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*Tryst*  
**V**ALENTINE  
JAMIESON WOLF

*Valentine*

*By*

*Jamieson Wolf*

## Valentine by Jamieson Wolf

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### **Valentine**

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**Dedication**

For Robert, who fills my nights with warmth and fire.

### Authors Note

According to legend, as early as the fourth century B.C., the Romans engaged in an annual young man's rite to passage to the god Lupercus. The names of the teenage women were placed in a box and drawn at random by adolescent men; thus, a man was assigned a woman companion for the duration of the year, after which another lottery was staged.

After eight hundred years of this, the early church fathers sought to end this practice and promote monogamy. They found an answer in Valentine, a bishop who had been martyred some two hundred years earlier. According to church tradition, St. Valentine was a priest near Rome in about the year 270 A.D. At that time, the Roman Emperor, Claudius II, had issued an edict forbidding marriage. This was around when the heyday of Roman Empire had almost come to an end.

When Claudius became the emperor, he discerned that married men were more emotionally attached to their families, and thus, would not make good soldiers. So to assure quality soldiers, he banned marriage.

Valentine, a bishop who witnessed the trauma of young lovers, met them in a secret place and joined them in the sacrament of matrimony. Claudius learned of this "friend of lovers," and had him arrested. The emperor, impressed with the young priest's dignity and conviction, attempted to convert him to the Roman gods, to save him from certain execution. Valentine refused to recognize Roman gods and even attempted to convert the emperor, knowing the consequences fully.

On February 24, 270, Valentine was executed.

While Valentine was in prison awaiting his fate, he came in contact with his jailor, Asterius. The jailor had a blind daughter. Asterius requested him to heal his daughter. Through his faith, he miraculously

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restored girl's sight. Just before his execution, he asked for a pen and paper from his jailor, and signed a farewell message to her, "From Your Valentine." A phrase that lived ever after.

The story that follows is loosely based on this legend. I have taken certain liberties with the characters of Valentine and Asterius. Though there are no historical records, there is nothing to indicate that the two men did not meet before Valentine's imprisonment; that there was not a spark of something more between the two.

And that is where our story begins...

## Chapter One

Valentine's eyes flashed in the silver glass. They were the blue of ice and so clear, so blue, that they often startled people when he turned his gaze upon them. People said they hadn't seen eyes that blue since Lupercus had walked the earth. While Valentine enjoyed the comparison to a god, he wasn't vain enough to let the compliment go to his head. He smiled, his teeth a flash of white, his lips full and lush.

He caught the image of Anna, his priestess, in the mirror.

"Is everything ready?" he asked, turning to look at her as she stood in the doorway.

Anna nodded. "I don't know if we're going to get away with this. It was one thing to carry on in secret. It's another thing altogether to do this when he knows."

"We aren't doing anything wrong," Valentine said. "We're helping others experience love. What is so wrong about that?"

"But he *knows*, Valentine. It's not just a fancy anymore." She went to him and touched his cheek. Her hands were cool to the touch. "You are in danger," she whispered.

"I do this for the god Lupercus. Would he have me die when I am performing these rights for him?"

She sighed. "I suppose there's no way I can talk you out of this?"

Valentine laughed softly. "No, I don't suppose there is.

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The forest had been decorated, Valentine noted.

Flower petals decorated the soft soil beneath their feet. Tree branches served as trellises, and they, too, were decorated. Ribbons were interwoven into the branches to softly flutter in the breeze, and bells were hung from those branches, small silver ones that twinkled in the sunlight.

A broom stood in front of the alter, its curving, wooden staff aged and worn. Sticks of hay and straw were tied around the staff's base with twine, sticking out at odd angles.

The couple would step over the broom as they left the alter, then bring it into their home as proof of their marriage. They could wear no rings, so the broom was the only proof they would have. They would use it to clean their home afterwards, bringing luck and good fortune into their home.

The alter was decorated with a single candle, and a white cloth that fluttered like the ribbons. Anna stood to the right, and the couple waited in the center. There were no guests.

Valentine smiled at the couple. They had come to him earlier in the week, wishing to be married under the name of the old god instead of the new God. To do so was treason, so they had to be married in secret. But for them, it was enough.

He went to them and joined their left hands with a white, silk cord. When that was done, he waved his hand, and the candle on the alter flamed to life. The flame did not move in the soft breeze but shone straight.

"Are you ready?" he asked softly.

The couple looked at him and nodded. He motioned to Anna. She took out a small pouch filled with herbs, which she sprinkled in a circle around them and the alter. Once that was done, she spoke a quiet spell.

"Lupercus, bind this circle so that all who are inside it are protected. So mote it be."

"So mote it be," Valentine said. He took the couple's hands in his and smiled at them. "Don't worry. We'll be quick." There was noise in the distance. Hidden in this small forest, they were safe for a while. But not



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for too long. The couple's absence from the village would raise suspicion.

Valentine spoke the sacred words softly, as if caressing them with his voice. "Lupercus, hear our call. Bind this couple together for their lives, for they have pledged their lives to you. Bind this couple with their love, for they have promised to love each other with their lives. Bind this couple as husband and wife so that they may spread your love. So mote it be."

A sharp tongue of magic slid down his arm and spread through the white cord that tied the couple together. It turned the white to gold. "I now pronounce you wed. May Lupercus be blessed."

He watched them walk back to the village, broom in hand.

Valentine's heart broke even more.

## Chapter Two

A knock at his door woke Valentine.

He opened his eyes and saw that the sky was dark. It was still night, but he could see well enough; a little light filtered through the trees of the forest that was his home. The small house that was his nestled in the middle of the forest. It was not large but afforded him a lot of privacy.

He was used to living alone. He'd had many lovers, many men who had come to his bed, but none that would stay. None who would give him the love he so desperately needed.

He supposed he should look for the humor in this. After all, he was a high priest that performed the rite of marriage, yet love avoided him.

The knock came again at the door, and he swung his feet out of bed. Putting on a simple, white cotton robe, the wooden floor soft and warm under his feet, he made his way to the small foyer of his home and opened the door.

A man stood in the shadow of the door's overhang. Valentine could make out broad shoulders and large hands; one of which clutched a broom.

"Are you Kalus Valentine?" the man asked. His voice was deep and rich, like fire whiskey.

Valentine nodded. "Yes." He wasn't sure why, but this man frightened him.

"May I come in? I have a few questions for you."

