

Loveyoudivine: His & His Kisses

Love, Always



KIYA

Scanning, uploading and/or distribution of this book via the Internet, print, audio recordings or any other means without the permission of the Publisher is illegal and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, places, events and characters are fictitious in every regard. Any similarities to actual events or persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

**Love, Always
Copyright©2006 Kiya Thompson
ISBN 1-60054-050-3
His and His Kisses
Cover art and design by ASIA**

All rights reserved. Except for review purposes, the reproduction of this book in whole or part, electronically or mechanically, constitutes a copyright violation.



**Published by
loveyoudivine 2006
Find us on the
World Wide Web at
www.loveyoudivine.com**

Dedication

To Nix for getting me through the door.
To ASIA for being so patient and kind.
And to my best friends Zan and Nick,
 who make me a much better
 writer and person.

Love, Always

by Kiya Thompson

One

The rattle of the train's wheels jolts me awake from a light doze. Incomprehension of my surroundings has me staring with bleary eyes through the thick pane of glass, distant mountains and a lush, fertile view of the countryside meets my gaze. It takes me another second to finally realize where I am and where I am heading.

Back to school.

Only it isn't really that. I have been invited to attend the seventy-fifth anniversary reunion of my former high school. A place where memories, as fresh as wet paint, still run through my mind despite my desperate attempts, in the last five years, to forget them. I have avoided attending all previous class reunions, usually ripping up every cream-colored envelope when they come in the mail.

I can still remember my excitement during my senior year, my eagerness and anticipation as I arrived at the Grand Hall early that cold October morning. Enkidu and Fujisaki, my best friends back then, had come with me, and I was glad since I needed the support for what was to come.

I knew why I had attended, knew why I was slowly making the spiked punch bowl my friend as I watched and waited with my heart in my throat. Every time someone walked through those solid oak doors was a lesson in patience and frustration.

I would watch as old friends laughed and hugged each other in exuberance, as they spoke too loudly, laughed too hysterically, tried to show off their success as only young men could. I waited even when the

Love, Always

speeches began, my glance darting towards the door every now and again, hoping *he'd* show up. And even when the festivities came to an end, I still foolishly held on to the hope that he'd come running in late. Perhaps flushed with embarrassment at not making it on time.

He never did.

I sat on the wet slab of marble, ignoring the water that splashed and soaked my uniform from the fountain above me. I felt cold and miserable, incredibly foolish and ashamed at my desperation to see him again. I had waited for three long years, to show that I had become a Head Boy just like him and was doing okay with great grades and a chance to be even more successful once I graduated. I wanted to watch those blue eyes light up with pride for me, or to even hear him say something *nice* to me for once, without sounding so condescending and rude.

"Like he'd even give a fuck," I muttered bitterly. Enkidu later said that he and Fujisaki had found me raving like a lunatic and cursing 'the great, stupid Hunter Yates,' while kicking a statue of one of the founding fathers of our school. I had to pay a fine for doing that. Come to think of it, the other three hadn't shown up either—Lee Chen, Jack Sawyer, or Brad Johnson. I wonder if they had planned not to attend. Did they think they were too cool for a stupid reunion?

I guess that's part of the reason why I have decided to attend this year's party. Not only because it's the seventy-fifth anniversary, but because all former students of power had been invited to stay at The Merlot for the three day weekend festivities. There was no way I was going to pass that up. The Merlot is only the most historic and grandest hotels in the country, and to think we were going to be pampered was too good to be true. All I had to do was bring myself and my luggage and the school would take care of the rest.

I think it's also safe to say that I have no qualms about going this year. After all, it's been five long years, and I think I'm over him now. I doubt I'll get jumpy when I see him...*If* I see him. Neither do I think I'll squeal like a little girl and hope to grab his attention like a desperate sex-starved maniac. I'm sure, like me, he's moved on. Hell, he moved on that very day he tossed his badge to me and waved goodbye. We did not exchange email addresses or phone numbers. We didn't swear to love each other until the day we died. He hadn't even hugged me when I...

"A drink, sir?"

Love, Always

I start in surprise at the soft voice, staring at the smiling porter with color suffusing my cheeks. I didn't even hear her approach.

"Uum...no thanks. I'm fine." I smile, hoping it's not as sickly as I feel inside. She's pretty in that cute and innocent way that makes you want to drag her to a cabin's restroom and show her just how manly you can be. However, I've sworn to be a good boy on this trip. I'm not in a serious relationship at the moment, and hopefully Ricky knows it, too. He's a great friend and a good fuck, but one has to wonder if he's bound to become clingy in the near future. I don't want to get his hopes up. I've been through several rather bitter break ups with the hurt party always telling me that I'm a prick for my behavior. Geez. The last thing I want to do is to be compared to that bastard, Yates. Now, *he* had some issues.

"Very good, sir," Pretty Porter is saying as she fluffs my pillows. She smells like roses. Nice. "If you need anything, don't hesitate to let me know."

She points to the button above me and I nod in understanding, watching the tantalizing sway of her hips and taut ass beneath the short skirt. Extra nice. There's a tightness in my pants now, and I have to smirk at my body's natural reaction. I can't remember who once said I'd fuck anything on two legs, and that wouldn't be too far from the truth...as long as they were willing, I have no problems obliging their requests. Hey, I'm no easy target though. I know who to pick and choose, and so far, I've done well finding good individuals—people who can satisfy me and...

You can then toss away like Hunter did, hmm? Looks like you're turning out to be more like him every day, Daniel.

"Shut up," I hiss angrily, squeezing my eyes shut as that tiny voice of rationale and reason taunts me again. So yes, I did have my fun back in High School, and I used a lot of junior students like Hunter had, but it wasn't the same. I still had feelings—I wasn't a cold hearted bastard. I had at least let them go easily and I doubt I ever two-timed any of them.

Another jolt of the old train, and I groan in misery, kicking myself inwardly for not using The Bullet after all. Sometimes, one's need for nostalgia might not always be the best thing, and as the minutes tick by slowly, I realize that the nervous butterflies I've been feeling all this time have to do with one thing and one thing alone.

Meeting Hunter Yates again.

Love, Always



“He probably won’t show up,” I say to no one in particular as I step onto the platform at the bustling train station. The biting cold has me reaching for my leather gloves quickly, and although it’s not snowing yet, the overcast sky and wet grounds are tell-tale signs of rain from the night before.

