

SAVING TREVOR

STEVE SAMPSON



I: A Lesson in Manners

ERIC stepped out of his car into the cool of a Michigan October afternoon. The air was crisp and fresh. The sound of the birds returning to their nightly roost filled the neighborhood. He listened to the birds for a moment. Across the street in the park the voices of two boys kicking a soccer ball joined the clamor in the trees.

Eric was a tall man with red hair and bright green eyes. He wore his hair in a buzz cut. On his chin he had a small handsome red goatee. There was no mustache above his moist crimson lips. Below the outside corner of his left eye an inch-and-a-half-long vertical scar marked his cheek.

He left the sounds and cool air and walked into the kitchen.

“Nick!” he called.

No answer.

He looked in the living room. No one. He walked back through the kitchen to the basement door and listened. He smiled. The sound of Nick’s singing came up the stairway.

Eric began the walk down the stairs. On his way he heard Nick's cell phone ring.

"Hello," Eric heard Nick answer his phone. "Hi, James."

Eric had met James several times at the Hair Lady. He was a middle-aged short stocky queen. Nick was very fond of James and they often spoke together on the telephone. Eric stopped near the bottom of the stairway and listened.

"I'm just straightening up the entertainment room," Eric heard Nick say. "No, he's still at work."

"Everything's great."

"Yes, James, I'm still happy. You know I'm happier now than I've ever been."

Eric smiled to himself. He was proud he made Nick happy. He was proud he had Nick's love.

Eric took the last remaining steps and stopped at the foot of the stairway. He looked into the room. His partner was facing away from the stairs and had not yet seen him.

"You're so beautiful," Eric whispered as he stood looking at Nick.

Nick was beautiful. Stunningly beautiful. He was an inch shorter than Eric's six feet three inches. He carried all the smooth-skinned beauty given to him by his Italian father and his Greek mother. His rich black hair was cut short. The old jeans he wore showed off his magnificent round butt.

Eric looked at that butt. He knew it well. He had spent

much time exploring and discovering that delicious butt.

He crossed his arms over his chest and leaned his right shoulder against the doorframe. He smiled with arrogance as he thought of all the men who wanted Nick. They wanted him. Eric had him.

Nick and James spoke for a few more minutes. Nick said goodbye, closed his telephone, and turned around. He jumped with a start.

“Goddamn!” he exclaimed.

“Sorry, Baby,” Eric said.

He came into the room and kissed Nick’s warm beautiful mouth.

“I didn’t hear you come in,” Nick said.

Before he answered, Eric took a moment to look into Nick’s warm brown eyes. Those eyes were Eric’s home, Eric’s life.

“I got home a few minutes ago,” he said.

“Yeah?” Nick asked. “How long have you been standing here?”

“Since your phone rang,” Eric answered.

“You were eavesdropping on me?” Nick asked.

“Yeah, I suppose I was.”

“Why?”

“No reason,” Eric answered.

Nick studied Eric for a minute.

“It’s not polite to eavesdrop,” Nick said.

“Well, you weren’t discussing any big secrets.”

“You still should have let me know you were here.”

“What’s the big deal?” Eric asked.

“The big deal is common courtesy,” Nick answered with what Eric thought sounded like annoyance.

“Man, I’m sorry,” Eric apologized.

“Sorry won’t do it,” Nick said.

His face was emotionless.

“It’s time you relearned some manners.”

“Manners?” Eric asked. “What the hell are you talking about?”

Nick did not answer. He walked around Eric and started up the stairs. He stopped in the middle of the stairway and turned to look back at his mate.

“Follow me,” he ordered.

He turned and continued his walk up the stairs. During the three years they had been together Eric had learned Nick found great pleasure in teasing him, picking on him, and tempting him. He smiled to himself. He would play the game. Eric followed his partner up the stairway.

Nick led him through the kitchen, the living room, up the stairs to the second floor, and into their bedroom. Again he turned and looked at Eric.

“Go take a hot shower,” Nick said. “When you’re finished, come back without a towel or clothes.”

Nick’s face was still impassive. Eric studied him for a moment. Then he turned, left their bedroom, walked down the hall to the bathroom, and showered as ordered. When he finished and had dried himself, he returned to their bedroom. Again he had followed his orders and was naked. His milk-white skin was pink from the heat of the shower. The golden-red hairs that covered his chest and stomach and dusted his arms and legs had been fluffed by his towel.

Eric saw their bed had been turned down. A small pile of neatly folded white clothing was in the middle of the bed. Nick pointed to the clothes.

“Put these on, lay on the bed, and wait for me,” he said in a calm authoritative voice. “Don’t do anything thing else. Don’t get off the bed.”

Nick left their bedroom, went into the bathroom, and closed the door. In a few minutes Eric heard the shower come on. He stared at the bedroom door and again smiled to himself. Slowly, he turned and picked up the clothes. There was a pair of white briefs, a white T-shirt, and a pair of white socks. Following his orders, he put the things on and stretched out on the bed. Soon, he heard the shower turn off. In a few minutes Nick returned to their bedroom. He was wearing white socks, white briefs, and a white T-shirt.

Nick walked to their dresser, opened a top drawer, and took something out. When he turned around, Eric saw he was carrying several short pieces of rope. Nick walked to Eric and looked down at him. Neither of the men spoke. Nick placed a length of rope by Eric's left hand. He walked to the foot of the bed and put a length of rope across his left ankle.

He went to Eric's right hand, gently took the arm, and wrapped the last length of rope around the wrist. Eric noted the rope was very soft, almost silky. Nick tied the ends of the rope to the bedpost. He returned to Eric's left arm and tied it in the same way. With deep fascination Eric watched Nick as he went about his silent work. When Nick had both arms secured, he walked to Eric's feet and tied them together. Then he tied the feet to the footboard.

Eric was on his back with arms stretched out and feet bound together. He was tied securely. The ropes did not hurt, but he knew he was unable to free himself. He was also aware of a warm, delicious feeling between his legs. His great, Danish cock was slowly thickening. He was fascinated and deeply aroused.

That arousal was growing.

Nick climbed onto their bed and stepped over Eric's waist so he stood straddling him. With calculated slowness, he squatted and lowered himself until he sat on the thickening cock that lay trapped by the briefs against Eric's body. Nick's warm, hard ass cheeks caressed Eric's anxious cock.

Nick leaned forward and brought his face close to Eric's

face. His lips pursed as if to kiss his mate's eager mouth. Eric raised his head to meet the kiss. Nick suddenly backed away. He leaned in again and repeated the tease. Again he backed away as Eric moved to kiss him.

Then Nick began to slowly drag his stomach and chest across the excited hardness of Eric's now impatient cock. When Nick's face reached the cock that was trying to rip free of the white briefs, he stopped. Eric looked down his long body and saw a wet spot on his underwear by his cock's giant head.

Carefully and with maddening slowness, Nick rubbed the massive pole with his face. He nibbled, he bit, and he tugged with his teeth at Eric's cotton-trapped cock. He opened his mouth and breathed hot breath onto the demanding organ.

Eric wanted to scream. He wanted to break loose and fuck Nick's throat. He wanted to explode into his lover's mouth and onto his face. But, he forced himself to remain quiet and play Nick's game.

Nick sat up and looked down at his mate. Eric felt the heat of his own face. He knew it was red with lust. He knew Nick was now in control.

Once more Nick moved and sat on the thick, hard cock that was being held flat against Eric's body. Slowly, he rubbed his ass on the cotton-shrouded hard cock.

Slowly, wantonly, Nick took off his shirt and threw it to the floor. His beautiful, silky, hairless chest filled Eric's eyes. Those happy eyes traveled to Nick's navel. There Eric saw

the beginning of that single dark line of hair he so often followed down into Nick's pants.

Nick wet his fingers with his mouth and began pinching his blood-filled fat, pointed nipples. He pulled his nipples. They grew fatter, longer, and the red color deepened. Eric loved to bite those nipples and pull them with his teeth. It excited him when Nick cried in pleasure from his savage attacks on those beautiful husky nipples.

Nick groaned. Eric raised his hips and pushed his cock against that sweet ass he loved and knew so well.

Nick put his hands in the fly of his briefs and pulled the opening wide. With a quick tug, he ripped the underwear apart. His long, fat erection jumped from the torn cotton into freedom and danced before Eric's glad eyes. Nick took his hard cock in his right hand. Eric stared in fascination at the cock Nick was holding. A bead of pre-cum clung bravely to the slit on the silky fat head. Eric longed to lick that single salty drop.

Nick moved up Eric's body so he sat on his stomach. With his left hand he reached around and took hold of Eric's still-shrouded cock. He squeezed it as he began to stroke his own.

A moan sounded deep in Nick's throat. He released both cocks, took Eric's T-shirt in his strong hands, and tore it wide apart.

Eric looked down over his powerful chest covered with the thick red forest. His eyes once more found Nick's beautiful, long, fat cock. Nick again began masturbating with

his right hand. With his left hand he took Eric's right nipple between his thumb and first finger. He squeezed and pulled the nipple. A small, almost suppressed, moan came from Eric's throat in response to the glorious pain.

Nick kept working his own cock. He pumped his cock and moved his hips so he ground his ass onto Eric's hard stomach. With his other hand, he pinched and pulled Eric's nipple until the pain and the pleasure were blurred together.

Eric saw Nick's shoulders begin to shake. From deep in Nick's throat came a sudden brutish grunt. Eric's mesmerized eyes watched the eruption. The slit on the head of Nick's cock opened and a rope of white creamy cum shot into the air. It was a blast of power that bathed their headboard, Eric's face, and his chest with rich, thick, salty wetness.

Nick released his cock and let it stand alone. Eric watched in excited hunger as that cock slowly ended its pumping and quivering. He watched as the last of the creamy cum oozed out and coated the head. Nick fell back and rested his head on Eric's ankles. Eric listened as Nick worked to catch his breath. He knew from happy experience that Nick was often unable to walk after a deep and powerful orgasm. Moments slowly slid by before Nick climbed off Eric and the bed.

Nick stood tall and looked down at his happy prisoner. Eric looked up into Nick's brown eyes. Eric's enraged cock was still trying to rip out of his cotton briefs. From the heat he felt, Eric knew his face was probably bright scarlet with his unreleased lust. He also felt the cum that was splashed

on his nose, eyebrows, eyelashes, and lips. He was aware of thick cream cooling on his proud red goatee, that same goatee Nick so often pulled with his teeth.

Still staring up at his spouse, Eric smiled and used his tongue to slowly clean the cum from his lips.

Nick turned and walked to the chair in the corner of the room. He removed his tattered briefs and dressed in a pair of old blue jeans and a faded green T-shirt. After he had changed, he walked to the dresser and opened the same drawer from which he had gotten the ropes. He turned around and faced Eric. In his right hand he held a large hunting knife. The blade was bright and shining in the light from the window.

He returned to Eric. With the fingers of his left hand he casually rubbed Eric's chest hairs that were coated with the now-cold cum. He leaned forward and slowly ran his tongue in one long lazy lick over Eric's lips. Then softly he kissed Eric's mouth.

Nick stood and used the knife he carried to cut the rope that bound Eric's left hand. He walked around the bed and carefully laid the knife on the wet red hairs of Eric's strong chest. Then he calmly turned and walked out the door.

Left alone in the room, Eric grabbed the knife, cut his remaining restraints, and jumped from the bed. He tore his briefs and the remnants of his T-shirt from his body. With his anxious cock leading the way with a bobbing dance, he rushed downstairs wearing only the white socks.

He bounded noisily into the living room and looked for

Nick. A sound came from the kitchen. He hurried to the door and looked into the room.

Nick was standing at the counter with his back to the door. Eric rushed in, grabbed him by the upper arms, and savagely pulled him to the floor. Nick spun around as he was being pulled down and fought the attack. His resistance was strong. His resistance was silent. His resistance was less than needed.

Eric felt the man he loved slowly surrender to him. With his powerful arms, Eric flipped his mate onto his stomach. He reached around Nick's waist and unbuttoned his jeans. Urgently, barbarically, he pulled the jeans off Nick's body and threw them from his awareness.

Savagely, he ripped the back of Nick's underpants wide apart. He spit into his hand and bathed his impatient cock with the saliva. His strong, large hands divided the glorious round satin cheeks of Nick's butt. He leaned forward and let a large drop of spit fall onto the hole he was about to invade. With his thumb, he smeared his spit over and into that hole. He took his large cock in his hand and aimed it well. Forcefully, yet with care, his cock entered Nick's sweet ass. Deeper he sank into that glorious hole. He smiled to himself when he heard a gasp of pleasure escape from his lover's beautiful mouth.

He had conquered. He was victorious. He now savored that victory. He reveled in his domination, his triumph, his glory.

On the kitchen floor, Eric fucked his mate with all the

power of his unreleased passion. Nick lifted his hips and pushed back to meet each thrust Eric gave him. Eric bit the back of Nick's neck and shoulders. He held Nick's upper arms in a vise-like grip. Time dissolved. There was only the sound of their sweat-covered bodies slapping together, their gasping for breath, and their growls of pleasure.

Then it happened. Caesar stepped onto the shores of Britannia. Zeus conquered Olympus. Vesuvius exploded. The shock. The power. The dizzying release. The momentary insanity that flooded the mind. Eric's toes curled. His body shook and trembled. His cock spat and spewed a massive flood of cum that filled Nick's ass.

Eric shook and rocked. His mind and his body became one screaming red flame. When his cock finally finished pumping into Nick's ass, his wet body collapsed onto his lover's back. They rested together, one on top of the other, for several moments.

Slowly, Eric raised his hips and pulled his cock from the tight, silky ass he owned. The ass he would kill to defend. The ass Nick had vowed to him and to him alone. That sweet ass made a small slurping sound of protest as the triumphant cock wetly slipped out of it.

Still beneath Eric, Nick rolled onto his back. Eric stretched his body on Nick's body. He raised his head and the two young men looked into each other's eyes. Eric kissed his spouse's eyebrows and smiling mouth. Nick opened his mouth, inviting Eric's tongue to enter. The tongue accepted the invitation. Nick sucked gently on the tongue before he released it. The two rolled onto their sides and held each

other in a loving, silent, tender embrace on the kitchen floor.

With lips brushing skin, Eric whispered into Nick's ear, "I own you. I own you forever."

Nick gently rubbed his cheek against Eric's cheek.

"Yes, you do. You do own me," he whispered in answer, "and I own you."

They lay silent for a few minutes.

Eric felt a large grin grow on his face. He kissed Nick's forehead.

"That was fucking awesome, man," he said.

"You know, we couldn't play like this if we still had to use those goddamn condoms," Nick said.

"One of the joys of monogamy," Eric answered.

Suddenly, he raised his head and looked at Nick.

"Hey, since when do we keep rope and a knife in our dresser drawer?" he asked.

"I put them there when you were taking your shower."

"Where did that silky rope come from?" Eric asked.

"I bought it."

"Why?" Eric asked.

"So I could do this."

"Do what?"

“Teach you manners.”

“You didn’t know I was going to eavesdrop,” Eric said.

“No,” Nick admitted, “but, I planned on finding some reason to punish you.”

“You fucking little punk,” Eric happily said.