"By all means." Valentine stepped aside so the man could enter.

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When he saw what the man was wearing, he realized the reason for his fear.

The man wore the traditional dress of the Roman soldiers. A gold breastplate covered his broad chest, and his shoulders were draped in a small, red cape. A leather kilt hung from his hips to just above his knees.

He glimpsed the man's taunt stomach and the trail of hair that led down from his belly into the folds of the kilt. Simple sandals covered his feet, with leather straps entwined around his large calves.

It was not just the uniform of a Roman soldier that scared him. It was the way the man looked. He wore no helmet. He had straight, red hair that framed his face in a riot of curls and stopped just short of his shoulders. His face was wide, with a strong chin covered in red and gold stubble. He stopped himself from touching the man's skin, which was tanned a deep golden brown.

It was the eyes that held him in place. They were a deep, piercing green. Indeed, in the dim light of the foyer, it looked as if they were glowing. He had never seen a more beautiful man, and his heart beat faster. The soldier slid his gaze up and down Valentine, as if searching for something. The eyes seemed to probe him, to see into him.

He looked away as he grew hard beneath the cotton robe. Heat infused his skin and seeped into his cheeks.

The man closed the door behind him with a soft click and turned back to look at him. "I am Asterius of the Royal Guard. Do you know why I am here?"

Again, Valentine enjoyed the cadence of his voice, the deepness of it. "No," he said, struggling to make his voice sound normal. "I do not."

"I am here to return this." He held up the broom. "I am told it belongs to you."

With Asterius' eyes on him, Valentine's cock jerked underneath his robe. He hoped the soldier could not see his dick moving in answer to his presence. However, as if reading Valentine's thoughts, the man looked down. His gaze lingered there, and Valentine grew even harder.

Turning away from him, Valentine went into the fireplace, speaking over his shoulder. "I have never seen that broom. Who was it

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that told you it belonged to me?"

"We found it in the home of a young couple. A young, *married* couple. They said that there was a Pagan priest that lived in the forest, though they would not give me a name."

Valentine busied himself with making a cup of tea. He poured water into a kettle and turned his back to the guard so that he could not see him light a fire beneath the kettle with a touch of his finger to the kindling. Asking Lupercus for strength, he dropped a handful of tea leaves into the now boiling water. The scent of jasmine filled the small room.

"I am but a simple man," Valentine said. "I live on my own and do not bother anyone. Surely there are other Pagan men beside myself in these trees?"

Asterius came in and stood behind him, his body heat warming Valentine's back. He wanted to press his body against the guard's, let that heat touch his skin.

Still holding the broom, Asterius moved closer to Valentine. "There is no one else that lives in the forest. We have searched it thoroughly. There is no one that lives here but you."

Valentine turned to say something to him and found himself face-to-face with him. He could sense heat rising from Asterius' skin, could see dark flecks of brown in his green eyes and the individual colors of his stubble. Valentine's cock grew harder still; Asterius must have felt it, too, for he looked down again and stared at Valentine's dick pulsing beneath the white fabric.

Asterius smiled, a sparkle in his eyes. In a whisper, he asked, "Are you sure the broom is not yours?"

Valentine nodded, not trusting himself to speak. His heart stopped when Asterius reached out a hand and ran a finger from his throat to his breastbone, where the robe had opened at the top. Heat grew where Asterius touched him, and his penis pulsed in response.

Valentine stood in shocked wonder as Asterius lowered his face and brushed his lips against his, kissing them softly. A spark jumped between them.

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When Asterius pulled back from the kiss, Valentine felt as if he were a deer caught in a trap. His heart pounded, his skin tingled.

Then Asterius smiled and stood the broom against the kitchen doorway. “The next time I come to see you, would you mind offering me a cup of tea?”

Numb, Valentine watched as Asterius let himself out of the small cottage, closing the door behind him with a soft click.

### Chapter Three

Valentine let the sun wash over him.

He had awoken after dreams of Asterius. Of his stubble rubbing all over his body, his solid body pressed against him. He had awoken with a dick so stiff he could have hammered nails with it. Deciding he needed to cool off, he put on a pair of leather trousers, a white tunic, and some soft, leather shoes.

He headed deeper into the forest until he could hear the sound of water. A small brook ran through part of the forest, cumulating in a pond big enough for swimming. He did his laundry and bathed here. It was enclosed on all sides by trees, so he was never vulnerable. He always felt safe here.

He stripped off his clothes and waded, naked, into the cool water. The brook was fed by mountain water, so it was always a little cold at first. But this would help clear his head. The sun shining down on him was warm and sensuous on his chilled skin.

The water had turned his nipples rigid, and he looked at them now, two buds on the front of his chest that brought so much pleasure. He pictured Asterius' mouth on them, imagined what it would be like to experience the heat of that man's tongue as he toyed with them. His penis grew and hardened underneath the water, and he shook his head.

He had never had feelings like this for anybody. The passion he'd felt before had been forced or lukewarm at best. Why did he fancy the Roman guard so much? Perhaps because the man was his enemy? How

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could he love a man sworn to eradicate the lands of all that practiced the sinful practice of marriage?

He slipped under the water and swam a little further across the pond.

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Asterius watched Valentine from behind a birch tree.

He had been waiting in the trees for Valentine to leave so that he could talk to him. On instinct, he'd followed when the man left his small hut. He wanted to watch the man who made him so horny, who filled his head and his heart with lust beyond anything he had ever imagined.

Asterius had bed his share of men. In fact, it was encouraged. If one mated with a man, he cared for him. He was more willing to protect someone he cared for in the heat of battle. But never had he lusted like this. When Asterius had laid eyes on Valentine, all reasonable thought vanished. All coherent thought was gone from his head.

Perhaps that was the reason for the kiss?

His lips still tingled when he thought of brushing his them against Valentine's, against those soft lips that he wanted nothing more than to part with his tongue

He watched the water shine like diamonds on Valentine's curly, brown hair that fell to his shoulders, framing a handsome, chiseled face. His muscles moved in his back, his legs. Though he couldn't see it, he recalled from memory the cleft in Valentine's chin covered in a day's growth of stubble.

He thought of Valentine's dick moving beneath that thin shift of cotton he'd worn and felt his own cock jerk. He had wanted to reach out and take hold of his penis, to have it grow bigger, fuller, while he held it in his hands.

God, he wanted this man.

He had never wanted anyone more than Valentine. He wanted to have him, to taste him, to possess him and be possessed by him. Smiling, he took off his breastplate and leather kilt.

