



# MAKING WAVES

PEPPER ESPINOZA

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“No, I don’t want to go to the movies. I don’t know if I even want to have anything to do with the movies anymore.”

Andy frowned. “What do you mean? You’re going to quit?”

“Sometimes...sometimes I think I would like to.”

“Why?”

“I never thought it would be like this. That’s all. I’m probably going to regret saying any of this tomorrow.”

“Hell, you probably won’t even remember anything you said tonight. Trust me.”

“You will.”

“Yeah, but I won’t hold it against you. In fact, I’ll pretend that I don’t remember a thing.”

“So whatever happens in this room...it’s going to remain in this room?”

Andy frowned, wondering if he should just tell Scott to forget it. He wouldn’t mention to anybody that Scott wanted to quit Hollywood, but he didn’t want to be in possession of any other information. But Scott was looking at him with such hope that it would be cruel to dismiss him now. And though

the two men weren't incredibly close, Scott would be part of his family for the rest of his life—no reason to start being cruel to him.

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BY

PEPPER ESPINOZA

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MAKING WAVES  
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# CHAPTER 1

Scott Huxley couldn't walk into a room without getting noticed. According to a recent *Entertainment Weekly* article, every woman wanted him and every man wanted to be him. Andy Burns had heard that cliché before, and he understood why people thought it fit Scott Huxley perfectly, but he had a different opinion. Every woman wanted to marry him, and every man wanted to fuck him. That reason, and that reason alone, was why Hollywood clamored so loudly for him. Not that Scott couldn't act. He could. But somehow, his chops as an actor just contributed to the fantasy that the studio happily encouraged.

Scott, for his part, seemed utterly oblivious to the effect he

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had on people. He existed in the center of an elaborate fantasy world, but he lived outside of it. Andy liked that about him. It kept Scott grounded. Sometimes, Andy forgot that Scott Huxley was a big time movie star. He was just the rather quiet, reserved guy who happened to be engaged to Andy's sister, Susan.

The drunken, sloppy man hunched over the corner of the bar was neither the calm movie star at the center of an almost manic fantasy land, nor was he the reserved fiancé of Susan Burns. He looked more like one of the louts that went directly to the bar after work and drank their paychecks away, breaking their wife's heart, and taking food out of their children's mouth. It was a surprising look, but oddly, not an altogether unattractive one.

"Andy! Old buddy, old friend, old pal of mine." Scott lifted his glass of beer in a salute. It was strange to hear each word slur against the other, instead of Scott's usual crisp, precise delivery. "What are you doing here?"

"I came for a beer," Andy said easily, settling on the chair beside him.

"Oh. Well, then, you should have one. They're quite good."

"They are. How long have you been here?"

"I don't know. Hey, Phil!"

"Yeah, Scott?" The bartender didn't even look up from the beer he was pouring.

"Phil's a friend of mine. Aren't you a friend of mine, Phil?"



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“Yes. We’re great friends, Scott.”

“See? Did you know that I didn’t even know Phil before tonight? How could I not know a fine man like Phil? He’s here, every single night. Every single one, Andy. He’s here every single night, and you know what? He’s working. He’s earning money to put food on the table.”

“It sounds like Phil is a great person,” Andy agreed. He wondered if Scott had already made arrangements to pay for his tab, or if Phil would be demanding money from Andy’s wallet. He also wondered how he was going to keep this from Susan.

“He is. Real great. What were we talking about before?”

“I asked you how long you’ve been here.”

“Oh, right. You know, I don’t know. All night? Maybe all week.”

“I doubt you’ve been here all week.”

“He came in around six,” Phil said, sliding a glass in front of Andy. “At first it was a bit exciting, you know. We never get any *real* celebrities in here. But after awhile...”

Andy sipped from his beer and lowered the glass slowly when he realized Scott was staring at him. “What?”

“Your eyes.”

“What about them?”

“They’re darker than Susan’s. But they’re still blue.”

“Yeah. I know.”

“I like them.”

Andy swallowed. “Thanks, Scott. I like your eyes, too. I thought you were supposed to be in Napa tonight?”

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Scott narrowed his eyes, as if he was trying to focus on Andy's face. How much had Scott had to drink? And why had he chosen tonight, of all nights, to pick a hole-in-the-wall and get plastered? He had never seen anything to indicate Scott was any sort of teetotaler, but he had never seen Scott have more than a glass of wine, or maybe a scotch and soda at dinner.

"Aren't I?"

"Aren't you what?"

"Aren't I in Napa?"

"No," Andy said slowly. "You're still in Hollywood."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, I'm pretty sure."

"Oh, no. Oh no, oh no, oh no. Andy... Andy this is *horrible*."

"It's not..."

"It is." He dropped his head to the bar and slammed his brow against the polished wood. "This is horrible, horrible, horrible."

"Hey..." Andy grabbed his shoulder and forced him to sit up. An embarrassing picture on his sister's wedding day would be bad. A giant bruise on the groom's forehead would be worse. Of course, the worst thing of all would be if the groom didn't even make it to his own wedding. "Stop that. You'll hurt yourself."

"Andy..."

"What?"

"If I don't even know where I am, how did you find me?"

"Luck. Susan didn't know where you were. Leonard didn't

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know where you were. David didn't know where you were. So, I just started at the bars closest to the studio and started asking questions."

"Oh. Have I been to many bars tonight?"

"About five, actually."

"Andy, I promise, I only wanted one drink. One tiny drink. One teensy, weensy insignificant drink." Scott drew each syllable out until the words almost lost their shape completely. "One easy drink to help me unwind. I've been too tense lately."

"You've had a stressful month."

"A stressful month? I've had a stressful year! A stressful decade! Every day, it's something new, Andy. Did you know that? Every day."

"It's only been stressful because you work so hard. You're one of the most successful actors in Hollywood. That's got to be worth some hard work."

"Hollywood. I hate Hollywood," Scott muttered darkly.

"No, you don't."

"I hate it."

"Then maybe we should drive up to Napa."

Scott blinked at him. "You mean we're not in Napa right now?"

Andy sighed. This was going to be a long night. When Susan had called and told him nobody could find Scott, Andy had assumed he was already on the road. Or maybe he'd lost track of time on set. It wouldn't be the first time Susan's plans had been sidetracked by a late shoot or some sort of

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catastrophe at the studio, or a last minute photo shoot, or interview, or premiere that Scott absolutely had to attend. He never expected to find Scott in a bar, totally out of his gourd.

"No, we're still in Hollywood. Remember? I already told you this."

"Oh, right. I hate Hollywood."

"That's what I heard. I think we should head on home."

"Susan is going to be very, very cross with me."

"She's not going to be cross."

"This is bad. This is very, very bad. I've lost my keys."

Andy reached into Scott's jacket pocket and closed his hand around the keys in question. As long as Scott believed they were missing, he wouldn't try to drive anywhere. If he didn't try to drive, then he wouldn't go and get himself lost again.

"I'll drive you home. And look for your keys. Can you stand?"

Scott looked strangely like a fish, blinking and gaping up at him. Andy couldn't help but feel sorry for him. Whatever had led him to this point wouldn't be a fraction as bad as his hangover would be the next morning. "I don't know. Can I stand what?"

"Can you stand on your feet?"

"You're so full of questions. So many questions. Questions about everything. You should be a reporter." Scott narrowed his eyes. "Damned reporters. Who do they think they are?"

"They're just doing their job, Scott."

"Stalking me isn't a job! I'm not a job! They just pick and

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pick and pick...like hens. Do you know where the word henpecked comes from?"

Andy grabbed Scott elbows and pulled him to his feet. Scott swayed and looked offended, but he didn't try to pull away. Which was probably a good thing, because one hard yank in Scott's state would put him flat on his ass.

"Just down that hall," Phil said.

"Thanks again."

"Wait, are we leaving?"

"Yes, we're going to Napa."

"What about Phil?"

"What about him?"

"Phil's my friend. I can't leave him here. In *Hollywood*."

"Phil's fine," Andy said patiently. "He probably likes Hollywood. He gets to meet all sorts of celebrities, like you."

"That's not why Phil likes me."

"No. Phil likes you because you're a good friend."

"Why do you like me?"

The question was just another in a long, drunken ramble, but it hit Andy square in the chest. There were a lot of reasons to like Scott. His looks might have been top of the list, but they weren't the only thing on the list. He had always been impressed with Susan's taste in men—and her ability to nab the ones she wanted—but he had never been jealous until she brought Scott to his attention.

"Because you're a good person. Because you're a good actor. Because you're good to my sister." There. Three perfectly good, perfectly logical reasons to like another man.

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"I'm not good to her, though." Scott said the words with such sadness that Andy felt their weight. "Oh, if only you knew."

"Scott, I've seen the two of you together about a hundred times. I've seen how you treat her."

"Not as well as I should. Andy, would what you say if I told you I had a secret?"

They were outside now, and in the stifling summer night, the garbage in the back was more than rank. He didn't want to talk about Scott's secret. He didn't want to do anything except deliver Scott to the proper church, see his sister married and happy, and get back home to hide in his house and drink his unnamed emotions away.

"I don't know, Scott. Is it a secret you should keep to yourself?"

"I don't know. Yes. No. Probably. I just don't want to hurt her, Andy. You have to believe me. I'd never want to hurt her."

"I believe you. If I didn't, I wouldn't have let her date you," Andy said lightly.

"I'm an awful person. Horrible. Terrible. She shouldn't talk to me anymore. You shouldn't talk to me. Andy, don't stop talking to me."

"Okay, I think you're getting a little out of control here." He half-carried, half-dragged the other man to the other side of the dark parking lot. Nobody noticed them. He supposed in the shadows, they looked like any other pair of drunks, winding their way through the dark streets. "Do you always get this

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maudlin when you drink?"

"I don't know. I never drink this much."

"Then what's got you drinking now? Nerves?"

"I don't have any."

"Nerves?"

"Right. No nerves. Never have." Scott nearly fell into Andy's car—he probably would have fallen onto the ground without Andy's help—but he didn't stop talking. "That's what my mother always said. Fearless. Even in front of a crowd. I'd just march right into the center of them and make everybody pay attention to me. But now..."

"Watch your feet and your hands," Andy instructed.

Scott dutifully folded his hands in his lap and crossed his feet at the ankles. It was easy to picture Scott as a child, running around without hesitation or reservation, making the whole world acknowledge him. When he stepped on stage, whether or not there was a camera involved, it was impossible to ignore him. Was that innate? Or something he had developed and cultivated? Andy supposed it didn't make a difference either way.

"Where are you taking me?" Scott asked, once Andy slid behind the wheel.

"Home."

"I don't want to go home."

"Then we'll go to Napa."

"I don't want to go to Napa."

That was good. Andy wasn't prepared to drive all night. At least not with a babbling, maudlin, confused, over-dramatic

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actor deep in his cups sitting right beside him. “That’s fine. Where do you want to go?”

“Somewhere else. Somewhere I’ve never been before. Where do you live?”

“You want to go to my house?”

“Sure. I bet you have a nice house.”

“It’s not as nice as yours,” Andy warned. A voice in the back of his head—it sounded like Susan—warned him that it was a bad idea. A very bad idea. He should take Scott home, get him safely tucked in bed, then call his sister and explain everything that happened. “And I don’t have any booze.”

“That’s fine. The booze hasn’t been working very well anyway.”

“What did you want it to do?”

“Make me forget.”

Scott didn’t sound drunk when he said that. He sounded sober—frighteningly, depressingly sober. Andy studied him from the corner of his eye, trying to get some clue. Would Susan know how to handle him in this state? Or would she be totally confused, too?

“Make you forget your secret?”

“Yeah. That.”

“Is it so bad?”

“It’s worse than so bad.”

Andy didn’t believe that, but he didn’t want to push. If it was something truly awful, sharing it with him wouldn’t relieve Scott’s burden. It would just make Andy carry the same amount of weight. If Scott was just a friend, just some



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guy he knew, that would be one thing. But he'd be forced to keep something possibly awful from his sister. And he wasn't comfortable doing that.

"I have a spare bed. I think it's pretty comfortable. We'll get an early start tomorrow for Napa."

Scott didn't respond. He had his arms folded across his chest, and he seemed to be lost in his own little world. Andy considered and dismissed a dozen ways to start the conversation rolling again. Scott didn't feel like talking, and just because the silence made Andy uncomfortable was no reason to get Scott going again.

Andy lived in Pasadena, not far from the Rose Bowl. The neighborhood was quiet, and his neighbors were just the sort of people who would call the cops over a minor disturbance. He just hoped that Scott wouldn't launch into anything until after they were safely inside. But his fear proved to be unfounded. They made it inside the house without incident, Scott meekly following him.

"You sure you don't want to go out back to your own house?" Andy asked.

"Yeah, I'm sure."

"Still feeling a bit drunk?"

"More than a bit. Just not so...happy."

Andy grimaced. "Well, have a seat, and I'll just check up on the spare room."

But Scott didn't sit down. In fact, he followed Andy up the stairs and down the hall. Susan used the room occasionally, so Andy knew that not only would it be presentable for company,

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but the bed would be freshly made with clean sheets. Susan always made sure that the house was left cleaner than she found it.

“What do you do when you want to forget something? And drinking just gives you a headache?”

“I find something to help me keep my mind off it. Read a book, or go to the movies. I bet you could get in for free.”

“No, I don’t want to go to the movies. I don’t know if I even want to have anything to do with the movies anymore.”

Andy frowned. “What do you mean? You’re going to quit?”

“Sometimes...sometimes I think I would like to.”

“Why?”

“I never thought it would be like this. That’s all. I’m probably going to regret saying any of this tomorrow.”

“Hell, you probably won’t even remember anything you said tonight. Trust me.”

“You will.”

“Yeah, but I won’t hold it against you. In fact, I’ll pretend that I don’t remember a thing.”

“You’d do that?”

“Sure.”

“So whatever happens in this room...it’s going to remain in this room?”

Andy frowned, wondering if he should just tell Scott to forget it. He wouldn’t mention to anybody that Scott wanted to quit Hollywood, but he didn’t want to be in possession of any other information. But Scott was looking at him with such

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hope that it would be cruel to dismiss him now. And though the two men weren't incredibly close, Scott would be part of his family for the rest of his life—no reason to start being cruel to him.

"Absolutely. I'm not big on gossip."

Scott smiled. It was the first real, genuine smile he had seen from Scott all night. It was almost like his mega-watt super-star smile, but not quite. It was a bit softer. Almost shy. "I know you're not. Lord knows you could have made a decent penny leaking information to the press."

"Well, even if I were a gossip, I wouldn't sell out my own sister."

"You say that like it's a given. It's not." Scott pushed the door shut behind him and sat on the foot of the bed. He pulled his tie loose.

"Is that what you were talking about earlier? When you were muttering about how you hate Hollywood?" Andy sat down beside him, but not close enough to touch him.

"Sure. And other stuff."

"You still feeling drunk?"

"That depends. Do you have some sort of spinning floor installed?"

"No."

"What about your ceiling? It's not the movable kind?"

"Nope. But you're not behaving so...well...silly."

"I'm an actor."

"Okay," Andy said slowly. "But what does that mean? Were you pretending before or are you pretending now?"

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“Yes.”

“Yes?”

“Yes. Every day. All day. That’s all I do.”

“That’s not true.”

“Isn’t it? Right now, I’m pretending that we’re having a perfectly reasonable conversation, and I don’t feel like I’m breaking down, and I don’t want another drink.”

“I don’t think you should have another drink.”

“Yeah, I know. But I want one. Maybe I could just keep drinking until I forget to be an actor.”

