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#### Vampire's Toy

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By Auburnimp

Justin Maddox awoke to find he was kneeling on a raised stone pedestal with a leather collar around his neck attached to a chain which ran from a metal loop in the floor behind him. It effectively kept him from getting to his feet. Even worse, his hands were cuffed behind his back and he was stark naked.

"How the hell did I get into *this* mess?" he asked of the apparently empty chamber that was his prison.

Memory slowly returned. Brett and Tyrone had persuaded him to do something 'more appropriate' for Halloween than the usual boring costume party. They had suggested exploring Foster House, the local 'haunted' house and, like a fool, he'd let them talk him into it.

Foster House was like something straight out of a Hollywood horror movie. It was Victorian Gothic in style and came complete with a turreted tower.

"That would be perfect for bats," Brett had said. Its dark windows gazed out into the cool, fall night like malevolent eyes and Justin had shuddered as they'd approached it.

"Umm, guys are you sure this was such a good idea?" he'd asked.

"Don't be such a wuss, Maddox," Brett had taunted him while Tyrone had simply sniggered and headed straight for the front door.

They'd been surprised when the handle had turned easily for them. The door had opened without so much as a squeak, let alone a scary groan. "That was a bit disappointing," Tyrone had said, "I was hoping for a creak at least." He'd pulled a flashlight out of his coat pocket.

Its narrow beam revealed a richly decorated hallway which had been surprisingly free of mould or cobwebs and obviously well looked after. "What the fuck? Are the ghosts here house-proud or something?" Brett had demanded of nobody in particular.

"Maybe people actually live here," Justin had said, "in which case, of course, we're committing a fucking felony."

"Shut the fuck up, Maddox," Tyrone had said although his eyes were wary as he gazed around the hallway.

Brett had turned on his flashlight and headed

towards the nearest door. He'd flung it open and they had all gasped.

It was very obviously a sitting room with rich, wine red upholstery covering an assortment of Victorian style furniture, various ornaments and a sleek writing desk in front of the window, also draped in wine red velvet. "That's it," he'd said. "You two morons can do what you like. I'm outta here!"

He'd turned towards the open front door only to see it slam shut as if pushed by an invisible hand. He'd pulled at the handle, but it wouldn't budge. The door was either locked or stuck fast and they were trapped. "Now what the fuck do we do?" he'd asked.

"I'm telling you straight, Maddox, nobody has lived in this place for years," Brett had said. "The wind probably caught the door and you, being the dumb fuck you are, panicked and thought it was locked."

"You try it then!" he'd said, stung by the contempt in the words but Brett had shaken his head and moved towards the stairs. "We're here, so we're gonna fucking look around."

Justin had stayed by the front door as Brett had climbed the stairs. Tyrone had shot him a look before shrugging and opening another of the downstairs doors. This time a kitchen was revealed and judging by all the cobwebs and the thick layer of dust, the room had not been used in a very long time.

Tyrone had chuckled. "Feel better now, Justin? If someone did live here they'd use the fucking kitchen."

He'd crept down the hall to join Tyrone at the kitchen door, the sight of the unused room making him feel more at ease. "I wonder who looks after the hallway and sitting room."

Tyrone had shrugged. "Real estate agents at a guess, just in case someone is crazy enough to want to buy the place."

Tyrone's answer had seemed logical at the time and Justin had relaxed enough to agree to explore more of the old house.

They had gone upstairs and peered into unfurnished bedrooms hung with tattered lace and dusty velvet and Justin had calmed down even more. The place was very obviously empty

and he'd begun to believe he'd imagined the whole incident with the front door.

It was when they'd finished exploring upstairs and were ready to go back to the ground floor that he'd felt a strong push from behind and gone tumbling down the stairs. And that was the last thing he remembered until coming to in his current predicament.

He had no idea where the hell he was or who had imprisoned him in this way. He was cold, scared and embarrassed by his nudity.

He felt rather than heard someone approach him from behind. He tried to turn his head to see who it was but the collar and chain wouldn't allow him to move his head that far around.