Nick smiled and leaned his forehead against Eric’s.

“You know I love it when you conquer me, control me, crush me,” Nick whispered.

Eric smiled and pulled Nick tight to him. On the kitchen floor in his strong arms, Eric crushed a smiling and, he knew, a very happy Nick.

II: Trevor

ERIC woke to warm breath softly touching his mouth.

He smiled and without opening his eyes said, “Morning, Baby.”

In answer he felt Nick’s warm mouth gently caress his lower lip. A contented moan came from Eric as he returned the kiss to Nick’s sweet mouth, that same sweet mouth that greeted him each morning.

Tenderly, he placed his large right hand on the creamy satin skin that covered the strong muscles of Nick’s smooth chest.

“Come on, Sweetheart,” Nick quietly whispered when their lips parted. “It’s Friday. Make it through today and you can sleep in for the next two days.”

Eric opened his eyes and looked at the face lying next to his. He smiled, closed his eyes, and snuggled closer.

“Man,” he exhaled, “I wish we could stay here all day.”

His hand slid down Nick’s chest to his stomach and

headed farther south. Nick grabbed the traveling hand.

“Eric, we won’t have time for our morning workout if you keep heading where you’re heading.”

“They say sex is one of the best cardiovascular exercises you can do,” Eric whispered into Nick’s mouth.

“Do they?” Nick quietly asked as he rolled onto his back and pulled his tall redheaded spouse on top of him.

Eric’s mouth took possession of Nick’s mouth. His right hand traveled along Nick’s back, slipped under the waistband of his sweat shorts, and claimed his hard, smooth butt. Nick swallowed Eric’s tongue deep into his mouth. A satisfied moan came from Nick. These sounds from Nick always excited and pleased Eric. He slipped Nick’s shorts off and pushed his legs apart.

When their kiss ended Eric sat up and knelt between Nick’s satin-smooth thighs. He leaned close and looked with lustful hunger at the beautiful hard cock only inches from his face. He could feel its warmth and smell its heady male richness.

Tenderly he kissed the hot soft skin at the base of Nick’s long fat cock. Carefully he sucked the smooth skin into his mouth. He released the skin and the tip of his tongue slowly began its exploration up the warm satin length.

His right hand held the savory erection tall. His tongue grew happier as it rediscovered the wonderful taste. Eric slowly licked the anxious organ. He backed away and looked at the fat head. There he saw a drop of pre-cum shining on

the slit of the cock's smooth head. His mouth found the head and took it prisoner. The pre-cum disappeared into his mouth.

"Eric, Baby," Nick breathed.

Eric was always surprised by the powerful thrill he found in caressing Nick's cock with his mouth. Soon he began to breathe harder at the demanding pleasure at having Nick fully in his mouth. Faster and more urgently, he swallowed and massaged the saliva-covered cock.

"Damn, Eric," Nick suddenly gasped, "I don't want to cum yet."

Nick pushed Eric onto his back. He pulled Eric's shorts from his body and brought his face to Eric's groin as he offered his cock again to the wet red mouth where it had been playing. They swallowed each other. They tasted each other. Their mouths caressed and pleased each other.

With a sinuous lack of haste, Nick moved his mouth to Eric's balls. He swallowed one and bathed it with his tongue. Then he moved his mouth to Eric's ass. His long wet tongue pushed its way deep into Eric's hole. In and out his tongue slipped. Deeper and deeper he fucked Eric with his tongue. Eric took the cue and followed Nick's lead. His face eagerly slid to Nick's perfect hole.

When the tip of Eric's tongue tasted Nick's hole a dizzy thrill rolled through his body. The perfect glory of exploring Nick's hole with his tongue was opium for Eric. The two tall men burrowed their faces between each other's heavenly butt cheeks and feasted on each other..

“You’re so beautiful, Baby,” Eric whispered between Nick’s cheeks.

Their tongues, mouths, and hands explored and brought pleasure to each other. They thrilled each other. Their sweat mingled. Their voices and breathing joined into a choir of lustful, loving sounds.

Eric was lost in paradise as he lay on his back and surrendered his powerful body to the powerful body of his mate. He knew his hunger and need for Nick was equaled by Nick’s hunger and need for him.

When it finally happened, every nerve in Eric’s body convulsed and burst into flame. His powerful cock began to spew cum onto his and Nick’s stomach and chest. His groans and growls were muffled by the beautiful butt on his face. Nick answered Eric’s cries of pleasure with his own when his cock began adding its load to the creamy mess between their bodies.

When the glorious madness ended, laughter exploded from Eric’s mouth. With his face resting on Eric’s balls, Nick joined the lusty laughter. Eric pushed Nick off him, sat up, and fell onto him. He kissed his beloved Nick. Long and deep he kissed him. He could taste the wild, heady flavor of his own ass on Nick’s beautiful lips and long, wet tongue.

They calmed. They returned to the world. They got out of their bed to start their day. An hour later, they stepped out of their shower and dried themselves with thick white towels.

“Don’t forget tonight we’re having dinner with Don and

Beth,” Eric reminded his spouse.

Nick passed his fingers through the golden-red forest on Eric’s powerful chest.

“I remember,” he answered.

THE young men were good friends with Eric’s employer and his wife. The two couples often went out together. That night, after dinner, they went to Mr. Blackport, Eric and Nick’s favorite jazz club. In the club they drank martinis and danced arm in arm to the music of the house quartet.

Mr. Blackport was not a gay club. It was a jazz club. All were welcomed. On that dance floor, in that club, Eric knew people watching them wondered how he, a tall redheaded Danish-American with an unimpressive face, had captured the heart of the beautiful dark man in his arms.

There was a time when he too wondered why Nick was his. But, that time was long past. Nick had shown him in so many ways. Eric knew, he understood, Nick’s love and heart were his and his alone.

The two couples closed the club and said their goodnights in the parking lot. Don and Beth drove off to their house in the country as Eric and Nick headed for their own home in town.

Happy and content, Eric drove his Lexus through the dark empty streets. He was happy. He was happy and deeply

in love. In their short history, he and Nick had passed through threats and attacks, yet he knew his life was rich and full. His heart was proud and filled with love. Through all the violent troubles Nick never faltered in his love. Eric knew Nick's heart was solidly his. He adored Nick and knew Nick adored him.

Nick found mellow jazz on the radio. He laid his seat back and rested his hand on Eric's strong thigh. Eric smiled to himself as he always did whenever he thought about Nick belonging to him. He had the love of a man many yearned to share. He had the heart of a man others hungered to own. He alone enjoyed the beautiful body of a man so many others lusted to enjoy.

When Eric stopped at a red light, he turned toward his partner and leaned close to kiss his temple. Movement on the street caught his eye. Through the passenger window he saw a thin teenage boy running down the far sidewalk of the cross street. The youth turned the corner and ran along the sidewalk in the same direction Eric and Nick were headed. Five men, all in their early to mid twenties, ran after the boy.

"Nick! There's a kid out there being chased by a bunch of guys."

Nick opened his eyes, sat up, and looked out the window.

"Damn, Eric, we can't let this happen! We've got to do something! We've got to help him!"

With a protesting squeal from his tires, Eric charged through the red light. Nick reached over and pressed on the

car's horn. The sudden sounds startled the men. They stopped running as Eric pulled near the curb and drove passed them. When he reached the still running boy, Eric slowed to keep pace.

Nick opened his window.

"Get in!" he yelled.

The boy slowed to a brisk walk and looked back at the men.

"They're not going to stand there just watching you," Nick shouted at the boy.

The boy stopped. Eric stopped the car.

"Get in or they're going to start running again!" Nick shouted.

He opened the back door.

Confusion and fear were on the boy's face. He looked in at Nick and Eric and then back at the men. Eric glanced in the mirror and saw the men had again started running toward the boy. When they were only feet away, the boy jumped into the backseat and slammed the door closed. Eric pressed hard on the accelerator. The car jumped down the street and turned a corner.

"Oh, man," the boy breathlessly cried. "Thanks. You guys saved my butt."

Nick turned and looked at the boy.

"What the hell's going on?" he asked.

“They want to beat my ass,” the boy answered.

He sat back in the seat, closed his eyes, and concentrated on catching his breath. The youth had a boyishly handsome face. He was thin with short brown hair and a small silver hoop earring in each ear. He wore baggy black pants and an oversized long-sleeved gray pullover. Even though the October night was cold, the boy wore no coat or jacket.

Eric was watching him through the rearview mirror.

“Is this about drugs or somebody ripping somebody off?” he demanded in a harsh voice.

“No, man. It’s not nothing like that,” the boy answered with his eyes still closed.

“What’s going on?” Nick asked in a softer voice.

The boy opened his eyes and looked at Nick.

“They tried to convert me and I told them I didn’t want to hear about it,” he answered.

“What?” Eric and Nick asked together.

“They’re part of some fundamentalist church,” the boy answered. “They were wandering around to people in the park preaching and shit like that.”

“It’s almost three in the morning,” Eric said.

“I know,” the boy answered. “There weren’t a whole lot of people there, mostly drunk bums or people getting high. But, they said they were there to save everybody. When they got

to me, I told 'em I didn't want to hear it. But they just kept up their preaching. They said they could help find me a place to sleep and give me eternal life through Jesus. I got pissed and told them what I thought of their religion. That's when they came after me."

"They want to kick your ass because you don't like their religion?" Eric asked skeptically.

The boy looked out the window. Eric could see he was scared.

"What's your name?" Nick asked.

"Trevor. Trevor Schilder," the boy answered.

"Do you want us to give you a ride home?" Eric asked.

"No, man, I don't," Trevor answered. "My Christian parents don't want me either. They kicked me out this morning. That's why I was in the park."

Eric and Nick looked at each other. Eric could hear Trevor trying to hide his fear. He looked in the mirror and saw Trevor watching him and Nick.

"Hey, you guys should just stop and let me get out," he said. "You don't want me in your car."

"Why?" Eric asked.

"Because I'm queer," Trevor snapped angrily. "That's why my parents threw me out this morning. That's why those so-called Christians want to beat me. When they didn't stop their damn preaching I told 'em they didn't want me in

their church 'cause I was gay. They said they could heal me. I told 'em I didn't want nobody trying to brainwash me. I mean, I was pissed. My whole day was shit. So I kept yellin' at 'em and told 'em I thought them and their church was a bunch of assholes. They got pissed. One of 'em slapped me. I jumped up and stood on the bench and called 'em fuckin' Christian assholes. I knew that was it, so I jumped over the bench and started running. I heard 'em running after me."

Eric and Nick exchanged glances. Eric looked into the mirror and saw Trevor still watching them.

With a brave sounding voice the boy said, "I guess you guys want to kick my ass now too."

Eric glanced at Nick and saw him smile at the frightened boy.

"No, Trevor," Nick said softly. "We don't want to hurt you. My name is Nick Bertolli. This big redhead driving the car is Eric Folke. We don't want to hurt you or see you get hurt. We understand."

Looking back at the boy, Eric saw the fear on his face change to curiosity.

"What do you mean, you understand?" Trevor asked.

"People have tried to kill both Eric and me," Nick answered. "They tried to kill us because we're partners."

"What do you mean? What kind of partners?" Trevor asked.

"Partners. You know, life partners. We're married," Nick

answered.

Eric watched Trevor study Nick's face in the dim light of the passing street lamps.

"You mean to each other?" Trevor asked.

"Yup. Last week we celebrated the second anniversary of our wedding."

"Wait a minute. Men can't get married in Michigan," Trevor stated with youthful authority.

"No they can't," Nick answered. "But we had a ceremony with our family and friends. That's all that matters. It's what we feel and know, not what the government thinks."

"Nick, what do we do?" Eric asked. "We're almost home."

"Trevor, do you need a place to sleep?" Nick asked.

The boy did not answer. In the mirror Eric could see fear had returned to Trevor's eyes.

"I promise you we're not rapists or perverts," Nick said. "We won't molest you. If you need a place to rest and figure out what you're going to do we have an extra bed you can use. If not we'll take you wherever you want to go."

"I don't have no place to go," Trevor said slowly and softly.

Eric heard tears in his voice.

Then with a bit more grit, Trevor added, "How do I know you're telling the truth? How do I know you're not going to

kick my ass when we stop?”

“We’re wearing our wedding rings,” Nick said.

He held his left hand up for Trevor to see. Eric held up his left hand when he felt Nick tap his shoulder.

“We both have the same kind of braided copper bracelet on our left arm,” Nick told the skeptical boy.

“That don’t mean nothing,” Trevor said. “You guys got wives at home. The bracelets might mean you’re in a club or something.”

“Show him that picture of us on that log in the Rogue River,” Eric told Nick.

Nick pulled a photo out of his wallet and handed it to the frightened boy. Trevor took the picture as Eric turned on the interior light. The young man looked at a photograph of Eric and Nick sitting together on a fallen log in the middle of a small river. They were shirtless and wearing cutoff jeans. Eric had his arm around Nick’s naked shoulders and Nick’s hand rested on Eric’s strong bare thigh.

Trevor stared at the picture for a couple of minutes. Thoughtfully, he handed it back to Nick. Eric turned off the interior light.

“You guys are for real,” he said in a surprised voice.

“Yeah, Trevor, we are,” Nick answered. “We won’t hurt you. If you want us to take you somewhere we will. If you don’t have anywhere to go you can come to our house, take a shower, get some food, and sleep in a clean bed.”

"I don't have no place to go," Trevor quietly said again.

Eric could hear the loneliness in the boy's voice. He could hear Trevor fighting the need to cry.

"How old are you?" Eric asked gently.

"Fourteen."

"Damn," Eric said to Nick. "You don't throw a fourteen-year-old kid out in the middle of October no matter what you think or believe."

Suddenly Trevor started to cry. Nick reached back and caressed his head.

"Hey, man," Nick said. "You're safe now."

"I'll sleep at your house," the boy answered through his tears.

Eric looked into the mirror and saw Trevor look at Nick with anxious wet eyes.

"But, please don't hurt me," Trevor pleaded.

Eric knew those words broke Nick's gentle heart.

"We promise," Nick said. "And please, don't you hurt us."

Eric glanced at Nick and saw a playful smile on his face. In the mirror he saw Trevor return the smile.

"I promise," Trevor answered.

Eric pulled into their driveway between their house and

the neighbor's house. The brown autumn leaves on the tall, old oak trees standing in the yard shaded the streetlights. The night air was still and cold.

"Come on, Trevor," Nick said as he stepped out of the Lexus.

He led the boy onto the back porch and into the kitchen. Eric followed. He thought how thin Trevor was and the immorality of five adult men wanting to beat the skinny boy because of a religious superstition.

Nick turned on the kitchen lights.

"Are you hungry?" he asked.

"Yeah, man. I'm starved," the boy greedily answered. "My parents kicked me out this morning. I ain't had nothing to eat all day. They didn't even let me go to my room to get my wallet or extra clothes or nothin'."

"I'll make you something to eat," Nick said. "You want to shower while I'm getting the food ready?"

"Oh, man. Yeah, please. I've been walking all day and hanging in the park. I must be real funky by now."

"Come on," Eric said. "I'll show you the shower and the guestroom."