Susan should have been here. She would know how to comfort Scott, she would know how to give him whatever he needed. She had to know. That’s what fiancées, and wives, did. Right? But Susan was in Napa.

“If you weren’t being an actor right now, what would you do?”

“What would I do?”

“Yeah. Remember, what happens in this room stays in here. What would you do?”

“If I weren’t acting...if I were just me...I would do this.”

Andy didn’t have a chance to respond before Scott curled his fingers in Andy’s shirt and pulled him forward. Their mouths met, and the rich smell of whiskey hung around Scott’s head in a cloud. He was so stunned by the contact, he couldn’t open his mouth. He couldn’t push Scott away. He couldn’t do anything except let Scott tease his mouth.

There were many reasons why Scott shouldn’t kiss him. At the top of the list was the fact that Scott was engaged to

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Andy's sister. Only slightly below that was the fact that Scott wasn't gay. And to round out the top three, Andy didn't kiss, touch, grope, or have sex with very drunk men. Generally, it never ended well for him. There were even more reasons why Scott shouldn't kiss Andy. And yet, there they were, in a kiss that seemed to be deepening instead of ending.

Scott was a good kisser. He must have had a lot of practice. Before he became involved with Susan, he was always in the tabloid papers with a different girl hanging off his arm. And being Hollywood's leading man meant that he got more than his share of kisses on the silver screen. Except that was just pretending. And there was nothing fake about the way Scott explored his mouth. There was nothing fake about the way Andy reacted. As he warmed to the caress, he became desperate for more, hungry to taste Scott's mouth. Andy's tongue tingled a little from the alcohol still lingering on Scott's lips and inside his cheeks.

"Scott..."

"You won't tell anybody, will you?"

"No...no...I won't tell anybody."

"I've wanted to do that before."

"Did you?"

"But I can't."

"You can't?" Andy's head was floating above his shoulders. He couldn't even feel his feet anymore. "You just did."

"I didn't make you uncomfortable...did I? Look, if you want me to catch a cab, I will. I should go home."

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“You don’t have to.” Andy didn’t know where the words came from. Scott absolutely had to. Scott should go home, and pack his bags, and catch a flight up to San Francisco, and he could be with Susan again by the morning. But...a man who could kiss another man the way Scott just kissed him might not be interested in flying several hundred miles to climb into bed with a woman.

“Okay.” Scott cupped the sides of Andy’s face. His hands were large. Sitting that close to him, Andy could see that his skin wasn’t entirely flawless. Sitting that close, he could see that Scott wasn’t as perfect as the movie studios would have him believe. Something stirred in the back of his mind. Like he was beginning to understand.

The second kiss was much harder. The first had been a test. The second seemed more like a demand. Scott demanded that Andy match his desire. Scott demanded that Andy respond appropriately. No hesitation. No uncertainty. Despite all the very good reasons not to give in to Scott’s demand, his body had other ideas. His mind could be as logical as it wanted, but his stomach was doing slow flip-flops beneath his ribs, his cock was stirring, and his throat felt tight.

He wondered if there would be more talking. He didn’t mind more talking. If Scott needed to talk about this stuff, he would patiently lend the other man an ear. But talking seemed to be off the table. Maybe Scott didn’t have anything left to say. His mouth was certainly busy enough against Andy’s, his tongue plunging between Andy’s lips again and again.

They fell to their sides. Or maybe Scott pushed Andy

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down. Even the shift in their position and angle wasn't enough to force their mouths apart. Had he wanted Scott to kiss him like this? Had he let his mind drift into a fantasy involving Scott's mouth, and Scott's perfect body, on occasion? Even though Scott was the very definition of out of his reach and out of his league? Scott wasn't out of Andy's reach now. In fact, he was very much in Andy's reach. His chest was as solid as it looked in all those scenes where Scott didn't wear a shirt, and his hard cock was pressed against Andy's hip.

"Wait...wait..." Andy gasped.

"What?"

"I don't know if this is a good idea."

"What?"

"This. You kissing me. Doing more. It's not a good idea."

"No, probably not." Scott reached between them and palmed Andy's cock. He massaged the shaft with just enough pressure to make Andy twitch. "But I don't want to stop."

"Scott...you'll regret this in the morning..."

"Why? Are you going to use it against me?"

"No."

"You'll keep your promise?" His hand didn't stop moving. Andy's pants had never been so tight. "Whatever happens in this room will stay here?" He thrust his hips forward, grinding his erection against Andy. "I need this. Andy, you have no idea how much I need this."

Andy thought he had some idea. Especially since his own need was rising by the second. He wished he was drunk, too. He wished they both had an equally good shot at forgetting

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this whole thing ever happened. It would be a hell of a lot easier to look his family in the eye if he could forget about it. Or at least blame alcohol the next morning.

"I'll keep my promise," Andy said. "I won't say a word."

"Good. Good."

He tugged at Andy's pants, trying to free the fly. Except, no matter how much he wanted to pretend otherwise, it was clear that he was just a little too drunk to be successful with his attempt. Andy, however, wasn't clumsy. His fingers did exactly as they were told, and he pulled Scott's zipper free. His cock broke free of the material, heavy and smooth against Andy's palm. Andy shivered at the contact. It felt better than he had imagined it could—or it would.

"I want to taste you." Scott finally worked down the zipper, and his hands were hot and rough as he pushed them down Andy's pants. "It's been so long since I've sucked anybody off."

Andy wasn't going to turn down a blow job. He wiggled out of his pants, trying to push them off even as he toed off his shoes. The thought of having Scott Huxley, *the* Scott Huxley, international movie star, getting on his knees in front of him made him feel like he was the one who had been drinking all night. It was a strange feeling. Though not entirely unpleasant. He couldn't remember the last time anybody had made him feel like that—his fingers were shaking, his balls hurt, even the bottoms of his feet tingled. It had been years since he had been this aroused, this ready, for anybody.

Scott sat up and pulled Andy with him. Andy was



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confused for a moment, until Scott slid off the foot of the bed and settled between Andy's thighs. His hair was mussed—though it didn't look a normal person's messy hair. It seemed more like it had been expertly styled and carefully combed to look disheveled. His cheeks were already rough with stubble. Maybe he was the sort of man who needed to shave twice a day. His eyes were bright—as bright as they had been when Andy first saw him in the bar—and it was a sharp reminder that Scott was still drunk.

Scott would probably regret this in the harsh light of day.

Scott would probably hate him. What if he confessed everything to Susan? Was a blow job worth that fallout?

"We should stop this," Andy gasped. "Scott...seriously."

"No."

"Yes. This is wrong."

Scott dug his fingers into Andy's thighs, holding him against the bed. Andy might have been strong enough to break his hold and push him away, but the dull pain of his firm grip only made Andy's cock ache.

"I don't care."

"You should. You're going to. Scott, listen...we shouldn't do this."

"I don't care."

To prove how much he didn't care, he ducked his head and closed his lips around the tip of Andy's cock. He sucked on the crown, his cheeks hollowing, his tongue dipping into the slit to collect the pre-come. Andy jerked his hips, pushing deeper into Scott's mouth, the protest forgotten as soon as he

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felt the wet warmth close around his flesh.

It might have been a long time since Scott had gone down on anybody, but that didn't mean he was rusty. Or maybe Andy just wasn't feeling very particular. Either way, Scott felt amazing. And he looked amazing, with his dark head lowered in Andy's lap, his lips pulled tight around Andy's shaft, and his eyelashes dark against his cheeks as he closed his eyes in bliss.

One of Scott's hands disappeared beneath his body, and Andy could feel him pumping his arm. Unfortunately, from his angle, he couldn't see Scott's cock. He could only imagine what it must look like as Scott jerked himself off with hard, fast strokes.

It didn't take long for Andy to forget about his disappointment. He couldn't worry too much about his inability to watch Scott's cock when Scott kept swallowing his shaft deep down his throat. His mouth was rough—he didn't do anything to stop his teeth from scraping across Andy's tender skin. In fact, it felt more like an attack. Like Scott couldn't be bothered with being slow or gentle. Like a starving man can't be bothered to pace himself when finally brought to food.

"Scott..."

Scott cupped Andy's balls with his free hand, cradling the sac against his palm. At first, he was gentle—a marked contrast to his much rougher mouth. Pleasure built in his abdomen, pulling his muscles tight. Though he should have, he didn't expect the sudden squeeze around his balls. Pain

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erupted through him, making black spots dance before his eyes.

“Scott...you’re...”

The other man didn’t even acknowledge his attempt at protest. His arm seemed to be moving faster. He began groaning. Somehow, the sound was almost enough to make Andy forget about the unexpected pain still lingering in his stomach. How could he not want to lose himself to Scott’s pleasure when his pleasure sounded so utterly delicious? He was gorging himself, and each time he sank his head down, he swallowed around Andy’s cock and created the most unbelievable pressure.

He welcomed the growing swell of pleasure. Not because Scott had had him on edge all night, but because he almost needed the relief from Scott’s mouth. “I’m almost...fuck...fuck...”

Scott moaned. It was low and hungry, like a growl. It sent chills down Andy’s spine. He redoubled his efforts, as if he was trying to force the come from Andy’s body. He couldn’t resist Scott. He exploded with a shout, his cock jerking hard against the roof of Scott’s mouth, shooting streams of come down his throat. Scott didn’t pull away. Didn’t stop. His throat flexed every time he swallowed, coaxing even more of the liquid from Andy’s body.

Andy opened his mouth to offer to return the favor, but Scott stiffened before he said a word. He lifted his head, gasping for breath, a bit of come clinging to the corner of his mouth. A harsh shudder, and then he shot into his hand. Andy

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watched as he trembled, and caught him as he collapsed forward, his head against Andy's stomach. Surprised, Andy held him, listening as Scott's breathing slowed.

"I think I should try to get some sleep," Scott said thickly.

"Yeah. Yeah, that's probably for the best."

Andy gently pushed him away and stood. He didn't bother trying to pull his pants back on. Scott climbed up the side of the bed and collapsed on the mattress. He still looked drunk. And more than a little exhausted.

"Do you want me to arrange for a flight tomorrow?"

"No. I mean...I'd like to drive up with you, if you don't mind."

"It'll take seven or eight hours to get up there," Andy warned.

"I know. But it's been a long time since I went on a road trip. Again, if you don't mind."

"No, no, I don't mind. It'll be...fun." For some definition of fun.

"Remember your promise."

"I won't forget." That promise, at least, would be easy to keep. He wasn't about to share what happened to him—between them—with anybody.

## CHAPTER 2

“You’re never going to believe what happened to me,” Andy blurted as soon as he answered the phone.

“What? Something good for once?” Wilson’s voice was a combination of curiosity and excitement.

“What do you mean for once? Good shit happens to me all the time.”

“No, that’s a lie. I can’t remember the last time you called me with good news.”

“If you keep that up, I’m not going to tell you who gave me a blow job just an hour ago.”

“Oh, God. Who?”

“Oh, wait, I can’t tell you.”

## MAKING WAVES

A beat of silence met his announcement. "What do you mean, you can't tell me? Why did you bring it up at all?"

"I *want* to tell you, but I just remembered that I can't tell you. It's a secret. Well, he asked me to keep it a secret."

"Why?"

"It's important that nobody find out." Well, it was absolutely critical that nobody find out. And Andy fully intended to keep his promise. He had integrity, and believed that a man was only as good as his word. Except, as soon as he saw Wilson's number on his caller ID, the need to *tell* was an immediate and undeniable force. It had overwhelmed common sense and intelligence. He could trust Wilson. Wilson was a good friend and Andy knew where the bodies were buried. "I just really wanted to tell somebody."

"What if I guess?" Wilson's voice was appropriately solemn, like he knew this wasn't a joke. Even so, Andy could imagine the sardonic glint in his eye, and maybe the hint of exasperation in the way he set his lips. "That's not the same as telling."

"We're not children."

"No, we're not. But you're the one who's playing a childish game of 'I have a secret.'"

"Okay. You're right. Guessing isn't the same as telling."

"Great. So, it's somebody that you shouldn't be fucking?"

"Definitely."

"And somebody who doesn't want anybody to know they're gay?"

"Right."

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“Scott Huxley,” Wilson answered promptly.

“What? How did you know that?”

Wilson sniffed. “Please. I pegged that guy for a closet case the second I met him.”

“You did not,” Andy protested, feeling more than a little silly. Wilson had only met Scott once or twice. It didn’t seem right that he would know Scott better than Andy did.

“Yes, I did. I’m surprised you didn’t.”

“How? Are you going to tell me it was gaydar?”

“I could, but really, you don’t need some mythical sixth sense to know that guy is gay. You don’t doubt it now, do you?”

“Well, no. But I never suspected at all. How did you figure it out?”

Wilson chuckled, like he couldn’t be more amused by Andy’s naiveté. “He was checking out every guy at the restaurant. The waiters. The guys at the next table. You.”

“Oh. Oh, fuck. Do you know what this means?”

“What?” Wilson sounded bored.

“Scott Huxley is gay.”

Wilson brayed laughter. “So, him blowing you didn’t clue you in, but me calling him a closet case was enough to help you figure it out?”

“He can’t marry Susan.”

“Whoa, whoa, whoa. I don’t think you should get involved in this, Andy.”

“What? I *am* involved in this. She’s my sister. That was my cock in his mouth. I couldn’t be more involved if I tried.”

## MAKING WAVES

“Yeah, but you’re not engaged to either one of them. That’s strictly between them. I would just wash my hands of the whole thing if I were you. And whatever you do, don’t tell your sister what happened.”

“I wasn’t planning on it. God, that’s the last conversation I would ever want to have.”

“I just wanted to be sure.”

“But that doesn’t mean I can’t talk to him about it.”

Wilson sighed. “He probably has his reasons. As much as I’d like every gay person in the world to be out and proud, there are pretty damned good reasons to let them stay in the closet. In Scott’s case, he can’t be out and proud and keep his career.”

“What is this? We’re not still in the sixties, are we?”

“Some people are. Most people are, it seems like.”

Andy sighed. “I don’t like this at all, Wilson.”

“It’s a shitty situation all around.”

“He wants me to drive up with him to Napa.”

“Why doesn’t he just fly?”

“I don’t know.”

“You going to fuck him again?”

“I didn’t fuck him before. It was just a blow job.”

“You going to let him blow you again?”

“No. I don’t know. Probably he won’t offer again.” Andy’s stomach grumbled. He padded out of his bedroom without turning on the light and made his way downstairs to the kitchen. He wasn’t sure if he had anything suitable for a midnight snack. A bowl of cereal would be good. “I think



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tonight is a special case. He was drunk. He's having some second thoughts about getting married."

"Do you think that because he went down on you?"

"Not necessarily. It was just a bunch of different things he said. I mean, he was rambling a lot tonight. He was drinking a lot, too."

"This is a fucking mess. What are you doing?"

"Right this second?"

"Yeah."

"Pouring a bowl of cereal. I'm starving."

"So...tell me more about this wedding? Should we go up to Napa early?"

"You'd take off work to go up there early?"

"I have a feeling this shit is going to blow up in your face. You better believe that I want to see that."

"There's not going to be any explosion." His freshly poured bowl of cereal no longer held any appeal. His stomach felt tight, far too knotted up to enjoy any food. "Not if I can help it. You're right. None of this is any of my business."

"I'm glad you said that."

"I think I'm going to go and try to get some sleep. This is going to be a long, long weekend."

"Call me if things get interesting," Wilson said.

"I will, but I hope you don't hear from me at all before Sunday night. Tell Jake hi for me. Oh, and you're not going to tell anybody what I told you, right?"