Warm hands came to rest on his thighs and breath tickled his right ear as the unknown person spoke in a deep and husky tone reminiscent of syrup, rich, sweet and overpowering. "Are you afraid?"

The voice sent shivers down his spine and the slowly moving hands were having a similar effect on him, so much so that his cock twitched its

way towards attention. There was a soft chuckle in his ear. "Not that afraid it seems."

"Who...who are you?" he managed to stutter out. "What do you want from me?"

"My name is Samuel Foster though I doubt it will mean very much to you. Besides which, you will refer to me as Master from now on. As for what I want, I already have it. You. At my mercy."

Justin didn't know how he was supposed to react to such arrogant words and yet something buried deep within his psyche thrilled at them. And the hands on his thighs were a heated reminder of just how vulnerable he was.

"Why?" he whispered.

"Why you? Because I find you attractive," that teasing voice continued. "I've observed you for some time, Justin, and I've learned much about you. Like the fact that you have no interest in girls but keep your real desires hidden from the world that would judge you. I can grant you every last one of those fantasies and more."

Justin's eyes went wide as he stared out into that cold, stone room. How does he know so

much about me? How could he possibly know what I need?

"I don't want you to hurt me," he whispered. "I don't want to be restrained."

The chuckle against his ear was low, sexy and filled with the promise of many unspeakable and exquisite delights. "Yes, you do, but we'll let that pass for now. I know exactly how the game is played, Justin, and you will provide me with a safe word. If you should say that word in our games, I will stop immediately. So tell me your word."

Justin shivered partly in fear and partly in anticipation of what was to come. He'd heard about safe words enough to know that they had to be something far removed from whatever might be happening. "Lexus," he whispered after a moment's thought.

"Lexus? Why that?" his tormentor asked as one long finger tickled his inner thigh.

"I've always wanted to own a Lexus one day," Justin told him. Somehow he had the feeling that this Samuel Foster would know if he lied to him.

"Anything is possible, especially if you please me."

Justin finally made the connection in his mind. "Foster? Then the Foster House belongs to you?"

That low chuckle sounded against his ear again, warm breath sensitising his skin. "Yes, I've owned it for some time, it was where I was born in fact, but I seldom stayed there for long."

"There? You mean we're somewhere else?"

"Very good, Justin, I was right to think you were intelligent as well as beautiful."

Beautiful? He thinks I'm beautiful? His cock hardened even more at that thought. Then sense reasserted itself. "Where are we then?"

"You are in the basement of one of my more permanent homes, the one in Italy, to be precise." The hands began to stroke his thighs less lazily, their long fingers brushing his inner thighs and making Justin even needier, his cock now hard as iron.

"Please," he whispered.

"Yes, I think you're ready now."

The hands were removed and Samuel Foster moved away. Justin could hear faint sounds but couldn't make out what they were. When his jailor returned he moved into Justin's line of sight.

Oh dear God, he's fucking gorgeous. He moves so gracefully too, it's almost like he glides instead of walks.

He gazed up into a pair of the most piercing, icy blue eyes he'd ever seen and a wave of pure lust washed through his body. Foster was tall, around six feet, if Justin was any judge, and slender of build. His hair was long and so black as to have blue highlights. He was dressed in tight leather pants, which accentuated his long, slim legs, and a vest in the same soft black material, that showed off every line and curve of his sleek upper body.

Justin's mouth went dry at the vision before him and he unconsciously licked his lips. Why would someone so fucking beautiful want me?

And yet there was something about the man that unnerved him. Perhaps it was the almost unnatural grace and fluidity of his movements. Possibly it was the cold depths of those polar ice cap eyes. Justin wasn't sure why he felt a frisson of fear run down his spine to settle like a cold weight in his stomach. Then again that could easily be due to his sheer helplessness.

Before he could ask any more internal questions, Foster crouched down and applied a cock ring to Justin's weeping erection causing him to swallow hard. "Please, I don't..."