"See if you can find something for him to wear to bed," Nick told Eric. "And bring me his clothes. I'll wash them tonight."

It wasn't long before Eric returned to the kitchen

carrying the boy's clothes.

"Did you find something he could wear?" Nick asked.

"Yeah. I gave him the sweats Tommy left here and one of our T-shirts."

"Put his clothes by the basement door. I'll wash them later."

When Trevor returned to the kitchen there was a dish of reheated baked ziti on the table waiting for him. Next to the pasta was a small bowl of black olives and a plate with bread with butter. Nick poured the boy a glass of orange juice.

"We had this ziti for supper last night," Nick told Trevor. "I nuked it for you."

"Oh, man. I'm starved. Thank you," the boy said as he sat down and attacked his food.

The sweats from their friend Tommy and their T-shirt fit Trevor loosely and helped exaggerate his thinness. Eric and Nick sat at the table and watched him devour his food.

"This is awesome pasta," Trevor said between gulps.

"Nick's a great cook," Eric answered. Then he asked, "You're telling us your parents threw you out of the house with only the clothes you're wearing just because you're gay?"

Trevor stopped eating and looked at Eric. He nodded his head.

"Yeah," he answered quietly. "I know what they believe,

but I thought they'd still love me. I'm their only child. But that didn't matter."

"I'm sure they still love you," Nick offered. "They just have to work through everything and then they'll remember their love."

"I don't know, man," Trevor answered. "My dad was really pissed."

He went back to work on his food. After he had cleaned his dish, he looked at Nick.

"You want some more?" Nick asked with a smile.

Trevor returned the smile.

"Yes, please," he answered.

Nick got up and took the dish.

While the second helping was heating in the microwave, Trevor asked, "How old are you guys?"

"This past spring I turned twenty-six and Eric turned twenty-seven," Nick answered.

Trevor looked thoughtfully at the two men.

"You guys love each other?" he asked quietly.

"Very much," Nick answered with a smile.

He walked to Eric's side and brushed his cheek with the back of his hand. Eric looked at Nick and smiled.

"I never knew a gay couple before," Trevor added.

The bell on the microwave announced the pasta was ready. Using a dish towel, Nick retrieved the dish and brought it to the table.

“Careful; the dish is hot,” Nick warned.

He looked at Eric.

“Do you want anything?” he asked.

“Just a glass of orange juice,” Eric answered.

Eric watched Trevor as he ate. Nick poured the orange juice.

“I see your parents let you pierce your ears and wear earrings,” Eric said.

“That’s what started this whole frickin’ mess,” Trevor answered.

Eric heard anger in Trevor’s voice.

“Me and a friend pierced each other’s ears last night. I got away with hiding ’em from my parents until this morning. When they saw them they freaked and my dad started yelling. I figured it was time I stood up for myself. I told ’em I was going to keep the rings. My dad kept yelling and preaching at me and said only faggots and punks in gangs wear earrings. I got so pissed at his BS I just yelled back and told him I was gay.”

“They didn’t take it very well?” Nick asked.

“Fuck no,” Trevor answered. “My mom screamed and started to cry and my dad just totally freaked. I mean, he

just completely freaked. He started yelling worse than before. He screamed about hell and burning forever and all kinds of shit like that.”

“Why didn’t you go to your friend for help?” Eric asked.

“What friend?” Trevor asked.

“The one you pierced your ears with,” Eric answered.

Trevor sat quiet.

“He doesn’t know you’re gay, does he?” Nick said.

“No,” Trevor answered. “Him and his family go to the same church my parents and me go to. The pastor there teaches gays are nasty, sick sinners who God hates. Only my parents and you guys know about me being gay.”

Eric stood and walked around the table.

“Come on, Trevor,” he said. “We’ve all had a long day. Let’s get some sleep and see what tomorrow brings.”

Trevor stood and answered in a tired voice, “It can’t bring no worse than today.”

Nick started to clear the table.

“Is there anything special you’d like for breakfast?” he asked.

Trevor looked at Nick with shy uncertainty.

“Anything at all,” Nick reassured him.

“Waffles?” Trevor asked hesitantly.

“Good choice!” Eric said as he lightly slapped Trevor on the shoulder.

III: Breakfast with Trevor

AFTER Trevor had gone to bed, Eric and Nick laid in each other's arms in their own bed. Eric brushed his thumb along the corner of Nick's left eye.

"You think he'll get up after we're asleep and steal everything he can carry?" Eric asked.

"He might," Nick answered. "But, even with that chance we can't leave him out all night in the cold."

"Sometimes I think you're all heart," Eric whispered to his mate.

He pulled Nick closer and held him tighter. He breathed on Nick's face. He knew there was a gentle power in his breath.

Many times Nick had shared how he found an engulfing warm magic in Eric's breath. A magic that pulled him from the ordinary. That breath blinded him to all but Eric. It deafened his ears to all but Eric's voice, Eric's heartbeat, Eric's breathing. Eric gloried in that power, in that magic Nick hungered to know.

Nick's mouth eagerly sought and found Eric's mouth. Their hungry lips moved together, caressed each other, and bathed in their wet passion. Three years they had been together, yet each kiss still held the power, the luxury, and the promise of their first.

Eric's left hand moved slowly down Nick's silky back. Nick moved in a sinuous serpentine dance against Eric's powerful body.

Eric felt Nick's eager anticipation. He knew every inch of Nick's body. He knew what made Nick quiver, what made him moan and gasp. Eric knew what made Nick cry out and beg him to conquer him, control him, own him.

When Eric's hand finally reached the small of his spouse's back and slid under the waistband of his sweats, Nick gasped.

"Take it, Daddy," he whispered breathlessly.

"Shh, Baby," Eric whispered into Nick's ear. "We don't want to wake our guest."

Nick took a deep breath.

"You should have thought of that before you touched me," he answered.

Eric took a great pride in his mastery of Nick's body. He also took a great pride in having Nick's love. He knew his beautiful Nick could have any man anywhere. Yet, Nick wanted him.

Eric's hand moved and went deeper into Nick's shorts.

His fingers slid between the silky muscular globes and entered the warm deep crevice. The first two fingers of Eric's powerful hand found the sweet heavenly hole. The fingers began drawing nerve-erupting circles on that hole hidden deep within those silky round cheeks.

Nick's strong arms crushed Eric to him. A woman or lesser man would have died in that embrace. Eric was not a lesser man. In that powerful embrace he felt the wanton need of his lover, his spouse. He felt the hunger and the demand for satisfaction.

There was a night in their history when Nick had covered Eric's mouth with his own in order to capture and hide his cries of pleasure from others. Eric now returned that favor. He enveloped Nick's mouth with his own. The moans, the cries, the begging that came from Nick were all taken into Eric. No sound made its way from their bed to the ears of their guest sleeping across the hall.

Nick pushed first his sweats from his body, then Eric's. Both shorts were lost and forgotten in the fresh clean sheets of their bed. Eric took his fingers from Nick's butt and slipped them between their kiss into Nick's mouth. He backed his face inches away.

"Get my fingers nice and wet, Baby," he instructed.

Eagerly Nick obeyed. When the fingers were slippery with saliva the hand returned them to that silky warm paradise. As the fingers left Nick's mouth, Eric's mouth returned and recaptured it.

A firm yet gentle pressure from Eric's fingers and that

satin hairless gateway opened. It opened only enough to allow entrance of first one and then the other wet finger. That hole knew those fingers and happily swallowed both.

Eric could feel Nick's desire to shout his pleasure into the night. He held Nick's mouth captive with his own.

Eric's skin became a field of electric charges when Nick's hand slid along his back. Nick pulled his mouth free from the moist prison and moved it to Eric's ear.

"Nothing exists but you," Nick gasped in a hoarse whisper. "I'm your toy. I'm your property. Your possession."

Deeper into Nick's body the fingers pushed their hungry way. When the hand was tight against the butt the fingers backed slowly out until only their tips remained in that hot, tight, joyful place. Then they returned to the secret depths. Again out. Again in. Out, in, out, in.

Eric backed his head away and looked at Nick's beautiful face. It was mad with passion. He knew his Nick was lost in pleasure.

Eric knew he was king. He knew Nick was his. The pleasure he was giving to Nick amplified itself in his own body. He took pleasure in giving Nick pleasure. He took prideful pleasure in leading Nick down a thousand different erotic paths.

He understood their passion came not only from their strong sensuous bodies, but also, and most importantly, from their love. Their powerful, deep, single-minded love for each other was the foundation of everything in their lives.

Nick grabbed Eric's face with his strong hands.

"Motherfucker," he whispered.

He pushed Eric onto his back. Eric's fingers left Nick's body and both hands collapsed onto the sheet. Nick's mouth fell onto the great pointed nipple in the forest on the right side of Eric's powerful chest.

Savagely, he attacked that nipple with his teeth and tongue. Soon, the other nipple suffered the same happy assault. Nick moved his face and Eric's navel was invaded by a long wet tongue. Expertly, Nick's tongue searched that deep dark salty hole on Eric's hard abdomen.

Nick's face moved farther south. It purposely bypassed and did not touch Eric's massive red cock. It went searching for and found Eric's heavy balls. First one ball was taken captive into his hot wet mouth. Eric's wrist covered his own mouth so his cries and growls would not wake their sleeping guest.

Nick's tongue rolled and caressed the ball in his mouth as Eric's body moved against the sheets. Nick released the ball and took the other. It too was bathed in the silky saliva of Nick's hot mouth.

Nick released that ball. His hot exhale filled every secret point between Eric's mighty thighs. Eric held his breath. He knew what was going to happen. During their first weeks together Nick had shown him an erotic pleasure he had never known, never imagined. Eric wanted that holy pleasure now. He knew it was coming. He knew Nick was aware of his anxious want. He knew Nick delighted in

teasing him, making him almost beg.

“Please, Baby,” Eric moaned into the dark.

Then he felt the tip of Nick’s tongue search and lick at the secret root of his great genitals. He felt the tip of that knowledgeable tongue slowly explore the sweet soft skin hidden deep between his powerful thighs.

“Oh, Nicky, Nicky,” Eric moaned quietly.

Nick’s hands pushed Eric’s thighs far apart. With his dark Mediterranean hands he pushed Eric’s great white Viking cheeks apart. Then his tongue found it. Eric’s eyes disappeared into his head. Nothing now existed except Nick’s tongue working its way deep into his body.

Nick raised his face.

“I love my face between your legs,” he whispered with primitive pleasure. “I want to live down here.”

“Fuck me with your tongue,” Eric both begged and commanded in the dark.

Nick returned to his happy work. Deep his tongue pushed its way into the sweet hidden darkness. He licked and he slobbered. His tongue and mouth worshiped that beautiful red Danish hole. His saliva ran down Eric’s thighs and cheeks onto the white sheet. Both men moaned from the pleasure each was giving to the other.

Eric began masturbating himself as Nick worked gladly, happily, and faithfully at pleasing him. Eric’s great balls banged on the top of Nick’s head. Nick’s tongue licked and

pushed its way into Eric's body. Nick's nose was crushed against the skin above the hole. Eric's mighty butt cheeks caressed Nick's face.

Suddenly Eric felt his sphincter grab Nick's tongue. Eric knew Nick's work was about to be rewarded. Eric's body bucked. He again used the back of his hand to muffle his growls of pleasure as his orgasm rocked his body.

Hot cum flew into the night air and fell with a wet splat onto Eric's hairy stomach and chest.

Nick raised his face from the heat of Eric's butt into the cool dark. His right hand took Eric's cock and brought it to his mouth. Hungrily his tongue cleaned the cum that was splashed on the great red silky head. Greedily, wantonly, arrogantly Nick licked away the salty creaminess of Eric's cum.

The nerves of that fat head were enflamed.

"Oh, Baby," Eric gasped as his body shuddered from a pleasure too extreme to face after his explosive orgasm.

He grabbed Nick's shoulders and pulled him up along his own sweat-drenched body. Their faces met and they kissed eagerly. Eric could taste his own salty cum in Nick's mouth. He swallowed Nick's tongue. That same tongue that had just been deep in his ass was now deep in his throat.

He pushed Nick onto his back and lay beside him. Again he put his two fingers into Nick's mouth.

"Wet them good, Baby. They're going back in you," Eric

said in a hoarse whisper.

When the two fingers were again covered in saliva they returned to Nick's hole. Slowly they slid in and just as slowly they slid almost out. In and out, Eric's two fingers fucked that hole, that beautiful hole. Deeply his fingers delved into that precious, beloved hole.

Nick grabbed his own cock and began working it. While he masturbated he pushed his ass down onto Eric's long fingers. He pushed down and pulled back. Down and back he rode those fingers.

As Nick rode his fingers, Eric watched the happy lust on his face. Soon, Eric felt the coming explosion. With incredible speed, his head went to Nick's crotch. His mouth engulfed and swallowed Nick's long, beautiful cock. Just in time. Nick pumped his hot load deep into Eric's throat. Eric swallowed and swallowed. Not a drop, not a single precious drop did he allow to escape his mouth.

Slowly Nick's body stopped its convulsing and he settled back onto the bed. When Eric was sure the eruption was over he freed the cock from his mouth and crawled up to Nick's face. They met and kissed tenderly.

They allowed several inches between their lips.

"My sweet beautiful baby," Eric said. "I love you, Nicky. I love you forever."

"Eric, Eric, my Eric," Nick answered. "I love you. I adore you."

The two sweat-covered men settled in each other's arms. They shared their breath as they regained control of their pleasure-racked bodies. When they were able they rose and showered together. After the shower the men returned to their bed and changed the sheets. Finally they crawled into their bed and each other's arms.

Almost immediately sleep, sweet sleep, came and took them.

NICK woke early the next morning. Being careful so as not to disturb the still sleeping Eric, he got out of their bed. After relieving himself he walked to the guestroom. Quietly, he slowly pushed the door open a few inches and looked into the room. Trevor was asleep with his face toward the door. Nick noticed how incredibly young he looked. He heard Eric behind him.

The tall redhead put his hands on Nick's shoulders and asked in a whisper, "How's our guest?"

Nick closed the door and turned to face his mate.

"He's a baby," Nick answered.

A SHORT time later, Trevor was awakened by the tempting aroma of waffles drifting up the stairs. He sat up in the bed

and looked around the room. His momentary confusion left as all that had happened the day before came flooding back into his mind. He saw his clothes neatly folded on the chair in the corner by the window.

“Good morning,” Nick said when Trevor walked into the kitchen.

“Morning,” Trevor answered.

He sat at the table and Nick placed a dish of hot waffles in front of him.

“Here’s some butter and warm maple syrup,” Nick said. “You want orange juice, grapefruit juice, or milk with your waffles?”

“Milk, please,” Trevor answered.

As Nick was pouring the milk, Eric walked into the kitchen through the back door.

“Morning, Trevor,” he said.

“Morning,” Trevor answered.

“How’d you sleep?” Eric asked.

“Good,” Trevor answered. “Thanks again, you guys. I mean for everything. I promise someday I’m going to pay you back.”

“Don’t worry about that,” Eric answered.

He walked to Nick, kissed him, and took his seat at the table.

“Did you get that hole in the attic vent sealed?” Nick asked.