"Can I tell Jake?"

"I'd rather you not tell anybody."

## *MAKING WAVES*

"It'll be between you and me," Wilson promised.

"Thanks." Andy just hoped that Wilson was better at keeping secrets than he was. "Night."

A closet case—was that fair? He did agree with Wilson about privacy. He never thought it was anybody's business or right to out people who didn't want to make their private lives public, even if he fully understood the logic behind people who made an entire industry out of exposing gay celebrities and politicians. Hell, he knew he could call up a tabloid at that moment and sell his story for enough money to pay off all his debt—not that he had a lot of debt.

Was Susan clueless? How could Scott keep it a secret for almost two years? They had met through work—Susan was a lawyer at a major agency—and Susan had instantly been charmed by Scott's smile, lovely eyes, and charming sense of humor. She had called Andy after their third date and confessed that she thought she would marry Scott.

Andy had rolled his eyes, but humored her, agreeing that Scott Huxley was a normal person, just like everybody else, and normal people got married all the time. Of course, he hadn't been a normal person like everybody else. He had been larger than life, a sugar-spun fantasy, a dream that people could take home with them from the movie theater. But less than a year later, she'd called to give Andy the heads up on her engagement. "So you're not surprised by the announcement in the tabloids," she had explained.

It didn't help. Seeing his own sister's face on the magazines at the grocery check-out had been such a shock, he

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almost walked out of the store without paying.

He pushed his spoon around the bowl, chasing after perfect little multi-grain Os. He replayed that phone call in his head, remembering how she'd sounded when she told him Scott had proposed. He had always been defensive of Susan's happiness, and he supposed he still was. She had sounded happy at the time, of course. And relieved. There had been a sort of lightness in her voice that reminded Andy that she had been waiting for this moment for a long time. A fist clenched around his heart. He hated Scott. He hated Scott for making him so hard that he had been thinking with his dick instead of his brain. He hated Scott for doing that to him when he could have had anybody he wanted in California. He hated Scott for trusting him with a secret that could break his only sister's heart.

"Goddamnit."

The answer to his problems was obvious enough. Drive Scott directly to the airport, put him on a plane, and wash his hands of the affair. He'd even think of an excuse to avoid the wedding. That way, he could avoid lying to his sister, and he could avoid thinking about Scott's mouth, and he could avoid wondering what it would be like to get on his knees and return the favor. Scott's skin had been smooth—so, so smooth—and he already knew that the entire length would feel heavenly sliding past his lips and deep down his throat.

"That's *it*. He's flying up. I'm done here."

The ringing telephone answered his declaration. Maybe it was Wilson, calling to congratulate him for getting his head

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screwed on straight.

"Andy? Did you find him?" Susan's worried voice made her seem close enough to touch, though she was seven hundred miles away.

"I found him. He was at a bar."

"A bar? What was he doing there?"

"Drinking."

"Scott doesn't drink."

"Well, he tied a few on tonight."

"Where is now?"

"I brought him back here to sleep it off."

"Why didn't you take him to his own place?"

"It just seemed easier to bring him here. I could go wake him and take him to his place, if you want."

"No, no, that's fine. He's okay, though?"

"Yeah, he's fine. He's going to be hating the world tomorrow, though."

"Good. So...was he photographed?"

"I don't know," Andy answered honestly. "I thought that I got him out of there quietly enough. The bartender helped."

"I hope he wasn't noticed. This is going to be a huge disaster if somebody did see him."

Andy frowned. His sister was pretty level-headed. She wasn't prone to making melodramatic announcements. As far as Andy knew, Susan never got melodramatic at all. "I hardly think it's going to be a disaster."

"It will be," she said. "What's the plan for tomorrow?"

"I was going to put him on an airplane."

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“You’re going to send him to LAX, hung over, and wearing the same clothes he was wearing the night before?”

“Well...I could swing around his place first and have him change.”

“He’s still going to be attracting attention at the airport.”

“He’s going to be attracting attention no matter what he does. He’s Scott Huxley.”

“He doesn’t need to be attracting any more attention until after the wedding. Will you drive him up?”

“Susan, I don’t know if...”

“Please. It’ll be a huge help.”

“Well, if he can’t fly, why can’t he drive himself up?”

“And risk another disaster like very nearly happened tonight? I just need to get him quietly married, Andy.”

“What?”

“What?”

Andy set his nearly full bowl in the sink. “What did you just say? You need to get him quietly married?”

“I need to have a quiet wedding, that’s all I meant.”

“Yeah, but...that’s not what you said.”

“Are you going to help me?”

Andy sighed. He wished he could tell her exactly why he wanted to say no. But he never would. Not even if she put a gun to his head. He didn’t even think his mouth could form the words.

“I’ll drive him up tomorrow.”

“Thank you! Okay, it’s late. You’ve got a long day tomorrow. You should get some sleep.”

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Like it was that easy. “You should, too.”

“Call me tomorrow before you get here.”

“I will.”

“Try to avoid any attention.”

“I will.”

“I love you, Andy.”

“Love you, too.” He waited until he disconnected the call before cursing his luck, Scott Huxley, and the thrill of excitement that raced down his spine at the thought of being with the other man for the entire day.

\* \* \*

Scott ran his tongue over his teeth and grimaced. He didn't know how it was possible, but he was sure that his two front teeth had sprouted hair. As far as problems went, it was pretty low on the list. There were at least two larger issues to capture his attention. The first was the unbelievable pressure behind his eyes. The pain wasn't centralized there, though. It spread through his limbs, making him ache right to his bones. His marrow hurt. His eyelids hurt. His eyelashes hurt, for Christ's sake.

The other concern was the strange bed. Waking up in a strange bed was firmly frowned on in his line of work. He'd had to quit drinking because he had the tendency to do that. Find the nearest pretty boy, follow him wherever he wanted to go, and then bend himself like a pretzel to get the pretty boy's cock in every hole he could. Had that happened?

God, there would be photos. It was probably too late to

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even worry about blackmail. The pictures were probably already on the Internet, flying from blog to blog. It would be in the newspapers next. And then the nightly newsmagazines. And then the Tonight Show. That would be the beginning.

A light knock on the door was enough to startle him out of his increasingly vivid, and horrible, fantasy.

“Scott? Are you awake?”

Scott caught his breath. He knew that voice. It was a good voice. The words were said with a slight drawl—Andy always talked a little slow. Scott thought it had to be a byproduct of the years he had spent surfing the California coast.

“You hungry?”

“I don’t know.”

“Can I come in?”

“Yeah.”

He ducked his head into the door. His blond hair was pulled back in a ponytail, and his face was covered with scruff. “I have breakfast downstairs, if you want it.”

“I...”

“I also have some aspirin.”

“Okay. Now you’re talking. Coffee?”

“Coffee. Also, here’s a robe.” He pushed the door wider and tossed the garment to the bed. “I guess we can go by your house and pick up any clothes that you want. Unless you’d just like to hit the road.”

“Hit the road? Where are we going?”

“Your wedding. Which is tomorrow night. Ringing any bells?” The final question wasn’t asked unkindly, but Andy

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did look a little amused.

"Oh. Yeah. It's ringing some bells. We're going there together?"

"You told me last night that you wanted to drive up with me." Andy frowned, suddenly looking hurt. "Are you telling me you forgot?"

"Forgot? Oh, God, no. Of course not. I remember everything that happened last night."

"Everything? Really?"

Scott swallowed hard. "Oh, Christ. What happened?"

"I think I'll leave you here to remember that on your own. When you're ready, come on downstairs."

Scott had more questions, but Andy shut the door, leaving him alone with his pain and his nonexistent memory. Why did he do this to himself? Why would he ever do this to himself? Booze was never kind to him. He was never allowed to escape a night of drinking unscathed. So what had made him think he should have another go at it?

The answer came to mind immediately. The only thing that had made him consider drinking in the past six months. He had always been strong enough to resist the twisted siren call of the bottle. Until last night. When it all just proved too much, and he had gone to the smallest hole in the wall place he could find and preceded to drink until Andy had arrived.

He must have been sent on a mission from Susan. That was the only thing that made any sense.

The room tilted dangerously as he sat up. Despite the tilting and spinning, it was a nice room. Clearly decorated



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with guests in mind. Did Andy get many guests? Or had he had one particular person in mind when he picked out the desk, the silver photo frames on the wall, and the lace curtains? Of course, he had one person in mind. Who else could this room be for except Susan?

Susan, Susan, Susan. It always came back to Susan, with her light blue eyes, and her dark blond, almost brown, hair. Andy's eyes were much darker. They reminded Scott of the ocean. He only hoped he hadn't mentioned as much, though he distinctly recalled commenting on Andy's eyes. Or maybe he had only thought about talking about Andy's eyes. Maybe no words were said at all, and he had kept the marveling to himself. Except, he had been drunk, which made the last scenario far, far less likely.

He always chose the wrong guys, but hitting on his fiancée's brother was a new, albeit interesting, low.

But he couldn't hide in his room forever. He didn't have any choice except shrugging on the robe, knotting it tight around his waist, and emerging from the relative safety of his room.

Finding his way down the stairs took far more time than he would have anticipated. He couldn't trust his own feet, and as a result, he couldn't trust the stairs. At some points, they seemed much too wide. At other points, much too narrow. A few creaked dangerously, as if warning him to watch his step, and lose a few pounds while he was at it.

"Scott? I'm in here."

Andy didn't sound anything like Susan. And not just

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because Andy had a deeper voice. Scott couldn't quite put his finger on the difference, but it might have been the fact that Susan always spoke in measured tones with short, crisp words. She was a busy woman. She had a lot on her plate. Her tone always reflected that.

"I poured some coffee. But I could make you a Bloody Mary if you like."

"No, no, no more drinking for me."

"You sure? It helps with hangovers."

"I'm sure." Scott lowered himself to the nearest chair. A bloody Mary actually sounded brilliant, but he thought coffee would be just as helpful, without being destructive. "Thanks for last night, by the way."

"Oh...um...it was no problem. My pleasure, even."

"It was your pleasure to spend most of the evening hunting for me?"

"Well, it wasn't *most* of the evening. Were you trying to hide?"

Scott shook his head. "I don't remember what I was trying to do."

"I told you so."

"Told me what?"

"That'd you'd forget most of the night. You should eat, though."

"I'm not sure I'm up to it."

"How about some yogurt?"

"Okay, I think I might be able to keep that down."

"Good." Andy smiled. It was a bright smile—almost too

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bright for Scott to put up with his hung-over state. “This is good yogurt. All organic. No preservatives. Natural flavoring.”

“Is there a way to make non-organic yogurt?”

Andy snorted. “I don’t know. I guess I haven’t seen too much fake yogurt in the grocery stores.”

“Do you get your food at grocery stores?”

“Where else would I get it?”

“Farmers markets and hippie cooperatives.”

“No. Well, I’m not actually a member of any hippie cooperatives. This yogurt came from Trader Joe’s.”

“That’s good.” Scott sipped from the coffee, expecting something weak and watery. Nobody ever made good coffee. His assistant usually got it right, but he didn’t trust anybody else. But this coffee was anything but weak. It was rich and powerful, and the aroma did a little to clear the cobwebs from his brain. Though the pain was still behind his eyes and between his ears. “This is really good.”

“Thanks. I wanted to sober you up. Is it working?”

“I don’t know. I think the caffeine is helping.”

“I was thinking we could leave this morning and get there before dinner. But if you’re not up to sitting in the car for the next seven hours, we can leave later this afternoon.”

“Susan is expecting me.”

“I think she’ll be happy as long as we get there before she’s scheduled to walk down the aisle.”

“Yeah...you think so? Because, honestly, the thought of getting in a car right now...I don’t think my stomach can

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handle it.”

“No problem. We’ll take it easy this morning.”

“I really had a lot to drink last night, didn’t I?”

“I don’t know. I caught you at the tail end of the festivities. You did seem to be...enjoying yourself quite a bit when I found you, though.”

“God. So...you found me at some bar, brought me back here, and put me to bed?”

“Yep.”

“As simple as that?”

“As simple as that.”

Scott nodded, though he didn’t know if he believed it. It was never as simple as that. Not when there was booze involved. Especially if there was tequila involved. And there was always tequila involved.

“Nothing else happened?”

“Why? Do you...remember something?”

Scott lifted his head. “Should I remember something?”

“No.” Andy began slicing berries to put on top of the all organic, no preservatives yogurt. “Nothing happened.”

Should he push or should he just accept Andy’s answer? He had the feeling that something had happened. History told him that was a good bet. Especially since Andy had high cheekbones, a bowed mouth, and glittering eyes. His body wasn’t bad either. Scott had never seen Andy naked, but he could still imagine it every time he closed his eyes. Andy’s tall frame was compact and lithe, as though he had been built to run on the beach and swim against the waves. He was every

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inch the sun-worshipping-California-golden-boy stereotype.

Scott needed to stop staring at him. Even if he was completely gorgeous.

“Something did happen, didn’t it?”

“Why? Do you remember something?”

“There’s something for me to remember. I knew it.”

Andy set a bowl in front of him. “So, you don’t remember anything?”

“I don’t need to remember anything, *per se*. I know how I get when I’ve been drinking. Did I make a pass at you?”

“Yes.”

Scott waited for a moment, but Andy didn’t elaborate. He chose to take that as a good sign. “I’m sorry. God, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean...sometimes that just happens. But I’m not gay or anything.”

“That’s fine,” Andy said mildly. “I’ve often done things I didn’t mean to do when I’ve been drinking. Sometimes, that’s the whole point of drinking. To have a ready excuse.”

Scott frowned. “I’m not making excuses. I’m sorry if I did anything untoward, or made you uncomfortable in any way, but I’m not making any excuses.”

“I didn’t mean to imply that you were. I’m just saying that everybody’s been where you are now, at least at one point in their lives.”

“Eating yogurt in your kitchen?”

Andy grinned. “Eating breakfast in a stranger’s kitchen, at least.”

“I don’t know if you quite count as a stranger.” Though,

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maybe since Scott went home with him willingly, he did count. That was his MO, after all. “Has Susan called this morning?”

“We talked late last night. I’m sure she wouldn’t mind getting a call from you, though.”

Scott shook his head. It wasn’t that he disliked talking to Susan, but he needed to be in complete control of all his faculties if he did speak to her. Right now, the pain in his head made him feel at least half out of control.

“This is really good. The fresh fruit is great.”

“Thanks.”

Scott scanned his surroundings as he ate, his brain finally alert enough to take in the smaller details. The house was small. Very small. In fact, Scott thought that his pool house was bigger when it came to square feet. It wasn’t exactly dirty, but it wasn’t exactly clean, either. It looked like a young man lived there—one who didn’t have a girlfriend or a maid but still did his best to keep the place presentable. His hardwood floors were swept, but they needed to be mopped and oiled. A surf board leaned against the backdoor. A skateboard rested beside it.

“You own this place?”

“No, I’m squatting.”

Scott’s brow furrowed. “What?”

“I’m not actually squatting. The guy who owns the place is in Afghanistan right now. So he’s letting me stay here.”

“Oh. So...do you have your own home?”

“No. Are you kidding? Like I could afford a place around

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here.”

“What are you going to do when he comes home?”

“Move into the guest room if he’ll let me. Or find somewhere else to sleep. It’s not a big deal.”

And Andy genuinely sounded like it wasn’t a big deal. Like the issue was nothing to lose sleep over. “It’s a nice house.”

“It is. Though I guess it’s not quite as nice as what you’re used to.”

Scott grinned. “Are you calling me a snob?”

“Snob seems a little harsh. But I’ve been to your house before. This whole place would probably fit in your living room.”