"Shush," Foster said and placed a long finger against Justin's lips. "I'm the Master here, remember?"

Justin shuddered as Foster reached behind him to unclasp the chain from his collar. "Stand up," he commanded and Justin obeyed very much to his own surprise.

After he got rid of the cramps in his legs enough to be able to walk again, he was led across the chamber, which he could now see was actually kitted out as a dungeon. His hands were freed from the cuffs only to be secured in different cuffs which were attached to a chain hanging from the ceiling. His arms now stretched above his head, Justin shivered as Samuel showed him a braided whip.

"Remember your safe word, Justin. You can

use it at any time." Foster smiled at him, the expression smug. "Although somehow I don't think you will."

Foster raised the whip and bought it down across his back. There was a sting like a line of fire and Justin felt skin split. He moaned the sound turning into a gasp of agony as the whip descended again, criss-crossing the previous mark.

The whip came down four or five more times until Justin's back felt like it was on fire. He was so wrapped up in the pain that he forgot all about the safe word they'd agreed upon.

A new sensation assailed his addled senses, that of a tongue tracing the welts, taking all vestiges of pain with it.

"Delicious," Foster murmured behind him, "but then I knew you would be."

Justin could find nothing to say to that, though he didn't believe his captor wanted conversation from him. What bothered him the most about this whole, insane situation was the fact he would still be aroused even if the cockring wasn't there. The thought disturbed him on

profound and fundamental levels. If he was still hard after that, what did it say about him?

Did I want this? Is this what I need to feel completely satisfied?

His Master, and Justin had come to terms with the fact that Samuel Foster was his Master, moved away again only to return with something else in his hands. He ran his hands across Justin's chest, stopping at a nipple to tweak and pinch it until it stood proud. A tiny clover-shaped nipple clamp was attached to the upright nub before his Master gave the same treatment to the other nipple.

It was then that Justin noticed the thin silver chain that linked the nipple clamps. His Master tugged gently on it and Justin gasped as the slight movement pulled on his over sensitised nipples.

His Master smiled at him and Justin finally noticed the elongated and incredibly sharp canines. "Y...you're a vampire?"

"I was beginning to wonder how long it would take you to notice. Yes, Justin, I'm a vampire. Does that frighten or intrigue you the most?"

Justin frowned as he thought about his

answer. If anyone had asked him about vampires a week ago, he'd have told them he didn't believe in them, that they were creatures of mythology invented merely to give people a pleasurable chill. Now he was faced with the reality and he didn't know how he should react. There was only one thing he needed to know above all others. "Are you going to kill me?"

His Master laughed. "Do you really believe I'd have gone to so much trouble just to capture a meal? No, Justin, I don't need to kill to feed. In fact, if we please each other enough, I'm prepared to offer you immortality, as my plaything, of course."

An eternity of pleasure-laced pain, could I stand that? Justin shivered at the thought, a slight movement his Master noticed immediately.

"I will ask you again; does the idea frighten or intrigue?"

Justin gazed into those piercing blue eyes and swallowed hard. What is this I'm feeling? Is it fear or desire? "I find it intriguing, Master, but also scary."

The arctic blue eyes softened, just a tiny

amount, but they did soften. "Excellent. I chose well. Let's see if I can convince you even more."

He gave the chain another gentle tug, causing Justin to catch his breath as his nipples were stimulated yet again.

His Master smiled. "I do believe you like that."

Justin hung his head, aroused yet ashamed of his needs. His Master lifted his chin and forced him to look at him. "You need to stop worrying about what the mortal world might think, my pretty, and surrender to both your needs and me."

Samuel reached up to release Justin from the cuffs and caught him as he slumped. Was I too harsh with him for his first time?

But his pet's arms were clinging to him and there was trust in Justin's green eyes. Samuel smiled. He had chosen well. Justin was not only easy on the eye with his pretty eyes and golden hair, he was also eager to play the games that would satisfy both of them.