“Yup,” Eric answered. “Now we don’t have to worry about a family of bats moving in.”

Nick sat the glass of milk next to Trevor’s plate. Then he poured two cups of coffee. He walked around the table, handed Eric one of the steaming cups, and sat next to him.

“Trevor, why that look on your face?” Nick asked.

“I never saw two guys kiss in real life before,” Trevor answered.

“Do you have a boyfriend?” Eric asked.

“No,” Trevor answered.

He shoved a forkful of waffle and warm syrup into his mouth.

“Remember he told us we were the only ones who know he’s gay,” Nick said.

“That’s right,” Eric answered.

“You know, Trevor, it might be a good idea if you called your parents and let them know you’re all right,” Nick said.

Trevor stopped eating and looked across the table at Nick.

“Why?” he asked.

“Because they’re your parents,” Eric answered. “No matter what they did or how you feel right now, they’re still

your parents.”

“Maybe they’ve calmed down since yesterday,” Nick added.

“Are you going to make me call ’em?” Trevor asked, looking at Eric.

“We have no right to make you do anything,” Eric answered. “It’s only a suggestion.”

“What do you want to do?” Nick asked.

“You mean about calling my parents?”

“Yeah, that and your life in general,” Nick said. “What do you want to do? Where do you want to go?”

Trevor looked from Nick to Eric and back to Nick.

“You guys want to get rid of me, don’t you? You want me out of here,” Trevor said.

“You’re welcome to stay with us as long as you need,” Eric answered. “But, we don’t have any legal right to keep you here. And Nick and I might get into some kind of trouble because of your age.”

“I’ll call Pop,” Nick said to Eric.

He looked at Trevor.

“My father’s a lawyer,” he said.

“Let’s take this one step at a time,” Eric said. “First, Trevor, why don’t you call your parents and let them know you’re okay? After that we’ll decide what to do. Don’t worry.

Like I said, you can stay here as long as you need.”

Trevor looked across the table at Eric. Nick’s partner was a big man. He and Nick were the same size but there was something about Eric that gave the impression of him being larger, stronger. Trevor did not fear Eric; he wanted Eric to like him.

“Where’s your phone?” Trevor asked.

“We don’t have a landline,” Nick answered. “You can use my cell.”

Nick took his telephone from his pocket and handed it to Trevor. Eric stood.

“Nicky, let’s give him some privacy,” he said.

Nick started to stand.

“You guys don’t have to leave,” Trevor said. “You already know everything.”

He opened Nick’s telephone and entered his parents’ number. After a few seconds he spoke.

“Hello, Dad,” he said. “I’m okay. I....”

He lowered the telephone and looked at Nick. He tried to keep the tears in his blue eyes. He failed.

“He hung up,” Trevor said.

He felt small and frightened. He tried to grasp, to understand the painful surprise. He was unable. The room was blurry. The world was heavy.

Nick stood, walked around the table, and put his hand on Trevor's head. The boy looked up into Nick's brown eyes. Suddenly he crushed his face against Nick's stomach. His arms went around Nick's waist. Nick held Trevor's shoulder with his left arm while his right hand caressed his head. Trevor tried to muffle the sounds of his sobbing against Nick's stomach.

"What kind of hateful superstitious bullshit is this?" Trevor heard Eric ask.

"Maybe I should call Tommy," Nick said.

He gently pushed Trevor from his body and knelt in front of him. Trevor hung his head low.

"Look at me," Nick softly said.

Trevor raised his face and looked into Nick's gentle, warm brown eyes. Nick took a napkin from the table and handed it to Trevor. The boy accepted the cloth and wiped his eyes.

"I have a friend named Tommy," Nick said. "After Eric he's my best friend. Tommy's from Alabama. His parents are fundamentalist Christians like yours. When Tommy was seventeen he told them he was gay. They threw him out of their house and out of their lives. For a long time he lived on the streets. He had to hustle to survive. You know what I mean when I say hustle?"

"Yeah," Trevor answered.

"After awhile, I forget now how long it was, but after a

while he ended up here in Michigan,” Nick said. “I met him at a gay-teen party. He was skinny and hungry and very sad.”

Nick quickly wiped his own eyes with the back of his hand.

“I was just a kid myself,” Nick said. “I didn’t know what to do, but I knew Tommy needed help. So I brought him to my house. My parents took him in and gave him a home. My brother and sister and me made him part of our family.

“I’d like to call him now. I’d like to call him and ask him to come over. Maybe you two can go for a walk. He knows your awful hurt because he’s gone through it. Maybe he can help you. You know, give you some ideas or something.”

“What’s he doing now?” Trevor asked.

“He lives with his partner on Heritage Hill and he works with me in my photography studio,” Nick answered.

Trevor’s tears had stopped. He looked at Eric.

“You want Nick to call him?” Eric asked.

Trevor looked back at Nick.

“Yes, please,” he answered.

IV: Living Your Life

FORTY-FIVE minutes later Tommy and his partner Allan arrived at the house.

Tommy was a handsome man, standing several inches shorter than Eric and Nick. He was thin with spiked, short red hair. His eyes were bright blue and his mouth was kind and smiled easily.

Allan was built heavier but stood as tall as Tommy. He had dark brown hair and brown eyes. His lips were full and ruddy, his voice deep and rich.

Eric, Nick, and Allan sat at the kitchen table with a bottle of Cretan wine and a bowl of black olives while Tommy and Trevor went walking in the park across the street.

In the park the noble brown leaves of the giant old oaks stood in dignified contrast to the riot of red, scarlet, yellow, and gold of the other trees. The cold air was fresh, clean, and filled with the rich nostalgic aroma of a Michigan October. Trevor wore a dark brown wool jacket lent to him by Nick. The jacket smelled clean and masculine, the same aroma Trevor had discovered when he held his face tight against

Nick's hard stomach.

"When Nick called he told me you and I have something in common," Tommy said as they walked under a tree filled with golden leaves.

Trevor stopped walking. Tommy stopped next to him and looked up into the brilliant boughs above their heads.

"They don't have trees like this in Alabama," he said.

"Do you miss your parents?" Trevor asked.

Tommy slowly lowered his head and looked across the park.

"All the time," he answered. "When I came out to my parents they called me all kinds of names. They said a lot bad things about me. They told me they hated me and never wanted to see me again."

He looked at Trevor.

"Yeah, I still miss them."

"You ever talk to 'em?" Trevor asked.

"For a couple of weeks after they kicked me out I tried to call them," Tommy answered. "But, they just kept hanging up on me."

"That's what my dad did to me this morning when I called," Trevor said.

"I know it hurt," Tommy said. "Every fucking time my parents hung up on me it hurt. Even when I told myself I

didn't care, it hurt."

"I thought my parents loved me," Trevor said.

"I don't know your parents so I can't talk about them, but my parents are prisoners," Tommy said.

"Prisoners? What do you mean?" Trevor asked.

"I mean they're prisoners of their own religion, their own beliefs," Tommy answered. "They're locked into their little judgmental world. They can't change, or they don't know how to change. There's just no freedom of thought in their perfect little Christian world."

"Nick's folks took you in?" Trevor asked.

"Yeah," Tommy answered. "His parents are the best. I'm part of their family now."

Trevor stood silent and looked at the ground.

"Let's walk down by the creek," Tommy said.

He pointed to a thick line of trees at the other end of the park. The two started walking.

"Nick's really handsome," Trevor said. "He's awesome. He's the best-looking man I ever saw."

"He is," Tommy agreed. "But, his heart's more beautiful than his face or body. He'll help you any way he can."

"Last night him and Eric said people tried to kill 'em," Trevor said.

"Yeah," Tommy answered.

“Why? What happened?”

“They didn’t tell you?” Tommy asked.

“No.”

“Simply put,” Tommy answered, “Eric was going with a woman when he met Nick and accepted being gay. He left her. When she found out Eric had left her for a man she totally lost it. I think that was the biggest thing. She couldn’t handle him breaking up with her to be with a man. She sicked her brother and another guy on Nick. They beat him bad. A couple of days later they came at him again. The second time there was three of them and they put him in the hospital.”

“Wow,” Trevor said.

“And about six months later Eric was put in the hospital by a Christian who worked at the same consulting firm he does,” Tommy said.

“He thought Eric was a sinner?” Trevor asked.

“That was part of it,” Tommy answered. “But, the biggest thing was he was jealous because Eric is so good at his job. This guy, the one who poisoned Eric, is about twice Eric’s age. He got jealous because Eric always got the best clients and everything. Eric got them because he works hard and has good ideas. This Christian was just basically jealous of Eric’s success.”

They reached the slow-moving creek under the tall trees at the far edge of the park. Together they stood and watched

fallen leaves ride on the lazy water.

“They really love each other, don’t they?” Trevor asked as he watched the leaves floating on the water.

“You mean Eric and Nick?” Tommy asked.

“Yeah.”

“Yes they do, Trevor. They love each other very, very much.”

“Nick hugged me,” Trevor said in a very low voice.

Tommy put his hand on Trevor’s shoulder and turned the boy to face him.

“Nick is a very warm, caring person,” Tommy said. “He touches people he likes all the time. But, don’t mistake what he means by those touches. He adores Eric. He worships Eric. Right now you’re sad and afraid. Don’t let everything bad that’s going on in your life make you see something that’s not there. Eric and Nick love each other more than you can imagine. They won’t allow anybody or anything to threaten their relationship.”

“I didn’t mean nothin’,” Trevor said.

“Good,” Tommy said in a softer voice. “Eric and Nick are two great guys. They’ll help you the best they can. They wouldn’t desert you. But, never try to come between them.”

“Okay,” Trevor answered.

He sat on a log among the dried ferns on the bank. Tommy sat next to him.

“What should I do?” Trevor asked.

“You mean about your parents kicking you out?”

“Yeah.”

For a silent moment Trevor and Tommy watched the leaves on the water.

“It’s hard enough to give advice to a friend you’ve known for a long time,” Tommy finally answered. “I don’t even know what to say to somebody I just met.”

Trevor looked at Tommy.

“Please,” he said.

Tommy took a deep breath and exhaled heavily.

“Man,” he answered. “I think you should be true to you. I think you should live your own life.”

“What about my parents?”

“You can’t live the lie they want you to live,” Tommy answered. “If you want to be a sane, honest man you have to live your own life.”

Trevor felt sad and frightened.

“Someday they might understand,” Tommy said.

“Do yours?” Trevor asked.

“No, not yet,” Tommy answered with a smile. “I keep hoping. But, even if they don’t ever understand or accept me or talk to me again, I have to be me. I have to live my life and

not the fantasy they want me to live.”

AT the kitchen table Eric, Nick, and Allan sat sipping their wine.

“What do you think the kid’s going to do?” Allan asked.

“I don’t know,” Nick answered.

“Nicky, I know what you’re thinking,” Eric said. “We have absolutely no legal standing to keep Trevor.”

“Maybe his parents will sign him over to us,” Nick answered.

“Two bigoted Christians signing their son over to a gay couple. I really doubt that, Nicky,” Eric said.

“Maybe he can divorce his parents,” Allan suggested.

“What?” Nick asked.

“I’ve heard about kids doing that,” Eric said.

“What is it?” Nick asked.

“There’ve been some kids who’ve felt their best interests were being neglected by their parents so they went to court and legally separated their relationship,” Allan said.

“Really?” Nick said. “I’m going to call my pop and see what he thinks.”

“Nicky, where are you going with all this?” Eric asked. “He’s not an injured squirrel you’re taking in to heal. He’s a teenage boy with parents.”

“Parents who don’t want him,” Nick answered.

“Nicky, even if they don’t, you and I can’t,” Eric said.

“Why?”

“There’re a lot of reasons,” Eric answered. “We just met the kid. We’re not his family. We’re two gay men in self-righteous Christian Reformed West Michigan.”

“And I can think of a big reason that says we have to,” Nick answered. “If we don’t give him a place to live the state will put him in a foster home with people who are only looking for a monthly check.”

“I’m sure he has relatives he can go to,” Eric said.

“What if he doesn’t?” Nick asked.

“Nick, you’re jumping the gun here,” Eric said. “Call your dad and tell him everything. See what he says. When Trevor and Tommy get back we will talk to him and see what he wants.”

Nick stood up and walked into the living room. Fifteen minutes later he returned.

“What’d your dad say?” Eric asked.

“He said we should think about calling child protective services,” Nick answered.

“And?” Eric asked.

“I told him we weren’t going to do that right now.”

“So what are we going to do?” Eric asked.

“Pop said he’ll come over tomorrow morning and talk with us and Trevor,” Nick answered.

Eric stood and walked to Nick. He put his arms around him and kissed him between the eyes. The two men leaned their foreheads together.

“Nicky,” Eric said softly. “I know you hurt because of his hurt. I know you want to stop that hurt. That’s one of the things I love about you, your gentle heart. But, Baby, there are times when you just can’t make the world better.”

“I can try,” Nick said.

Eric leaned his head back and looked into Nick’s warm brown eyes. All their shared history passed through Eric’s mind.

“Nicky, there’d be so much of our lives that would have to change,” he said softly.

“Does that mean you’re willing to try to do something for him?” Nick asked.

“I love you, you little punk,” Eric said. “You know I’ve never been able to say no to you.”

“Don’t blame this all on me,” Nick said. “You’re not as tough as you act.”

The two men kissed each other.

Allan, still sitting at the table, said, "You guys might want to talk to Trevor and see what he wants before you decide to have a baby shower."

Eric and Nick looked at Allan and laughed.

"Why do you always have to be the voice of intelligent reason?" Nick asked.

Allan smiled and shook his head.

WHEN Tommy and Trevor returned, they joined the others at the table. Nick poured Tommy a glass of wine and handed Trevor a can of Diet Coke.

"Trevor, do you know what you want to do?" Eric asked.

Trevor was silent.

"Would you like me or Eric to go talk with your parents?" Nick asked.

"No," Trevor answered. "The minute my dad found out you were gay he'd throw you out."

"Man, we'll help you any way you need and as much as we can," Eric said. "But, we have to know what you want."

Trevor looked down at the table.

"Trevor," Nick said.

“Can’t I stay here?” Trevor asked in a small voice. “I’d like to stay here.”

Eric and Nick looked at each other.

“I know it’s stupid and a whole lot to ask,” Trevor said.

“It’s not stupid,” Eric said. “Your thoughts aren’t stupid, they’re you. If that’s what you want or feel it’s not stupid.”

“I know you guys want to talk about this,” Trevor said. “Can I go downstairs and play one of your video games? That way you guys can talk?”

“Yeah, go ahead,” Eric said.

Trevor stood up and walked to the door that led to the basement entertainment room. At the door he stopped and looked back at the four men at the table.

“I know I’m asking a lot,” he said. “I’ll find a job and pay you guys rent. If I don’t stay here I’ll have to go to live with one of my relatives in Missouri. They’re all members of the same crazy True Victory Bible Church like my parents. I don’t want to go to Missouri. I want to stay in Michigan. My school and friends are here. And I don’t want to be preached at all the time and told I’m a sinner and all that shit. That’s what’ll happen in Missouri.”

He looked directly at Tommy.