Scott shrugged. “Maybe. But I’m hardly ever home, between shooting, press tours, premieres, and everything else.”

“Sounds like a rough life.”

“It’s not all it’s cracked up to be.”

“I hope that wasn’t the sales pitch you gave my sister. Marry me, I promise it won’t be all it’s cracked up to be.”

Scott chuckled. “It was a bit more romantic than that.” It hadn’t been more romantic than that, but if he said as much, Andy would begin to ask questions. Not that Andy didn’t already have enough ammunition to use for a whole battery of questions. God, he hoped that things hadn’t gone beyond the initial flirtation.

“It must have been. I have to admit, I was shocked when she told me you two were engaged.”

## *MAKING WAVES*

Scott's shoulders stiffened. "Why?"

"Because she had never acted like she wanted to marry anybody for any reason. And then, all of a sudden, she's engaged to you and picking out dresses. It was a little weird."

"Well, sometimes when you meet the one, you just know it." Or so Scott had heard. "What about you? Are you the marrying kind?"

"What?"

"Have you ever thought of getting married?"

"I always thought one of the perks of being gay is that you don't have to get married."

"You're gay?"

"Yeah. You didn't know?"

"No."

"You're serious? You had no idea until I said something?"

"No, no idea. I don't think Susan's ever mentioned it, and I've never seen you with another guy."

"You're serious."

"Yes." Panic welled up inside of him. "Why? I mean, if I did anything like...if I made any sort of pass at you, it wasn't because...I just do that sometimes when I'm not in my right mind."

"That seems like a dangerous habit to me," Andy said.

"What?"

"Making drunken passes at guys that could be straight."

"Well, it's not like I can tell you people apart just by sight."

"I see."



## *MAKING WAVES*

Andy stood, collecting his bowl and his mug. Regret replaced Scott's panic. He hadn't meant that. He never meant to sound like such an asshole, either. Even if he was a bit afraid of what Andy could figure out.

"Wait. I'm sorry. I didn't... I shouldn't have said it."

Andy shrugged. "You can go through the closet in my room if you want. Maybe something in there will fit you."

Scott considered pointing out that they weren't the same build at all, but he had already proven himself to be an asshole. He didn't need to make it a point to be an ungrateful asshole. He gulped down the rest of his coffee—considering the burn on the back of his tongue to be part of his punishment—and wandered back up the stairs to Andy's room. He had to admit, he was intensely curious about the master bedroom. Not because he was usually curious about bedrooms—he wanted to see what else he could learn about its occupant.

The room was tidy enough, like the rest of the house. Though the bed wasn't made. He could still see the imprint of Andy's head on the pillow. Hoping that the other man hadn't followed him up the stairs, he crossed the room to get a closer look at the bed. He ran his fingertips over the sheet, expecting it to be warm, and it was. Though that probably had more to do with the morning sun slanting through the window. The smell of soap and deodorant and a subtle musk drifted from the disturbed bed. Unable to resist, he leaned in, trying to capture more of the scent.

The back of his mouth tingled. A part of him wanted to

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crawl into the bed and surround himself with the warmth and smell of Andy's body. It had been a long time since anything other than perfume clung to Scott's skin. The only thing better than wrapping Andy's blanket around him would be having Andy himself wrapped around Scott's body.

"You lose something over there?"

Scott jumped. "No, no. I thought I saw a bug or something. But it's gone now."

"Casey has some clothes here, too. He's a bit closer to your size."

"Casey? He's the one who owns the house?"

"Right."

"He won't mind if I borrow his clothes?"

"I doubt he'll ever find out. Unless you destroy them or something."

"I don't intend to do that."

"Good." Andy pulled open the closet and gestured toward the neatly hung clothes. Mostly shirts, though there were pants hanging on the left end. "Help yourself."

"Look, I was a real prick downstairs, and I probably wasn't much better last night. I'd be more than happy to just call a cab and go home. You don't need to babysit me or anything."

"You were pretty insistent last night that I should drive you."

Scott blanched. "I was?"

"Yep."

"Oh. Well, I don't think you should take anything I said

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last night very seriously.”

“Susan was also pretty insistent. She made me promise that I would get you there in one piece, and woe betide the person who doesn’t follow her orders.”

“Then I guess neither of us has much of a choice.”

“Nope. I’ll leave you to get dressed.”

As soon as Andy left the room, relief washed over Scott. It wasn’t that he wanted to see Andy go. But he was already beginning to feel the curious mix of guilt and shame and arousal that always accompanied an initial attraction. He didn’t want to be attracted to his future brother-in-law. That would cause more problems than getting married could possibly fix.

He needed to focus on other things. Like Susan. Like getting married. Like the way his life would change, for better or worse, in approximately thirty-six hours. All of that, any of that, would be an improvement over reflecting on how good Andy’s skin smelled. Or thinking about the fact that he had bypassed a shirt that was more comfortable in favor of one that was a bit tighter at the shoulders and over the chest, but reminded Scott of the way Andy’s pillow had smelled.

## CHAPTER 3

Andy had prepared himself for Scott's memory loss, but to be utterly forgotten had still stung. Unless Scott was only faking that part. Then it didn't sting so much as make him angry. Either way, after the breakfast they had shared, Andy was quite convinced that his earlier anxiety had been for nothing. Even if Scott remembered what happened, he was clearly in the closet. And his closet was in Denial-Land, on the border of Self-Hating-Territory. Andy had had his heart broken enough times to know that you never, ever allowed yourself to become interested in a guy who wasn't at least willing to make occasional forays into Reality-World. Plus, there was the whole future-brother-in-law thing.

## MAKING WAVES

But when Scott stepped out of the bathroom, freshly showered and shaven, the shirt he chose clinging a little too tightly to his shoulders, Andy's mouth went dry. It was like a fist to the gut—a blatant reminder that he not only had a freaking movie star in his living room, he was staring at the most gorgeous man on the planet with damp hair curling over the collar of the shirt he had taken from Andy's closet.

"You feeling better?" Andy asked, his throat more than a little tight.

"Yeah. Almost like a whole new man."

"Good. You look better, too." What Andy wanted to say was *you look fucking delicious. Please let me lick you*. "Less pale."

"I think I used the last of your shampoo."

"That's fine." Andy would happily donate a dozen bottles to the cause of having Scott naked in his bathroom. *Pull it together, man. Or else you're going to have a lifetime of awkward Christmases to look forward to*. Even that thought wasn't strong enough to drive out the image of a naked Scott Huxley. "You ready to head out? Or you want to wait a bit longer?"

"Can we wait? It's nice here. Really quiet."

"I've always liked the vibe of this place. Something about it is soothing. I think it's because Casey has a good aura."

"Whatever it is, it's nice. Does he have a backyard?"

Andy jumped to his feet. "Yeah, you want to see it?"

"Sure."

Andy didn't know why Scott wanted to prolong this

## *MAKING WAVES*

torture. Though, it probably wasn't torture for him. He probably thought everything was just fine, and he was enjoying his break from the fans, the paparazzi, and Susan's manic wedding plans.

The backyard was protected and shaded by several trees, including two orange trees, one apple tree, and one avocado tree. The avocados were already in season, and they hung, fat and green, waiting for Andy to pluck them. He kept the lawn cut short and watered—one of the stipulations of staying in Casey's house—and it was so thick and luxurious that nobody could resist lowering themselves to the soft ground. Andy would guess that not even Scott would be immune to its charms, and he couldn't imagine Scott ever willingly sitting on the ground.

"You grow your own avocados?"

"Sure."

"This is really nice."

"Your yard is nicer."

Scott frowned and shook his head. "I'm always scared if I go outside I'll ruin the landscaping. Plus, I never have time to go outside."

"Acting keeps you that busy?"

"Oh, it's not just acting. Or just the promotion. I do a lot of charity work and various things. Amber is probably having a fit right now."

"Amber? I don't remember her."

"My assistant. She's up in Napa with Susan, but she gets nervous every time she's not right at my side."

## *MAKING WAVES*

“Do you usually travel with a bunch of people, or is it just Amber?”

“I’m a little bit ashamed to admit that I have an entourage. But I sent them all north with Susan.”

“So you would be alone?”

“Yeah.”

Andy watched him closely. “So nobody would be with you last night when you went out?”

“Are you asking me if I planned on getting drunk?”

“I’m asking if you planned on going out.”

Scott stepped from the patio and ventured farther into the yard. “Yeah. They’re pretty good at shadowing me. Keeping me away from trouble. Saving me from myself, I guess. But I don’t need somebody to babysit me.”

Andy’s lips twitched. “Considering how shitfaced you got, maybe you do need somebody to babysit you.”

“Maybe. But if I had kept Amber around, you wouldn’t have swooped in to rescue me. And then I wouldn’t be standing in this lovely yard and having a nice chat.”

“You want to sit down?”

Scott looked around. “There aren’t any chairs.”

The response was completely expected, but it made his heart twist a little bit. Like his chest was too small. “Sit on the grass. It’s nice. Don’t worry about grass stains.”

Scott lowered himself carefully. “You going to join me?”

“Sure.”

Scott was sitting in the shade of a tall elm, but Andy chose to sit in the sun. Even though the temperature was already

## MAKING WAVES

hovering in the low eighties, he liked the warm caress of the sun on his back. With more than a little wistfulness, he realized it would be a good day to go out on the water. The ocean would be a vibrant, beckoning blue, dotted with the distant figures of his friends and fellow surfers.

“Can I ask you something?”

Andy plucked a piece of grass and twirled it between his fingers. “Sure.”

“You and Susan...have you always been so different?”

Andy smiled. “What do you mean?”

“I think it’s pretty obvious. I mean, she’s so...focused and driven. And you’re...”

“A slacker?”

“That isn’t what I was going to say.”

“But I think it’s what you meant.” His smile widened. “Don’t worry about it. I’m not offended. I *am* a slacker. We always joke that she got all the motivation in the family. By the time I came along, there was nothing left for me.”

“So it has always been like this?”

“Yeah. In school, she’d get straight A’s and be the most perfect student ever. All the teachers who had her first were shocked when I ended up in their classes. While she had been a teacher’s pet, I was always off in my own little world. I couldn’t help it.”

“You weren’t a troublemaker?”

“No, not at all. I was always the quietest kid in the room. I didn’t like to be the center of attention. I just wanted to be left to my own devices.”



## *MAKING WAVES*

The corner of Scott's mouth lifted. "That's where we differ. I always loved to be the center of attention."

"Yeah, I bet you did. Did you always want to be an actor?"

"I think so. I mean, I didn't always know that was the word for it. But I remember going to the theater with my mom to see some of the real classics, and I was just...enamored with people like Cary Grant and Humphrey Bogart. I wanted to be just like them." Scott skimmed his palms over the sharp tips of the grass blades. "I wanted to be them."

"So you became an actor?"

"Eventually. I never really got over that desire. I mean, who doesn't want to be Cary Grant or Bogie, right?"

"I never gave it much thought before," Andy admitted. "My heroes were people like Tony Hawk."

"Do you skate professionally?"

Andy snorted. "No. No, nothing like that. I'm not even really gainfully employed. I just do odd jobs here and there."

"So...basically you couldn't be more different from your sister?"

"Pretty much. But you know, she never made me feel like she was ashamed of me just because I didn't follow in her footsteps. As far as sisters go, she's pretty great."

Which was why he shouldn't be gawking at her fiancé, or fantasizing about her fiancé, or wondering what it would be like to lick the bead of sweat on his jaw. Susan loved him. More than that, she trusted him. Why was he even considering the possibility of getting close to Scott again?

Because Scott was gorgeous. And he already knew exactly

## *MAKING WAVES*

how Scott's mouth felt around his cock. That knowledge was more pressing than the abstract thought of the upcoming nuptials. Scott rested his hands behind him and leaned back. The shirt had already seemed too tight, but now it strained against his chest. Scott was going to drive him insane.

"Do you eat those avocados?"

"Yeah, all the time."

"I...I've been known to make a pretty good guacamole."

Andy tilted his head, trying to discern the meaning of the slight hesitation in his voice. Scott said it like he was offering information he normally wouldn't give out. "Really? I love guacamole. Do you want to make some?"

"Do we have time?"

"It only takes seven hours to get up to Napa from here. Five, if I drive fast. Three, if we fly. I don't see why we wouldn't have enough time to have a bit of a snack. Although..."

"What?"

"I have this recipe for fajitas that is out of this world. But the marinade for the meat takes at least three hours."

"I'd love to try some out-of-this-world fajitas."

"I don't mean to brag, but I also take the time to make my own tortillas. And I think I have everything I need here."

Scott sat up and wiped the grass from his hands. "I think that sounds like a great plan. Will you show me how to make the marinade?"

"Only if you show me how to make the guacamole."

"Deal." Scott stood, towering over Andy. He seemed

## MAKING WAVES

larger than life, blocking the sun, and though Andy squinted against the light, he couldn't see Scott's face. Scott offered his hand. Andy knew he shouldn't take it. The less physical contact between them, the better. But it would be rude to ignore Scott's hand, so he took it, allowing the other man to pull him to his feet. "Think we should shake on it?"

*No, let go of me.* Scott's hand was exactly the way Andy remembered it. The texture, the temperature, the strength of his grip. Except, the last time Andy had felt it, it had been wrapped around his prick.

Instead of pulling away, he let Scott pump his hand once. Now, they were locked together, bound by a contract. Unfortunately, Andy wasn't exactly sure what he had just agreed to.

\* \* \*

It took only a few minutes to realize that Scott did not know his way around the kitchen at all. Andy was no gourmet chef. Most of his knowledge came from trial and error. He spent most of his life couch-surfing, and always repaid his friend's generosity by assuming certain household duties. That included preparing the meals. Since most of his friends were poor college students, and then later, overworked and harried professionals, they were more than happy to have their ne'er-do-well buddy prepare their food and clean their homes. And, if Andy caught them at the right time, most of his buddies were happy enough to let him suck them off. It was an arrangement that pleased everybody.

## MAKING WAVES

Scott, however, probably never had to cook for himself. Of course not. He had money, which meant he probably had a personal chef see to all his dining needs.

“Who taught you how to make guacamole?” Andy asked as Scott painstakingly cut his avocados in two.

“Rita Bowers.”

Andy looked up from the red chili he was slicing. “*The Rita Bowers?*”

“*The Rita Bowers is the only Rita Bowers I know.*”

“Okay, so what’s the story there?”

Scott shrugged. “There isn’t much of one. We were doing a film together...”

“The adaptation of *Much Ado About Nothing?*”

“Right. Anyway, there was a lot of downtime on the set. One day, she showed me this huge bag of avocados in her trailer and told me we were going to make guacamole every single day until we perfected the recipe.”

“That’s a lot of guacamole.”

Scott snorted. “That’s what I said to her. But it wasn’t like we were going to eat it ourselves. It got to a point where everybody else on the set, even Frank, looked forward to our daily offerings.”

“Frank Worth? Your director?”

“Yep.”

“Did you make guacamole for the whole shoot?”

“Most of it. We did run out of avocados eventually, but not before we did perfect the recipe.”

Andy shook his head. “That’s a crazy story.”

## *MAKING WAVES*

“Boring, though.” Scott began making two piles. One for the split fruit, the other for the discarded pits. “I mean, it’s not the sort of story you would tell to Leno.”

“I didn’t think it was boring. But then, I’ve been told that I’m easily impressed.”

“What are you doing over there?”