Samuel knew there was a streak of curiosity in the mortal boy, knew he wanted to ask many questions, and that was fine. He would even answer them once he was assured Justin was completely his.

He picked his toy up and carried him to the bed in the corner, unwilling to wait any longer before giving the boy some pleasure in reward for the pain he'd endured. However, there was one more thing he would do before burying himself in Justin's beautiful body.

"I will soon make you forget all about the pain," he whispered, "but I want that pretty ass of yours to be rosy before I do."

"What do you mean?" Justin asked. He was half fearful, half anticipatory if his tone of voice and the thoughts in his head were anything for Samuel to judge by.

Samuel chuckled as he placed his plaything on the bed. "Anticipation is half the game, Justin. You'll find out all in good time exactly what I have in mind."

He turned the boy onto his front and placed his wrists in the cuffs attached to the brass

headboard before moving across the room to collect what he would need from the rack there.

Samuel selected a paddle, a dildo that was ridged and crevassed for its entire length and a tube of lube, smiling to himself as he did so.

He returned to the boy on the bed, amused by how wide the green eyes had become. His cute toy was a fast learner but also wonderfully innocent.

Samuel sat on the side of the bed and applied lube to his long fingers. He leaned over Justin and inserted one into his ass. The boy gasped and squirmed so Samuel inserted a second finger and searched for the spot that would give Justin pleasure.

A choked off scream told Samuel that he'd found what he was looking for and the blush that spread right across the boy's body was an added bonus. He chuckled and added a third finger, stretching the boy's anal muscles to get him ready for what was to come.

When he felt Justin was prepared enough, Samuel removed his fingers and covered the dildo with lube. He inserted it gently and smiled

as the boy writhed and actually tried to impale himself on it.

"Take it easy, Justin. We have plenty of time."

Having inserted the dildo all the way, Samuel stood and picked up the paddle. He bought it down smartly on Justin's pretty ass and chuckled as the boy gasped. He swatted the other cheek, knowing that each stroke of the paddle would move the dildo in his captive's butt. Pain and pleasure combined, which was precisely what he intended for the boy's future.

I wonder if he'll agree to receive the gift from me. He's certainly everything I could ever want and so very responsive.

Samuel paddled Justin's ass until each cheek was rosy. Satisfied with both his handiwork and the soft moans issuing from the boy's mouth, he put the paddle aside and eased the dildo out of Justin's ass before turning him over.

Tears streaked the pretty face but, judging by the dazed expression and the tongue that licked at dry lips, they were tears of humiliation rather than pain.

Samuel smiled. The boy was ready for him and

he was more than ready to partake of the feast before him.

He unzipped his fly, released his hard and aching cock then lifted Justin's unresisting legs onto his shoulders and pressed against the boy's opening. "Look at me as I take you."

Leaf green eyes gazed up into his and a flush spread over Justin's face making the boy even more beautiful. With a soft growl of lust, Samuel pushed into his willing slave.

Justin made an incoherent sound at the intrusion and the blush deepened but there was no struggle, no pain showing in his eyes.

Samuel found himself unable to thrust into the boy as he'd intended. Instead he moved slowly and almost gently, his hands running over Justin's chest and sides, stopping occasionally to give a little tug to the chain connecting the nipple clamps.

Justin made delightful little noises, gasps and moans that made Samuel want to free his hands, to feel his embrace. But that could come later, for now his little toy had to realise that he was the Master here.

He began to thrust in earnest making sure to hit that sweet spot in Justin's body with every plunge into him. His toy was hot, tight and delicious; exactly what he'd been looking for all these years.

Samuel felt his balls tighten in a prelude to release so he took hold of Justin's cock and removed the ring. The boy screamed out, "Master!" and spurted over Samuel's hand and their bellies. Samuel groaned as his own climax hit him with the force of an avalanche.

He just about had the strength left to roll off the boy before collapsing on the bed beside him, body spent and completely sated.

Once he could move again, Samuel freed Justin from the cuffs and removed the nipple clamps. He pulled the boy into his arms and was well pleased when one of Justin's arms rested across his waist, so satisfied in fact that he gave the boy a tender kiss.