Baggage claimed, I drag the lone travel case on its wheels and hoist the overnight bag over my shoulder. I haven’t packed much. Just the only expensive suit I have for the reunion dinner and two regular dress shirts and pants that can be worn either casually or for whatever else happens on this trip. I couldn’t resist packing a pair of jeans and my favorite t-shirt either. I am planning to sight see after all.

It doesn’t look like things have changed much since the last time I passed through these terminals. The train station still has that mingled smell of human sweat, yellow age and now damp newspaper. There’re still passengers sitting beneath the watchful eyes of the glass dome, what little light there is pouring down upon them as they muse on their destinations. I can remember how I felt the first time my parents had dropped me off here as a freshman. I wasn’t terrified, but rather excited at the thought of being on my own, away from their watchful eyes as I set out to become a man. Every journey after that was much easier to deal with. I knew the ins and outs of getting good seats, getting my baggage on time before the mass hysteria of impatient passengers, and getting in line first for either the bus or a taxi. I usually used the former, since I wasn’t able to afford the luxury of a taxi back then. I had been on a scholarship anyway.

“To The Merlot,” I say briskly, as the driver of the yellow cab nods and helps me with my luggage. Fortunately, I can pay my way with the money I make these days. I’m not rich by any means, but I have been able to successfully turn my father’s sporting goods store around. Before he died of cancer a few years ago, the business had run into debt. So much so, that he contemplated selling it to a hotshot entrepreneur who planned to use it as a parking lot for his mega mall. If it wasn’t for my mother and her stubborn pride, goodness knows I’d be picking food

Love, Always

out of garbage cans by now. She stood her ground and refused to give in, instead deciding that a quick course in Business Management would give her the edge in keeping up with the country's economy. With my help, we both re-established the store. We did everything from slashing prices to making sure we got quality products from our manufacturers. Of course, I could say that sleeping with one of the manufacturer's managers helped, but that's a secret I'd rather not share with my mother.

The drive to the hotel is quick, but still eventful. I'm quite surprised to find that things have not changed much. The towering Municipal building still glares down on mere mortals along Mulberry Street. There's Central Park, a place we students had been to on more than one occasion for field trips, and the Betty Schneider Library still stands like a dour old lady, hidden amongst the boulevard of oak trees. However, instead of turning left towards the school, we make a right towards the busier streets of the city. Here, I can see the steel boxes of capitalism, where men and women in power suits, cell phones, Blueberries and Bluetooths, walk in and out, either pretending to be busy or trying to show an ounce of excitement for their nine to five jobs. I doubt I'll ever fit into that world. I would probably go crazy at the end of one day in there. Give me a small business anytime where I can make my own rules.

"The Merlot, sir," the driver says, jerking me out of my reverie as he pulls to a stop in front of the grandiose building. Amongst the sea of modern technology and commerce, The Merlot is a throwback to a time when men wore tights and powdered wigs, while women dressed in the heaviest of ball gowns. The solid stone walls, now aged over time to a smooth sheen like marble, seem to mock the towering steel buildings beside it. Long, narrow windows are accentuated with details of either angels or gargoyles, thick burgundy curtains successfully hiding its contents from prying eyes. As cars pull up to the driveway, doormen and women walk out of the gold finished doors, dressed in impeccable uniforms of maroon or navy with gold accents. Bowing low in greeting, they hold open the doors for the guests, smiling warmly and welcoming travelers to their hotel. I almost feel embarrassed at the fussy nature of the young man that approaches me. He can't be any older than eighteen, and I have to wonder how much he's getting paid for this.

"You are here for the reunion, sir?" he asks as he takes my bag from me, still smiling broadly. Shit. I forgot I'll have to tip like mad in this place. I hope I have enough cash on me.

Love, Always

“Yeah,” I reply, following him into the building and into a lobby designed and fit for a member of royalty. Okay, so I swore I wouldn’t gape and gawk too much at my surroundings, but there’s no way I can’t do that now. It’s so ostentatious; I feel I’m going to be blinded by all the glittering lights from the mega-sized chandeliers and cream-colored walls, which, as one might guess, are accentuated with gold and silver trimmings. Good grief.

“It’s enough to drive you crazy, eh?” says a voice behind me, and spinning around quickly, since it sounds quite familiar, I all but scream in delight at the sight of my former roommate and best friend Enkidu. I wrap my arms around him in a tight hug, laughing and trying not to cry at the same time. I haven’t seen him since we parted ways after graduation, and boy, have the years been good to him or what? His blond hair is much longer now, his features no longer baby-faced and now much more defined. He’s almost as tall as I am too.

We talk quickly and excitedly, cutting into each other’s sentences as we try to make up for lost time. According to him, he’s now in charge of his father’s laboratories—some pharmaceutical company—and is doing well for himself. No kidding. The fur-lined coat he’s wearing must cost a fortune, and I doubt he went through the basic express like I did. He probably has his own personal jet!

“And this is my girlfriend, Hikari,” he says, tugging a small, mousy woman I hadn’t even noticed closer to us. She’s pretty, but not a knock-out as I would have thought a guy like Enkidu would go for. The guy had a collection of hot babes posted all over his side of the room back in school. This Hikari girl definitely isn’t, but who am I to judge? Enkidu looks happy, and when she smiles and introduces herself shyly, I can see the appeal.

“Let’s stay across from each other on the same floor,” Enkidu invites with a flourish.

“But we were already assigned rooms, weren’t we?” I remind him, while pulling out the small card that had come with the invitation. I pass it to the concierge, a guy who looks like he’s likely to die from excitement at any minute. I doubt he’s seen so many guests in one night.

“Oh yeah, that’s true. Damn. I wanted the penthouse suite. We could have it for ourselves and just rock out this weekend.”

I have to laugh at that. The guy still speaks as if we’re in school and nostalgia hits me like a ton of bricks. I look around and see other men, both old and young, chatting as they meet up with former classmates.

Love, Always

Some come with their wives or girlfriends; others even show up with their kids. This event is obviously a big deal. However, Enkidu still looks crestfallen. Hey, I would have loved to be rooming across from him too, but whoever fixed the room assignments hadn't taken that into consideration.

"Let's meet for dinner," I say with a wide smile, hoping that will at least keep him cheerful. "We'll meet in the lobby around..." I glance at my watch. "Say in two hours?"