“In Missouri I won’t be able to be me,” he said.

He turned, opened the door, and went down the stairs. He closed the door behind him.

"Tommy, you told him to be himself, didn't you?" Allan asked.

"Yeah, I did," Tommy answered.

Then he looked at Eric.

"I don't know what you guys are thinking about doing but there might be a problem here," he said.

"We haven't decided to do anything yet," Nick said.

"What problem are you talking about?" Eric asked.

"I think Trevor has a little crush on Nick," Tommy answered.

"Me?" Nick asked.

"Don't look so surprised," Tommy said. "Right now he's feeling abandoned, lost, alone, and afraid. You've helped him. And you're a very good-looking and sexy man."

"Eric's helped him too," Nick said.

"Yeah, but you hugged him," Tommy said.

"Oh my God," Nick said.

Tommy told them what Trevor had said about Nick.

"We have to be really careful, Nicky," Eric said.

"I have to talk with him about this," Nick said.

"If he told Tommy he understood his mistake, I think we should just let it rest," Eric said. "I don't want to embarrass him or put any more emotional pressure on him."

Nick smiled.

“You’re thinking like a parent already,” he said.

“I’m going to call his father,” Eric said. “Nicky, give me your phone. He used it to call his old man. The number will be in memory.”

Nick handed Eric his cell phone. Eric opened it and found the number Trevor had called.

“Hello, Mr. Schilder?” Eric said. “Sir, my name is Eric Folke. Last night a friend and I rescued your son from a gang trying to jump him.”

Eric listened for a moment.

“Yes sir, he’s here at our house.”

Again Eric listened.

“Yes, he told me.... Sir....”

“Sir....”

“Sir, if you don’t want him to return home may I at least come and pick up some of his clothes?”

Eric listened for several more minutes.

“Yes, sir. I understand. Thank—”

Eric closed the cell phone. He looked at the others.

“He hung up on me,” he said.

“What did he say about Trevor’s clothes?” Allan asked.

“He said I could come over and get his clothes and everything else,” Eric answered. “But, I have to come alone. Allan, can I borrow your truck?”

“Sure,” Allan said.

He took his keys from his pocket and handed them to Eric.

Eric looked at Nick.

“I’ll be back as soon as I can,” he said.

Nick leaned forward in his chair and put a hand on the back of Eric’s neck.

“You called me your friend,” he said.

“What?”

“You said last night you and *a friend* saved him,” Nick answered.

“I’m sorry, Baby,” Eric said. “I didn’t think it wise to say ‘my husband and me’.”

Tommy and Allan laughed as Eric kissed Nick.

“I’ll let it slide this time,” Nick said.

Eric stood.

“I’ll be back as soon as I can,” he said. “Allan, where’d you park?”

“On the street out front,” Allan answered.

Eric walked out of the kitchen and into the living room.

He grabbed his coat from the closet and went out the front door.

WHEN he returned an hour later, everyone, including Trevor, was sitting in the living room.

“You guys want to help me unload?” he asked.

Trevor got off the sofa and walked to Eric.

“What happened?” Trevor asked.

“When I got there I saw clothes and other stuff piled in the driveway in front of the garage door,” Eric answered. “I rang the doorbell and the same man’s voice I talked to on the phone shouted through the door that the things in the driveway were yours. He told me to take it and not come back or call again. Trevor, I’m sorry, but he also told me to tell you he and *his wife* never wanted to see or hear from you again.”

“Man,” Trevor said.

His face went white and he sank to his knees. Eric knelt and wrapped the lost boy in his strong arms.

Lost, lonely, heartbroken, deserted sobbing filled the room as Trevor buried his face in Eric’s powerful, warm chest. Nick hurried to Eric. He knelt and wrapped his arms around the boy and the man.

“Come on, Tommy,” Eric heard Allan say.

While he and Nick held and soothed Trevor their friends unloaded the truck. They placed everything on the living room floor of Eric and Nick's and now Trevor's home.

V: Ending Everything

WITH the coming of the early autumn night, Allan and Tommy returned to their home. Eric and Nick's house rested in dark stillness. Trevor curled in what was now his bed, his room, in forgetful healing sleep. His things had been carried into the room where they waited to be put away. Eric and Nick lay facing each other in their bed.

Eric gently traced a finger along Nick's eyebrow.

"We're moving awful fast, Nicky," he said.

"I know," Nick answered. "But, we have to. I don't fucking understand how people can be so goddamn cruel."

"You're a gay man living in a right-winged pocket of a blue state," Eric answered. "You know from experience how nasty some people can be."

"I guess," Nick said. "I do understand Trevor needs a family and a place to live. And I know we'd be good for him. You especially."

"What do you mean 'me especially'?" Eric asked.

“I watch you, man,” Nick answered. “I watch you with our nieces and nephews. I see you with the neighborhood kids. They all love you. And you love them. You glow when you’re playing with them or helping them fix things or build things. You have a real connection with kids.”

“He’s not a kid,” Eric said. “He’s almost a man.”

Nick touched his forehead to Eric’s.

“He’s a lost and frightened little boy who’s been incredibly hurt by those who should protect him the most,” Nick answered.

“Nicky, I love you so fucking much.”

Nick gently brushed his mouth on Eric’s mouth.

“Yeah?” Nick asked.

“You’re so damn good, Baby,” Eric answered.

“We’re so damn good,” Nick corrected him.

Their bodies moved closer, their arms and hands held tighter, and the one mouth caressed the other.

“You’re the best thing in my life, Nicky,” Eric whispered when their kiss ended and their lips were still gently touching. “I just don’t know if I can share you.”

“And you’re the best thing in my life,” Nick answered.

Their mouths separated as their foreheads again touched.

“Eric, I know what you’re saying. As much as he needs

our help, I don't know if I can share you or even want to share you. I'm selfish about you. I'm awful fucking selfish about you."

Eric rolled on top of Nick.

"I know," Eric answered, "and that's my pride. Who else can brag that the most beautiful man in the world wants him all to himself? But, besides you being selfish, look at how we live. We go where we want when we want. And how many times do we make love on the sofa or the living room floor or even on the kitchen table, for that matter?"

In the dark of their bed Eric could see Nick's answering smile. Nick caressed Eric's face. He opened his legs and Eric settled comfortably in their warm strong embrace.

"We'll have to give that up if we take him in," Eric said.

"I know," Nick answered, "but what else can we do?"

"I don't know," Eric answered. "I agree he needs a family and emotional security. But, I'm not going to like our sex being confined to our bedroom."

"We can still play in the bathtub," Nick answered.

"I like having you anywhere I want, anytime I want."

"I like that too, Eric," Nick answered. "But if we decide to keep him we'll just have to be more creative."

"We're already pretty damn creative," Eric answered with a lusty wicked smile. "But, I think we've already decided we're going to try and keep him here with us."

“Eric,” Nick said, “if we were a straight couple and just had a baby we’d have to make adjustments.”

“I know that, fool,” Eric said.

“Tomorrow when Pop comes over we’ll see what he says,” Nick said.

Eric rolled off Nick’s body onto his own back.

“You know, Nicky, we are selfish,” he said as he lay looking at the ceiling. “We’ve been talking about our needs and wants. That kid needs a home. A loving, caring home.”

“Daddy, we’re only selfish about each other,” Nick said.

Eric turned back to Nick and kissed him. He took Nick’s wrists in his strong hands. While their mouths were still together, Eric raised the hands over Nick’s head and pressed them against the headboard. His face moved to Nick’s left armpit. The clean masculine aroma in that dark furry jungle intoxicated Eric. He licked the skin around the hair. He took the hair in his lips and tugged.

Then his mouth moved down along the side of Nick’s body. His face glided onto Nick’s hard, flat stomach. Slowly, his mouth flowed over the smooth satin skin. The lips were searching. The tip of Eric’s tongue led the search. Then it was found. The sweet warmth of Nick’s navel. That perfect navel surrounded by an encircling guard of soft black hair. Eric’s hot wet tongue slipped in and deeply explored that warm, delicious opening.

Eric’s mouth went farther south following the thin line

of hair and captured the cotton-covered hardness. His mouth surrounded and his teeth bit the hard passion coyly hiding behind the soft fabric. He gently gnawed that hardness while his fingers slid into the leg opening of Nick's sweat shorts.

Through the cotton, Eric felt the eagerness of Nick's cock. He knew his breath was penetrating the thin fabric and bathing Nick's cock with warmth. Eric's fingers slowly pulled the shorts from Nick's body. The sweat shorts disappeared and Eric swallowed Nick in a long, lazy inhale.

Eric's nose and chin became lost in the dark forest between Nick's strong silky thighs. He backed away until only the fat head of his lover's cock was in his mouth. His tongue bathed the silky fat head. The tip of his tongue played with the slit in the head. Then in one pounce he swallowed Nick again. He backed away and swallowed again. He repeated this move over and over and over.

Eric lost his identity. All he knew was Nick's hot, hard, saliva-coated cock sliding in and out of his mouth. But a new awareness was awakening. An incredible mind-numbing pressure was building deep in his own groin.

Eric's hands caressed Nick's smooth, strong thighs. He pushed the thighs farther apart and his throat swallowed Nick deeper and deeper. Nick's hands took hold of Eric's head. His hands did not control the head between his legs; they simply followed the head and enjoyed the ride.

Suddenly Nick pulled Eric's head from his crotch. He dragged his lover's head to his face and he engulfed Eric's

mouth with his own. Nick's tongue went into the mouth and throat where his cock had just been playing.

With impatient hunger Eric pushed his own sweats from his body. He raised himself up and with a mighty knee in each of Nick's armpits he sat on the silken chest. With his giant cock he began to slap Nick's beautiful face. Nick moaned and begged for more.

"Beat me, Daddy. Beat me. Beat me with your beautiful dick. Make me serve you. Goddamn, make me serve you."

Eric looked down at Nick's handsome lust-filled face. Nick was his. Eric's pride, his power, his strength all stood tall and arrogant. He owned Nick. He gloried in that ownership.

Eric curled his lips in a wanton licentious smile. He was king. He raised his butt off Nick's chest so his cock could be swallowed. And it was swallowed. Deep it was drawn into warm, wet delight. He closed his eyes as Nick bathed and caressed his cock with mouth and tongue.

Suddenly, Eric pulled himself free and stretched his body atop Nick. He stared deep into Nick's brown eyes.

"You're mine, Baby," Eric said in a hoarse whisper.

Then he backed away and knelt between Nick's knees. He pushed Nick's thighs far apart. He spit into his hand and smeared his cock with his warm saliva. With a smile, Eric lifted Nick's hips.

Then that giant cock that had been swimming in Nick's

throat found its happy way deep into his sweet, tight, glorious ass. With madding slowness he pushed his way deeper into Nick's satin body. His mouth returned to Nick's mouth. His hips began to slowly pump against Nick's sweet body. With measured rhythmic grace he fucked his beautiful Nick.

"My baby," Eric groaned into Nick's mouth. "My sweet beautiful baby."

"Eric! Eric!" was all Nick said.

Eric's hands caressed and held Nick's face. Nick's hands found their home in the small of Eric's superb back. They fucked, they rocked, they gasped for air with their mouths locked together.

Their mouths, their hands, their bodies, and their love found pleasure in giving pleasure. Their savage passion gave and took. A moment, an hour, time did not exist. Nick gasped and growled and claimed Eric's body. Eric invaded and conquered and took what was his.

Finally it happened. The violent explosion of Eric's orgasm. Nick answered that explosion with his own. A massive eruption that pumped hot cum between their bodies. As one, the lovers convulsed while their bed threatened to break beneath them.

They collapsed together onto that sturdy oak bed. They were exhausted in their love, in their sweat, and in their home. Together they searched for their breath. Together they relaxed and their hearts slowly calmed.

Softly, tenderly, Eric kissed Nick's temple. Gently, Nick caressed the shoulders of his redheaded mate. Quietly they relaxed. Long they lay together, Eric on top of Nick. Eric listened as Nick's breathing became soft and regular. He knew his mate was drifting into sleep.

Eric raised his head, looked down at the beauty beneath him, and smiled. He moved so he was lying beside his spouse. In the sheets Eric found a pair of sweats that he used to wipe Nick's stomach and chest clean. He wiped his own clean and dropped the shorts onto the floor.

Then he relaxed with his face next to Nick's face. He smiled again. He smiled often these days. There was a time when smiles did not come easily to him. There was a time when his heart was filled with anger and not with Nick.

As he listened to Nick's gentle breathing he thought of the life they had created together. He thought about Nick's warm, gentle brown eyes and smiling mouth. His thoughts looked back to the time in his life before Nick. The loneliness, the emptiness, the cold hard blankness. Those days were now dust that had been blown away by a warm breeze.

He thought of the boy in the room across the hall. Did he want to share Nick with that boy? Could he share Nick with that boy? Trevor needed a home. Eric needed Nick.

WHEN Nick's parents arrived Sunday morning, the living

room was rich with the scent of apple wood and cedar chips burning in the fireplace. The aroma of a slowly simmering harvest soup drifted in from the kitchen and added to the room's comfort.

In the living room, three sofas sat around a coffee table in front of the fireplace. Eric and Nick sat on the sofa directly across from the hearth. Nick's parents sat on the sofa to their left. Trevor sat alone on the sofa to their right.

Sal, Nick's father, a tall handsome Italian-American, spoke about the law, responsibility, and the need for careful deliberative thought.

"First," Sal said, "the state has to be notified. Along with the notification we can petition for guardianship if that's what the three of you want."

"What about Trevor's parents?" Nick asked.

"They'll have to face some legal questions of their own," Sal answered.

Eric looked at Trevor. The youth was watching the fire. He looked very young and very lonely.

"Only one of you can legally become Trevor's guardian," Sal said.

"Because we're gay?" Nick asked.

"Not so much that as the fact that you two are not a legal entity," Sal answered. "And because only one of you can assume the guardianship, I think it should be Eric."

“Why me?” Eric asked.

“The local business community has a high regard for you. You’re employed by a successful firm. I’ve talked with Don. He said he and Beth were both more than willing to write letters and testify on your behalf. And you, Nikos, are self-employed in a business you only recently started.”

“What does that mean?” Nick asked.

“From a legal viewpoint your income is not as assured as Eric’s,” Sal answered.

“Pop, why do we have to do any of this?” Nick asked. “Why can’t Trevor just stay here until his parents calm down and let him come home?”

Sal looked at Trevor and spoke softly.

“Because they may never change their minds.”

He looked back at his son.

“And if you don’t do something, the state will. Trevor needs a guardian. Medical decisions may have to be made. His education should continue without any interruption. And there’s legal liability. Because he’s a minor there has to be some responsible adult guiding him.”

“These are all major steps,” Candy, Nick’s mother said. “Before you do any of the things you guys are talking about, why doesn’t someone try to reunite Trevor with his parents?”

“Candy, I’ve tried,” Eric said. “His father was very harsh and adamant about what he believes and wants.”

Eric saw pain in Candy's eyes. He knew it was Trevor's pain she was feeling. It was the same pain Eric had seen in Nick's eyes. Candy was a woman of stunning Greek beauty. Nick had inherited her warm eyes and luscious mouth. He had also inherited her deep compassion.

