And I need to tell you I'm sorry too,” Taylish said, words a warm breath against Daniel's chilled throat leaving more goosebumps as he moved over to the muscled curve of a shoulder. “I'm sorry, Daniel, for not realizing how you really can take care of yourself. I just, it's just that you're so important to me and I know I'd be so lame if I lost my sight. I know life hasn't been real easy to you and I guess I was just afraid that something could happen to you. Maybe it's just that you're so important to me. I was so lonely before you came into my life.”

“I’m so hard and I want you to fuck me, please? I need you to,” Daniel said, unfastening his jeans and shoving them down. He wore nothing under them except his desire for his love.

“I want to make love to you,” Taylish said. “I want to be as naked with you in my heart as I can be in body.”

“Aren't we always,” Daniel asked reaching forward with both hands, following Taylish's voice. “I'm going to catch you and get your cock between my teeth and you'll forget all about doing things slow.”

Without reply, now bared feet silent on the hardwood floor, Taylish moved to turn on the Celtic cd he'd played when he was home last time. In the very sparsely furnished apartment, the music echoed and flowed. There were two candles on either side of the stereo and Taylish lit them both. As he moved back to Daniel who had stopped in the middle of the room, naked, red hair drying and curling a little at the ends, Taylish stopped and watched the miracle that was his husband.

From what he'd found out about Daniel's past, the beautiful red head shouldn't have been sane, really, let alone so very competent and loving. “Where do you like me to touch you best?”

“I like everywhere you touch me,” Daniel said, turning in the direction of Taylish's voice. “I like it best if you do touch me. Or do you want to see me touch myself?”

Naked as well, Taylish walked slowly all the way around Daniel. He pulled the ponytail holder from his hair and tossed it towards the couch. “You seem disappointed. Did you really want me to arrest you and fuck you on the hood of a patrol car?”

“Maybe,” Daniel hedged, “Maybe I'm just fucking twisted and broken too. We can do it your way.”

Taylish considered. He'd had what he wanted to do so clear in his mind, to worship Daniel with kisses and touches and make love to him so slowly. They could write books about what he didn't know about sexuality though and what he really wanted was to make Daniel feel good, really good. “It's better if we do it how we both want. Put your wrists behind your back, Daniel Morgan. You are under arrest. Do you want me to read you your rights?”

There was a tremble of excitement that went through Daniel, a shiver over his shoulders and his cock twitched, and Taylish didn't understand, but he liked it. Daniel placed both wrists behind his back and moved slightly from one foot to the other. "What rights? What have I done?"

"Well, Mr. Morgan," Taylish said as he carefully put the cuffs around Daniel's wrists. "I have to arrest you for reckless incitement of an officer of the law. I may need to do a body cavity search. Have you ever had a body cavity search, Mr. Morgan?" Taylish asked, finding himself much more excited because of Daniel's excitement. He caressed slowly down the shivering curve of Daniel's ass, moving between his legs to push them apart a little, then to press the side of his hand between where ball sack and anus were. "I urge you to cooperate, Mr. Morgan. You're not embarrassed by being seen completely naked by an officer of the law, are you?"

"I'm not hiding anything, Officer," Daniel said, wrists working at the cuffs. "My hole is too small to hide anything in!"

"Oh really?" Taylish said, one hand holding the chain between the cuffs, the thumb of his other hand pressing small circles against Daniel's tight entrance. They were always careful and while Taylish had thought some things must grow looser with time, Daniel was as tight as when he'd first met him, though he never had any trouble entering him either. "It seems you might be a virgin. You realize that this is against the law in our living room? I will need to take care of that for you."

Daniel wiggled his hips, moving deeper into the roll that Taylish hadn't expected. "Oh please, don't! I'm saving my virginity for the man I love! Please don't touch me there!"

Taylish knew he ought to feel uncomfortable, or at least he thought he ought to, but as he pulled a slightly struggling Daniel back against him, pressing his hard and very ready cock between his love's legs, all he felt was excitement. "Daniel," he whispered in his ear, "Is this what you want? God, you excite me so much? I love you so very much!"

"Yes, this is what I want. Force me to lay down on the bed, and tell me that you're going to take my ass as your own, no matter what I say. You're okay too? It really excites you?"