"Sounds good to me," my friend replies, patting me on the shoulder as his girlfriend begins to tug at him impatiently. "I'll see ya later, buddy. We have a lot to talk about. Like Fuji."

"Yeah, where is he anyway?" The concierge is already motioning for me to follow him, but I have to find out where the last of *The Three Musketeers* is.

"In Tokyo," Enkidu says around a laugh. "He's supposed to be getting married...well, actually meeting his future bride this weekend. No time to come down here, but he says he'll give us a call when he can."

"Ah okay." I don't think I'm too happy knowing that my two best friends have kept in touch over the years without seeking me out. I'm beginning to feel like an outsider already. It's almost impossible to believe that we were once tight, swearing to remain buddies until death do us part.

"Things change," I mutter.

"Say what?"

"Nothing," I reply, giving him a mock salute as I follow the impatient uniformed man. "See ya!"

Once in the elevator—the cab itself is pretty cozy looking and there's even a small computer screen, or perhaps TV showing ads at the moment—I lean against the paneled walls, closing my eyes to avoid any conversation with my companion. The journey has been a long one, and I really am exhausted. The idea of sprawling across my bed and sleeping for the next two hours is a welcome thought. I just have to set the alarm or have someone call me so I don't show up late for dinner with Enkidu tonight.

Wait a sec. Is it just me or this elevator ride taking a bit too long?

I crack an eye open and peer at the digital lights signaling our floors. Fifteen and counting.

"Uuum..." I pull out the small note that says room Fourteen-oh-

Love, Always

two on it. No, I'm definitely not seeing things. "Where are we going? I should have stopped on the previous floor."

The smaller man grins at me. "No can do, Mr. Maloney. You've been upgraded."

I blink in bemusement. "What?"

Looking a bit smug at being able to deliver such stunning news, he preens and speaks again. "You've been asked to stay in the penthouse suite, Mr. Maloney."

"*Why?*" Alarm bells are ringing quite loudly in my head now, my eyes darting towards the doors as if hoping they'd open and let me out of this surreal moment. Maybe if I pinch myself hard enough, I can make believe I'm actually...

"Why not?" He looks confused as well, perhaps wondering why the thought of staying in the most distinguished room in the hotel would be such a problem. "We received an order..."

"From whom?"

"We are not allowed to..."

I growl and take a step towards him, slightly amused at the breathless squeak of fear he gives. "You had better start talking..." I eye his badge. "Mr. Peresol. Who asked you to do this?"

"I don't know, sir, honest! I just typed in your name in the computer and it showed on the screen that you were supposed to be escorted to the penthouse suite. That's all I know, sir."

Beads of cold sweat break out on my brow as I realize that he is telling the truth.

Hunter. He's here. I'll bet he's...

"Fuck!" I pound the wall in frustration, kicking myself for even assuming he would be the one responsible for something like this. It can't be him. How had he known I'd show up today? Yes, I did send the reply mail to the administrators saying I would attend the reunion, but still...

"We're...we're here, sir," Peresol whispers, as the elevator doors open to usher us into a world I would have never dreamed of in a million years. A small waterfall—how they can build that on the top-most floor of a hotel is beyond me—in the shape of building blocks stacked haphazardly, greets us once we step into the lobby. Several doors forming a rough semi-circle are before us, each with intricate designs of various scenes from the middle ages. Huge vases—and I mean *huge*—filled with freshly picked bouquets, permeate the air with

Love, Always

their scent. As Peresol opens one set of doors with a flourish, I can't stop myself from letting out a soft *wow* of amazement.

"Is it to your liking, sir?" he asks, relieved that I'm not going to bite his head off. I walk into my personal castle, stepping down the small flight of stairs that leads to a living room large enough to host at least fifty people. The landscape sliding doors lead to the balcony, which gives one a breathtaking view of the east side of the city made up of the central park and in the distance, Wiltshire Mountain.

"We have an indoor pool as well as one on the roof, sir," Peresol is saying as he drags my luggage towards the bedroom. "We also have a massage room, where you can dial for a personal masseuse to come at anytime. A kitchen can be seen on your left, with the refrigerator and cabinets well stocked with whatever you might need, and just in case you don't find anything you like, feel free to call the Information Desk for help at anytime. We also have a mini-bar, with the country's finest and some international favorites. Again, if there's something missing, we will be more than happy to replace it for you, sir."

He claps his hands and soft music from unseen speakers fill the room, meanwhile, he's still rattling a mile-a-minute as I follow like a star-struck fan.

"The Emperor bedroom is designed in the style of eighteenth century French architecture. As you can see, the ornate accents on the posts are..."

I tune him out, extremely impressed with the humongous bed and how soft it is to the touch. The sheets even feel like silk. The bathroom...whoa! A guy could get lost in there! This is just too much.

"And you're sure you saw my name on the screen," I begin slowly, wandering around the room, touching everything gently in wonder.

"Yes, sir," Peresol replies with a grin. He stands at attention, obviously waiting for his tip. Digging my hands into my pockets quickly, I bring out a wad of bills and shove them into his hand, hoping its enough. Apparently, it seems to do the trick, as he gives me a salute, his smile even wider—if that's possible, "Don't forget to give me a call anytime, Mr. Maloney. Please enjoy your stay at The Merlot."

I sink into the comfortable chair in the bedroom, staring at the ceiling in contemplation. However, once I hear the door closing behind Peresol, I bounce to my feet and begin to search. I tell myself I'm being silly, yet that tiny persistent voice insists that a certain man might have something to do with this. He must have moved in already...perhaps

Love, Always

he's even hiding in one of the rooms, watching me, taunting me like he always has.

"Fuck you, Hunter. I won't let you get me this time," I whisper harshly, diving beneath the bed, opening closets, pushing aside curtains and looking under couches. I even go as far as climbing to the rooftop, my mind too focused on my search to enjoy the amazing view. I'm panting harshly now, cold sweat dusting my skin as I try to catch my breath. Nothing. No sign of anyone having been in the room before me.

"Heh, just being paranoid, eh, Daniel?" I laugh at my silliness and descend the stairs, staring at my large and empty living room with a grin of delight.

"WHOO HOO!!!" I bellow, thinking I'll call Enkidu and have him join me up here with his girlfriend. He'll flip if he hears my good fortune. But first things first...