"Trevor, what do you want to do?" Candy asked.

Trevor's eyes were still on the fireplace.

"I want to go home," he answered, still watching the fire. "But if I can't, I want to stay here."

Eric could hear the lowly sadness in Trevor's voice.

"I want my parents to love me," he added. "But, I know that won't happen. My dad hates me. My mom thinks I'm disgusting."

Candy left her seat beside her husband. She walked to Trevor and sat beside him. With her gentle hand, she caressed his face. Her arm then went around his thin shoulders.

"They love you," she said softly. "But, they have to come to terms with their love for you and their religious beliefs."

"Trevor," Sal said as he stood. "May I telephone your parents? I'd like to speak with them."

"You can call 'em," Trevor answered. "But, my dad won't talk to you."

"When I introduce myself as a lawyer I think he'll listen," Sal said.

Nick opened his cell phone.

“Pop, here’s the number,” he said. “Just press send.”

“Eric, may I use your office?” Sal asked.

“Yeah, go ahead.”

Sal took the telephone, walked into Eric’s home office, and closed the door. Eric was tending the fireplace when Sal stepped out of the office ten minutes later. Candy was still sitting with Trevor holding his hand.

“Your father says we can do whatever we want,” Sal said. “He said he doesn’t care and wants to be left alone.”

“What does that mean?” Trevor asked.

“I’m sorry, son,” Sal answered. “It means he won’t let you come home.”

Eric saw the sudden pale hurt on Trevor’s face. He left the fireplace and sat beside him. With all the concern of a new father, he put an arm around Trevor’s shoulders.

“I’m not going to say I understand what you’re feeling,” Eric said. “I don’t. I can’t imagine it. But, Nicky and I can give you a home if that’s what you want. We’ll be here for you.”

Trevor looked at him. Eric saw large pools had gathered in his eyes. They waited, ready to fall and slide down his cheeks. But they did not fall. They sparkled in the light from the fireplace. They sparkled and tore at Eric’s heart. Slowly, hesitantly, Trevor placed his head on Eric’s chest.

Eric's arms pulled Trevor tight to him. He felt pools in his own eyes. These pools did fall and slide down his cheeks. He looked at the others in the room. There were many tears.

Eric laid his cheek on the top of Trevor's head.

"You're home," he whispered.

THEY ate their lunch of rich soup, hearty bread, and a Greek cucumber salad that reminded all of the summer that waited under the fallen golden leaves.

"Trevor, have you thought about what type of career you'd like?" Candy asked.

"I want to be an artist. You know, a painter."

"Do you study painting in school?" Sal asked.

"Only regular art class," Trevor answered. "I have to be real careful when I draw or paint at home."

"Why?" Nick asked.

"My dad doesn't approve. He says painting weirdo pictures ain't no way to make a living and support a family."

"I'm sorry he feels that way," Candy said. "Art is very important to life."

"I draw and I do pastels and watercolors in my room in secret," Trevor admitted. "I kinda think my mom knows, but

she never says anything to me or my dad.”

After their meal, after Sal and Candy had said goodbye and left, Eric went into his office to finish some work. Trevor helped Nick put away the dishes.

“How come your mom and dad call you Nikos?” Trevor asked.

“That’s my name,” Nick answered. “It was my Greek grandfather’s name. My family and everybody I’ve known since I was a kid all call me Nikos. My friends call me Nick.”

“Except for Eric,” Trevor said.

“Eric?” Nick asked.

“Yeah, he calls you Nicky.”

Nick smiled.

“You really love Eric, don’t you?” Trevor asked.

Again Nick smiled. This smile was brighter than the last.

“Trevor, my friend,” Nick answered, “Eric is my heart.”

“I like Eric too,” Trevor said.

“He likes you,” Nick answered.

ERIC and Nick crawled into bed that night with bodies still warm from their shared bath.

“Looks like we can get a dog now,” Nick said as he pulled the covers over the two of them.

“A dog?” Eric asked.

“Yeah,” Nick answered. “We always say we don’t want a dog because we’ll be tied down and can’t take off whenever we want.”

“So?” Eric asked.

He snuggled up to Nick.

“It looks like we just settled down,” Nick said.

Eric kissed Nick’s temple and whispered, “I hate to say this, Baby, but it looks like we might’ve just grown up.”

“Damn,” Nick said as he cuddled into Eric’s powerful furry chest.

MONDAY afternoon when Eric arrived home from work he joined Trevor at the kitchen table. Nick was at the counter making tomato sandwiches.

“How’d things go at school?” Eric asked.

“It was okay,” Trevor answered.

Nick set sandwiches on the table in front of both Eric and Trevor.

“I didn’t say nothing to nobody, if that’s what you

mean,” Trevor said before he took a huge bite from his sandwich.

“Tomorrow I’m going to go talk with your principal,” Eric said.

“Why?” Trevor asked with a voice muffled by a wad of sandwich.

“The school has to know what’s going on,” Eric said.

Trevor swallowed.

“Man,” he said to himself.

“Don’t worry, Trevor,” Eric said. “Sal’s going with me.”

“Why?” Trevor asked.

“We want the principal to understand the importance of keeping private the reason your parents threw you out,” Eric answered.

“Cool,” Trevor said.

He took another large bite from his sandwich.

“There are some gay kids at school,” he mumbled with another full mouth. “They have a kinda club.”

“You gonna join?” Eric asked.

Trevor swallowed with a noisy gulp.

“I have to think about it,” he answered as he pushed the last of the sandwich into his mouth.

Nick set two glasses of Diet Coke on the table. Then he

leaned to Trevor's ear.

"Before you join anything, I'll tell you what my parents use to tell me. Your food isn't going to run away. Take smaller bites."

Trevor looked at Eric and smiled with bulging cheeks. He finished chewing and swallowed with another large gulp. He looked at Nick.

"Sorry, Mother," he said.

ERIC stepped out of the bathroom drying his buzz-cut hair with a thick white towel. Another towel was wrapped around his waist. It was late in the evening and the household was preparing for bed.

As he walked by he looked in the open door of Trevor's room. He saw the teenager sitting cross-legged in the middle of his bed. Trevor was wearing red boxers and a white T-shirt. Eric stopped and stood in the doorway. Trevor looked lost and younger than his fourteen years.

"Hey," Eric said.

Trevor looked up.

"Hey, Eric," he answered.

"You look like a man deep in thought," Eric said.

Trevor turned his face from Eric and looked at his

dresser. When he spoke his voice was low and hesitant.

“Can I ask you something?”

Eric walked into the room carrying the towel he had used to dry his head. He sat on the bed next to Trevor.

“What’s up?” Eric asked.

Trevor looked at his lap.

“When I talked with Tom in the park he told me about how some Christian guy tried to poison you.”

“Okay,” Eric said.

“Is that true?”

“Yeah, it’s true,” Eric answered.

“He said you were in the hospital for a long time and they said you might not ever walk again.”

“Yeah, that’s all true.”

Trevor again looked at his dresser.

“Did you... did you?” he asked with an unsure voice. “I mean when you were in the hospital and you didn’t know what was going to happen and stuff. Did you ever want to stop it? End it?”

Eric felt cold fingers deep in his gut. In that instant he realized Trevor’s hurt and fear were deeper than he or Nick had realized. Eric knew the statistics. He knew the hate that spewed from the mouths of evangelical bigots chased far too many teenagers to the most lonely of acts.

“No,” Eric answered. “I had Nick. He was always there. I never felt alone.”

Trevor returned his gaze to his lap.

“Are you feeling like that now?” Eric asked. “Are you feeling you want to end things?”

“Kinda,” Trevor answered in a very small voice.

Eric put his hand on the back of Trevor’s head. Softly he caressed the short brown hair.

“You’re not alone, Trevor,” he said.

Trevor looked at Eric. His face was tired. Eric knew Trevor was carrying far too much heartbreak and betrayal. His large, strong hand slid to the back of Trevor’s neck.

“You’re not alone, Trevor,” Eric repeated. “Nick and I are here. You’re not alone.”

“I thought you got lost.” Eric heard Nick’s voice from the door.

He looked at Nick. He was wearing gray sweat shorts and a white T-shirt.

“We’ve been talking.” Eric answered.

“What about?” Nick asked.

He came into the room and sat on the bed facing Trevor.

“Trevor says he sometimes feels he wants to end things,” Eric said.

Nick put a hand on Trevor's bare knee.

"Is that true?" he asked.

Without looking at either man, Trevor pointed to his dresser. Nick got off the bed and walked to the dresser. He picked something up and turned around. In his hand he held a utility knife.

"I was going to take a real hot bath," Trevor said.

"With this?" Nick asked.

"I was thinking about it," Trevor answered.

Nick put the knife where he had found it, returned to the bed, and sat down.

"But, you didn't," Eric said. "You decided to talk instead."

"I didn't want to make no trouble for you guys," Trevor said.

"I think you also want to stay around for awhile," Eric said.

"There's a lot of things waiting for you," Nick said.

"What kinda things?" Trevor asked.

"Life," Nick answered.

"I don't know what to do," Trevor said.

"One thing you can do is help Eric and me," Nick said.

"Help you? How?"

“You can help us grow up,” Nick answered.

“How can I help you grow up?” Trevor asked. “Ain’t you already done that?”

“Up until now we only had to worry about each other,” Nick answered. “Now we have to learn to care for someone else.”

Trevor laughed.

“You guys are crazy,” he said.

Eric rubbed the top of Trevor’s head.

“Hey, Nicky,” he said. “Tell him about the Center.”

“I’ve checked things out at the West Michigan Gay and Lesbian Resource Center,” Nick said. “They still have their teen program. It’s the place where I met Tommy. Besides the dances they now have a drop-in lounge and they teach self-defense and they have a lot of other programs. You can meet gay kids your age. You want to check it out?”

Trevor looked first at Nick then at Eric. Slowly he smiled.

“Yeah,” he answered. “I do. I really do.”

VI: Superstitious Bullshit

At the end of the week Eric telephoned Sal.

“Nick and I have come to a decision,” Eric said.

“What have you decided?” Sal asked.

“I want to petition the court for guardianship,” Eric answered.

“You’re sure about all this?”

“Yes sir, we are,” Eric answered. “Nick and I have talked it all through.”

“What about Trevor?”

“He’s pushing for it,” Eric answered.

“Pushing?” Sal asked.

“Yes, sir.”

“Why do you think he’s pushing for it?” Sal asked.

“It’s hard to say,” Eric answered. “I think there could be a couple of reasons.”

“Like what?”

“I don’t know if I’m real comfortable with sharing my guesses about why another person does anything.”

“Listen, Eric,” Sal said. “Right now don’t think of me as your father-in-law. I’m your lawyer. Everything you tell me will be held in confidence.”

“Okay,” Eric answered. “First off, I think he likes the idea of the freedom he’s discovered by living with two gay men.”

“Freedom?” Sal asked.

“You know; he’s able to be himself,” Eric answered.

“That makes sense,” Sal said.

“He likes playing our video games.”

“Video games?” Sal repeated.

“Yeah,” Eric answered. “His dad never let him have video games. He thought it was sinful or some shit like that. He also really likes meeting our gay friends. I think it’s been really helpful and good for him to find out he’s not the only person with the feelings he has. He’s not the only person who’s gone through the crap he’s gone through.”

“That’s something you would see before I would,” Sal said.

“Yeah, I suppose,” Eric said. “And, from some of the things he’s said I think he also kind of wants to stick it to his father by becoming the ward of a gay man.”

“Does that bother you?” Sal asked.

“You mean him using me to irritate his old man?”

“That’s exactly what I mean.”

“No,” Eric answered. “I think it’s just his way of dealing with the hurt.”

“Yeah, but is it a reason for you to become his guardian?” Sal asked.

“I think sticking it to his dad is just an afterthought,” Eric answered. “I think the most important thing is, just like any kid, he’s afraid of being abandoned. I think he’s scared of being alone. He wants to be part of a family. I also think he’s really frightened of the possibility of being sent to Missouri.”

“It’s going to be a big change in your and Nikos’ life,” Sal said.

“We know that,” Eric agreed. “But the kid needs us.”

“I’m proud of you two,” Sal said.

“Thanks,” Eric answered. “But, maybe you should save your kudos until we see how it all works out.”

“You guys are going to be great,” Sal said. “I’ve been making calls. Your family, friends, and neighbors are all willing to testify on your behalf.”

A WEEK later on a Thursday evening Eric closed the door behind a departing guest.

“I think that went all right,” he said as he walked back and rejoined Nick and Trevor in the living room.

“That guy was weird,” Trevor said as Eric sat down.

“Most of the people who work for local government and social services are weird,” Nick said. “They can’t get jobs in the real world so they end up being fat and lazy on taxpayers’ money.”

“Both you guys, chill,” Eric said. “That weirdo is going to make the recommendations we need to help me become your guardian.”

“WHERE’S Trevor?” Eric asked.

It had been ten days since the man from Protective Services had visited.

“He’s at the Rainbow Center,” Nick answered. “There’s an after-school dance.”

“When will he be home?”

“Around seven,” Nick answered.

“Awesome! Come on,” Eric said.

He grabbed Nick’s hand and hurried up the stairs to

their bedroom.

“What the fuck’s going on?” Nick asked through his laughter.

Eric fell onto their bed, pulling Nick with him.

“We have to make up for some lost time, Baby,” Eric said before his mouth kissed Nick’s mouth.

Nick returned the kiss.

They lay side by side, locked in a powerful embrace. Their mouths were pressed together in a deep, needful kiss. Eric backed his head away and looked at Nick’s face.

“Baby, you’re so beautiful,” he said. “I’ve missed the hell out of our afternoon fucks.”

Nick flashed a puckish grin. His delicious long, wet tongue licked Eric’s mouth. He held his tongue out. Eric slowly licked Nick’s juicy wet offering. He licked it, he kissed it, and then he sucked it into his own mouth.

While their tongues played together, their hands were at each other’s zippers. Nick was the first to find his prize. He pulled Eric’s long, hard cock from his pants.

Quickly, he pushed Eric onto his back and moved his face to the waiting cock. He swallowed it deep and wet and noisily. He slurped and sucked on Eric. The wetness of his mouth, the caressing of his tongue, the pressure, the depth, and the slobbering sounds all thrilled Eric.

Nick’s mouth held tight as he moved his head up and

down, faster and faster. Eric's hands grabbed Nick's head and pushed his face harder against his red-haired crotch. His hips pushed upward. He grunted and he growled as he fucked Nick's face.

Long he fucked that beautiful face, that beautiful mouth. Oh, the power, the glory, the mad, dizzy, overwhelming need. Slowly the pressure built. He was close. He knew he was close. Any minute he would drown his beloved with his explosive load.

Then!

Nick backed away.

"Bitch!" Eric yelled.

Again Nick's face fell onto Eric's crotch. His mouth engulfed and swallowed Eric's long, fat, red cock. Eric threw his head back against a pillow and growled into the air. He felt the rebuilding of the pressure. He felt the oncoming riot of cum that was ready to scream from the scarlet head of his jubilant cock.

"I'm close! I'm close!" Eric yelled. "Nicky! Nicky!"