Scott wasn’t quite touching him, but he was hovering over Andy’s shoulder. If he swayed back, just a little, they would be touching. Andy wouldn’t do that, but he was maddeningly aware of the fact. “I’m cutting up a chili. It’ll add a bit of heat to the steak. You don’t mind heat, do you?”

“No, I don’t mind a bit of heat. What else goes in the marinade?”

“I’m going to juice a lime, then mix it with some red wine vinegar, some olive oil, a bit of salt and pepper and cumin, some garlic, an onion, and this red chili. I was told always to let it sit over night, but there was an emergency once, and I learned that three hours will do.”

“An emergency? A marinating emergency?”

Andy grinned. “Not quite a marinating emergency. More like a munchies emergency.”

“I see.”

“I suppose a guy like you has people to take care of his munchies emergencies.”

“Actually, I’ve never had one.”

“Your house is well stocked?”

“I don’t smoke.”

“Like, recently?”

## *MAKING WAVES*

“Like, ever.”

Andy put down his knife and turned to face Scott. “You’re kidding me.”

“No.”

“How is that even possible? I mean, I always get my best weed from people who work on movie and television sets. I thought everybody in Hollywood used pot.”

“Some people do. But I’ve always been... Look, I’m not even supposed to drink. It never seemed like smoking pot would be a good idea.”

Andy snorted. “I bet you would be a riot high. You’ll have to try it sometime.”

“I don’t think Susan would approve.”

“Susan doesn’t have to know everything you do.” As soon as he spoke, he felt his face turn hot, from his neck to his scalp. He turned away quickly, trying to focus on the garlic he needed to chop, even though he was certain that no amount of chopping would make the situation better.

“Maybe you’re right,” Scott said softly.

“No, no I’m not right. I mean...maybe you shouldn’t tell her everything you’ve ever done, but you should definitely be honest with her.”

“But she’s not my mother. She doesn’t need to know every little thing I do, right? I don’t need to tell her that we stayed in LA so we could eat fajitas, do I?”

“No, you probably shouldn’t do that. She wouldn’t be amused. And she’d probably sit on me and pull my hair, like when we were kids.”

## MAKING WAVES

“What should I tell her? I don’t want her to sit on you and pull your hair.”

“Tell her we were in bed...you. You were in bed. You overslept.” His knife fell rhythmically against the cutting board. The back of his eyes tingled from the strong aroma of garlic and onion. His mouth watered, too. “She’d understand. I told her you were pretty drunk last night.”

“Was she mad?”

“I don’t want to be in your shoes.”

“I think we’ve gotten away from the larger point.”

Scott wasn’t moving. Why did he need to stand right there?

“What’s the larger point? And shouldn’t you be working on your guacamole?”

“Do you have lemon juice?”

“In the fridge.”

Scott finally stepped back, giving Andy room enough to breathe. “The larger point is that maybe I want to try some.”

“Maybe you want to try some pot?”

“Yeah.”

Andy looked over his shoulder, hoping if he could see Scott, he could understand what the hell he was talking about. Except, when he looked away, he didn’t stop moving the knife. Pain traveled up his arm as the blade sliced right through the tip of his middle finger.

“Mother *fucker*.” Andy dropped the knife and held his hand up. He watched rivulets of blood run down his finger and into his palm. The red was so bright, shining in the sunlight.

## *MAKING WAVES*

“What happened? Oh, God. Come here, let’s get that rinsed off.”

“I just...I wasn’t paying attention.”

Scott held Andy’s wrist and dragged him over to the sink. He turned on the cold water and forced Andy’s bloody finger under the stream. “Because of me?”

“You did startle me a little bit. That’s all.”

Scott grinned. It was a beautiful grin. The sort of grin that would make people shovel money in his direction just to make him grin again and again. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to do that.”

“No, no, it’s fine.” It wasn’t the loss of blood that made him heady. Why did Scott keep smiling at him? “You startled me a little bit. You’re getting married tomorrow and you want to stay around here and get high with me?”

“Well, when you put it like that, it sounds insane, doesn’t it?”

“I don’t think this is going to stop bleeding.”

“Let’s get some pressure on it.”

Scott turned off the water and the deep red stream continued to flow. Andy remained still, relieved that the pain hadn’t actually started yet. His flesh was numb from the cold water, but his wrist and arm were throbbing. He knew soon after the throbbing, he would be seriously uncomfortable. Painkillers. He would need some of those.

Scott ripped a handful of paper towels from the roll and started carefully dabbing the blood and water from Andy’s hand. As the blood disappeared, Andy realized the injury was



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just a thin little slice missing from the tip of his finger. When it healed, it probably wouldn't leave a scar. But for the moment, it was still bleeding, almost angrily. As if the injury had been a major offense to the integrity of his body.

Once the skin was dry, Scott began winding a clean paper towel around the injured finger. The white immediately turned scarlet.

"I don't think it's going to stop bleeding."

"It will. Did you get any blood on the onion?"

"I don't know."

"It's okay if you did. It'll just add some iron to the marinade."

Andy made a sound that might have been a snort or might have been a laugh. He sounded a bit like a strangled pig. "What if it doesn't stop bleeding? Are we going to have to go to the hospital?"

"I think it'll stop bleeding," Scott assured him. "Hopefully that'll be before you pass out or something."

"If I do pass out, will you take me to the hospital?"

"Yes, but only if it's clear that you've passed out due to the blood loss."

"Do you expect me to pass out for any other reason?"

Scott's grin turned wolfish. "Well, I could think of a few things. Does it hurt?"

"Does what hurt?"

"Your finger."

"Oh. I think an aspirin and some ice might help. I can finish the marinade without getting too much blood in it."

## *MAKING WAVES*

"I'll finish it, if you like."

"You don't know how to cook," Andy reminded him.

"I can follow directions," Scott reminded him. "That's like, all I do. It's my whole job. Where's your Band-Aids?"

"In the cupboard above the stove. There's some ointment up there, too."

Scott unwound the towel—it was already completely red, but the blood had slowed. "Well, I'm not doctor, but I think you're going to keep your finger."

"You think so?"

"You might even keep your nail."

"It doesn't look too bad?"

Scott brought Andy's hand up to his face, inspecting it closely. For an insane moment, Andy thought Scott was going to kiss the small cut. And if he kissed Andy's finger, then he might kiss his knuckle. And then his palm, his pulse, his arm, and up to his shoulder. Which was only inches from his mouth. He couldn't let his mind wander that direction, but he couldn't stop himself from thinking about it.

"No, not too bad. Keep your hand up like this."

"Okay."

"Stay right here. I'm going to get the Band-Aid."

"I won't move an inch," Andy promised.

Scott turned away, allowing Andy the perfect view of his ass. He hadn't spent too much time staring at Scott's ass, but now he realized that was a mistake. Because Scott had an amazing ass. He also had amazing shoulders. The more time Andy spent in Scott's presence, the more he found to

## *MAKING WAVES*

appreciate.

“Found it.” Scott turned, and the smile was gone, replaced with an appropriate solemn look. “You know, I used to love to play doctor.”

“With all the neighborhood girls?”

Scott peeled the paper from a Band-Aid and wrapped it around Andy’s finger nail. Only the very top edge actually reached the wound. “And a few of the boys.”

Andy’s heart slammed against his ribcage. What game was Scott playing here? He had been so incredibly vehement that morning about not being gay. And he had been so very good at sucking cock the night before. And now he was mentioning playing doctor with boys? Or maybe he was only teasing Andy? Though it didn’t seem like a very funny joke.

He added another Band-Aid, completely covering the top of Andy’s finger. “Does it hurt?”

“It’s starting to.”

“Yeah, it probably will for awhile.”

“I think I can finish this up, though.”

“You sure? My offer stills stands.”

“Yeah, I got it. It’s just a little flesh wound, after all. You better get back to your guac before all the avocados turn brown.”

“I hate brown avocados.”

“I think we all do.”

The pain was spreading now, gliding over his hand like slow-moving molasses. It was stupid. How could such a small injury hurt him so much? He’d sound like a baby if he

## MAKING WAVES

complained about it, especially since Scott had studied it so closely. He couldn't pretend that it was a serious wound.

"You doing okay over there?"

*I've been better. Of course, I've been worse, too.* "I'm almost done. Can you open the vinegar for me?"

"No problem."

They worked quietly after that. Andy was never not aware of what Scott was doing. Especially when he started dicing the onion and garlic for his dip. Sometimes he could feel Scott watching him, like when he poured his mixture into a large freezer bag. He added the skirt steak and began mixing it all together, making sure all the meat was well covered.

"That smells really good."

"Wait until I've got the meat on the grill."

"Three hours, huh?"

"Yep. Can I try some of your guacamole?"

"Absolutely."

Andy scooped a healthy amount onto a chip and popped it into his mouth. He had been expecting something passable, even good. But he didn't expect the amazing flavor that hit his tongue. It was bold and subtle at the same time. It was spicy without being overpowering. Andy realized he could eat the entire bowl of the dip and still want more.

"This is amazing."

"You like it?"

"I'm in love with this dip. I want to have sex with it."

"Really?"

"Can I have more?"

## *MAKING WAVES*

"If you eat it all now, there won't be any left for the fajitas."

"We have an entire tree of avocados outside," Andy pointed out.

"You've got to learn how to exercise a little bit of self-control."

"Self-control is highly overrated." He reached for the bowl, but Scott held it out of his reach. He was just two inches taller, but apparently, that two inches was all he needed.

"You're right. Do you want to do something about that?"

Andy stopped reaching for the dip. "You're serious about this?"

"I am."

"Why?"

"It's hard...it's hard to explain. We can ignore I ever mentioned it. I just...it's hard to explain."

Scott didn't have to explain. Andy already understood. Probably better than Scott could ever imagine. He understood why Scott had been drinking. He understood why Scott had wanted to stay in a tiny house in a corner of Pasadena and eat fajitas and guacamole. He understood it. He didn't like it, but he got it.

"Come up to the bedroom with me."

"The bedroom?"

"You're not a narc, are you?"

Scott laughed. "No, no I'm not."

"Then come up to the bedroom with me." Andy knew it was a bad idea. He just didn't know if he cared.

## CHAPTER 4

Getting high was probably a bad idea. Getting high with Andy was probably a bad idea. Getting high with Andy in Andy's bedroom was definitely a bad idea on every level. It was possible that Scott had never had a worse idea. Unlikely, but possible. But once he got it in his mind, he couldn't let it go. He didn't want to let it go. He just wanted to be somebody else. He wanted to be somebody who lived in Pasadena, who had the right to sleep in Andy's house, who ate fajitas, who smoked with his friends.

"You've never done this before?" Andy asked, sitting cross-legged on his bed.

"No."

## *MAKING WAVES*

“What about in high school? College?”

“No. I don’t remember anybody offering me any.”

“But...you were in the theater department, right?”

Scott chuckled. “Yes, I was. But I was a bit of a square.”

“Maybe you smoked a lot and you just don’t remember it. That’s not unlikely.”

“No, I suppose anything’s possible.”

Andy rolled the joint, looking up through his lashes. “You don’t have to do this. If you want, I can just put all of this away and we can watch television.”

“I want to try it. Think of it as my last big hurrah before I get hitched.”

“I thought that was last night.”

“It wasn’t much of a hurrah. At least I don’t remember celebrating much.”

“You probably won’t remember this celebration much either.” Andy licked the paper and sealed the joint. “Should I give you a list of things you can expect? Or do you just want to be surprised?”

“Are the effects the same for anybody?”

“Nope.”

“Then I guess I’ll settle for being surprised.”

“Okay. Just do what I do.”

Andy brought the rolled pot up to his lips and lit the end. It glowed a bright orange, and an almost sweet-smelling smoke drifted to Scott’s nose. Andy’s chest expanded as he inhaled deeply, and the end of the cigarette glowed brightly once again. His chest hitched as he held the smoke in his lungs, the

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seconds crawling by before he released it in a long, low breath.

“You ready to try?”

Scott nodded, accepting the joint. He mimicked Andy in every way, bringing it up to his mouth, inhaling, holding the smoke, exhaling in an even breath. He wanted to cough, but he fought that urge until the tickle in the bottom of his throat was too much to withstand. He hacked, his body shaking, trying to clear itself of the smoke.

“That’ll happen the first few times,” Andy assured him. “Try it again.”

He coughed again on the second attempt, but by the third time, he managed to inhale and exhale without going into convulsions. He wanted to try again, but Andy held out his hand, silently expecting Scott to pass it over. He took a hit, and handed it back. Scott took a deep lungful, and his scalp started to tingle. More than tingle, it started to burn. Though the burn wasn’t unpleasant. He didn’t think his head was on fire or anything, but it was still burning. The more he thought about it, the deeper it became. Sharper, too.

“Andy?” Was that his voice? It had to be his voice, because he didn’t think Andy would have any reason to say his own name.

“Yes?”

“My scalp...”

“What about it?”

*My scalp is burning* was far too absurd to say. The words didn’t make any sense because even though he felt this strange



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tingle all the way to his brain, there was no way that his head was on fire. If he said those words, he'd be just like all the brain-dead stoners that people mocked.

"Scott?"

"It's just...weird." Yes, weird was a good word. Safe, too. Because things *were* weird.

"Yeah, it is."

"Do things get weird for you?"

"Usually."

Scott took the joint back. Was this his fifth hit? Or had he had more? Less? He tried to tell himself that it didn't matter. Why did it matter? He took a deep breath, and he felt the smoke travel through him. It went through his scalp, lighting it all on fire again, and then slowly wound through his limbs, wrapping around him tighter and tighter. He felt the smoke in his chest and his stomach. He even felt it in his groin.

"Oh...God..."

"How you doing?"

"Good," Scott answered quickly. Thickly. The word lingered in his mouth. He could taste it. Words tasted like things. How had he never noticed it before?

"You're kind of a lightweight," Andy said, not unkindly.

"New to this."

"I know."

Andy set the cigarette in the ash tray on the nightstand and leaned back, stretching his long legs in front of him and folding his hands on his stomach. He looked so comfortable. Would Andy mind if he lay down beside him? Curled up close

## MAKING WAVES

to him? Touched his chest and stomach and face?

“You can lie down if you want.”

Scott jumped. Had he voiced his thoughts? He didn’t remember speaking. Maybe he had? Or maybe Andy could read his mind? Either one seemed possible at that moment. But, more importantly, he did want to lie down. He wanted to stretch out on the thick mattress and bury his face in the pillow and inhale until he caught every trace of Andy’s increasingly familiar scent.

“This is nice.” The words still felt thick. His eyes were heavy. He closed them, but he didn’t feel tired.

“Yeah, it is. You look different.”

“How do I look different?”

“Calmer. More relaxed. It makes you look younger when you don’t have all those stress lines around your eyes.”

Scott smiled. “I’ll keep that in mind for the photo shoots. You know that some jerk in *People Magazine* said I was getting old?”

“You’re not getting old.”

“I’m getting a little old.”

“No. You’re not. And I think you look better than you ever have.”

“Really?”

“Yep.”

“You must think I’m terribly insecure.”

“Aren’t all actors terribly insecure? I thought they got involved in acting for the validation.”

Scott chuckled. “Yes, probably.”

## *MAKING WAVES*

“You shouldn’t be insecure.”

“Why not?”

“Because you’re gorgeous.”

A wave of warmth moved through him, filling each of his cells, pushing his blood closer to the surface of his skin. “I wish I could be more like you.”

“Why?”

“Because you know who you are. You don’t wake up in the morning and think, ‘Who am I going to be today?’ You don’t consider hiding under your bed and refusing to be anybody at all.”

“How do you know that?”