“OH yeah, but promise you'll say if anything doesn't feel right.” Taylish pleaded, turning his love around so they were face to face, “Dance with me for a song, just please?”

“Sure,” Daniel said, swaying to the upbeat Celtic song, chest pressed to Taylish's “You smell so good. I love the smell of your sweat.” He licked Taylish's chest then, still dancing, but leaning a little so he could circle one pink nipple. “You taste good too.”

Taylish pulled him back and wrapped his arms around him. The song played around them. The candle casting shadows around them that Daniel couldn't see, but it was vanilla scent and Taylish just wanted this safe moment of the two of them, slow dancing. As the song ended, Taylish was sure he could feel Daniel's heart speed up. It was likely something else or he imagined it, but he was also ready to give Daniel what he seemed to want.

“I taste good? Oh yeah,” Taylish said with a groan, “Well, if you don't want me to take that sweet little virgin ass of yours for myself, maybe you better see what you can do about this hardon of mine.”

Daniel whimpered, a mock fearful submission as he kissed down Taylish's chest. Hands cuffed behind him, he took the head of Taylish's cock easily, sucking him in deep, truly trying to bring Taylish to orgasm, just as he would if their little game had been real. It took only moments of that for Taylish to be seeing white and wanting to thrust for all he was worth.

“Stop,” he groaned, fingers combing through Daniel's hair, “Love, stop, or I'll come. And I haven't given you a body cavity search yet.”

“But I'm doing good, right? You don't need my virginity!”

Taylish reached down and took Daniel by the arms. Maybe it's something primal in a man that makes him want to dominate and possess his lover. “Oh, but I do. And I'm going to keep you for myself. I don't think I can live without you. And, now I'm going to take you into an interrogation room and search you. No matter how you resist, I'm going to have your ass.”

“Oh yes, Tay, take me!” Daniel said, and his words just sounded passionate to Taylish.

Taylish turned him around and cock between his legs still, he walked him forward their bedroom. “Don't be afraid. I'll try to be gentle with you, beautiful one.”

The mock struggles did something right to Taylish's belly, made his cock weep with need, and he really just wanted to nuzzle Daniel's neck and sink into him, but the scene was important and Daniel was still very much into it.

“Where are you taking me?”

“To a special interrogation room, where we take virginities. It's sound proof and once I lock the door, no one can help you.”

“Don't stop, Tay, more,” Daniel whimpered as his legs reached the bed. “Are you going to tie me up?”

“If I have to! Virgins can't be allowed to wander the streets,” Taylish said, searching for a reason for the game they were playing. “They attract dragons. Crawl onto the table and spread your legs.”

“Are you going to take photos of me?” Daniel asked, hips swaying as he moved forward on his knees. “I don't want anyone to know!”

“Oh yes, we're going to take photos of you,” Taylish said, grabbing a pillow really quick and putting it where Daniel was about to lay, so it would be under his belly. “And when I'm done fucking you and my cum is dripping out of your little pucker, I'm gonna take more photos. Evidence, you see, proving that you were deflowered, by law.” He brushed hair back from Daniel's face too, as he moved to the head of the bed to get their lub.

Daniel kissed his hand when it moved by. “This is so hot, Tay!”

“Begging will not help you,” Taylish said, trying to sound stern, but really feeling very pleased with himself for turning Daniel on so much. “I will prepare you for the deflowering now. Spread your legs, Virgin.”

“Will it hurt? What are you doing?”

“I'm putting on gloves now,” Taylish lied. “And then I will insert one finger into you. One finger shouldn't hurt too much.”

Daniel whimpered and moved higher up on his knees, his ass looking vulnerable and god so delicious. “Will just one finger be enough? Then we're done? I have gotten hard. You wouldn't tell anyone?”

“Of course I will. I'm going to take lots of photos,” Taylish promised sliding one lubed finger into the tight ring of muscle that was Daniel's entrance. “Do you want me to show all my buddies?”

“No, please don't show anyone! I shouldn't be so turned on by this!”

“Yes, you should! You're my love and you'll always get hard when I'm about to take you,” Taylish said, proudly, possessively, as he slide two fingers into his prisoner. “Daniel, I want to be in you, can I now, please? This is fun. We can do more later. Maybe I'll get hard again.”

“Tay,” Daniel said affectionately. “Take me now. Hold me.”