Again Nick backed away.

"Motherfucker!" Eric cursed.

He sat up and looked between his thighs. Nick was looking up at him with a wicked teasing grin. Eric grabbed Nick's dark hair in his fist and dragged him to the head of the bed. He pushed Nick onto his back and straddled his chest with his powerful thighs.

Eric looked down at the beautiful bronze face between his white thighs. He took his cock in his hand and rubbed its wet head along Nick's lips.

"Now, Baby," he said, "your teasing is over."

He guided his cock between Nick's lips and into his mouth. His cock slid deep into Nick's throat. Carefully he pulled himself halfway out. Nick's smiling eyes were looking up at him. Eric flashed a wicked breathless answering grin as his cock returned to the hot, wet depths of Nick's throat.

Deeply, slowly he fucked Nick's face. Deeply, slowly he fucked the satin face of the beautiful man who willingly lay on the bed for his pleasure.

Eric looked over his shoulder. Nick had freed his own cock and was eagerly masturbating. Eric grinned with lustful satisfied pride. He was a conquering barbarian enjoying his spoils. Nick was his.

Eric returned his attention to the face between his thighs. Nick's beautiful brown eyes were still looking up at him. Eric smiled the smile of a man who had found everything he wanted.

With a dancer's elegant grace, he slid in and out of Nick's throat. In and out he fucked that throat, that face. Oh, he was happy. So happy. And the pressure built. The maddening pressure. The overpowering pressure. The glorious pressure.

He groaned and moaned as his balls prepared for their great moment.

His groans became gasps. It was coming. It was coming.

He grunted and growled when his load crashed into Nick's throat. He heard Nick swallow and gag. He quickly pulled his cock from the wet mouth. It was still pumping its white creamy load. Nick's face was whipped with the last of his release.

Then Nick's body rocked and convulsed. Eric felt a wet splat hit the back of his shirt. Another splat and another.

He looked down at Nick's beautiful face crisscrossed by ropes of wet cum.

"Baby," Eric said in a deep, hoarse voice.

His mouth fell onto Nick's mouth. The two men kissed deep. Eric could taste his own cum in Nick's mouth and on his lips. His face felt the wet cum on Nick's face. That cum was smeared between their two faces. He backed inches away and looked into Nick's happy, warm brown eyes.

"You damn teasing motherfucker," he whispered.

"You damn Viking pig," Nick whispered in answer.

Both men smiled and the mouths again came together.

CHRISTMAS and New Year's Day came, were celebrated, and passed into happy memory. Weeks passed. The men and Trevor, as all who live together, developed a routine. Work and school, Eric and Nick grabbing afternoon sex whenever

Trevor was at the Rainbow Center or stayed after school for some event.

Late in the night in the middle of January Nick opened his eyes. The bedroom was dark and still. The only sound was Eric's soft breathing as he slept warm beside him. Nick listened. There was no sound other than Eric. He snuggled against Eric's naked, strong silky back and closed his eyes. He was drifting into sleep when he again heard the sound.

What is that?

Carefully, so as not to disturb Eric, Nick slipped out of bed. Wearing only gray sweat shorts he walked into the hallway. He stopped outside Trevor's bedroom door. The door was open a few inches. Nick stood close to the opening.

Is that sobbing?

Carefully, respectfully, he pushed the door open. In the dark room he could just make out Trevor's bed. The sound was now clearer. It was a soft, muffled sobbing. The sound did not come from the bed.

Nick stepped into the darkness of the room. The crying came from the corner near the window. In the low light that silently came through the window Nick could see Trevor on the floor in the corner. The youth was sitting with his back to the wall and his legs drawn up tight to his body. His arms were around his legs and his face was buried in his knees. He was wearing white boxers and a white T-shirt.

Nick walked quickly to the boy and knelt beside him.

“Trevor. Baby. What’s wrong?”

There was no answer. Nick placed his hand on Trevor’s shoulder.

“Trevor.”

It was as if Nick’s hand had opened a door. Suddenly Trevor was in his arms weeping against his bare chest. Nick felt the hot tears on his skin. He held the boy tightly and allowed him to weep.

With patient silence, Nick held him. The only soothing he gave was his arms, his warmth, and his presence. Nick felt the trembling of the boy’s thin body. He did not ask any questions; he simply held Trevor and waited for him to speak.

“My mom,” Trevor finally whispered.

“What about your mom?” Nick asked.

“Today was her birthday.” Trevor wept. “It was her birthday and she doesn’t want me.”

Nick felt his heart crack and split open.

“Oh, Baby,” he said.

Tighter he wrapped Trevor in his arms. He kissed the top of the boy’s head. Trevor burrowed in those strong arms and pressed himself tight against Nick’s body. More hot wet tears ran down Nick’s chest.

“Nicky. What’s going on?” Eric asked from above and behind him.

Nick heard Eric kneel next to him and Trevor. He looked at Eric in the dark, lonely room.

“Today was his mother’s birthday,” Nick answered.

“She hates me,” Trevor’s voice, muffled against Nick’s chest, cried into the dark room.

The warmth, the security, the protecting love of Eric’s great white arms surrounded Nick and Trevor.

THE following afternoon Eric left his office and drove to the home of Trevor’s parents. He did not know if they would allow him into their house or even speak with him. He did know he had to try.

He pulled into the driveway of the ranch-style brick house. For a moment he sat in his car. Nervous moisture covered the palms of his hands. What the hell was he doing? He was going to give a lecture to parents about their treatment of their own son. Where did he get the balls?

As he stared at the house he thought about last night. He thought of Trevor’s thin body trembling with his lonely, abandoned sobs. That’s where he got the balls. He wiped his palms on his pant legs and got out of his car. With righteous intent he walked to the front step and rang the doorbell.

A woman in her thirties opened the door. The woman was plain and dull and looked incredibly sad.

“Hello,” she said in a dry, lonely voice.

“Mrs. Schilder?”

“Yes.”

“My name is Eric Folke. I’d like to speak with you and your husband about your son.”

The promise of spring returned to her face and eyes. A window partially opened and allowed sunlight to return to a dark and dreary room.

“Trevor! How is he? Is he all right?” she asked with breathless worry.

“He’s fine,” Eric answered. “Or as fine as a boy can be after being abandoned by his parents. He’s staying with me and my spouse right now.”

She turned her head and looked into the house and then out at the road.

“My husband’s not home yet,” she said. “Please, come in. Tell me everything about Trevor.”

Eric walked into the house. Mrs. Schilder offered him a seat on the sofa. She sat next to him and listened with wet eyes as he told her everything that had happened to her son over the past two months.

“Yesterday was my birthday,” Mrs. Schilder said when Eric finished. “I missed him so much. But his father won’t let me talk about him or even say his name.”

“I know it was your birthday,” Eric said.

He told her about Trevor weeping in the corner of his room late at night. When Eric finished they heard a car pull into the driveway.

“That’s my husband,” Mrs. Schilder said.

There was some small apprehension in her voice.

Eric remained in his seat when Mr. Schilder walked into the living room.

“Hello,” he said when he saw Eric.

“George,” Mrs. Schilder said. “This is Mr. Folke. He’s given Trevor a place to stay.”

“I remember you,” Mr. Schilder said. “I told you when you picked up his clothes and I told your father over the phone I didn’t want to see or hear from you again.”

“That wasn’t my father,” Eric corrected him. “That was my husband’s father.”

“Your husband?”

“Yes, my husband,” Eric answered.

“You’re a faggot,” Mr. Schilder said with venom.

“Yes, I am,” Eric answered with calm.

“Get out of my house or I’ll call the police,” Mr. Schilder said.

“Call them,” Eric challenged. “And I’ll tell them how you threw a fourteen-year-old kid out into a cold October night without a coat or food or money.”

Mr. Schilder pointed to the door.

“Get out of my house,” he ordered.

“I always thought Christianity was about love and kindness and helping others,” Eric said. “But, you’ve almost crushed the life out of Trevor with your condemnation and narrow hate.”

“What I do with my son is none of your business,” Mr. Schilder said.

“Usually I’d agree with you,” Eric answered, “except I had to pull him off the streets before a gang of Christian thugs beat him. Maybe beat him to death. You, sir, have made it my business.”

“How dare you,” Mr. Schilder snapped. “It’s queers like you who have poisoned my son. You faggots are ruining America. You’re bringing God’s anger down on the rest of us.”

Eric rose from his seat. He rose slowly. He rose to his full six feet and three inches. He wanted Trevor’s father to see all his height and all his strength.

When he spoke he spoke carefully. He spoke with a voice deep and balanced. When he spoke he looked down upon Mr. Schilder.

“I came here to appeal to you as a father,” Eric said. “But, I see your superstitious nonsense drowns even your love for your own son.”

Mr. Schilder looked up at Eric.

“Get out of my house,” he said slowly.

Eric looked at Mrs. Schilder. Her face was lonely, lost, and, Eric thought, unsure of her husband’s decision.

“Thank you, Mrs. Schilder, for your courtesy,” Eric said.

“Get out,” Mr. Schilder repeated.

Speaking calmly, Eric said, “You allow the superstitious bullshit beliefs of Bronze Age tribesmen sitting in their tents in the desert in Palestine to direct the way you treat your son. People need a license to own a dog, but fools like you can bring children into the world and drown them in poisonous hate and bigotry.”

He turned and walked to the door. Before he opened it he looked back at Mr. Schilder.

“It’s amazing,” he said. “Your love for barbaric nonsense is greater than your love for your own son.”

He turned, opened the door, and left.

“THAT’S not a word,” Eric said to Nick.

The two men and Trevor sat on the living room floor around the coffee table playing Scrabble. A comfortable fire burned on the hearth. Outside, the dark February evening was cold. Inside, the room was warm and cozy.

“Are you challenging me?” Nick asked.

“Just tell me, Nicky, what the fuck does that word mean?”

Before Nick could answer, the doorbell rang.

“You two fight this out,” Trevor said. “I’ll see who that is.”

He stood up, walked to the door, and stepped out onto the enclosed porch.

“Mom!” Eric heard Trevor cry out.

Both he and Nick jumped to their feet and hurried to the door. On the porch they saw Trevor sharing an urgent hug with his mother.

“What are you doing here?” Trevor asked.

“I’m sorry, Trevor,” Mrs. Schilder cried. “I made a terrible mistake. I let someone else tell me how to love. I’m sorry, I’m sorry. I’m so sorry.”

She wept onto Trevor’s shoulder.

“It’s okay, Mom, it’s okay,” Trevor said as he held his mother and wept with her.

“Trevor, I’ll never let you down again,” she said through her tears. “I never want to lose you again.”

“You won’t, Mom,” Trevor said.

“I don’t understand gay,” Mrs. Schilder said. “But I understand I love you.”

“There’s nothin’ to understand,” Trevor said.

They held each other and dried their eyes with their hands.

“I’ve left your father,” Mrs. Schilder said.

Trevor let go of his mother and stepped back.

“What?” he asked.

“I had a lot of time to think,” she said. “I had time to remember how much I love you. I had time to see what I was letting him do to you and to me.”

Trevor hugged her again.

“Are you gonna divorce him?” he asked.

“Yes,” Mrs. Schilder answered shyly.

“Mom!” Trevor said.

“I’ve watched your father these past few months,” Mrs. Schilder said. “I finally see and understand the awfulness of his and his church’s beliefs about homosexuals.”

She looked at Eric.

“I remember when you were at the house you used the word ‘superstition,’” she said. “I see how true that word is. Everything they say is all hateful superstition.”

Eric smiled.

“Mrs. Schilder,” he said. “I’d like you to meet my partner, my spouse, Nick Bertolli.”

“Hello,” she said taking Nick’s hand. “Thank you, Mr.

Bertolli and you, Mr. Folke, for helping my son. For taking care of him.”

“Hello, Mrs. Schilder,” Nick said. “And you’re welcome. Trevor’s a good guy. Come in. Please.”

Trevor led his mother into the living room where Eric took her coat. Trevor and his mother sat on the sofa to the right of the fireplace. Eric and Nick sat across from them.

“You didn’t tell me you talked to my mom and dad when you picked up my stuff,” Trevor said to Eric.

“This was another visit,” Eric said.

“When?” Trevor asked.

“A few weeks ago,” Eric answered. “I went to talk with your parents the day after your mom’s birthday.”

He told Trevor about the visit and encounter with his father.

“You guys are the best,” Trevor said, looking at Eric.

Mrs. Schilder looked at Eric and Nick.

“You’ve done good with my son,” she said.

She looked back at Trevor.

“You look like you’ve put on twenty pounds,” she said.

“Not twenty,” Trevor said. “But probably a couple a pounds. Nick’s a great cook.”

Mrs. Schilder put her arm around Trevor’s shoulder and

told how she had left her librarian job early so she could pack her car with clothes and personal mementos before her husband got home from work. When everything was in the car she wrote him a note explaining what she was doing and why.

After her story, Nick went into the kitchen and prepared a hot mulled cider. When the cider was ready they sat in front of the fire sipping steaming mugs and eating day-old baklava. They spoke about Eric's quest to become Trevor's guardian.

"Two weeks ago I was granted temporary guardianship," Eric said. "In three months I have to apply for permanent guardianship."

"That may not be needed now," Nick said.

"Is it?" Eric asked Mrs. Schilder.

"No," she answered. "I'm his mother and I will be his mother. But, thank you for being there and for caring for him when he was all alone. When I was not there."

Trevor hugged his mother.

"What are you gonna do now?" he asked.

"Tonight, I'm going to go get a hotel room," Mrs. Schilder said. "Tomorrow after work I'm going to start looking for a place for you and me to live."

Trevor looked at Eric and Nick.

"She's not going anywhere," Nick said.

He stood.

“Mrs. Schilder, this big old house has two guestrooms,” he said. “You’re going to stay here until you get everything together.”

He looked at Eric.

“Okay?”

Eric smiled and chuckled.

“Absolutely,” he answered.

“Mom, it’ll be great,” Trevor said excitedly.

VII: Only for You

ERIC, Nick, and their two guests sat at the dining room table. The lights were off. Candles burning on the table defined a small area of familial peace with their warm glow. A blizzard sweeping down from Ontario was howling outside the windows. Bean and pasta soup, Italian bread, and a tomato and mozzarella salad made their comfortable supper.

During the meal, Mrs. Schilder announced, “I filed for the divorce today.”

Trevor was lifting a spoonful of soup to his mouth. He stopped and looked at his mother.

“I’m sorry,” Nick said.

“It’s not your fault,” Mrs. Schilder answered. “My husband absolutely refuses to open his eyes.”

“Dad’s never going to change, is he, Mom?” Trevor asked.

“I don’t think so,” she answered.

“You know, I hate to say this,” Eric said. “But, if we put

ourselves in your dad's place we can sort of understand him."

Everyone looked at Eric with surprise.

"What are you talking about?" Nick asked.

"I'm not saying I agree with him. I don't," Eric said. "But from my own experience when I came out I know how hard it can be dealing with everything."

"I know what you're saying," Mrs. Schilder said. "That day Trevor shouted he was gay I panicked and was so confused. I didn't want to hear it. I didn't want to believe it. I felt lost. But, the worst thing I did was to stand silently by and watch my husband throw our son out of the house."