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It was time to take matters into his own hands.

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Valentine surfaced from underneath the water and screamed.

There, standing by the waters edge, watching him, was Asterius. He was naked, and the sun shone on his tanned skin. He had a broad chest covered in a sprinkling of red hair that reminded him of molten gold. His chest was massive, the muscles moving as he breathed, two dime-sized nipples delectable as candies.

He ran his gaze down Asterius' chest to his stomach. The man was made from muscle and was formed into a thing of beauty. He saw the treasure trail of hair that he'd glimpsed previously and let his gaze travel to where it led. His heart stopped beating for an instant.

Asterius' dick pointed at him, thick and standing at attention. The head was a gorgeous purple mushroom that even now had a bead of wetness at its tip.

Valentine was just as solid under the water, though he was vulnerable. He crossed his arms over his chest. "What are you doing here?" His voice was but a whisper.

"I came to see you," Asterius said. "I've been watching you."

"Have you now? And what have you determined?"

"That I must have you." He strode into the water, the coldness of it causing goose bumps to rise all over his gorgeous body.

"Would you like me to warm the water for you?" Valentine felt as if he was in a dream and might never awaken.

"I thought we might warm it ourselves."

"Why are you here?" Valentine asked. "You know you should not be here."

"I am here because I can't get you out of my head. I can't think of anything else but you. From the moment you opened your door yesterday, all I can see when I close my eyes is you." He smiled and came a little closer. "Is that a good enough answer?"

"We cannot be together."



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"There is nothing wrong with lust between two men," he said with a wink.

"You know what I mean. We can't be together." He shook his head. "You frighten me so much."

"Then it's time you conquer your fears."

Growling softly, Asterius lunged for, and caught, him. He wrapped his arms around the other man, Valentine's solid dick pressed against his. He moaned when he felt the heat pulsating off the other man and held on to him tighter.

He bent down and pressed his lips to Valentine's, a heat spreading between them. Sparks danced off Valentine's skin, making the water around them hot. There was only each other.

He parted Valentine's mouth with his tongue and thrust deeper inside. He tasted him, savored him, and moaned when Valentine kissed him back, exploring his mouth with his own tongue.

Reaching down, he cupped Valentine's balls in his hand, softly caressing them. Valentine moaned and tried to pull away, but he held him firm. He stroked the other man's member softly, lightly, wanting the moment to last forever.

He picked Valentine up and brought him to the edge of the water hole. He put him down on the grass, holding him there with his strong hands, and kissed his neck, his chest, licking his hot skin. All the while, Valentine moaned softly and chanted his name in little whispers that fueled the fire they had started.

He looked at Valentine, drank him in. The man's long, brown hair was wet and dripping, the curls loose and thick. His eyes were closed, but his lips were parted, making little noises that drove Asterius on. Valentine had broad shoulders and, though not large, was very muscular. His body was taut, and his muscles rippled under Asterius' touch. Valentine's nipples had shrunk into two little buds, and he took one of them into his mouth, teased it with his tongue. Valentine moaned, and Asterius felt the man's dick move against him.

"You have me so hard, I could burst," Valentine said, his voice breathy and strained.

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“That makes two of us.” He took Valentine’s hands and placed them on his own dick. “See what you do to me? See how stiff it is? It’s for you. It is all for you.”

They stroked each other then. Slow at first, but with growing speed. Asterius loved the feel of Valentine’s long member. It was easily as big as his, though not as thick. Still, it suited Asterius fine when he stroked it and Valentine moaned his name.

“Come for me,” Asterius said. “Come for me, give me what I want. I want all of you, Valentine. All of you.”

He bent down and kissed Valentine so fiercely he thought their lips would bleed. He thrust his tongue into Valentine’s mouth, quick and fast, and increased the speed of his stroking. Valentine moaned louder, and his skin seemed to vibrate under Asterius’ hands. Valentine increased the speed and strength of the strokes around Asterius’ cock, which brought him dangerously close to coming, to falling over the edge.

Valentine pulled away from the kiss and whispered, “I’m going to come.”

Asterius watched as Valentine’s dick released its bounty; a rain of thick, white cum that sprayed Asterius on the chest, his stomach.

Valentine moaned softly, saying his name over and over, his skin hot and reddened with a blush.

Asterius lowered his mouth to Valentine’s penis, teasing the head first with his tongue then taking the length into his mouth.

Valentine whispered, “I’m going to come again.” And indeed he did. His cock spurted out more cum straight into the back of Asterius’ mouth.

He tasted like heaven. He stroked his own dick as he sucked on Valentine’s. When he was close, just about to come, he pulled his mouth from Valentine’s cock and looked deep into his eyes. “This is all for you,” he said.

He gave a loud grunt when his penis let forth a surge of cum. It covered Valentine from the neck down, and he felt as if his balls were trying to go back up inside his body. He came again and again, thick white rain covering Valentine in a sticky mess.

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When Asterius was able to breathe, he pulled Valentine to him again. Valentine wrapped his arms around him this time and kissed him freely, exploring his mouth with his tongue. They pulled back, and Asterius looked into Valentine's blue eyes wide and alive with passion.

They were covered in cum. Smiling, Asterius kissed Valentine softly on the lips. "Fancy a bath?"

## Chapter Four

They lay on a blanket by the water, the sun warming their bodies.

Valentine felt as if he would never be able to walk again. This suited him fine. He also thought he was dreaming. Every time he opened his eyes and turned to see Asterius laying there beside him, his heart gave a leap. Could there really be this much passion with someone else? Could there really be this much heat?

He stared at the water. Sparks from his body still heated it, and steam rose from the surface. How was it that he could have joined so many people in love, yet not know what love felt like until now?

That thought sobered him up quickly. He sat up, water droplets still clinging to his skin. "This isn't right. We can't do this. We can't continue this." His heart beat faster in his chest. His fear was so great that small sparks leaped from the palms of his hands.

Asterius put a hand on his shoulder. "Don't do this. Not after what just happened. How can you deny what's between us?"

"Look at what you are," Valentine said in a fierce whisper. He gestured to Asterius' uniform of the Roman Guard spread out on the grass by the water. The metal of the breastplate shone bright in the sunlight.

"You have no idea who I am, what I am capable of." Valentine shook his head. "You have no idea..."

"You said yourself you are a simple Pagan living in the woods. Do you always ask this way?"