“You're so beautiful, just you, not the way you look, but you.” Taylish quickly coated his cock with lub as well and was into Daniel before he'd finished speaking. He rolled them onto their sides, the heat that was Daniel around him like a silky glove, gliding, over and back all the sensitive spots a man has when he's that hard.

Strong arms around Daniel, holding him close, face hidden against Daniel's neck, he stroked until all he saw was white and his body sank down into the pinpoint of his being as he released into Daniel. He heard the cry, deep and passionate, but it was only as he sank back from the peak that he realized it was his own cry. He kissed Daniel's shoulder, to the edge and back down to his spine.

As the light receded, Taylish reached down to see if Daniel had come too and found that he hadn't. “Sorry! I came too soon.”

Daniel rolled, and reached up to touch Taylish's face. “Shhhh, don't say things like that. You come perfectly and you're just not done.”

“Hey! How did you get out of the handcuffs?”

After a dismissive sound, Daniel reached back and got them off his other wrist too. “They're just handcuffs, Tay. They haven't made a pair of those that could hold me since I needed to shave. Blow me?”

Their kisses were tender, short, candy kisses, and then Taylish was able to worship Daniel as he'd wanted, moving those teasing kisses down his chest, over his belly, as one hand cupped Daniel's balls. Truthfully, Daniel didn't take long to come either, but it was as if he were waiting for Taylish's mouth to encase him, licking and pulling and he spilled his pearls.

Daniel's cries were just as passionate as Taylish's had been, but quieter. Release with Taylish was always so much more intimate than anything before, more than even his own masturbation, like release was a promise from the universe that he was loved. That feeling was so intense this time, that he cried as he came, tears flowing down into his hair. "Taylish! You do love me, right? You'll never stop because I do stupid things?"

First he licked up the last bit of come from Daniel's slowly softening cock, then he moved to pull his into his arms. "I will love you always, Daniel. Why did you go there in the first place?"

"There was a girl. The mother, she came ask you to help get her daughter back from the bar, and I just wanted to be, I just wanted to do it myself. She hugged me and it was like she was my mother for a moment. I'm not helpless. You didn't need to get your dad to stay with me, you know?"

"I'm sorry. I know now. I just, Daniel, you really are important to me and I get afraid for myself, more than what you can and can't do, but wow, you really can lay to with that stick of yours. How did you know where they were?"

"There were just things I could hear about them all. I was very focused. I don't know how I did it, but I was afraid they'd kill me if they got hold of me."

"You're so brave," Taylish said then kissed Daniel's shoulder, before reaching for the blanket at the foot of their bed. "You going to foot ball with me after we sleep?"

"Sure," Daniel said, taking hold of Taylish's hand and pulling his arm around him. "First, though, I haven't been to sleep yet."

Later, when Taylish woke to a soft knock on their door, he slipped from bed and grabbed gray sweat pants from the dresser by their bed room

door. Out the peep hole there was a prim black woman holding an aluminum foil wrapped plate. It smelled like chicken and Taylish opened the door a bit. "Can I help you?"

"You're the cop, aren't you?"

"Yes, Ma'am," he said, opening the door a little. "Are you the lady who spoke with Daniel earlier?"

"Yes, Sir," she said, looking at the floor again for a moment, before pushing the plate towards him. "I'm real sorry. I didn't mean to get him into trouble. I didn't know he was blind. I was just so upset and it was dark then, but my girl says he saved her life. She was real scared and then he was there. She said he defended her against that nasty man and his friends. I think she's going to stay doing right now. You'll tell him I said I was grateful, please? And I'm real sorry if he got hurt or anything. I made you all chicken."

Taylish made a mental note to be sure to introduce Maya to this nice lady. She was so sweetly Southern that Taylish wasn't quite sure what to say. "Thank you very much for the chicken. You just let us know if you need anything, okay?" Plate in one hand, he held out his other hand to shake, and saw her eyes hit the black nail polish and look back to his face, which, he expected still had some eyeshadow and mascara on. "Don't mind the make up. It's just for work."

"You are a police officer, right?"

"Yup, It was very nice to meet you now."

She nodded and smiled as he closed the door.

Daniel was in the door, leaning, arms across his chest as Taylish peeled the foil back. "Smells good. Football and chicken, Love?"

"Sounds good to me!"

And it was a very lovely Sunday.