I strip to my boxers, not caring—hey, I am alone after all—about protocol, and make a running leap to my bedroom. Sinking into the heavenly comfort of my silk bed, my lashes drift closed before I can even settle in properly. Just for two hours, I tell myself and then I'll wake up, get dressed for dinner and tell Enkidu about my good fortune...

Two

The first thing to assail my waking senses is the smell of food—the sharp, delicious, and tantalizing smell of beef patties being fried or grilled. I lick my lips, stretching my arms and legs as I sit up in bed. My first thought is that perhaps a personal chef has come into the apartment to prepare dinner for me. I guess I should have told them that I’d be eating in the restaurant downstairs. No need for all the fanfare. But damn, the smell is heavenly! I should call Enkidu and have him come here instead. If I can just find...

“Hey, Jack, do you know where my suit is? I could have sworn I left it in here. Oh, hey, Daniel. You’re finally awake. Sorry, didn’t mean to bother you.”

Huh? Huh? *HUH?*

I rub my eyes and count slowly to ten. No, it’s a dream. It’s got to be a dream! Yeah, that’s right. I’m still sleeping and I didn’t actually see *Brad Johnson*—or someone that looks like him—walk into the bedroom and then leave, and I didn’t actually hear him speaking to me. Okay, think Daniel Maloney. Just think! This isn’t actually happening. You’re a rational man and this...this is probably just a dream. I should just lie down again, squeeze my eyes really tightly shut, and then...

“I swear that show is horrible! I can’t believe you’re watching it. Hey, Maloney.”

I watch the dream-Lee Chen, dressed in a classic white suit and looking quite dapper, reach for a bag beside the chair I had sat in earlier in the day, give me a small smile before leaving again.

Love, Always

"Here's the stupid bag, Johnson. Geez, are you blind or something?" comes the call from the living room.

There's laughter, more voices and my heart is pounding so hard in my chest, I can hardly breathe. *They're here.* They're all here. This isn't a dream, and if it is, it's definitely fucked up. But...how and why? *Why?*

"Oh God," I groan, sinking trembling hands into my hair. That means *he's* actually here with them. As usual, he's found a way to humiliate me without even trying. I'll bet he had this all planned out, making me feel like I was finally free of his presence and then pouncing like the bastard he is. I'm reduced to a freshman again, my entire body trembling as memories come racing back in a flood. The smirk, the cold smile, and that blank stare, I would get to experience it all over again. And the bitterness and resentment I have tried to build over the years, is becoming moot because of the undeniable passion I still have for him. I'm a lost cause. Someone just kill me now.

"Are you just going to sit there or do you plan on getting dressed soon?"

That voice!

Flushing to the roots of my hair, I start in surprise and end up falling to the floor with a painful thump, sheets tangling around my legs, making me look even more embarrassing.

Hunter.

I want to say his name, but it remains lodged within my throat, a stubborn lump that ridiculously feels like a prelude to tears. For a moment—just one brief moment—we are back in high school. He's still dressed in that familiar uniform and that blazing badge of honor is stuck upon his breast pocket. But the image vanishes, and the *real* Hunter Yates stands before me. He is now a man, the lines of youth now hardened into more defined features that takes my goddamn breath away. How could I have forgotten that piercing blue gaze of his, or the perfectly chiseled nose or lips that I had dared kiss and gotten punished for? The white dress shirt he wears has its top two buttons undone, revealing a strong neck that my fingers once longed to wrap around and choke the life out of. The shirt is tucked into a pair of black pants that seem to hide long legs. Geez. The years have definitely been good to him.

And after five long years of absence, he has to see me in my underwear.

How long we keep staring at each other, I have no idea, but my

Love, Always

entire body feels feverish, and the more he stares at me, the more insecure I feel. For crying out loud, Daniel Maloney. You're twenty-two years old! You're no longer a teenager! Get a fucking grip!

"Hey," I finally croak, wincing at how my voice sounds.

He only nods and then motions towards the living room. "Jack made dinner. Join us."

Not a request, but an order. I grit my teeth, feeling the familiar dull rage welling from the pit of my stomach.

"I'm not hungry," I reply, pleased to find I don't sound so weak. "Besides, I'll be packing my things and leaving. It's obvious you planned this from the beginning." I begin to laugh bitterly, stumbling to my feet. "After all this time, you still haven't changed, have you? You think you can just push me around and..."

"I didn't invite you here," he replies calmly, still watching me with that hooded gaze of his. "If you leave, you'll be breaking Brad's heart. He's the one who made this..." He waves a hand flippantly. "...possible. Don't be rude to him."

"Fine, then I'll go apologize to him," I retort, walking towards my travel bag to get a change of clothes. I see my other outfit hasn't been recovered from my spontaneous undressing in the living room. Damn it all!

"Could you excuse me?" I bark coldly, glancing behind me quickly as I notice he hasn't moved from his position. "I'd like to dress in private."

"What's the problem, Daniel?" he says slowly, a small smirk forming. "I have seen you naked before, haven't I?"

I blush and turn to hiss sharply, my face still burning at the memory. "I was a teenager then!"

"What difference does it make?"

"I've changed, you asshole! I'm not as...as..."

"As what? Young? Gullible?" With each word, he's walking into the room, closer to me, backing me into a corner, suffocating me with his intense gaze, his cologne, a heat that seems to radiate off him in waves, his very presence, till nothing stands between us but a breath of air. A whisper of a kiss. "Pliable?"

"I...I wasn't..." I can't go back any further, and I swear if he tries anything funny...

His fingers—strong and lean—reach for me and sink into my hair. He moves closer to inhale it, his long lashes fluttering gently against his

Love, Always

cheeks. I let out a small sound like a whimper, aware of the tightening sensation in my boxers. I try to pull away even further, hating to let him know just how much he's affecting me.

"Daniel..." he begins in a whisper. "Daniel..."

"Hey, you two, we can't wait forever!" Lee yells from the living room. Hunter stiffens and pulls away from me, successfully breaking a moment I thought would drive me mad with desire. I let out a soft breath of relief, unaware I had been holding it to begin with, and yet a part of me feels cold and bereft as he turns away to run fingers through his hair.

"You heard him," he finally snaps as if I'm the one at fault here. "Join us for dinner."

"I can't," I reply quickly, remembering Enkidu and my promise to him.