The question caught him off guard, poised as he was to run. "What

do you mean?"

Asterius sighed and pulled him back down on top of him. He could sense Asterius' penis already hardening beneath him, and his own stirred in response.

"We experience perhaps the most amazing moment in sexual history, yet you want to run away like a frightened little rabbit. You're not afraid of the fact that I'm one of the Roman Guard. It has no bearing on what is between us."

"Then what am I afraid of?" Valentine whispered, his eyes downcast.

Valentine was forced to look Asterius in the eye when the big man moved, bringing their faces close. His lover moved a finger down his chest and played with a nipple, making it harden to a bud under his touch. Then Asterius spread his hand across his chest, and his heart thundered under the skin.

"You are afraid of this," Asterius said.

"Of my heart?"

"Of letting it feel."

"I don't know what you mean," Valentine said.

"I think you do. You perform marriage rights for those who are so in love it is blinding, yet you remain alone. Why is that?"

"Because I choose to be alone."

"No one chooses to be alone. Why would anyone choose that when love is waiting for them right around the corner?"

Valentine said nothing for a moment after this statement. Finally, when he trusted himself to speak, his voice was soft and unsure. "Love has never been waiting for me. I am different."

There was a twinkle in Asterius' eyes. "Because you like men? I can assure you that you are not so different, otherwise I would not find myself here." He chuckled. "There is indeed enough of men fucking that goes on in the Royal Guard."

"Then why do you not find one to suit your fancy there?" Valentine asked.

"Because I have found you."

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"You don't know what I am."

"Then show me." This was a command, Asterius' voice deep and melodious. Valentine's cock grew solid, and he softly kissed Asterius on the lips, though it cost him much to do it.

Slowly, he stood and looked down at the man he already thought of as his lover. "Watch."

Closing his eyes, he concentrated. The sparks that had sizzled in the palms of his hands came to life now, leaping like fire.

Asterius watched with wonder as Valentine's hands were consumed by tiny sparks that seemed to be made of spun gold and could only be magic.

The sparks flowed along Valentine's body, and a soft, warm heat filled Asterius' entire body with longing.

As more sparks materialized, a glow emanated from Valentine. It was as if Asterius were able to see his aura, though he knew this was magic. Pure magic from the gods. Not the Roman gods, though. They would never be able to make something so beautiful.

The glow grew stronger into a soft, silver light that seemed to fill the air around them with magic. He stared at the man who had captured his heart and was quite sure that his mouth hung open. He had never seen anything so breathtaking. The glow hummed, and it sounded like music.

It sounded as if the wind were whispering, and the trees were shaking their leaves, and the water running over rocks all at once. But it didn't frighten him. It filled him with a sense of gladness he could not name.

Valentine finally opened his eyes and looked down at him. The glow, the magic, grew that much stronger. "I am a Child of Lupercus."

"I know."

"You see me for what I really am," Valentine said. "This is what I was made for. Lupercus came to me one evening and bestowed upon me gifts to grant his wishes here. I am his, but my heart belongs to you."

Valentine closed his eyes and whispered a soft incantation. To Asterius, the words sounded like the wind. The glow slowly dissipated until it faded to nothing. Standing there, Valentine looked just as he had

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before. But to Asterius, he seemed different, and more beautiful.

Valentine reached out and took Asterius' hand. "I want to take you to my home. I want you to spend the night with me." There was urgency to these words.

"I wouldn't think of saying no," Asterius whispered.

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They approached his cabin quickly.

The night around them was filled with the sounds of crickets, and Valentine could hear birds cooing softly in the distance. The grass whispered as they made their way down the path to his cabin, his white robe chaffing the head of his penis as it grew.

He could also hear his heart as it beat a fast tattoo beneath this skin. He thought that Asterius must surely hear it, too, it was so loud, but he gave no indication. For strength, and for reassurance, he reached out and took his lover's hand in his. It was warm and comforting, strong. And Asterius' touch sent a bolt of fire up his arm.

His magic responded and sent a small shock of fire along Asterius' skin. By the time they reached the cabin door, they both glowed softly in the moonlight.

Valentine almost sighed out loud when Asterius took his hand back and looked at it with wonder. "How long have you been able to do this?"

"Ever since I took it upon myself to perform marriage rights," Valentine said. "It's not right that those who love can't marry because one man says so. When I took my post as cleric, the power grew in me."

His breath came in labored gasps. Being this close to Asterius did something to him, made something boil within his body. He wanted to experience this molten fire of his skin, to lose himself in him. "It is a gift from the god Lupercus. He is happy with me."

"I am happy with you, too." Slowly, Asterius leaned forward and kissed him softly on the lips. Valentine opened his mouth, taking his tongue deep. Then he kissed him back.

That molten fire spread through Valentine, and he felt as if his

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whole body would catch flame. He broke the kiss and looked at Asterius. "If I do not get naked with you soon, I will lose my mind."

"It would be a terrible thing to lose," Asterius said, chuckling.

Valentine opened the door and stepped aside to let Asterius enter. As soon as he closed the door, Asterius was upon him, crushing his lips, thrusting his tongue into his mouth. He had already dropped his kilt onto the floor with the rest of his armor, and he now stood naked, pressed against Valentine's body.

Valentine felt as if his whole body were liquid, as if he had finally learned to fly, had finally learned what love really was. He kissed Asterius back with such fever it caused Asterius to groan. When Asterius ripped his robe off, he didn't care. He let himself be picked up and carried to his small bed. The sound of ripping cloth let loose something in Valentine that had been held in check, and he let himself go.

He ravished Asterius' mouth, rubbed his hands over his lover's chest. "I need you inside me," he whispered. "I want all of you inside me."

Asterius growled, a guttural sound that sent shivers running down his spine and made his dick go rock hard.

Asterius thrust him onto the bed. "Turn over," he said. "No, on your stomach."

Valentine obeyed, wondering what Asterius would do with him, craving his touch, his breath along his skin. Valentine's heart beat increased with his lover on top of him, his massive dick rubbing against his buttocks, and he thought he'd never experienced something as wonderful as this anticipation.

Valentine groaned when Asterius kissed his neck, biting softly at the flesh. Asterius reached down and, while continuing to kiss his neck, parted Valentine's buttocks. He probed Valentine's asshole with a finger, softly at first, rubbing it, pushing his finger only a little of the way inside.

Valentine's groans increased, and he bucked, trying to draw Asterius' finger deeper inside him.