Almost to his surprise the kiss was returned before Justin snuggled against him. Neither of them spoke for several minutes then Justin spoke into his chest, "So what happens now, Master?"

Samuel knew he had to address that particular problem also so, to buy time, he asked, "What do you want to happen?"

Justin's head came up and those pretty eyes gazed into his. The boy blushed as he said, "I want to stay here, to be yours."

Samuel smiled although his heart was full of bitterness. "Why would you, with your whole life ahead of you, want to stay with one such as me?"

Justin snorted. "My whole life ahead of me? That's a joke. My so-called friends merely tolerate me because I don't have a girlfriend, I have no prospects as I was raised in an orphanage and they don't provide for college. I have a dead end job in a factory and I go home to an empty one-roomed apartment. I thought you knew all that."

Samuel did, of course. Justin's sorry excuse for a life was one of the reasons he'd chosen the boy. He reached out a hand to smooth blond bangs off the boy's face. "Yes, I knew, Justin, but if you stay here with me, you can never go back."

Justin rubbed his head into the caress,

reminding Samuel of a cat. "How did I get here?"

Samuel contemplated telling Justin the whole and decided he could take the truth. "Your friends betrayed you, not that I gave them a lot of choice in the matter. I'd caught them snooping about the place and frightened them into bringing you to me."

"My friends, they were never really my friends." There was a wealth of bitterness in Justin's tone. "I should have been suspicious when they invited me along at all." He gave Samuel a shy smile. "But then again, if I hadn't gone, I wouldn't have met you."

Samuel stared back at the boy, actually shocked. "Does that mean you want to stay here as my pet?"

He was even more amazed when Justin nodded. "If it's possible, then yes."

Justin needed to know everything if he was going to stay but Samuel wasn't sure where he should start. He sighed in resignation. He should get the down side of this little arrangement across first. "Justin, what happened to you tonight was

only a taste of what will happen to you in the future. I'm not a gentle or considerate lover and I enjoy these games."

Justin blushed again and shook his head. "I enjoyed everything you did to me so, please, don't use that as an excuse to be rid of me."

Samuel smiled and resumed stroking the blond hair. "You could have been made especially for me, Justin. Okay, the next problem is all the people you knew will have to consider you dead."

Justin's eyes widened but all he said was, "How do we go about that?"

Samuel grinned, showing his sharp canines. "Well, I've made a start by burning down the Foster house and clouding those boys' minds into thinking that they escaped while you did not."

Justin frowned. "What about a body?"

"An old hobo took refuge in there last week. Unfortunately the shelter was too late to save him and he died." He saw Justin look uncomfortable and open his mouth to speak so he held up his hand for silence. "Let me finish, Justin. I had

nothing to do with his death, which was down to a hard life and a worn out body giving up. I've already told you, I don't have to kill to survive.

"If needed, he's your body. When Brett and Tyrone tell their story and his remains are found in a burnt out house, it will be assumed he is you."

Justin frowned again. "What about the postmortem, dental records all that stuff?"

"The fire was started by an explosion in the basement, an old gas boiler to be precise. I doubt they'll find enough pieces of the body to do a post mortem. With that and the statements that Brett and Tyrone will give them, they are unlikely to do anything but close the case."

Justin fidgeted a little but still stayed close, his arm around Samuel's waist. "So Justin Maddox would be legally dead. Where does that leave me?"

Samuel smiled. Now they came to the hard part. "With me – for eternity."

"You mean as a vampire, don't you?"

Samuel nodded. "That's exactly what I mean,

Justin. That small New England town you grew up in is not the only place in the world, which means you will exist, just not there. There's no going back if you agree to this."

He waited while the boy made his decision, surprised by how much a refusal on Justin's part would pain him. To have found someone so perfectly suited to him only to have him say no would be – agonising.

Justin lay in his Master's arms trying to think things through. What did he really have to go back to?