Hunter throws a cold glance at me, eyes narrowing with irritation. "And why not?"

"Because I have a date." I smirk and reach for my clothes, before walking into the bathroom, making sure I slam the door shut behind me. I think I might have seen a look of surprise on his features, but it's probably just my imagination. Besides, what does he have to be surprised about? It's not as if he's jealous or anything.

Is he?

Three

“Pity you can’t join us for dinner, Daniel,” Jack Sawyer says over his raised glass of red wine.

He looks awesome, that’s about the only word I can use to describe him. In fact, they all do. Brad’s at the head of the table, looking dashing in a dark purple velvet suit. It compliments his eyes which look greener beneath the light. He has let his hair grow out a bit, and I do remember having a slight crush on him back then and for good reason. He was the nicest of the gang and always treated me with something more than just polite courtesy. Jack and Lee are sitting on either side of the table, and I can see a plate has been reserved for me beside the Chinese man. Hunter is at the other end of the table, and I’m doing my best to ignore him as much as possible. It doesn’t help that I can feel his gaze burning a hole right through my shirt.

“Yeah, well, I can’t keep him waiting,” I say around soft laughter, my cheeks flaming as they—besides Hunter—throw a knowing look at me.

“Fast worker, aren’t you, Maloney?” Lee comments with a smirk, dark eyes flashing with an unreadable expression as he glances at Hunter. “We’re hardly a day in, and you’ve made some friends.”

“It’s Enkidu,” I mumble. “I knew him...”

“Ah yes, your former roommate. Isn’t that interesting, Hunter?” Brad says as if trying to draw the sullen man into conversation. “I think I might have seen him earlier. What about the other one? Hmm...what was his name again...?”

Love, Always

“Fuji,” I reply quickly, glancing at my watch. I have less than half-an-hour to get downstairs. “Listen, can I talk to you in private when I return, sir...” I blush as they pick up on the salutation quickly. Their laughter has me wishing the ground would open to swallow me whole.

“It’s okay, Daniel,” Jack chuckles and raises his glass in a toast. “We’re no longer in school. It’s a whole new ball game and we’re on an equal playing field, wouldn’t you say?”

I wonder if he’s just referring to the reunion in general or something else entirely. After all, I think they all know of the torrid relationship I had with Hunter back then. They were witness to one such embarrassing encounter.

I can’t remember my response to them, but soon enough, I’m out of the suite and taking huge gulps of breath in the hallway as I wait for the elevator doors to open. Talk about a group of guys capable of sucking the very air from the...

“Hold it,” comes that voice that literally has me trembling. Before I can push the button to seal the doors and prevent him from coming in, he smirks and stands beside me as the doors close to trap us in its cocoon. I forget how to breathe.

“Are you two lovers?” he growls the commanding question, leaving no room for argument.

I choke and stare at him incredulously, wondering if I’m hearing things. “What’s it to you?” I finally manage through lips that feel too heavy in the thick silence surrounding us. I barely hear him press the button to stop the elevator, too lost in those piercing blue eyes that keep drilling a hole right through me, tearing me apart, shredding every piece of clothing until there’s nothing left but...

“Answer me, goddamn it,” he breathes, his hand reaching for my wrist to pin me tightly against him. I can see our reflection on the opposite wall, the tantalizing and almost sinful position we have created as he leans closer to me. I watch the handsome features tighten with impatience, remembering just how cool and collected he was with me back then. Why would he care now? He couldn’t possibly be...?

“And what if he is?” I reply, my voice hoarse and thick with a need I’m no longer going to try to fight or deny. He thrusts a thigh between my legs, smirking at the breathless moan I give in response.

“Liar,” he mutters against my lips. I smile, losing myself in the swirling pools of blue and black before me. I reach out to lick his lower lip, his corresponding gasp of surprise a thrill to my senses.

Love, Always

"You came chasing after me," I tease, and promptly hiss in a sharp breath as he grinds his lower body against mine in a motion so erotic, I swear I almost come in my pants. I'm as hard as a rock, and I can feel tiny beads of sweat breaking out on my upper lip. I make the mistake of trying to lick it in a nervous gesture, and I'm soon lost within his warmth—the punishing pressure of his lips against mine.

He never did know how to be gentle, but I'm up to the challenge and I do not have to worry about being punished in the manner I was back then. We're both adults now, free to do as we please, free to explore places we've never been before. It's with that, that I find my arms wrapped tightly around his neck, sticking my tongue as deep as it can go, warring and sparring with his as we exchange bodily fluids. His grip on my wrists loosens to slide down to the seat of my pants, to be exact, my ass. He cups both cheeks firmly, thrusting me so hard against him that we stagger and almost lose our balance. I can feel his erection burning through our layers of clothing, the urge to pull down his zipper and to feel that throbbing organ is slowly driving me...

"Hello? Is anyone in here? Hello? This is the elevator crew. Is everything okay in there? We noticed the elevator had stopped and we would like to..."

"Fine!" Hunter barks as he tears himself away from me with a muttered curse. "Everything's fine." He releases me and I have to steady myself against the wall because I swear my knees are no longer willing to cooperate with me. Breathing harshly, my lips swollen, heart still racing and mind a complete mush of absolutely nothing, I can only stare at the floor as I listen to him punch the button to get the cab going again.

Wow. I have forgotten how great a kisser he is. You would think we were just picking up from where we left off in his dorm room. Except back then...

"You might want to look decent enough for your date," he says quietly, although I can hear the amusement in his tone. "You look like you've just had a quick fuck on the way down."

Flushing, I run fingers through my bangs to straighten them out as much as possible, fix my tie and brush down my suit. Damn the smirking bastard. This is all his fault anyway. However, it doesn't look like my torment is over. He leans close to me again—just as the doors open to the right floor—to whisper into my ear.

"Besides, you'll now think of me throughout your...date." He proceeds to blow softly, sending delicious tingles down my spine,

Love, Always

before nipping the lobe gently. My knees imitate jelly again as I bite my lower lip hard enough to draw blood. Damn you, Hunter!

“Daniel?”

Enkidu’s uncertain call has me shoving Hunter away and stepping out of the now claustrophobic space. His relaxed stance—legs crossing each other, hands shoved in the pockets of his pants and that daredevil smile—is the last thing I see as the doors seal him away from me. I’m unaware of my harsh breathing, or the look of panic on my features—Enkidu tells me this later on—as I try to gain some sort of composure. Christ! I’m going to have to get myself under control or...