"Easy," Asterius said. "There is more yet to come."

Asterius pushed his finger in slowly, very slowly, forcing the hole



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open until half of it was inside. He moved it in and out, still kissing neck, while he did this, the hole opening and closing around his finger.

He moved down Valentine's body, his nipples like rocks as his hair rubbed against his skin.

"Relax," Asterius said. "I won't hurt you, *dragostea mea, Meu singur.*"

*My Love, my only.* Valentine's heart seemed to fill his entire being, and his body relaxed, waiting to be touched by his lover, his love.

Surprising Asterius, he turned around and took Asterius' member into his hands. Asterius' soft groan increased in volume when Valentine took the head of his lover's penis into his mouth, rolling his tongue around its girth.

He cupped Asterius' balls in his hand, playing with them softly as he took more and more of Asterius' penis into his mouth. He watched as Asterius closed his eyes in bliss. Valentine ran his fingers through his lover's curling hair. It was like silk to him and he wanted to lose himself in it.

"I don't want to come yet," Asterius groaned. "I'm so close, but I don't want to come yet." He sounded as if he was on the edge and ready to fly over.

"I want you to come inside of me," Valentine said. He pushed Asterius down so that he lay on his back, and he crouched above him, the tip of Asterius' dick teasing his asshole. "I want to see you," Valentine said. "I want to see you, to look at you and your face when you're inside me."

Taking Asterius' cock in his hand, he guided it toward his asshole. He felt it open and close, felt it clench with wanting, and nearly came when he touched the head of Asterius' dick to the bud of his hole. But he breathed in once, twice, and then slowly worked himself down the length of Asterius' dick.

Slowly, ever so slowly, he eased himself down.

When the head of his lover's penis was completely inside him, Asterius groaned. "You are going to kill me," he said. "Surely this is torture."

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Smiling, loving the look of lust on Asterius' face, he took more of his dick into him, sliding slowly down the shaft. He felt the blood pulsing through it, the desire coming off of Asterius like a heat wave.

When Valentine thought he could stand it no longer, when he thought he could take no more, he took the last of his lover's cock into him, the shaft of the penis stretching him, filling him up until he thought he would burst. "How does that feel?" Valentine said.

"Exquisite," Asterius said. "Beyond description."

"It is the first time I have had someone inside me," Valentine said. And he began to move, raising himself up and lowering himself down, slowly. He wanted to draw out the pleasure for as long as he could, for as much time as possible.

Asterius, though, had other ideas. No longer content to lie helpless, he grabbed Valentine's hips and lifted him up so that he could thrust into him with rough, pounding thrusts. He rammed his dick into Valentine again and again, with stronger thrusts each time, so that the slap of skin against skin punctuated their moans.

Soon, sweat dripped off both of them, and they were each glowing. Valentine had never felt such bliss; he could barely breathe. He rode his lover's cock with a fierce, determined hunger, meeting each thrust with a clench of his hole and a moan.

Valentine clenched his asshole firm, so that he was tight going up, and tight going down. The pleasure in this made a moan rise out of Asterius' throat, a growl as he panted, sucked in breath.

"You keep that up much longer," Asterius said. "And I'm going to come."

"I want you to come," Valentine said. "I need you to come. I want to have you inside me. All of you." He clenched and Asterius' pounds became fierce; he thrust into Valentine harder and with more force each time and groaned when Valentine started to beat his own penis, stroking its length.

"I'm going to come," Asterius said. "I'm so close to coming."

Valentine smiled as sweat dripped from his brow. The glow emanating from his skin intensified. "Come for me, my love. God, I love

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you so much." He worked his own dick fiercely, matching Asterius thrust for thrust. "I love you," he said. "I love you so much."

"*Dragostea mea, Meu singur.*" Asterius said. "I'm going to come for you. I love all of you."

"And I you," Valentine said.

With an earth-shattering growl, Asterius came. Valentine felt the thick, hot load inside himself. He sensed its heat, its warmth filling him, spreading into him, even as he came in fierce, glorious thrusts. Cum rained down on Asterius' chest as Asterius continued to come. Valentine knew it slid out of his ass, coating his ass with a hot stickiness.

Valentine continued to come, thick, hot spurts covering his lover from face to chest. Asterius reached out and took Valentines sensitive penis in his hands, making him shudder, and licked the come from his palm.

Valentine fell on top of Asterius, crushing his body to his lovers, and their hearts beat under the skin as one. They lay quiet for a moment, listening to the sounds of each others breathing, before Asterius spoke.

"I think we need another bath, don't you?"

## Chapter Five

In the morning, Valentine found himself alone.

Smiling to himself, running a hand along the indent that Asterius' body had left on the feather mattress, he got out of bed and stretched. Never had he been so utterly used and emptied.

Never had he felt so wonderful. Never had his body been so thoroughly pleased. His skin still hummed with Asterius' touch, and he hummed to himself as he prepared his morning tea. Lighting a fire with a snap of his fingers, the flame dancing on the end of his index finger, he touched it to the tinder and watched the flame take life. Much the way his heart had been heated, he thought. Where he had been cold before, the fire that Asterius had lit in him warmed even the coldest part of his heart.

He was still humming when he heard a hurried knock at the door. Smiling, and running to throw on a robe, he grew worried when the knocks on his front door became more forceful.

Anna's hushed voice came through the door. "*Valentine*, I know you're there. You have to let me in."

When he opened the door, he found her in a state of disarray. "Whatever is the matter with you?"

"They know," she said, pushing inside and closing the door behind her.

"Who? The Romans? Yes, we knew they were aware of someone doing ceremonies before," he said, unable to keep a note of impatience out of his voice.

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"No, Valentine. They *know*. They know it's you; they know you are a cleric." She choked back a sob. "They know you can do magic."

Valentine's world turned on its axis. The pit of his stomach dropped away from him until he was sure he would fall. Gripping onto the doorframe, he held himself upright. "What are we going to do?" he whispered.

Anna shook her head. "I don't know. I tried to come to you last night, to warn you so that you had time to leave, but..."

He didn't need her to complete the sentence. "You saw us together."

She nodded. "Yes. I know who he is, too. He is the one that told them what you are."

The words hit him like a slap of cold water. "He would never do that. He would never betray me like that. Asterius loves me." He hoped it was indeed true.