Scott still didn’t open his eyes, but he could still imagine Andy’s face. Curious without being defensive. Or accusatory. Inviting, beautiful blue eyes. A lovely mouth. “Because you’re not ashamed of yourself. Because you’re...an honest person. Trust me. I can always sense an honest person.”

“How do you sense that?”

Scott shrugged. Or he felt like he was shrugging. “I just can.”

“I’m not so honest, Scott.”

“What do you mean?”

“I’ve lied to you.”

“I don’t believe it.”

“I lied to you this morning,” Andy continued. “I lied about what happened between us. I left something out.”

Now Scott did open his eyes. He propped himself up on his arm and was startled to realize that Andy’s eyes were even

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bluer than he had imagined. “What did you leave out?”

“What you did. But I promised I wouldn’t mention it at all. I suppose that means I shouldn’t mention it to you, either.”

Scott frowned. “I wasn’t lying, though. I don’t remember anything that happened.”

“Nothing?”

“No.”

Andy scooted closer, until their chests were touching. Until Scott could feel the erection against his thigh. He should move away. He should roll to his back, so he wasn’t so close to Andy. Or he should get off the bed. He understood all of that, but the thoughts refused to be concrete. They refused to become actions. There was a division between his brain and his flesh, as if they were no longer on speaking terms. It must have been the drugs. Or it could have been Andy.

He was about to tell Andy of this strange, disconcerting separation, when Andy leaned forward. For a moment—for just a second—he didn’t understand what Andy wanted to do. But it all became clear when their mouths touched. Andy tasted spicy—like the guacamole and garlic—and a little sweet, too. His skin smelled of the smoke and of his aftershave. And his lips...his lips felt perfect. They fit Scott’s mouth like they were made for kissing.

There was no thought of pulling away. He didn’t *want* to pull away. If Andy wanted to kiss him, who was he to resist? His first, automatic reaction was to part his lips, inviting a deeper caress. Andy moaned softly, then slipped his tongue against Scott’s, teasing him with the hint of what more could

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come. But Scott didn't want to be teased. He wanted it all. He wanted to taste Andy—he wanted to lose himself in the other man.

Scott gripped the back of Andy's neck, holding him in place as he plunged his tongue into Andy's mouth. They moved together, Scott lying back as Andy pushed forward. Chest to chest, legs entwined, mouths locked together—Scott didn't want to move. Each slide of Andy's tongue made his head spin, each caress burned into his flesh. Everything was too sharp, too vivid, but he didn't care. His heart hammered, his skin and eyes and fingers throbbed in response, and he craved more of Andy's mouth.

"Don't stop," Scott murmured.

"You sure?"

"I'm sure."

"We shouldn't be doing this," Andy said solemnly.

"I know. But you feel so good. I've never felt anything like this...like you."

"You have." Andy thrust his hips, grinding his erection into Scott's thigh. "Last night."

Scott blinked. When was last night? What day was it now? Andy was speaking like he thought Scott should know what was happening, but he didn't have any idea. His lips were tingling. He needed the weight of Andy's mouth on his. Why were they talking?

"I kissed you last night?"

"You did more than kiss me," Andy whispered. He wiped his thumb over Scott's bottom lip, pulling it to his chin before

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tilting his head to run his tongue along its edge. “Your mouth felt amazing.”

“What do you mean? Did I...did I suck you off?”

“Until I popped.”

No matter how much he searched his memory, that wasn't ringing a bell. But he did believe Andy. Because who wouldn't suck his cock at the first possible opportunity? Scott was only human, after all. He was nothing more than flesh and blood. And there was nothing weaker than flesh. Especially in the face of temptation. What had been that quote? Scott only vaguely recalled it—something about being able to resist everything except temptation.

Now the thought of Andy popping made his cock throb. It didn't just throb. He ached. He hurt for contact. How long had it been since another man touched him with rough, groping fingers?

“Help me with my clothes,” Scott muttered, awkwardly tugging at his shirt and getting nowhere with it.

“I was serious before.”

“I'm serious now.”

Andy clawed at Scott's shirt, sending buttons flying. “Still serious?”

“You just ruined this shirt.”

“It's my shirt.” Andy sat up, straddling Scott's thighs. His strong fingers tugged Scott's fly open. He pulled, Scott pushed, and between the two of them, they got his jeans down to his knees. “God, your cock is even prettier than I imagined.”

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The words made Scott flush. "You didn't see it last night?"

"I didn't get the chance. You had...very firm ideas of what should happen."

"I can't imagine I stopped you from doing anything."

"You're more forceful when you're drunk." Andy unzipped his own pants, giving Scott the perfect view of one of the nicest cocks he had ever seen. Of course, he had seen it once before. "I think I like you high."

"Why?"

Andy gripped the base of his cock and dragged the tip up and down Scott's shaft, smearing a string of pre-come across the skin. "Because you're more pliant now."

"You don't like it when I'm forceful?"

"I don't mind...I just like to have a turn on top every once in awhile."

It was definitely Andy's turn now. The crown of his cock was soft, like something made of velvet. Scott tilted his head back and closed his eyes. The light contact shouldn't have felt so good, but he couldn't think of anything that had ever felt better. Andy's skin was hot, but instead of making Scott warm, it sent chills down his spine. When he didn't think he could take it anymore, he opened his eyes, his gaze clashing with Andy's.

Need overwhelmed him, and he reached for the other man without thinking. He pulled Andy forward, and their mouths came together in a hard, fumbling kiss. Their cocks were aligned, and Andy wrapped his hand around both, long fingers enclosing Scott's shaft, holding it tightly against Andy's. He

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began pumping his wrist, sliding his body along Scott's in the same rhythm.

The world bled away from them. He wasn't a Hollywood actor, desperate to hold onto his looks, his reputation, his star power, the elements of his career. He wasn't a man engaged to be married. For a moment, he was exactly what he had always wanted to be, with the person he had always wanted to be with. The thought fueled his hunger, stoked it, until he was mindless with it. He wrapped his arm around Andy, holding him as tight as he could as their tongues dueled.

Scott knew it would be better if he let Andy slide down his body to close that hot mouth around his shaft. He knew it would be better if he allowed Andy to move. But he couldn't let him go. Especially when Andy started rocking faster, building the friction between their bodies. Besides that, Andy was an amazing kisser. Maybe the best kisser he had ever been with. He wasn't sloppy or slobbery. He didn't push his tongue down Scott's throat. His teeth didn't scrape against Scott's lips—unless Andy wanted them to. He did occasionally nip at Scott, sending pain-tinged pleasure from his throat to his groin.

Scott didn't tear his mouth away until it felt like the bed was dipping and rising beneath him. Was that the lack of oxygen? The pot? Something else?

"God..." Andy pushed Scott's hair away from his brow. His lips were parted and swollen, and warm breath fanned across his flushed skin. "I can't stop myself now."

"Don't try."



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Scott hoped the exchange would lead to another deep, slow, toe-curling kiss. Instead, Andy slid down Scott's body, mouthing a trail of hot, wet kisses from his throat to his cock. He didn't linger. He didn't try to tease Scott's pulsing flesh. He simply closed his lips around Scott's shaft and swallowed him all the way down.

Scott stiffened, his back arching off the bed. No matter how long he wanted this to last, he knew he was already on the edge. It didn't help—or maybe it helped too much—when Andy started moving his hand and mouth in tandem, stroking and sucking him until his lower stomach tightened. Occasionally, Andy looked up through his lashes, and each glance sent a strange, sharp sting to Scott's chest. There was something in his eyes, some unnamed emotion, that Scott could see but didn't quite recognize.

The only thing Scott really understood was that Andy wanted this, too. It wasn't just a matter of being horny. It wasn't because of lowered defenses. Scott's mind couldn't grasp onto much, but he held on tight to that thought. Even as it felt like his head was drifting above his body on a string, and every one of Andy's breaths rasped across his skin, and he could count the lines and cracks in the ceiling, he held onto the thought that they both wanted this. Wanted each other.

Andy began moving faster, building friction with his lips, tongue, teeth, and palm. Spit and pre-come coated his shaft, and he felt the sweat gathering on his chest and thighs. His scalp was still burning and tingling, and that strange, hot sensation swept through him, searing each hair from his head

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to his toes.

Finally, Andy swallowed Scott to the root, burying Scott's crown deep in his throat. He swallowed, his throat tight and quivering. That was it. That was all Scott could take. He exploded, his cock jerking with each shot of come. Andy swallowed it all, until Scott was completely spent.

"Oh...fuck."

Andy licked delicately at Scott's softening shaft, his tongue flicking out again and again to clean his shaft, his crown, and even his balls.

"Andy...God..."

"Do you want another hit?"

"What?"

"From the joint?"

Scott shook his head. "No, no, I'm good. I'm...my scalp is still burning."

Andy smiled and climbed up his body. Scott wrapped his arms around him, holding him tight, as their mouths fused together once again.

"I can't believe we did this again," Andy murmured against his mouth.

Scott ran his palm up and down Andy's knotted spine. "I can. I can't help myself with you."

Andy lifted his head, and the way his eyes clouded over told Scott that he had said the wrong thing. At the very least, the kissing was over.

"You're going to have to learn how to help yourself."

"Andy..."

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"I'm such an asshole."

"You're not an asshole," Scott protested, trying to sit up, even though his head was still spinning.

"I am an asshole. You're not just some guy I picked up at a bar. You're going to marry my sister *tomorrow*. God, she just wanted me to make sure you got up to Napa in one piece. And look what I did."

"Andy, I know how you're feeling, but..."

"And what about you? Can you be engaged and fooling around with another guy?"

"It's not as simple as that."

"It is that simple..." Andy reached for his pants and pulled them over his hips. "We know the difference between right and wrong."

"There's a bit of a gray area here."

"How can you say that? I should call Susan."

"You're not going to tell her, are you?"

"Yes. No." Andy ran his hand over his face. He had a great chest. Scott knew now wasn't the time to ogle the other man, but he couldn't help himself. "I don't know. I felt guilty enough last night. But now..."

"We need to talk about this."

"You need to get dressed."

"Fine. I'll get dressed. Then we'll talk about this."

"Okay. But I don't know how much we have to actually talk about."

"Probably more than you think."

Scott dropped his head back as soon as Andy left the room.

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How did he get himself in this situation? And how could he get out of it? Was getting out of it even possible? His head felt cloudy and he just wanted to curl up and sleep. But he couldn't keep running away from his problems. He couldn't continue fleeing from the reality he had created for himself. His decisions, and his decisions alone, had led him to this point.

He would have done everything differently if he had known. Now he couldn't take it back. He just hoped Andy would understand.

## CHAPTER 5

Andy didn't know if he was technically the worst brother on the planet, but he thought he was in the running for that dishonor. Receiving a blow job wasn't great or commendable, but he thought it might be forgivable. Getting Scott high, kissing him until his mouth was bruised, and then sucking him off was not forgivable. And it shouldn't be forgiven. Not that he planned to tell Susan, and he didn't think Scott would make a confession, but that didn't alleviate his guilt.

Despite his guilt, he wasn't surprised by his behavior. He had never cheated on any of his lovers, but he had a knack for finding lovers who were involved in relationships. But never, ever anybody who was involved with his own sister. So why

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did this keep happening? And could he stop it from happening again?

That final question lingered in his mind, unanswered. As soon as Scott descended the stairs, most of Andy's good intentions flew out the window. What the hell was he supposed to do about this? Sometimes, when he had a relationship problem, he would call Susan and get her take on things. She was smart, she always had good advice, and she had the uncanny ability to look at Andy's fucked up life and know exactly how to sort it out.

He had the feeling that she wouldn't be any help this time around.

"You look awful," Scott observed.

"I feel awful."

"I wish you wouldn't."

Andy didn't have a choice. It wouldn't take any other mind-altering substances to get him on his knees in front of Scott again.

"Why?"

"Because...it's complicated."

"That doesn't make me feel better."

Scott sat down on the couch beside Andy, but, thankfully, there was a few inches between them. He didn't want to touch Scott. Especially since he could still taste Scott on his tongue.

"It's a business arrangement."

"What?"

"The wedding. It's a business arrangement between the two of us. We have contracts drawn up and everything."

## *MAKING WAVES*

“Contracts? Why?”

“My career. There are rumors, you know? There are always rumors. But I’m getting older, and my agent thought that me getting married would help. We’d have the promotion from the wedding, itself. We’re on the covers of magazines. We’ve got a few talk shows booked.”

“Does Susan know this?”

“Of course.”

“But...” Andy understood arranged marriages. He understood gay men choosing to remain in the closet, choosing to disguise their orientation with weddings. He understood that in Hollywood, appearance mattered more than anything else. But he didn’t understand why his sister would be happy to agree to a loveless marriage. “Does anybody know this?”

“No. Just me, Susan, my agent, and now you.”

“But you don’t want to get married.”

“That’s not really....”

“You don’t want to get married. That’s why you went drinking last night. That’s why you didn’t want to leave here.”

Scott shrugged. “I agree that it’s a good idea. And we don’t have to be married forever. A year or so would be more than enough time.”

“But you don’t want to get married.”

“No, I don’t.”

“You don’t have to,” Andy said softly.

“I think that I do.”

“We’re not living in the forties, for Christ’s sake. This

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isn't the golden age of Hollywood. You aren't owned by the studios."

"I know, but..."

"Rumors aren't going to be enough to ruin your career. Not in this day and age."

"I don't want people to know that I'm gay."

"Why? What's wrong with being gay?"

"I don't know. Why don't you ask all the people who hate us because of something we can't control? Hell, people in this state voted for a Constitutional amendment to keep us second-class citizens. And you're asking me what's wrong with being gay?"

"Nothing's going to change for us if we stay in the closet. You're somebody who could make a real difference for the gay community."

Scott shook his head. "I never asked for that sort of responsibility, and I never wanted it."

"Responsibilities aren't always something that you ask for," Andy pointed out. "Sometimes, you have to step up even if you don't want to."

"No, you don't. I don't."

"So what are you going to do? Spend the next several years drinking every night, hating yourself? And don't tell me that you don't hate yourself. Don't tell me you're happy about this. I heard what you said last night. I know what you've been doing today."

"It's just...nerves. Last minute nerves."

"It's just that a part of you knows this is wrong."



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“Maybe, but it’s the decision I’ve made. And it’s too late to go back on it now. The papers have been signed, the wedding has been planned, and I’m going through with it.”

Andy could keep arguing with him, but it would be futile. He knew that. He had had the same sort of argument a hundred times with a hundred different people. And he never won. Most of the time, they eventually realized Andy was right, but by then, it was too late to do anything about it.

“I’m not going to tell Susan what happened between us,” Andy said in a dull tone.

“That’s fine. I don’t think she needs to know.”

“Are you going to stay faithful to her? Was that part of your deal?”

“Discretion was part of our deal. Which isn’t a problem for me.”

“Why her? Why my sister, of all people? You couldn’t find anybody else to get caught up in your self-delusion?”

Scott’s lips thinned. “She learned about the plan from my agent. She volunteered. And I met her, we got along well. I realized that I could spend time with her, have a house with her, and not be miserable.”

“She’s letting our entire family think she’s found the one she wants to spend the rest of her life with.”

“That was her decision.”

“I think you should get ready to go.”

“We’re leaving right now?”

“There’s not any point in lingering around here, is there?”

Scott pushed himself to his feet. “No, no I guess not.”

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Andy didn't move from the couch, even though he needed to change his clothes and pack his bag for the trip. Scott had only confessed because he wanted to alleviate Andy's guilt, and he appreciated that, in a way. But instead of feeling better, he only felt disappointed. In Scott. In Susan. In himself, even. He didn't want that sort of relationship for his sister. He had always wanted her to find somebody she loved, somebody who made her happy. And now, she was going to have a big, beautiful, glorious wedding, and it was going to be fake. Fake emotions. False promises.