“Was that Hunter Yates?!” Enkidu’s busy gushing as he tugs my arm to peer at me with a look that can only be described as awe-struck. Ah yes, I forgot Hunter had seemed like a god to most freshmen, Enkidu included.

I must have nodded, because he begins to rattle off how awesome it is to see the ‘great’ Hunter Yates here, and did I remember when he did this?...and did that?...and how he’s in charge of the largest military organization in the country, and is prime to become the youngest Chief of Staff under the current regime?... blah, blah, and blah.

Dear God, spare me. The last thing I need to hear is all his good qualities. Goodness knows he’s anything but.

Four

O kay, I know I should be heading back upstairs, but I'm dreading it with a passion. Dinner with Enkidu and his blushing bride ended almost three hours ago. I've moved from the restaurant to the cocktail lounge where a jazz musician belts the lonesome blues as I drown my cowardliness in yet another glass of vodka. Maybe if I drink myself into a stupor, I can forget the events of the evening ever happened.

As Hunter had predicted, dinner with Enkidu was a nightmare. He couldn't stop talking about Hunter—it didn't take long for Hikari to fall into the star struck act—and the more he gushed, the more I was reminded of our heated encounter in the elevator. My lips—no matter how many times I chewed and swallowed the delicious meal offered—still burned from his touch, and that tiny voice inside of me knew that I would crave more of that man.

Nice going. Just the first night and I'm already playing the role of a raving nymphomaniac.

"Hey, handsome. Need some company?" Delicate fingers caress my shoulder gently, the overwhelming floral perfume assailing my senses. She presses her body against mine, a vivacious redhead with matching lips. I grin through my watery gaze, and she seems to take that as an invitation. When she pulls me up, I'm too wasted to resist. Besides, I need the release, to get Hunter out of my system. I vaguely remember having to speak to Upperclassman Brad...oh yeah; we're not in school anymore.

I think I giggle and the broad mutters something to me. Whatever,

Love, Always

sweet thing. Just do your best and make me forget this night ever happened.



Fucking tranny.

I should have known something was up when the wig came off. Shit. Good thing he didn't rob me blind. He was quite good natured about my lackluster performance while promising he wouldn't tell a soul. Great. There goes my ego.

The elevator doors open and standing at the other side is Lee in a tracksuit...and Jack making his way towards him. They both stare at the picture I make, and I don't need to tell you that I look like shit this morning. My hair is tousled; my dress shirt is barely buttoned and tucked haphazardly into my pants. My jacket is slung over an arm, there are lipstick marks somewhere, and I'm in need of a good shave...and shower.

"Hey," I greet, giving them a mock salute before shuffling my way out and past them. "I'll just be packing my stuff and looking for another room."

"You don't have to leave," Brad says as he too steps out to join the gawking parade. "We have got plenty of room up here. I thought it would be a nice reunion for all of us."

"Yeah, well..." I rub my stubble and eye the trio, each with a different expression on his face. I'm not sure if they want to laugh or cry at my state. "Thanks." I finally mutter and make my way into the suite, too tired to argue with anyone right now.

"So you slept with a transvestite," comes the dry observation from a familiar voice. "Didn't think you'd go that far, Daniel."

"Fuck you, Yates," I retort, while giving him a middle-finger salute as I head to the—hopefully still my—bedroom. "Back to stalking me, are you? And besides, I didn't sleep with her...him...it. I woke up with my clothes on."

"It's possible to still get fucked with your clothes on," he mutters. That has me stopping before the doors to my sanctuary. I turn around to eye him properly. He's sprawled out on the couch watching TV, dressed in nothing more than a pair of black sweatpants. His hair is plastered to his scalp in dark ringlets, telling me that he's either back

Love, Always

from a morning of jogging, hitting the gym or taking a shower. Did I forget to mention that his abs are...?

Forget about his killer abs and focus, Daniel!

"Listen," I begin angrily, only to feel a wave of vertigo wash over me. I stagger and try to hold on to something, but the sudden sensation of strong arms around my waist and the faint, obviously concerned call of my name, has me leaning into the warmth that envelopes me like a blanket. Dear God, I could remain like this forever...just...don't let go...



Voices drift in and out of my consciousness.

"...sure you don't want us to stay...?"

"Got it...fine...sleeping..."

"Dinner festivities begin..."

"...all day...fever...sheesh..."

"Talk about overdoing it..." That's Lee. I think he leans over me. I can smell his cologne. Someone places a hand on my forehead. It feels cool and comforting.

"I said I have it under control." Hunter now. Sounding impatient as he tries to shoo away the rest of his friends. Hunter? *Concerned?* I must be in another dimension. God, my head hurts. Think I'll doze off again...



It's much quieter, and as I lift my lashes, my blurry gaze soon becomes accustomed to the gloom. The curtains are drawn, but I can see it's nighttime. Did I really sleep all day? Tonight's supposed to be the big reunion dinner in the Grand Ballroom and I've slept through it all! Fuck. My weekend's going to be over before I know it. What happened to my plans of sightseeing the city today? I think I remember promising Enkidu I'd join him and Hikari for a grand tour. I groan and try to sit up, only to fall back on the pillows as I notice the still figure in the leather chair beside the bed. My heart slams hard in my chest; the

Love, Always

fright at not being alone slowly easing into astonished...*delight*? How else am I to explain the warm fuzzy sensation creeping up my spine? I thought he would have left with the others, but to my surprise, he's still here. Fast asleep though.

I watch him for a while, noticing the way his hair, now dry and back to its unruly state, brushes across his forehead. His chest rises and falls with each breath he takes, his hands curled on his lap like a little boy accused of doing something bad. Beside him are bottles of water and some aspirin, a book he must have been reading and a wash cloth. He must have laid that on my forehead while I was asleep.

I feel a ridiculous lump fill my throat and I close my eyes, turning away to stare at anything but him. The confusion within me swirls to a feverish point, my mind trying hard to make sense of what's happening. Why is he being nice to me now? I know it's been five years and people can change, but my perception of Hunter had been an uncaring, cold bastard—a man who didn't really care about me or my welfare. He was a man who liked to use and abuse as often as he wanted, not concerned about the consequences—one can almost say it was his way of preparing for his role in the military, but I'm not so sure.