"Mom, don't," Trevor said. "It's not your fault. It was a total mistake. I just all of a sudden dumped everything on you. You weren't ready."

"It's okay now, Honey," she said. "I listened to what Eric said when he came to our house and talked with your father. After that day I found myself again. I know the choices I have to make. The first thing I have to do is be a mother."

"You are a mother," Trevor said. "A good mother."

"I try and I learn," she answered. "Now, I have to help you learn how to protect yourself from hate and bigotry. Even your father's."

She looked at Eric and Nick.

"You two men have been so good," she said. "You've

helped Trevor so much. You've helped me so much. Being with you and watching you these past few days, I've come to understand love is love; the gender doesn't matter."

"Eric, I think you're right," Trevor said.

"Right about what?" Nick asked.

"When I was talking to Tom that first day I was here," Trevor said, "he told me his parents were prisoners of their beliefs."

"You think your dad's a prisoner of his beliefs?" Eric asked.

"Yeah, I do," Trevor answered. "If the pastor don't say it's all right, he won't do it. I wish Dad could see I'm not doin' this to make trouble. I'm not doin' nothin' but bein' me."

FOUR weeks later Mrs. Schilder stood at the top of the stairs that led down to the entertainment room. She could hear Trevor and Eric speaking loudly to each other as they played some video game. The aroma of something appetizing drifted up the stairway. Nick was probably making one of his incredible snacks.

She began the walk down the stairs. She was going down to tell her son she had taken a step that a few months ago would have seemed unimaginable. It had been done for him.

She finished her walk down the stairs and stepped into the entertainment room. A large sofa faced away from the stairway. Trevor and Eric stood in front of it playing Wii tennis. Their eyes were glued to the large flat-screen television on the far wall. To her left Nick was in the kitchenette. Everything seemed right and comfortable.

“Hi, Mrs. Schilder,” Nick greeted her.

Trevor and Eric took a fast glance over their shoulders and then their eyes where back on their game.

“Hi, Mom,” Trevor said. “I might beat Eric today.”

“No, you won’t.” Eric laughed.

“I got an apartment,” she announced.

Eric paused the game. He and Trevor turned to face her.

“Where?” Trevor asked.

“Over on Union,” she answered.

“That’s not far,” Nick said. “That’s about a ten- or fifteen-minute walk.”

“Yeah,” Trevor said, looking at Eric, “I can still come over and challenge you.”

“You’re not going to beat me at tennis if that’s what you think,” Eric said.

“How do I thank you two for everything you’ve done for me and Trevor?” Mrs. Schilder asked.

“You don’t have to,” Eric said. “Nick and I have enjoyed

it all. We're going to miss having Trevor around here."

"I told you, I'm still gonna come over," Trevor said.

"And I told you, you're not going to beat me," Eric answered as he punched Trevor in the shoulder.

THE water in their large double tub was very hot and very comfortable. Eric and Nick lay in its luxurious steaming embrace. The lights were turned off. Two small candles cast a warm golden glow. A gentle sandalwood incense filled the room with sweet, exotic scent. The music of Chick Corea on the piano helped the two men drift into deep relaxing calm.

Eric turned his head and nuzzled Nick's ear.

"It's nice to have the house all to ourselves again, isn't it?" Nick asked.

"Yeah, I guess," Eric answered softly.

Nick turned and leaned his forehead against Eric's.

"What do you mean 'you guess'?" Nick asked. "When Trevor first came here aren't you the one who said you didn't like the idea of sharing me?"

"Yeah, I did," Eric agreed. "But...."

He paused and hugged Nick tight.

"I'm just going to miss having him around."

“You’re a natural father,” Nick whispered.

“Whatever,” Eric said. “We still have our nieces and nephews we can spoil.”

“I’m sorry I can’t give you any kids,” Nick whispered.

Gently, Eric kissed Nick’s smiling mouth.

“But, you keep trying,” he whispered as his hand moved down Nick’s back and caressed his butt.

“I THINK I ate too much,” Marco, Nick’s oldest brother, complained.

He sighed as he sat heavily on the sofa.

Nick, his brother, sister, Tommy, and their spouses had just finished a family meal at their parents’ home.

“You always eat too much,” Ann, Marco’s wife, said.

Sal sat in his chair near the fireplace. The rest of the family found seats around the living room.

“Are Trevor and his mother all settled into their apartment now?” Sal asked.

“Yeah,” Eric answered. “They still need a few things, but they’re doing all right.”

“I know Mrs. Schilder was short on cash,” Tommy said. “Did you guys give her any money to help her get the

apartment?”

“We gave her a small loan,” Eric answered.

Gianni, Marco’s four-year-old son, crawled into Eric’s lap. Candy walked into the living room with a tray of coffee.

“You two make me so proud,” she said.

“What two?” Nick asked.

“You and Eric,” she answered.

“Why?” Nick asked.

“Because you’re also helping, always ready to help,” Candy answered. “Whenever anyone needs anything you two are always there.”

“I know how I felt right before I came out,” Eric said. “And I know what Tommy’s gone through.”

He looked at Tommy sitting next to Maggie, Nick’s sister. She put her arm around Tommy’s shoulder.

“And Trevor’s a good kid,” Eric added.

“That’s what I mean,” Candy said as she handed Eric a cup of coffee. “You and Nikos feel other people’s pain. You’re good boys.”

She kissed the top of Eric’s head.

“What else do they need?” Sal asked.

“Some furniture and things for the kitchen,” Nick answered. “But they have the basics.”

“A few days ago Nicky and Mrs. Schilder went shopping for sheets and towels and stuff like that,” Eric said.

“Give me her phone number,” Candy said. “I’ll call her tomorrow and find out what more they need.”

“The bright side is you and Nikos can now get your home life back to normal,” Maggie said to Eric.

“I don’t know,” Nick said. “Eric misses having Trevor around.”

“Don’t you miss him?” Allan asked.

“Sure I do,” Nick answered. “I’ve come to love the kid. But, I think Eric’s had his parental gene turned on.”

“Is that right, Eric?” Marco asked.

“I don’t know,” Eric answered. “Nicky seems to think it is.”

He hugged Gianni and nuzzled his neck. The boy laughed and hugged Eric’s neck in return.

“Well, Nikos,” Maggie said. “You’re going to have to do something to help Eric fulfill the call of his parental gene.”

“Like I already told Eric,” Nick said, “all we can do is keep trying.”

Eric felt his face turn red as laughter filled the living room.

“HURRY up, Nicky,” Eric said. “I’m tired.”

Nick crawled into bed. Eric turned off the light and pulled the covers up to his shoulders. He put his arms around Nick and pulled him close.

“That was a nice supper your mom made tonight,” he said.

“It was,” Nick cooed. “But, I need something else.”

Eric felt Nick’s hand slide down his bare back and slip under the waistband of his sweat shorts.

“What do you need?” Eric asked.

Nick’s hand squeezed Eric’s butt cheek.

“You know what I want,” Nick whispered.

Eric felt Nick’s hand and fingers slowly trace patterns on his tender white skin.

“Your ass is like silk,” Nick whispered.

“Tell me what you need,” Eric repeated.

He lightly bit Nick’s eyebrow.

“I thought you were tired,” Nick said.

“Tell me,” Eric repeated again.

Nick put his lips against Eric’s ear. He whispered his answer. His whisper was soft and very low. His whisper warmed and thrilled Eric.

“You,” Nick said. “I want you. All I’ve ever wanted is you.”

Eric’s skin trembled from the touch and warmth of the breath and the meaning of the words. He wrapped his arms tighter around Nick, rolled him onto his back, and lay on top of him.

“Nicky, my Nicky,” he whispered.

His lips caressed the side of Nick’s face. Then their mouths came together. His mouth, his hands, his arms, and his body felt Nick’s silky strength. His heart felt Nick’s deep love.

“My sweet, beautiful Nicky,” he whispered into Nick’s mouth.

“Own me, Daddy,” Nick whispered his gentle command.

“I do own you, Baby,” Eric answered.

“Then take me,” Nick whispered. “Make me please you. I want to please you.”

“You do, Baby,” Eric answered. “Every day, in everything you do you please me.”

He kissed the corner of Nick’s right eye.

“Do you remember how we laughed after the first time we made love?” Eric asked.

“Yeah,” Nick answered.

“We laughed because we felt so damn good,” Eric said.

“I remember,” Nick answered.

“I still feel so damn good,” Eric said.

“You mean after sex?”

“I mean all the time.”

Eric again kissed the corner of Nick’s eye.

“I’ve never liked kissing before I met you,” Eric confessed.

“You know,” Nick said, “for me our first kiss wasn’t like fireworks. It was like a curtain and window opening in a dusty room. Light and fresh air came into my life.”

“When we had that first kiss, Nicky,” Eric said, “I thought you could hear my heart beating. It was so loud. But I couldn’t hear anything. I wasn’t aware of anything except your mouth and warm face. My world spun. I was lost in you. I was clean and whole for the first time in my life.”

Nick pushed Eric off from his body. Eric rolled onto his back and Nick climbed on top of him.

“My big, beautiful redheaded Viking,” Nick said.

They kissed hard. They kissed deep. They kissed long.

“You know, Baby,” Eric said when their kiss finally ended. “You took me by total surprise.”

He kissed Nick again.

“I want to pamper you,” Nick said when the kiss ended. “I need to pamper you. I enjoy pampering you.”

“I know,” Eric said. “You make me feel like a kid with his own private candy store.”

Nick tugged Eric’s short goatee with his teeth.

“People say you spoil me,” Eric said.

“They’ve always said that,” Nick answered. “I like them saying that ’cause I like spoiling you.”

“I know, Baby,” Eric said. “Spoil me now. Pamper me.”

Their mouths and tongues played together. Nick kicked the covers from their bodies and slid off Eric. Quickly, he pulled both their shorts from their bodies. Eric’s fat and ready cock was now free. With his strong hand, Nick grabbed Eric’s cock and began to masturbate him. It was not long before Eric felt his hips rising and falling at the pleasure of Nick’s hand.

Eric’s body began to thirst for extra oxygen. But he did not want to release the strong wet lips that were kissing his mouth. He did not want to lose the long delicious tongue that was exploring all the secret places of his mouth.

His need for air grew greater. He freed his mouth and gasped. Nick began licking the lips of Eric’s open mouth. His tongue slipped in and licked Eric’s tongue. He moved his mouth and engulfed Eric’s nose. His mouth caressed and played with the nose before it moved on and kissed the red eyebrows and silky eyelids. Slowly Nick slid his mouth back to Eric’s saliva-coated crimson lips.

Eric’s mind suddenly swirled and glazed at the same

time his body began to shudder and buck. His back arched. His captured mouth sucked air from Nick's mouth as he gasped with pleasure. He felt his cum fly screaming from his cock into the air.

Nick did not stop working Eric's cock as it spewed and emptied its happy load. He smeared glorious cum on the cock's fat red head where the nerves were now in ecstatic violent revolt. Eric growled but Nick did not release his mouth or his cock.

Eric could take no more of the extreme pleasure. He rolled off the bed onto the floor where he lay and gulped air deep into his hungry lungs. His brain was reeling and his eyes were momentarily blinded by swirling flashes of color.

"Motherfucker!" he finally blurted out.

Nick fell onto the floor beside him. He put his hand on Eric's forehead and pushed his head back.

"Yeah, Baby," Nick asked with a wicked smile. "Can't my giant redheaded Dane take it?"

"Motherfucker, that was awesome," Eric answered.

The dark-eyed Nick tenderly kissed Eric's warm, wet forehead. He stretched out beside Eric. They lay together until Eric was able to navigate.

When he knew his strength had returned, Eric pushed Nick onto his back. He spread Nick's legs and pulled his knees up. Then he got onto his own knees between Nick's satin legs.

“I love you,” Eric said.

He lowered his head and breathed onto Nick’s silky smooth cock. His head went lower. His mouth tasted the delicious warmth of Nick’s balls. Eric pushed Nick’s thighs farther apart and up and his face went lower still. His tongue went looking and then found the sweet, delightful glory of Nick’s hole.

Eric pushed on Nick’s thighs and raised that glorious hole so it was pointed toward the heavens. Eric smiled and kissed the hole before his tongue returned to its happy exploration. His strong tongue pushed and wiggled its way deep into that delicious, beautiful hole. Eric spread the cheeks with his hands and his tongue delved deeper and deeper into Nick’s body.

“It’s yours, Daddy,” Nick moaned. “All yours. Only for you.”

Eric left that magnificent butt and went to Nick’s face.

“I know that, motherfucker,” he bragged. “I goddamn know it.”

Then he kissed his spouse passionately. His tongue that had just been deep in Nick’s ass now went down his throat.

Eric left the kiss, pulled Nick to his knees, and circled around behind him. He spit into his hand and smeared his cock with his silky saliva. Slowly, teasingly, he pushed his cock deep into Nick’s saliva-wet hole. Nick raised his arms and captured Eric’s head. He clawed at the short red hair while Eric bit his neck and face.

“Nicky! Nicky, Baby!” Eric cried in his passion. “God! Your beautiful fucking ass! I love it. I love your ass. I love your silky sweet hole.”

“It’s yours, Daddy. It’s yours,” Nick gasped. “Fuck me, Eric! Fuck me! Claim me! Make me yours! Only yours!”

Eric gladly, happily, joyfully followed Nick’s pleading. He fucked his Nick with all the strength and power of his great thighs. Those powerful white thighs covered with beautiful golden hairs slapped against Nick’s smooth, bronze ass. The sound of the slapping joined with their gasping for breath and the protests from the floor beneath them. These sounds were the choir that sang to their frenzied love and passion.

Eric held tight to Nick’s hips. He pulled Nick in to him and pushed him out again. Nick pushed back with his own strength and swallowed Eric’s cock deep into his ass before he released it for another plunge.

Nick’s hands were holding Eric’s neck and head. Eric never touched Nick’s cock. He knew he could make Nick cum without touching his cock. He knew the power and pleasure of his cock deep in Nick’s body crashing against his prostate would bring him to a shuddering, mind-blurring orgasm.

And it did. With a grunt from Nick’s mouth, his cock began to spit into the air. His sphincter grabbed Eric’s cock with a vise-like power. Eric roared into Nick’s ear as he achieved a second orgasm.

His cum exploded deep in Nick’s beautiful body. Eric trembled and gasped and knew nothing but burning, consuming, blinding pleasure.

They fell forward. Nick lay on the floor on his stomach. Eric stretched on Nick's back. They lay as one, gasping for breath. Their sweat mingled together and their hearts joined in unison as they tried to catch their breath.


Slowly their hearts began to calm. It was some time before either one could speak or move.

But, they did not speak. They laughed.


They lay exhausted in their sweat and in their love and they laughed because they felt so happy and so damn good.

STEVE SAMPSON was born in Michigan on an asparagus and peach farm. He's always dreamed of writing, and after years as a manager, he finally decided to follow that dream, so he quit his job and now writes full time. He is an avid camper and loves canoeing. He also teaches Buddhism and meditation.

You can e-mail Steve at Steve.Sampson@comcast.net.



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