Tears slipped out of Anna's eyes and slid down her cheeks. "I saw him leave early this morning. The voices in the village say that he is the one who brought the news to Claudius. They say that Claudius already rides here now, that he has brought his troops with him to capture the heretic."

"Me?" he asked in a soft voice. "You mean me?"

Anna nodded. "I am so sorry, Valentine." She threw her arms around him and whispered into his ear. "I have always loved you, but I knew that you were not meant for me. You were meant for someone else." She sobbed, her body heaving. "You were meant for him. I don't know why Lupercus would give you love and then take it away in such a cruel fashion."

Valentine held her close. She had always been his most trusted confidant. "The god works in bizarre ways. We may not always understand why things happen, but they happen for a reason." Pain, deeper than he'd ever known, filled his heart, his soul. It took all of his willpower not to cry out. "The god's will is all seeing. Surely there will be a way out of this."

They broke away from each other when they heard shouts and the

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beat of horse hoofs a few yards away. Valentine kissed Anna's cheeks. "You must go now. Run into the woods and find the fairy cave. They will not find you there."

"No!" Anna said, looking fierce, her face becoming hard. "I will stay with you. I will fight with you."

"Who will carry on our noble work if you are in prison as well?" he asked. "You must continue our work for Lupercus. There are other lovers, others who love, who need to be wed."

"But what about you?" Anna asked, tears falling freely now, sobs threatening to mar her words.

"I will never love again," he whispered. He went to the dry closet where he stored his food and rummaged in a basket. He returned to Anna holding a thick, silver chain. Dangling from it was a depiction of Lupercus, head bent in prayer. "Take this." He pressed the chain and pendant into her palm. "It holds power from him. Let it fill you up, and let it heal you."

They looked to the front of the house again when they heard more shouts. The Roman guards were closer now. "Go now!" he said with urgency, pushing her to the back of the house. "Go now before they find you. You will be forever in my heart, Anna."

"And you in mine." she said.

"Merry met, merry meet, and merry meet again."

"So most it be," she whispered.

Then, like a dream, she was gone, running soundlessly into the woods. He watched her go, a fleeting splash of red and gold, her dress flying out behind her. Then he turned back inside and closed the door.

He went to his bedroom and found his ceremonial robes. They were etched along the edges with embroidery made to look like vines and branches. Around his neck he put a silver chain from which hung a small piece of amber, the blood of trees, possessing the most potent magic.

He found his staff, carved and etched out of the trunk of a birch tree. Power sizzled up his hand and along his arm when he grasped it. He held tight to it; he would need the power the staff held.

And then he went to the front door and opened it, prepared to meet

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whatever came, his heart beating loudly underneath his skin.

## Chapter Six

Valentine was able to see them come up the road. About twenty Roman Guard in all. But there were two things that made his heart stop, that almost drained all the fight out of him.

He saw the sun shining off of the reddish golden hair first. When his lover's face came into view, when he saw Asterius marching up that hill, he thought his soul would wither and die. So deep was his anguish that he failed to control the sparks of fire that leapt across his skin.

His body knew his lover on sight.

The second thing he saw was Claudius leading the Guard toward his dwelling. Valentine said nothing and placed a mask of indifference over his features as the men made their way toward his house. He must not let them see his pain.

He would not give them the satisfaction. Could not let them know how much he hurt. His heart had been bled out of him; but surely Asterius must feel the same way?

One look at his lover, at the man who ignited his skin, told him that this was not so. One look at Asterius showed him the gruff Roman guard who had first greeted him at his door two days ago.

To Valentine, it seemed as if it had been forever ago.

His heart belonged to someone else. To feel such emotion, such passion, such love; and now to have nothing but a cold and empty expanse of ice. He would never be the same.

Instead of crying out, instead of throwing himself into the arms of



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his lover, he stood his ground and faced the soldiers head on. "What business do you have here?" he said. His voice sounded deep and rich, but inside he was dead.

Claudius sneered at him. "We will ask the questions here. You are hereby charged with treason."

Valentine actually chuckled. "And what treason have I committed?"

"You have married couples in a binding union. This goes against my Royal Decree."

"And I am to be honored that you have come to give me the news yourself?" He smiled slightly. "Thank you so much, your grace." He made a mock bow. "You have brightened my day considerably."

Valentine did not make a sound when one soldier, after a nod from Claudius, lowered his spear to his neck. He felt a pinprick against his skin and knew that blood flowed down his neck in one long drop.

"You offend me." Claudius said.

"You offend me by breathing," Valentine said. "I think that makes us even."

There was one moment, one heart-stopping moment, when Valentine thought he had gone too far. Instead, the emperor drew back his hand and slapped Valentine across the face. "Do not test me. There are penalties for such a thing." He regained his composure. "You are charged with ignoring my decree. How do you plead?"

"Innocent," Valentine said. "I wasn't disobeying you. I was obeying my god."

"Your Pagan gods have no worth here."

"Not to you," he replied. "But surely a man has a right to his own beliefs."

Claudius laughed. "Not in my empire."

"Do you deny, then, that there were gods before yours? Do you deny that my god exists?"

"I neither deny nor confirm anything," Claudius said. "You are a traitor to the crown and to your country."

"But I am not a traitor to my countrymen. That honor falls on you."

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Valentine was sure Claudius was going to strike him again. His skin had gone pale, and dark shadows moved across his eyes.

Finally, not moving, Claudius spoke. "Chain him. I want him in a cell as soon as possible. I want him comfortable for questioning."

Valentine pushed the point of the spear away from his neck. "You have no need for chains. I will go freely."

When he strode past Asterius, he didn't even glance in his direction.

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Inside, Valentine's heart broke into a million little pieces. Indeed, he didn't feel anything as he marched, surrounded by the Guard, a prisoner. He saw Anna in the crowd, her pale face wet with tears. He didn't acknowledge her, but she knew he had seen her. His heart knew a small bit of gladness that, at least, she would know love and let it fill her.

The journey through the town was long and difficult. As they marched, one of the Guard read of Valentine's list of offenses. When his sentence was shouted out—death by execution—he could swear he heard Asterius gasp.

He resisted looking at his lover the entire journey. He did not want to incriminate him and have him lose his life.

He could never be that cruel.

When they reached the palace, built into the slopes of the mountain range that protected Rome from outsider invasion, he was roughly thrust into a small cell in the dungeon. The floor was stone, and there was a small pallet of straw on the floor in one corner should he be tired enough to sleep.