So what has caused this great change? Why isn't he mocking me, or ignoring me? Why isn't he having fun downstairs with the others, instead content to remain in this room with me for as long as it takes? This isn't the Hunter I know, and believe it or not, a part of me resents it. A part of me wonders why he took so much pleasure in torturing me in the past, only to now turn things around to actually worry about me. Is he trying to fuck with my mind? Is that it? Is this a new game? One where he pretends he's decent and then turns around to stab me in the back again?

Oh, you're good, Hunter. I've got to give you that.

"You're awake."

I stiffen and refuse to turn, wondering why that stupid lump in my throat hasn't gone down yet. I hear him stretching and then rising to his feet. Before I can say anything, I feel his palm against my forehead and on reflex, I reach out to slap it away, turning around to pin, what I hope, is a furious glare at him.

For a moment, just one moment, I notice a flash of pain in his eyes or perhaps confusion, but he masks it quickly with a look of passive indifference.

"And feeling much better," he continues flatly, before shrugging

Love, Always

and turning away. “You might want to get dressed for the ball. You don’t want to be too late.”

The door closes behind him with a slam, and I wince, my stomach giving a sickening lurch as I wonder if I’ve done the right thing. But...I *have* to keep my distance. I don’t want to be hurt again. I really don’t. I thought I had gotten over it—over the agony of knowing he would never feel the same way I did for him...

Still do, don’t you? You still love the bastard despite everything.

...and if he’s just playing with me then...then...

“Damn it,” I whisper in misery, slapping my hands over my face to stop the seeming flood of tears that threaten to spill. I know I’m a big fool for allowing myself to be this vulnerable again. The biggest fool there is.

Five

The party is in full swing by the time I get to the ballroom. Loud music blares from the speakers and couples are swaying, swinging, gyrating hips and dancing like there's no tomorrow. There's a Mardi Gras feel to the décor as an usher hands me a colorful mask of green and gold before pouring several strands of matching beaded necklaces around my neck. I reach for a passing flute of champagne, weaving my way through the throng of sweaty, excited partygoers while searching for something edible. Sleeping all day has made me as hungry as a horse...nah, I could eat the damn horse.

"Daniel! Hey, Daniel! You made it!" I reluctantly turn away from the buffet table, stuffing a finger sandwich into my mouth as I notice Enkidu sashaying towards me with a grinning—and I'll bet you ten bucks she's drunk—Hikari in tow. Their hair is filled with colorful confetti and strings, and although they're both wearing masks—and dressed in matching white ensemble—it's not hard to distinguish Enkidu's blond hair in a crowd.

"Hey, what's up? Having fun?" I greet, as Hikari throws her arms around me and plants a big wet kiss on my cheek. Wow. She really is drunk.

"We heard you weren't feeling well," she says, still dancing to the infectious beat as she shouts to make herself heard over the din. "Brad Johnson told us."

I raise a brow and Enkidu backs up her statement. "We met them during the speeches and stuff. Booooring! Good thing you missed it, buddy! But I'm glad to see you. Come on! Let's dance!"

Love, Always

“Ah...I don’t think....” But I’m already being tugged towards the mayhem, with Hikari pushing me from behind.

Soon enough, we’re in the midst of the confusion, my legs moving on their own accord as the beat overwhelms me. Enkidu is a pretty good dancer and with Hikari by his side, we end up laughing, nearly tripping and bumping into each other with delight. In the madness, I can make out Brad and Jack dancing. They wave and I return the gesture, mouth-ing a question about Lee’s whereabouts. They point towards the eastern section of the room, and after craning my neck around for a while, my heartbeat falters as I notice him...and who he’s dancing with. My feet get tangled up and I slow down, a pain piercing through my chest as I watch them move closer to each other.

He’s laughing. He might be wearing a mask, but there’s no mistaking Hunter. I only saw him really laugh once. It was on his graduation day, and tonight he has reserved that gesture for one other person. I try to tell myself that I don’t give a fuck, that I don’t care he’s dancing with someone else. After all, he had stayed with me when I was sick and I had treated him like...

“Hey, Daniel! Come on!” Hikari says and drapes herself around me again. I steal another quick glance at the other couple, flushing with awareness as that dark gaze seems to be trained on me. I watch his lips tighten for a moment before he turns away to whisper something to Lee. The Chinese man laughs and to my chagrin, both of them begin to leave the room.

I don’t care. I just don’t care! I’m going to dance until I can’t feel my legs anymore. I’m going to dance until I stop this growing ache inside of me. Dance until I feel absolutely nothing at all.



Except I now have a killer headache to show for it.

Enkidu and Hikari are now clinging to each other like glue on the dance floor, which is now nearly empty as many of the partygoers have called it a night. Many will be leaving early tomorrow morning, while others want to get a last glimpse of the city. I met several of my teachers and some other classmates during the course of the evening, politely refusing an invitation for a game of cards and cigars in the Lounge

Love, Always

afterwards. I need to clear my head, to think straight after an evening that felt as if I had been shot out of a cannon ball. I step into the cool night, sucking in the fresh air like a man deprived. I lower the mask to cover my eyes again, loosening my tie as I wander towards the quieter parts of the hotel grounds.

Music from a grand piano wafts through the large windows, the soothing warm glow from the rooms illuminating the dimly lit gardens. It's a perfect romantic getaway for couples. In fact, I think I see a few making good use of the secluded alcove and benches loitered about the place. Satisfied that I'm away from prying eyes, I lean against an oak tree...and then push myself away from it quickly, blushing at the memory of the last time I had leaned against a similar tree...and what had taken place. Hunter had all but forced me to strip in public, proceeding to dry hump me until we came in an orgasm that was both painful and explosive.

However, I can't help wondering if he's with Lee now. If they're both laughing behind my back at managing to fool me into believing I still had a shot with a guy like Hunter. Sighing heavily, I run fingers through my hair in a restless gesture. I need to get some sleep and...

"God, you two make me sick," comes the voice of the very man I have been thinking about. I turn around quickly, watching the handsome older man approach with a scowl on his visage. He stops before me and exhales before raising his gaze to the heavens.

"Sir..." I kick myself inwardly and correct my mistake. "Lee..."

"He's a stubborn idiot you know," he continues as if I haven't said anything. "He won't admit that he still gives a damn about you."