People like Brett and Tyrone being assholes while the rest of the town ignores me. A dead end job and a few clothes is all that is there. The only thing I'm likely to miss is playing games on my computer. And sooner or later someone will realize the truth about my sexuality and things will get even worse.

"Tell me about being a vampire. I mean, I thought you would feel cold but you're not, you're warm. Would I have to stay out of the sun and stop eating garlic?"

His Master laughed aloud. "You've been watching too many horror movies or reading weird fiction. I'll try to explain without confusing you too much. First of all, I am neither dead, nor undead. I'm as alive and warm blooded as you are.

"When I was twenty-five I travelled to New York City on business. While I was there I met a Russian immigrant and we became clandestine lovers. It was he that infected me with vampirism."

Justin pulled away slightly to stare at his Master. "Infected? Is it a disease?"

Samuel shook his head. "Not in the sense you mean, no. It's not a virus or bacteria. But it is spread by infection rather like AIDS is spread, through blood. Once the infection is in the blood, we cease to age, grow elongated canines and have to drink some blood each day. Not a lot and it can be either human or animal blood. Some of us have our own private blood banks. We don't kill to live."

Justin thought about how people might just be prepared to kill each other for that particular

infection. "How many vampires are there?" he asked.

His Master shrugged. "All told about thirty. We're very particular about whom we infect. Also, although virtually immortal, we can be killed. That also keeps our numbers down."

"So all that stuff about sunlight and coffins and stakes through the heart is crap?"

The vampire he called Master nodded before he chuckled slightly. "Well the stake would probably work but present day vampire hunters know that a well aimed bullet is a lot easier and less like hard work."

Justin stared. "Whoa! Did you say vampire hunters?"

"Yes, Justin, there are those who are so jealous of our powers that they will kill us on sight. Not many luckily. Most mortals consider us scary legends, just as you did until you met me."

Justin thought some more. His Master seemed to be very forthcoming about all the pros and cons of being a vampire and, although he was tempted, there was more he wanted to know. "What about eating and drinking?"

"Apart from a cupful of blood each day, necessary to keep our blood functioning as it should, we eat and drink quite normally. If the blood worries you, it can be disguised in food or drink."

Justin shook his head and leaned up on one elbow. "I don't know how to feel about that, to be honest, but it does lead me to another question. Why the fangs if you don't need to bite people for blood?"

His Master's hand continued to stroke his hair. "Biting was necessary before blood banks made our lives easier. Of course, if your donor was human, it meant having sex with them to disguise the feeding as a love bite." A grimace crossed his Master's face as if he was remembering something unpleasant. "If you are infected the fangs will grow. It's our one giveaway to the hunters."

"So I would need to keep them covered most of the time, the way that you do," Justin mused.

"Yes, especially when out in the open."

Justin smiled. "I'd have to be a fool not to take your offer, Master. Virtual immortality, a body

that doesn't age *and* great sex, what more could a boy ask for?"

He had the satisfaction of seeing how much he had surprised his Master before he was pulled into a bear hug. "No going back," that sexy, teasing voice reminded him before he felt those sharp fangs sink into his neck.

Justin wondered if he was going to die after all but after a few seconds his Master pulled away from him to bite into his own wrist. He held the bleeding wound to Justin's lips. "So drink, Justin."

And Justin drank, the blood of his Master tasting like fine wine as it tingled on his lips and tongue.

#### About the Author

Auburnimp is the pen name of Tracy Boyall. She is the author of two successful series Fallen Angels and Sweepers and the co-author of the Dragonhope books.

She has been writing since she was fifteen but it is only in recent years that she decided to see what publishers thought of her work. Her characters are always strong, feisty and often impetuous enough to get into dangerous situations rather like their creator.

She has recently become a partner in a e-publishing house, Shadowfire Press, where she is responsible for finances and customer service.

She has been a knife-thrower's target, an exotic dancer, a drummer, a homeless wanderer and many other things due to a desire to go wherever life takes her.

She now lives in a small house in a large English city with four resident cats and one frequent visitor.