The bars, made of thick, blackened iron, stood like sentries in front of him, and he cringed when the door slammed shut and the key turned in the lock. He hated being caged in. His magic would still work here but, away from nature, he was stifled. He was alone.

A guard approached with a tray of food. Expecting gruel or nothing fit for eating, he was surprised to be handed a tray filled with

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pheasant, bread, and soft butter. Even a goblet of wine.

"What's all this?" he asked.

"The Emperor is not unreasonable," the guard said. "He has stated that your last meal is to be a fine one. Enjoy this." The guard did not smile but leaned in close as he laid down the tray. "I believe in what you are doing," he whispered. "There are those of us here that do. We will try to make sure your death is as painless as possible."

Valentine blanched in shock. He had supporters? Here? "I thank you for that," he said softly. He had to assume that even the walls had ears, that no conversation was safe. When the guard left, he pushed the food to one side of the cell and sat upon the pallet of straw. He had no appetite, yet, and did not want to eat.

Instead, he cupped his hand and called forth his magic. Small tongues of flame danced on his palm. Before, the fire had always entranced him, given him joy. Now it only served to remind him of his lover's betrayal. He clenched his hand into a fist to snuff the fire out.

He straightened, but did not stand, when he heard footsteps. He was shocked to see the emperor standing before him, looking down at him with disdain.

"And so the mighty has fallen." Claudius sounded almost sad. "You have been quite a thorn in my side, priest."

"I am no priest," Valentine said.

"You are a...cleric, is it? Able to do magic and a priest of the people? A beggar's priest, if I'm correct."

"I am what you wish me to be."

"You are what I tell you to be," Claudius said. "You have been quite the bother. Marrying people when you had no right. Helping people wed even though I had made the royal decree that no marriages were to take place."

"Who are you to control love in such a way?"

"I am Emperor of Rome, Claudius the Second."

"But not even you, Emperor, can control the love of the human heart." He smiled. "The gods cannot even control it. Love has no boundaries and knows no control. How can you think to stop it by

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stopping marriage?"

"Marriage weakens men," Claudius said. "If men have wives at home, waiting for them, that makes them weak. They do not fight with focus if they have a sniveling woman waiting for them."

"But have you never loved? Does your heart not beat for someone?"

"It did," Claudius said. He sounded almost defeated. "It still does. But he prefers you instead."

Saying nothing more, Claudius walked away, leaving him alone with his thoughts.

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The moonlight shone through the cell's only window. To Valentine, it had never been father away. He longed to be out in the moonlight, to bathe in it, to breathe it in. He didn't want to be here in this cell, contemplating his death.

He wondered for a moment what his god had in store for him, what his god meant by ending his life on such a sour note. Surely there were others who needed to be wed? Shaking his head sadly, he knew Anna would carry on with their mission. That she would perhaps, one day, find the love she so richly deserved.

A whispering of footsteps sounded on the stone floor. Valentine lay on his pallet, his food untouched, and pretended to sleep. He listened to the footsteps come closer until they stopped in front of his cell.

"Valentine," A deep voice whispered. "My sweet Valentine."

Valentine knew that voice, knew those lips shaping his name. The voice sent shivers down his spine and, despite his circumstances, his dick thickened in response.

His lover had come for him.

But was Asterius still his lover? Rising slowly, he looked at Asterius through the bars of his cell.

His eyes, blue green, glowed in the darkness, and his skin shone with a subtle glow. He thought, for a moment, that it was a trick of the

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light, but then he noticed his hands, his own skin. It glowed, too.

"Why are you here?" Valentine asked.

"I've come to free you."

Valentine laughed. "After you fed me to the hounds?"

"You have to believe me when I tell you that I had nothing to do with your capture."

"But Claudius knows of us," Valentine said. "He told me so himself."

"Because I told him about us. In order to spare your life."

Valentine searched the words for falsehood but found none. What he experienced instead was that his heart, so cold and brittle, started to heat again. Fire soothed his aching limbs. "Is this true?"

"How could I have anything to do with your death when I wanted nothing more than to bury myself in you? When I wanted nothing more than to lose myself in you? I tried to make him see reason, tried to plead your case. I'm afraid I did more harm than good though. I thought..." He struggled for words. "I thought he would listen."

"You loved each other once," Valentine said.

"Many years ago. I moved on, but Claudius still hungers for me. I do not share his lust. My heart belongs only to one man."

"And who is that?"

"You," Asterius said. "When we were together, nothing in the world mattered except your happiness and the happiness you brought me. I have never felt anything like my love for you. You have to believe me that I would never harm you or put you in harm's way."

Valentine nodded. "I believe you."

"Is your heart still mine?"

"Yes."

"And do you still want my heart?"

"If you have it to give," Valentine said.

"It is yours."

They softly kissed through the bars of the cell, and fire spread along his skin, sparks once more dancing where they had lain dormant. "But how are we going to get out of here?" he asked, breathing in the

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scent of his lovers skin.

There was a sound behind them, and Valentine turned to see Anna standing in the shadows. She held a set of keys in her hand, which she jingled merrily. "If you two lovebirds are finished," she said. "We have a bit of work to do."

## Chapter Seven

Under the cover of night, they made their escape.

Anna had secured the keys from the guard. "He was easy enough to seduce and drug. He will be sleeping peacefully for some time, and when he wakes, he'll find the keys gone. Then I'm sure he will run. He would not want to suffer the emperor's rage."

They rode in the back of a caravan driven by Maximus and Rozanna, the couple he'd married only days before. They were posing as a couple bringing their wares to the bazaar. So far, there had been no trouble.

"It's good of you to do this for us," Valentine said.

"It's our pleasure," Rozanna said. "How else can we repay you for the happiness you have brought us?"

"You will have to hide for some time," Anna said. "We'll take you to the border, so you can flee into Italy. There are people there waiting for you. But they will be expecting that. They will be looking for you. For now, for a while, you will have to live in the forest."

Anna dug in a sack she'd thrown over her shoulders. She withdrew a map. "There is a house that sits in the branches of the largest tree. It is hidden by leaves, and it is not easy to find. Here, you'll find the route you must take. Then, in a fortnight, make your way to Italy by cover of night. I will have someone waiting to meet you."

Valentine and Asterius nodded. Valentine could barely breathe. Every second he thought he would wake up, that this must not be real.

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They said nothing until the caravan stopped. Then Anna spoke. "This is where we leave you."

"But what's to become of you?" Valentine asked.