He could admit to himself that disappointment stemmed from the fact that Scott wasn't who Andy believed he was. Instead of being relieved that Scott had admitted he was gay, he was just upset that there were more obstacles between them. More barriers Andy didn't think they could overcome. How could he have a future with a man intent on getting married? How could he have a future with a man who wouldn't even consider being honest with himself and with the world?

As soon as the thought entered his mind, Andy shook his head. Now he was just being stupid. Why did he think he'd even want a future with Scott? Because they had a fun time together that morning? Because the sex was good? Andy had a feeling that if he gave voice to any of those thoughts, Scott would shake his head and explain that he never had any real interest in Andy. And Andy wasn't some naïve kid. He didn't need Scott to explain anything to him.

Even so, the bitter taste of disappointment lingered on the

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back of his tongue. Like bile, yellow and thick, coating his throat.

\* \* \*

“So...are you never going to talk to me again?” Scott asked, about one hundred miles outside of Los Angeles.

“I’m concentrating on driving.”

“It feels like you’re never going to talk to me again.”

“I don’t think there’s really anything to say. Do you?”

“I had a good time...”

Andy snorted. “Yeah, I bet you did.”

Scott didn’t know which was worse. Andy feeling guilty and disgusted with both of them, or Andy feeling angry and disgusted with Scott. He had no further explanation to offer. He couldn’t plead his case. From Andy’s perspective, he didn’t have much of a case to plead.

“Don’t you think I wish things were different?”

“Don’t you think you could make things different, if you wanted to?”

“It’s different for you, Andy. You’re not constantly under scrutiny.”

“So you only have to be honest with the world, and with yourself, when nobody is paying attention?”

“That’s not what I meant.”

“Actions speak louder than words,” Andy said softly.

“I enjoyed spending time with you,” Scott tried.

“Yeah, we had a good time. But that doesn’t change anything.”

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“We can’t even be friends?”

Andy was silent for a long beat. “I don’t think we can be friends. Because if we spend time together...are you going to be able to remember that we’re just friends?”

“Probably not,” Scott admitted.

“I don’t think I can remember, either. And I don’t care if you and Susan have an understanding. I can’t just pretend that the two of you aren’t married. I can’t just pretend that I’m not going behind my own sister’s back. And...that’s not even the biggest problem.”

Scott was almost scared to know. A part of him didn’t even need to ask. He should just cut off the conversation, close his eyes, and try to sleep off the lingering effects of the pot. Maybe if he slept on the whole drive up, he could pretend everything that happened between them was nothing more than a dream.

“What’s the biggest problem?”

“I can’t...I don’t know. I can’t respect you right now.”

“I think you would feel differently if you were in my shoes.”

“I don’t think I would.”

It would be best to let the whole matter drop. He didn’t know what possessed him, but he reached over, his fingers seeking out the warm skin beneath Andy’s ear. He fully expected Andy to slap his fingers away. He did tense, but otherwise, he didn’t react at all. His skin was surprisingly soft. He wanted to know the rest of Andy’s body. And he would probably never get another chance.

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“Maybe I would have done things differently if I had met you first.”

“Don’t say things like that.”

“It’s true.”

“No, it’s not. Because even if we were...you’d still be who you are. Why are we even talking about it? It’s not going to change anything.”

Scott sighed. Andy was right. Their lives were too different. Their worlds were too different. Except, it wasn’t even that. And Scott knew it.

“I’m sorry. I really am.”

“Why? It was just a bit of fun, wasn’t it?”

“No,” Scott answered honestly. There was no reason to lie to him. Just because Andy thought he was dishonest didn’t mean he had to live up to that. “It was fun. But what happened between us...it means more to me than that.”

“Yeah.” He tilted his head. Just a little. Just enough to move into the touch. “Me, too.”

Scott caressed the corner of Andy’s jaw with his thumb. How would it be to watch Andy sleep? How would it feel to kiss him in the morning? To come home to him at night? To miss him while he was on location shoots? Why did he torment himself with these thoughts? Because they were a torment, and he had the feeling they wouldn’t be going anywhere. Especially when he spent every single day with a woman who had Andy’s eyes.

## CHAPTER 6

The resort Susan chose for her faux-wedding ceremony was breathtaking. The Calistoga Resort was the sort of place Andy would never visit, let alone stay for two nights, on his own. But it was just the sort of place Susan loved. And as soon as Scott walked through the doors, he was transformed. While Andy felt out of place and conspicuous, Scott walked through the lobby with an air of ownership. Had he stayed there before? Or did he just know how to work the room?

Susan was waiting for them in front of the fire place in the lobby. The whole room was decorated in understated tans and beiges, and she stood out like a jewel, or an exotic bird, in a dress as blue as her eyes. She smiled when she saw them, no

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hint of being annoyed at their tardiness. She embraced Andy first, and he watched carefully when she turned her attention to her fiancé. A short embrace, a very polite kiss, and then they were separated again.

How had Andy ever been fooled by them?

"I want you two to get settled, then I'm going to show you where we're holding the ceremony. It's already set up outside, and it's gorgeous."

Andy smiled. "Can I be surprised? I'm really beat."

"Did you drive all the way up here?"

"Yeah. I didn't mind, but now I'm tired."

"Okay. Come on, I'll show you where you're staying."

The resort had several lodges and smaller cabins. Andy hoped she would show him to one that was far from the one she would share with Scott, but he didn't have that sort of luck.

"I hope this is big enough," Susan said as she opened the lodge door. "I figured you wouldn't be spending too much time inside, anyway."

"It's more than perfect," Andy assured her.

"We're right next door if you need anything."

"What time is the rehearsal dinner tonight?"

"Eight." Susan smiled. "I'll make sure you don't miss it."

"I don't doubt it."

Scott wouldn't even look at him before he left, following at Susan's heels. Which was fine. He didn't want Scott to look at him. He didn't want to talk about what had happened. There wasn't anything left to say. And since he couldn't avoid Susan

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and her husband for every holiday, every family get together, and every phone call, he'd better get used to the fact that there was nothing left to say.

Andy stripped down to nothing, shedding his clothes in favor of feeling the air and sunlight against his skin. The lodge came complete with a giant tub—big enough for two people—but he resisted the temptation. If he took a bath, he would have nothing to do but lie in the hot water and think of Scott. At least if he went to sleep, he would give himself a break.

The bed felt like a cloud. Or at least what Andy thought a cloud must feel like. It was soft, yet firm, and the sheets smelled of sunshine and pine forest. The duvet was thick—thick enough to be used as a mattress itself—and the pillows were cool against his face. He stretched out on his side and stared out the giant, picture window into the woods. Normally, he would get dressed and go for a hike. He didn't even feel like doing that much.

Andy let his mind drift over past lovers, past victories, past heartbreak. He settled on a memory he didn't revisit often. A man he had met when he was only nineteen, not yet completely out of the closet, and trying to figure out what he was going to do after getting kicked out of college. His name had been Bobby, he had been in his mid-forties, married, with two daughters only slightly younger than Andy. About thirty minutes after Andy had hit Bobby with his Frisbee, they were in one of the showers and Bobby was sucking hard on his cock.

Somehow, Andy had convinced himself that Bobby loved



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him. Their affair had lasted for a little over a year, Bobby insisting he wasn't gay, and he wasn't going to leave his wife, even though his wife didn't understand him. Even so, Andy had still believed Bobby had loved him. When it finally ended, Andy's entire sense of self had been destroyed. He'd immediately hooked up with another married man. And his boyfriend after that relationship had imploded was not married, but he was involved with somebody else.

Unavailable men. One after another. Scott was only the most recent in a long line. Of course he had been immediately attracted to Scott. He was the very definition of unavailable. He was a fantasy that didn't exist in the real world. He was another woman's fiancé. He was the walking, talking embodiment of America's sexual desires, and Andy had fallen into that trap. He'd never stood a chance.

Being aware of his own weakness, of the issues that kept driving him forward into a brick wall, didn't give him any useful information about how to deal with it. He had the feeling that attending the ceremony the next evening would just make him ache with desire. For one thing, Scott would look amazing in his tailored tuxedo. His hair would shine, his smile would gleam, and if he sent one vaguely hungry glance Andy's way, he'd melt.

And since he was going to be sitting in the front row, he was pretty sure the ceremony would be the most awkward event of his life.

The bedroom faced west, and late afternoon light slanted into the room, spilling golden light over the hardwood floor

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and the white bed. Andy watched the shadows change shape, stretch, get longer and longer, as the sky drifted from blue to a deep shade of pink. It would be a perfect night. Warm without being hot, soft around the edges. Alcohol would flow freely at the dinner, and he was sure Scott would indulge. Andy probably would, too. Why did he feel so sick inside? Why was Scott any different from every other man who'd slipped through his fingers because he'd never had a true hold on them anyway?

"Andy?"

He had been thinking so hard about Scott that he wasn't the least surprised when he heard the other man's voice.

"Are you in here?"

"I'm here." Even though he called Scott to him, he didn't reach for the complimentary bathrobe, or pull the blanket over him. "What do you need?"

"Susan told me to make sure you were awake. Dinner is an hour." His voice was getting closer. The lodge was small. It would only take a few steps to bring him into the bedroom.

"I'm awake. I'll be there."

"The pool is beautiful. That's where the ceremony is going to be held. They're going to have floating candles over the entire surface."

"Sounds magical."

He knew the moment Scott entered the room, because the other man caught his breath. "It...it should be. Susan is changing right now, and fixing her makeup."

Andy felt like he was somewhere else. Somewhere above

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the bed, watching Scott with somebody else. "She'll kill us if we're late." Why say that? Who said anything about being late? He had an hour, and it would only take minutes to shower and dress.

"We won't be late."

"Are the rest of the guests here?"

"The majority of them. Susan introduced me to a few of her friends. They played it very cool."

"They're all from Hollywood. They wouldn't be dazzled by you."

"Good point. A friend of yours was out there. Wilson, I think his name was." The mattress dipped behind him. It was a king size bed. He shouldn't be so aware of Scott's presence, but he absolutely could feel every single breath.

"What did he say when you met him?"

"He asked about you, then he laughed a little. He seemed like a strange guy."

"He is a strange guy." Andy took a deep breath. His muscles were tense, waiting for the first touch. The brush of contact he knew was coming. "But we've known him all our lives, so...Susan was thorough."

"Yes. Apparently."

"I was thinking just now...about somebody I used to know. His name was Bobby."

"Who's Bobby?"

"An ex-lover. He was married when I met him. It wasn't exactly my proudest moment."

"Did you swear off married men after that?"

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“No, not at all. I’m in the terrible habit of falling for guys who are just out of my reach.”

“So...I’m just a habit?”

“You might be.”

The touch came then. Light fingers following the curve of his spine. Scott did not have a gentle touch. He was always demanding, just on the other side of harsh. But now, he touched Andy like he was made of glass. Something vulnerable, to be cared for, to be cherished. Andy dismissed the thought. Scott didn’t care for him or cherish him. But Scott was still touching him, leaning closer to him. Crowding his space until the bed felt like no more than a cot.

“God, Andy...”

“If we’re late, she’ll kill us.”

“We won’t be late. I promise.”

Andy rolled to his back. In the dying summer light, Scott looked younger, more vulnerable. He took Scott’s left hand and held it up, studying the thick, gold band. The engagement ring. He had never noticed it before. Scott gently took his hand from Andy’s grip and cupped the side of his face.

“I wasn’t going to do this, by the way.”

“What?”

“I didn’t come in here to touch you. Or kiss you.”

“Then you should probably stop.”

“Yeah. Probably.”

Scott tilted his head and Andy braced himself. But he couldn’t do anything to prepare himself for the shock of electricity that jumped from Scott’s mouth to his. He couldn’t

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prepare himself for the thrill of pleasure that shot down his spine. The thrill of pleasure that forced him to open his mouth and respond to the kiss without hesitation or reserve. Scott moaned, like he hadn't expected Andy to respond positively—or respond at all.

Scott smoothed his hand down Andy's body, his palm molding over Andy's chest, exploring his stomach, and finally settling at his hip. Andy hated that Scott's touch already felt familiar. He hated that every inch, every second of contact, just made him hungry for more. He hated that he clung to Scott like a child clinging to a teddy bear. Scott would leave him again soon enough.

“I want you, Andy.”

“I know.”

“No...I mean...” Scott reached between Andy's legs to cup his ass, one finger pushing between his cheeks to seek out his clenched hole. “I need to be inside of you. I need to fuck you.”

Andy began nodding before Scott stopped talking. He knew what Scott wanted—what he thought he needed—because he needed and wanted the same thing. They could sit there and swap reasons why they should stop. He could remind Scott that they could not be late to his own wedding rehearsal and dinner. But his cock was hard, already leaking with clear pre-come, and Scott's erection was pressed against thigh.

Scott groaned before claiming Andy's mouth. His finger caressed Andy's pucker, teasing him, pushing at the muscle

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without actually entering his channel. Andy's fingers felt fat and stupid, but he pushed at the buttons on Scott's shirt, pulled at his belt, and tried to work his zipper free. Their tongues dueled. Kissing Scott always felt like a fight, but it wasn't unpleasant. It wasn't that Scott was fighting for a clear show of dominance. He was just fighting for every second, struggling to hold onto every caress. Andy liked it. He liked being wanted—he liked that Scott was desperate for him.

It made him feel less pathetic for wanting Scott so much.

“What time is it?” Andy gasped, when they broke apart for air.

“Um...” Scott sat up and pulled off his shirt. His shoes and pants followed. Andy's mouth watered at the first sight of Scott's thick erection, but he didn't think they had time for that. “Ten after seven.”

They definitely didn't have time for that.

Once Scott was naked, he settled on his back and pulled Andy on top of him. He was drawn to Scott's mouth. He tried to kiss his throat. He tried to kiss his chest and his nipple. He tried to taste the little drops of sweat gathering on Scott's skin. But no matter what he tried to do, his lips wanted to go directly back to Scott's mouth. And each time they met, a new shock went down Andy's spine. The hair on his neck and arms stood on end.

Scott's cock rested against his ass. He rocked back until the shaft slipped between his crack. Each time Andy rocked forward, the blunt tip teased his hole. He wasn't stretched. They needed lubricant. But each time the crown nudged

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against his pucker, he quivered.

"Please...tell me you have condoms," Scott murmured.

Andy groaned. He didn't care about condoms. He didn't have any reason to believe that either of them weren't clean. He just wanted to feel the slow burn of Scott stretching his ass. He wanted to sink onto that length until he felt Scott's balls brush against his ass. He wanted to know what it felt like to be completely, and finally, overwhelmed by Scott's body. Who cared about condoms? Who could even think about them?

"I don't know...I might..."

"Andy..."

"I wasn't expecting this to happen. Wait..."

There was a welcome basket on the table near the bed. Andy had ignored it, but now it seemed like their best shot. This was a romantic resort, with rooms booked for a massive wedding party. A few discreet foil packets would not be out of line. He dumped the basket on the table without hesitation, upturning it until everything fell out. Including three unmistakable foil squares, exactly like Andy had imagined.

"Oh, thank goodness."

"They really make sure they have all their bases covered, don't they?"

"They want it to be a magical weekend, I suppose."

"Yeah. Not a bad goal."

"Not a realistic goal," Andy muttered.

Scott frowned. "That's not something I'd expect to hear from you."

"What time is it?"

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“Twenty after.”