She is female and has blue eyes; anything else is often subject to change without notice.

#### About the Author

# Links

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newsletter/chat group www.groups.yahoo.com/group/auburnimp

Following are some excerpts of other hot m/m erotic romance titles from Shadowfire Press.

If you enjoyed *Vampire's Toy* by Auburnimp, you might also like *Swordbrothers 1: Outlaw and the Brat* by Auburnimp and Michael Barnette.

Sometimes kidnappings don't turn out the way the kidnapper expects.

Darksky Stonetamerson is an outlaw who makes his living kidnapping watermages and selling them to the people of the City to make his living.

Lakesinger Rockmanson is a very talented watermage and the biggest brat of his clan.

When Lakesinger falls prey to the notorious outlaw, Darksky, the older man's intention is to sell the spoiled young warrior to the City dwellers. But an out of season storm keeps the pair stuck in Darksky's cave with unexpected results.

Here is a short excerpt from Swordbrothers 1: Outlaw and the Brat by Auburnimp and Michael Barnette

He blinked as he recalled the firm flesh of Lakesinger's butt. A fine, very fuckable butt. One he had no intention of keeping, despite the lure of the man's youthful beauty.

A very find ass indeed. He'll bring a good price on the open market in the City. A better price than I'd get from any clan.

Grinning, he headed for the pool. If he was going to sell him, he should get a good look at what was under those leathers and furs besides a perfect butt.

You'll be able to drive a harder bargain that way, he told himself. Clan or City, beauty is worth more than an ugly darbear of a man like me.

When he reached the cave he found Lakesinger sitting in the bathing pool which was giving off steam. The boy blushed when he saw him and ducked his head.

"I hope you don't mind me heating the water, but I really hate cold baths. They never get you really clean the way hot water does."

He stared at the slender body, the lean lines of the young mage from the sweep of his shoulders

to the expanse of his nicely defined chest down to the rippling abs. His eyes swept along the sleek thighs, but soon lifted, coming to rest on the smooth shape of the cock nestled in the spun sunlight of his pubic hair.

He swallowed, forced himself to stop staring, to focus on the bright blush coloring Lakesinger's cheeks. But it was no good. His blood hammered in his veins, pulsed in the hardening flesh between his thighs.

Thought deserted him and he crossed the room, mind focused on one thing and one thing only: the beauty of that sleek body. Dark virtually pounced on Lakesinger as he dropped to his knees by the pool and captured the perfect slim body in his arms. Dark set his mouth to the younger mage's in a demanding kiss.

The boy went completely still beneath him for a moment or two then, to his surprise, wet arms snaked round his neck and the kiss was returned with an equal amount of demand and even more passion.

Part of him commanded that he stop, but the louder part wanted to pick the young mage

up, carry him to bed and show him why being a swordbrother was a desirable state of being.

Instead he shoved the watermage into the bath he'd made for himself and stood there gazing at him, taking in the young masculine body and the upthrust cock that proved what he'd done hadn't gone unnoticed by Lakesinger.

He wanted, needed. Instead of taking Dark turned away. "That's something else for you to think on, boy," he growled and stalked for the exit.

There was a soft groan behind him and a murmured, "Oh gods."

Darksky smirked, but the satisfied expression quickly faded. He'd kissed the brat. What had he been thinking? He had no intention of keeping the boy, none. And yet... the feel of the watermage's lips on his lingered, as did the throbbing ache of his arousal.

Apparently they both had a few things to think about.

Or you might like *Plague Dance* by Michael Barnette.

A plague ravaged the world. Cory and Deshawn survived. But can they survive Roderik, the man who would be King?

After a mutated strain of Ebola ended the world as we know it, Staff Sergeant Deshawn Roberts finds himself alone and longing for companionship.

Cory Wilson, one time office worker, finds himself a captive of Roderick, King of the Lone Star Empire. It's a life of slavery worse than death, and Cory escapes to find himself on the run.

Brought together by chance, can these two men survive in the harsh reality of post Collapse America, and will they find the love they both crave?