"I will live on at Rozanna and Maximus' cottage. There are others who need love such as you've found with each other. I will help them as you did."

"My Priestess..." Valentine could say no more before tears choked his words. Anna wrapped him in a strong embrace.

"Be not sad, my Valentine," she said. "For we will see each other again. We will conquer this. The Roman Empire is going to fall. I have seen it. And when it does, we will be together again."

Valentine and Asterius slung their packs on their shoulders and dismounted. Saying nothing, but waving with a smile, tears sliding down her face, they watched Anna drive away.

Asterius grabbed him then and crushed his mouth in a bruising kiss. He wrapped his arms around Valentine and pulled him closer. Heat spread along their limbs until their skin softly glowed.

"Let's find that tree house, shall we?" Asterius said. "I need to have you naked in my arms."

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When they found the ladder hanging from the tree house, they climbed it and pulled it up after them. Valentine didn't trust himself to speak. He felt as if he would burst, as if his heart inside him would explode. He was not really here, he thought. Soon, he would wake up from this dream and find himself on the cold, stone floor in his cell.

He repressed a yell when Asterius threw his arms around him. He felt his lover's cock pressing into his buttocks and breathed a sigh of relief. It was no dream.

They were together.

He turned to look upon his lovers face, and his heart sighed. Such a beautiful man, such a gorgeous face, all his. His lover was already naked, and the moonlight streaming in through the cracks between the wooden



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slats drew shadows along Asterius' skin. To Valentine, he had never seemed more beautiful.

Wordlessly, Asterius helped Valentine out of his robe. It pooled to the floor like a puddle, and then he was being lifted up, held strong and fast in his lover's arms as Asterius kissed his skin, his lips. Valentine kissed him back with a fierce hunger, running his hands along Asterius' shoulders, his back. Asterius' nipples rubbed against him, and he moaned with wanting.

"I can't make it to the bed," Asterius said.

"Then take me right here," Valentine replied. "I want you so badly."

Softly, Asterius laid Valentine down on the grass mat that covered the floor. "I don't think I can be gentle this time."

"I don't think I can either." He was surprised to find he still had a voice.

When Asterius took Valentine's stiff member into his mouth, Valentine was sure he would explode. The pleasure was too much, the sensations too great. He wanted his lover inside him now, this instant. He moved to turn over, but Asterius held him in place.

"I thought we might try something different," He said.

Valentine groaned when Asterius positioned himself over his dick, grabbed hold of his slick shaft, and guided it toward his asshole. Valentine's cock probed Asterius bud, and he nearly wept with wanting.

"All I think of is you." Asterius said. "You are in my thoughts, my dreams, my breath. I need the rest of you inside me," Asterius said as he gently slid down over the head of Valentine's penis, slowly down the length of his shaft. "You feel so good inside me," Asterius whispered. He clenched his ass around Valentine's cock. "You fit so good."

Valentine could say nothing; his voice was lost to him. He could only stare longingly at his lover as Asterius began to rise and fall over his penis.

"Do you like that?" Asterius asked.

Valentine nodded. "Yes." The word came out in a choked whisper. "God, yes."

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"I want to drive you as crazy as you drive me," Asterius said.

Soon, there was no need for words.

Asterius increased his speed, and Valentine, all reservations gone, thrust up to meet his lover's ass as it went up and down on his dick. Sweat and fire poured off the two of them as they moved as one.

Valentine rubbed his hand over his chest, gathering up sweat, then ran his hand along Asterius' rigid cock.

"Oh, god," Asterius groaned. "You keep that up and I won't last much longer."

"Doesn't it feel good?" Valentine said as he stroked and then thrust deeper into his lover's ass. "Don't you like it when I touch you?"

"Yes," Asterius said, all breath gone from him. "God, yes."

Valentine increased speed. He stroked Asterius' thick cock and continued to thrust. "Come for me, my love," he said. "I want you to come. I want it all over me." He stroked faster and faster until he heard Asterius groan low in his throat.

"Oh, god!" Asterius shouted. "I'm...going...to..."

He never got the last word out. Great sprays of cum shot from the head of his cock to rain down on Valentine's chest, his face; it was hot and wonderful, like velvet. Some landed in his mouth, and he wanted more. Asterius was still coming, and Valentine sat up so that he could take Asterius' dick into his mouth.

"Again..." Asterius said. "I'm coming..."

More spurts flew into Valentine's mouth, and he sucked and swallowed hungrily. His lover tasted like magic, like lust, and he wanted it all.

Asterius moved up and down along Valentine's still stiff cock, moving faster and faster until Valentine could hold it back no longer. With a moan, he tore his mouth away from Asterius' dick and looked into his lover's eyes. "I'm coming..." he said on a breath. "All for you. It's all for you."

He groaned louder as he came, great spurts of cum that filled his lover's ass. His body shuddered and jerked, and he felt as if a great floodgate had opened. He loved this man and was loved in return. There

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was no greater gift.

When they were both sated, Asterius gently lifted himself off of Valentine's dick and laid down beside him. His lover put his arm around him and pulled him closer so he could sense his heart beating against his skin.

They lay there for what seemed like hours but was probably only minutes. Night sounds played like music outside their hut. Wind blowing the grass, leaves dancing in the breeze. Somewhere far from them, a wolf howled.

Finally, Asterius spoke. "My Valentine," he said. "My funny Valentine. What am I going to do with you?"

He moved to kiss his lover, his cock already growing hard once more. As he touched his lips to Asterius, he felt their hearts sing.

The End

## Author Bio

Jamieson Wolf has been writing since a young age when he realized he could be writing instead of paying attention in school. Since then, he has created many worlds in which to live his fantasies and live out his dreams.

As well as being a novelist, he is an accomplished non-fiction writer. He writes book reviews for Linear Reflections, The Gotta Write Network, and his book review blog, The Friday Review. As well, he writes non-fiction pieces for *The American Chronicle*. You can also read his blog, One Step at a Time, where he writes about living with Cerebral Palsy.

He is the author of several novels and two non-fiction works which include: *Hunted*, *Hope Falls*, *Eagle Valley* and *The Ghost Mirror*. His forthcoming publications include *Dragon's Cove*, *Cupid's Delight*, *Letting the Mind Wander* and *One Step at a Time*, a memoir, from The Friday Project in the summer of 2008.

He currently lives in Ottawa, Ontario Canada with his husband, Robert, and his cat, Mave, who thinks she's people.

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