“There’s not going to be a magical weekend for me,” Andy said flatly. “That’s all.”

Andy climbed on the bed and straddled Scott once again. He tore at the foil, ripping it open to pull out the lubricated condom. His cock was still hard, and his back was covered in goose bumps—a thrill went through him as he unrolled the condom down Scott’s shaft. But reality had intruded on them—the way reality had the tendency to do. Now he almost felt compelled to continue, but it didn’t feel the same.

“Andy...”

“I know.”

“Listen...” He took Andy’s wrist and pulled him down. Scott’s chest was warm, his smooth skin stretched across sculpted, perfect muscles. Andy didn’t know if Scott actually wanted to say something—or what he could say—because their mouths were fused once again. He felt the minutes crawl over his back. Each second reminding him that they didn’t have many seconds to spare.

“I just need...” Scott started.

“I know.”

Andy didn’t need to hear Scott tell him what he needed or wanted. He didn’t need to hear promises, or hints of promises, or vague fantasies that neither one of them could ever live up to. He wanted somebody he couldn’t have, and Scott wanted somebody who wouldn’t make any real demands, and there weren’t any strings attached, or promises made. And there shouldn’t be. Andy couldn’t stand it if there were.



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“No, I don’t think that you...”

“Scott...please. I just want to feel you before...” Andy reached back to grasp Scott’s slick cock. He pressed backward until his muscle gave way to the thick head and he kept moving. Kept sliding until his whole body was full, until he saw stars behind his eyes, until even his moan was choked off in the back of his throat. “We should have...sooner.”

“Yes...yes we should have.”

Andy dug his fingers into Scott’s shoulders. “How much time?”

“Don’t ask me that.”

“But...”

Scott gripped Andy’s hips, hard enough to imprint ten perfect bruises in Andy’s skin. “Don’t ask me that. Just don’t.”

Andy nodded. He wouldn’t ask again. He wouldn’t even speak again. He was having difficulty breathing and his heart was hammering in his ears and Scott was better than anything Andy had ever imagined. It didn’t matter if they went slow or fast. They didn’t move right, at first. Their natural rhythms didn’t match. But that didn’t matter, either. Andy realized that very little mattered when he had Scott beneath him, flexing his hard muscles, staring with half-closed, fevered eyes, his lips parted just enough to make Andy long to kiss him once again.

“God...Andy...fuck...your ass is so fucking tight.” Scott’s Adam’s apple bobbed after every word as he gulped for air. “I could fuck you all night.”

It wasn’t a promise. It didn’t count as a promise.

“I’ll come by tonight...”

## MAKING WAVES

That did, though. Andy kissed Scott, knowing that would distract him. Between the weight of his tongue and the pressure of his cock, Scott made Andy's head spin. He literally felt like he was high again. Like he had smoked until his lungs burned. That's what Scott did to him. He disrupted his reality, until nothing made sense, and impossible things seemed probable. They hadn't even been together for an entire day.

Not that Andy was surprised. He had lusted after Scott since before they'd met. But physical attraction and this—whatever *this* was—weren't the same thing, and Andy knew it. Maybe Scott knew it, too. Maybe he could sense there was something else there. It didn't matter. He repeated that over and over and over. With each hard thrust, his mind shouted the refrain. Until the words became dull and meaningless with the repetition.

"Harder," Andy moaned. "Please. God."

Instead of moving to meet his plea, Scott froze. Andy moaned in protest, but the push and pull against his hips was enough to tell him what Scott wanted. He wanted Andy to fuck himself on his cock. Andy didn't have a problem with that. With palms braced against Scott's shoulders, he slammed himself backward. They both shouted. He inched forward, then slammed backward again. Each sharp slap of flesh was accompanied with an even louder shout. Maybe Susan would hear them. Maybe the whole resort would hear them. Andy didn't know, and it was difficult to care when Scott repeatedly hit his prostate.

## *MAKING WAVES*

It might have occurred to Scott, though, because he crushed their mouths together. He caught every moan and shout, and Andy caught his pleas and sighs of encouragement. The sounds soon mingled, until Andy couldn't tell which noise was coming from whom. Everything mingled. His body didn't feel like one solid structure any longer. It felt like he lost himself the second he invited Scott in, and even the reminders that Scott didn't feel the same way—couldn't feel the same way—was enough to shake the notion.

The orgasm, when it came, took him by surprise. He imagined Scott sneaking into his room later that night, and the pleasure sparked from that one thought was enough to make his entire body erupt. He shouted one final time, and even Scott's mouth wasn't enough to muffle it. His cock, trapped between their bodies, jerked hard and painted them both with come. He rocked backward, reeling from the pleasure rolling through him, every muscle in his body convulsing and trembling. Scott shouted, too, but the sound was choked in his throat, and then shudders wracked his frame.

"Oh, God... oh, my God..." Scott's arms and legs were like a vice around Andy. He kept murmuring those words, like he was actually praying.

"Scott..."

"Don't ask me what time it is. I just need to...lie here for a moment."

Andy didn't need to ask. He could see the clock from his vantage.

The clock said it was time to go.

## CHAPTER 7

Scott couldn't remember the last time he'd slept with another person in the bed. The occasional men he picked up always went home when they were done, usually with a bribe for their silence tucked in their wallets. Occasionally, he found himself in bed with a woman, but they were always at her place, and he always went home afterward. Usually, he didn't mind sleeping alone.

But sleeping alone with somebody else in the bed was something else entirely. Susan stayed on her side of the mattress. Their feet didn't even touch. He could hear her breathing, but in the darkness, he couldn't tell if she was asleep. Maybe she was still awake, staring at the window,

## *MAKING WAVES*

thinking of everything that needed to happen the next day. Her special day. No wonder Andy had been so pissed off when Scott confessed. If Susan were his sister, he would be pissed off, too.

The wedding would be beautiful, though. The rehearsal had gone off without a single misstep. None of the candles had been lit, but it was easy enough to imagine Susan's skin glowing in the golden light, the reflection from the water catching her eyes and sparkling in the pearl earrings she planned on wearing. A gift from him upon their engagement. Everything had been perfect. Except for the fact that Andy wouldn't even look at him. All night, the other man had studiously kept his eyes averted. Like if he slipped and made the mistake of catching Scott's gaze, he would be turned to stone.

That hurt. He understood it. He wouldn't dream of blaming Andy for it. But it still hurt in some indefinable way. It reminded him of opening night, when he had landed his first leading role. He had been a sophomore in high school, and the auditorium was mostly full. He had been the best Conrad Birdie anybody had ever seen. But when the houselights went up, he had realized that his parents hadn't been there. His mom made it up to him by going to the second and third performances, but nothing could erase that moment of hot, prickling confusion, anger, and even humiliation. The moment had been tattooed into his skin, choosing odd moments to flare up from then on. Like when Andy refused to even acknowledge him.

## *MAKING WAVES*

He hadn't been the only one to notice Andy's behavior. Susan had asked him repeatedly if he was still tired, if he had a headache, if the dinner had disagreed with him. Andy had politely fended off her questions. Had even chastised her for worrying about him on the eve of the biggest day of her life—he had even said the words without a trace of irony.

Fucking him had probably been a mistake. But he had been stretched out on that bed, like some sort of holy offering, and Scott wasn't strong enough to resist. He didn't think it boded well for the next few years, when their paths would cross. But on the other hand, hopefully the next time their paths crossed, Andy wouldn't be naked and delectable on a bed that looked like a cloud.

"Nervous?"

Scott jumped at Susan's voice. "Am I keeping you awake?"

"I was thinking over tomorrow's schedule."

"Oh."

"It's going to be a big day."

"Yes. It's going to be perfect."

"Well...not perfect."

"Perfect enough. Everybody's going to be amazed at the job you did, putting it all together."

"You're going to have bags under your eyes tomorrow. You should get some sleep."

"Make sure I have access to cucumbers and ice before we take the photos."

"Most guys aren't aware of that trick."

## *MAKING WAVES*

“Most guys don’t have to be on set at five in the morning.”

Susan turned toward him, but he still couldn’t see her face.

“I wish I was more like Andy.”

Scott swallowed. “Why?”

“Because he just lives his life the way he wants to live it. My mom cried hysterically for three hours when he told her he was gay. He sat on the couch with her, holding her, letting her work through all of that. He never let go of her. Never told her to stop crying. Never even flinched from her. And then she calmed down and everything was back to normal.”

“How normal could things have been anyway if she cried for three hours?”

Susan laughed. “You’ve met my mother. You know she’s wound pretty tight. He knew it, too. But he didn’t let that scare him away.”

“What are you trying to say?” There was an edge in Scott’s voice, a tone he didn’t like to take with Susan. But just because they were going to be married didn’t mean she had a say in how he ran his life.

“I just wish that I had the strength to sit on the couch with her for three hours. Because if she finds out I’m a lesbian, she’s definitely going to think she failed as a human being.”

“You’re...you’re gay, too?”

“Yeah. Maybe it is genetic.”

“Is that why you agreed to marry me?”

“I felt a certain amount of sympathy for your plight. Andy thinks people should be openly gay. That if we want to see changes in the world, then we’ve got to be willing to stand up

## *MAKING WAVES*

for ourselves. And I don't think he's wrong, but it's not that easy either."

"No, it's not that easy."

"You like him, don't you?"

"He's a nice guy," Scott said.

"That's not what I meant."

Scott knew what she meant. Why on earth did they ever think they could keep it a secret from her? Probably because he didn't know her well enough to know better.

"What if I told you I was having second thoughts about getting married?"

"I'd tell you it was your non-refundable deposits on the line. I could probably handle the crippling disappointment."

Scott hesitated. "You were kidding about the crippling disappointment, right?"

Susan laughed. "Yes. Not that I wouldn't love to marry you, but...if it's not meant to be, it's not meant to be."

"Wouldn't this be weird after a little while? Pretending we want to sleep in the same bed, live in the same house, do the same things? It's not even a matter of finding somebody to fuck...it's all that effort."

"A relationship is an effort, no matter who you're with."

"But sometimes the effort is rewarded. Besides...isn't it easy sometimes? Isn't it just as easy as...sleeping in on a Saturday morning and making guacamole for lunch?"

"Yeah. Sometimes it is that easy. And sometimes, sleeping in late on a Saturday and sharing lunch is worth a lot of other crap you have to put up with."



## *MAKING WAVES*

"I want to keep my job, but sometimes I think...I think that they shouldn't be allowed all of me. I just like to make films. Does that entitle everybody a piece of my private life?"

"No. It shouldn't. But a lot of them...they think it does."

"Yeah. That doesn't make them right." He palms were wet and tingling. He was on the cusp. He just needed to close his eyes and take that leap. "Will you be terribly embarrassed tomorrow? If I'm not there?"

"No. Besides, it's a party and the wine will be flowing freely. Well, not freely. You'll still get stuck with the bill. Still, who doesn't love a party?"

"I think I've got to go." Scott paused. "I think I'm going to be sick. It's not very...romantic to puke all over the person you want to run away with you, is it?"

"No, but I don't think Andy will mind."

"We really never had you fooled, did we?"

"Andy has been infatuated with you since the night I introduced the two of you. I know my brother. Sometimes, too well."

Scott rolled out of bed. "This is insane. I can't believe I'm going to do this."

A lamp clicked, filling the room with low light. "Good luck."

"Thanks."

It wasn't going to be easy, but some things were worth it. Andy was worth it.

\* \* \*

## *MAKING WAVES*

When Andy tried to sleep, he realized his pillow still smelled of Scott. The whole bed smelled of Scott. He could probably call the front desk and have the linens changed, no questions asked, but he was about to have a whole lifetime of linens that did not smell of Scott. So what was the rush now?

Instead of bed, he chose a chair on his private patio. It overlooked a ravine, and somewhere below him, he heard the roar of rushing water. During the day, he hadn't heard the water at all. Now it filled the entire world, like a wave rushing right for him.

Like the champagne he had downed at dinner rushed directly to his head.

Gravel crunched along the path between his lodge and Scott's lodge. Possibly Susan, but more likely, it was Scott himself. Sneaking over here even though Andy had told him not to. Scott had no self-control, and Andy didn't have the self-discipline to stick to his guns. Neither, it seemed, would be happy until both their lives were a disaster.

"Are you going to sneak over here on your wedding night, too?"

"No." Scott stood at the edge of the patio. A railing separated them. Even so, he was close enough to touch. "I'm not sneaking over here now."

"It sure looks like it."

"Looks can be deceiving."

"I suppose you would know that better than most."

"Yeah, I suppose I would."

"What's going on, Scott?"

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He took a deep breath. The moonlight fell on his hand. He wasn't wearing a ring. "I don't want to get married. I never wanted to get married. I didn't want to get married last night. But I didn't have any really good reason not to. Until you dragged me out of a bar."

"What do you mean?"

"I was just talking to Susan and we agreed that we wouldn't be good for each other. Because it's not just a business arrangement. And it's not just playing a role for a few years. It's a chunk of my life that I'm going to lose and I'm never going to get back. It's like voluntarily locking myself in jail and hoping the world doesn't pass me by."

"I don't think being married to Susan would be that bad."

"No, being married to Susan would be great. If I were the right person for her. And she were the right person for me. But she's not. And I'm...well, I'm beginning to suspect that you are the right person."

"Me?"

"Yes."

"But..." Andy didn't want to argue with him. It didn't seem wise to just accept his words at face value, either. "This is fast. This is too fast."

"I know nobody else makes me feel like you do. I'm not saying we should get married, Andy. But you're...you're the only person I've met who's worth the effort."

"I don't think this is going to work, Scott."

"Why?"

Andy thought the reasons were self-evident. Maybe they

## *MAKING WAVES*

weren't. Maybe Scott was drunk again. "Because I've done the sneaking around thing. I'm tired of behaving like I'm some sort of criminal. And I'm not saying I want you to take me to the Oscars or anything like that. But I'd want to be part of your life."

"I know. I want to keep my private life private, Andy. I don't want to have any more big, elaborate shows like this wedding. I don't want to invite the world to gawk at me, like it has the right. And I don't want to live my life like I'm waiting for somebody to hand down a judgment. I just...I want to try to be normal. With you."

Andy swallowed, trying to lose the sudden lump growing in his throat. "When do you want to start this normal life?"

"Tonight. Right now, if you'll let me."

"What would you do to start your new normal life?"

"I'd go for a walk. This place really is stunning, and you haven't had a chance to see any of it. Will you go for a walk with me, Andy?"

Andy waited for the familiar, cold sensation—the one he always felt when somebody offered himself without strings. The one that flagged the first moment of disinterest. Instead, the lump in his throat grew bigger. That feeling of being high returned.

"Do you think there's a path down to see the river?"

"There is."

Andy stood. "Then I would love to go for a walk with you."

"After this, do you think we could drive home?"

## MAKING WAVES

“Back to LA?”

“Yes. I’ve been thinking all day about those fajitas you promised me.”

Andy jumped over the railing. The gravel shifted under his feet as he landed. “Is Susan going to kill me for absconding with you?”

“No. No, I think she’ll understand.”

“I think other people will understand, too,” Andy said softly.

Scott’s smile made his heart stop. “Maybe they will. Come on.”

Scott took his hand. A casual gesture so intimate it made Andy’s chest ache without a hint of indifference. “I think you’re worth it, too. Just so you know.”

“I won’t forget.”

*Neither will I*, Andy vowed as they descended to the water.

## PEPPER ESPINOZA

Pepper Espinoza lives in southern California with her husband and her cats. She has spent the last year working as a full time author, and intends to start graduate school in the fall.

You can learn more about Pepper by visiting her website:

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\* \* \*

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