Here is a short excerpt from *Plague Dance* by Michael Barnette

A torrent poured forth from the darkened sky, the pounding drops intermingled with the chattering sounds of hail against the windows. Bursts of lightning shattered the night, bright as explosions in an embattled city.

Deshawn Roberts stared out at the fury of nature, wondering who else might be out there witnessing the storm. Wondering if he might be the only one left after the outbreak of Ebola tore through the country leaving millions dead.

Millions that included almost everyone else on the base where he'd been stationed.

Other than himself he didn't know who else might have survived the pandemic that had swept the US— the entire world— and left more people dead than living.

The barracks where he'd lived with the rest of his platoon was empty, the rest of the men he'd liked, and those he'd tolerated were dead. Their mortal remains lay in the mass grave he'd managed to dig with a backhoe from a construction site, a subdivision that would never be finished.

There was no one left to do the work, and no one alive to buy the half finished houses anyway.

Of the hundreds of people who'd lived at the base, he was the only one left.

Him alone with the echoing silence. He'd never understood that term, 'echoing silence' until he experienced the utter quiet of a place so devoid of life that seeing a bird made his heart fill with joy.

He braced his forearms against the window sill, stared out at the raging storm.

Lonely.

He craved the sound of a human voice. The camaraderie of other soldiers, of men he knew, missed, wished he could talk to one last time. Share a beer and off color jokes, stare at the TV and hear laughter and angry words exchanged.

To hear any voice break the plague of silence that ate at him day after day the way the plague of the body had eaten away at the people he knew until all that remained was the dust of the grave.

Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust. The words mocked him. Taunted him with the promise of a release from loneliness he was unable to take.

A few others had survived, a couple men from

a different platoon, one of the officers from his own command group. But they'd gone to find their families and no one had tried to prevent it. Not after captain Ferrel had killed himself in the bedroom of his home, surrounded by his Ebola murdered family. There wasn't much point in saying anything to them about duty or remaining to guard the base. Not after the government collapsed.

That's what the media had begun to call it in the last few struggling days of the United States. The Collapse. The end of civilization as everyone knew it. Even then the reports of warlords rising to power were coming in. Men— women too—carving out a niche in the plague shattered land.

He wondered if any of the men he'd known reached their homes. Wondered if they'd found anyone alive if they had.

Deshawn sighed, gaze riveted on the wild night, the storm torn riot beyond the glass and came to a decision.

At first light he would load up a Humvee with supplies and head out. There wasn't any reason to remain at the base, no one left to care what he

did or whether he remained loyal to his oath as a soldier.

With no government he had no one left to be loyal *to*, so his oath meant less than the rain hammering the base.

Sooner or later other survivors would show up. Survivors he might not want to meet. People like the warlord types the last few newscasts he'd seen reported about. He'd heard a few radio broadcasts after that, the station running on a generator for a few days. The last discjockey left for hundreds of miles talking himself hoarse, passing on any information he received, broadcasting rumors about the self-proclaimed King of the Lone Star Empire. A king who the rumors said was some former military guy named Roderik who'd raised an army and sent them rampaging around the countryside capturing the few people alive. People he forced to work for him, women he turned into servants fit only to cook and clean, the prettiest ones forced into lives of slave prostitution.

Then the station went silent. Either out of fuel for the generator or silenced by one of

the warlords. Deshawn didn't know and he'd probably never find out.

In the long run it hardly mattered.

The world had gone from a thriving global economy, from civilized high-tech and instant communication across the globe to a barbaric age of savagery in the span of less than a month.

There *were* some really bad customers out there, prowling the post-Collapse landscape. People he had no desire to meet. Nor any desire to join in their egomaniacal quest for power.

"Rain, rain go away," he murmured to himself before turning from the hammering of hail and rain to try and get some sleep.

Deshawn climbed out of his bunk the next morning, loaded up the Humvee and rolled out into the new world created by the Hand of Fate at a wink from Old Man Death.

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