Huh? Wait a sec...*still*? Does that mean...?

He looks at me, a small smirk on his features. "Yes. Still. He would have come for the reunion in your senior year. We did learn you had become the Head Boy and he was pretty damn proud of you, but his training kept him back. He still thought you hated him. Boy, did you fuck with his mind after that night you...eh...two did the deed."

I blush darkly, unable to believe Hunter had actually told his friends about the night in his dorm room. But then again, I wouldn't put it past him.

"He kept up with you over the years."

He was stalking me after all!

"Ever wondered why that McCormick character was so quick to give you and your mom your sporting goods store?"

Love, Always

I shake my head although my heartbeat is quickening again. I already know what he's going to say and I don't want to believe it. I *refuse* to believe it.

"You guessed it. Bought the guy out...more like threatened him. I'm not the highest paid lawyer this side of the country for nothing you know." He smirks again and I can only nod like a fool. My mouth feels dry. It had seemed so easy back then. I had thought my one-night-stand with that slobbering fat bastard had done the trick, and yet to know that only one word, or possible threat from Hunter had made him change his mind makes me feel like a cheap slut.

"Did he organize this special reunion thing too?" I ask dryly.

He shrugs. "Not really. It was Brad's idea because we knew you two had to see each other again. It was getting ridiculous. He knew where you lived, knew your phone number, could have called you anytime, but his damn pride would get in the way. Or he'd mumble something about you not really wanting to see him again, and besides you had moved on. Have you moved on?"

I'm not ready for the sudden question, and take a step back as if he's tried to throw a punch at me. I falter for a moment, not sure of what to say to that, but he slaps me on the shoulder and motions towards the southern portion of the garden.

"Go talk to the son of a bitch," Lee says. "At least, say all the things you should have said but held back because he was a bastard. He's grown, not just physically, but mentally and emotionally as well. You know his past history, Daniel, and despite his hard-nosed, tough demeanor, the guy's really insecure inside...I think."

He yawns and gives me a mock salute, before turning on his heels to make his way back to the hotel. Over his shoulder, he calls out again, "Good luck!" and gives a quick wave as he gets lost in the shadows.

The silence overwhelms me, and I'm uncertain of what to do. It's one thing to hear the story from Lee, but what if everything's a lie? What if I go to Hunter now and he turns me down like he did before? Why do I have to be the one making the first move? If he wants me, he has to be the one to approach me. So why the fuck am I still heading towards the direction pointed out to me? Man, I'm such a sucker.

"Nobody here," I whisper as I stare at the man-made waterfall a few feet away, which is quite breathtaking with all the lights that surround it. The roar of the cascading water is a rather lonesome soundtrack to my tumultuous emotions, and feeling disappointment—

Love, Always

although a part of me really should have expected nothing—I try to turn away when a strong arm wraps around my waist to pull me tightly against an oh-so-familiar body. My immediate instinct is to twist away, but his warm breath against my cheek and into my ear has me shivering again in reluctant pleasure.

“May I have this dance?” he whispers, and I groan, lashes fluttering weakly, unable to stop the low sound that escapes my throat as he begins to lead me in a slow dance to the music of the waterfall. His other hand slides down my arm to my hand, our feet now moving in time as if we had practiced this awkward dance position a million times before. I can feel the smooth plastic sensation of his mask against my chin, and I realize he hasn’t taken his off either. For some reason, that turns me on even more, perhaps some romantic part of me assuming he’s the Phantom of the Opera and I’m his Christine. Okay, I really have to stop Ricky from taking me to watch those damn musicals.

It takes me another second to feel the hard heat pressed against my ass, and I try to step away, but like a matador claiming his bull, he pulls me even harder against him, nipping my jaw gently as I moan in protest.

“You can’t solve everything with sex,” I whisper thickly, surprised I can get anything past lips that feel heavy and dry.

“Why not?”

“Because it’s not right, damn it,” I hiss, desperately trying to get him to talk and to stop seducing me. It’s hard to think when he keeps...oh God...stop...

“No!” With every effort I can muster I push him away and stagger backwards. Pity I forgot there was a streaming pool behind me because I stand there flailing my arms like a windmill for a second before falling into the cold water with a resounding splash. Damn it! It’s *freezing*! And it’s not as shallow as it looks either!

Someone’s laughing at me. After reassuring myself I wouldn’t drown—I am now chest deep in the pool—I smirk at Hunter who has turned away for a second to compose himself. Suddenly—where do I get my zany ideas from?—I pretend to be drowning, flailing my arms again and sinking into the cool depths with as much theatrical display as I can muster.

“Help!” Gulp. Geez. Not fun swallowing the water, but... “Help me! Hunter!”

I sputter, breathing is becoming a bit difficult, and just when I

Love, Always

think he's going to ignore me completely and I'm going to die thanks to my hare-brained idea, I feel his hand grip mine tightly.

Bingo.

With a fierce yank, I pull him in to join me, listening to his small yelp of surprise before the water envelopes him in a rush.

"Can't believe you fell for it, sucker!" I give him the finger and try to make my escape, when I feel a tug on my pants and I'm sinking into the pool again. Sputtering in indignation, I reach out for him, possibly to choke the life out of him, but he splashes more water on me! And he's laughing to boot! I push my damp hair out of my face, staring—almost comically I'm sure—at the man before me. It's a cold night, but his cheeks are still flushed, his eyes alive, making him look so much younger, and taking me back to that seventeen year old senior I had fallen head over heels in love with.

"Giving up?" he asks, still laughing as he cups another handful of water, but I'm too quick for him as I dodge and tackle him, both of us falling into the pool beneath the surface and into each other's arms.

When our lips meet, it's with a sigh of longing and need, of knowing that he loves me in his own way even if he never plans to admit it to me...yet. His arms wrap around my waist, our masks breaking apart and floating to the surface as we deepen our communion. The soft swirl of his tongue within my mouth and water tantalizes my senses and has me gasping for air. We break apart and swim to the surface, panting harshly as we try to catch our breath. I brush away the wet strands of hair from his face, before resting my forehead against his, watching those beautiful blue eyes widen for a moment before darkening with an emotion I can't define.

"Make love to me." A whispered plea against his lips. "Not just sex, Hunter. No games. No hurt. Just...love me."

"Daniel..." His voice seems to break as he pulls me closer, hugging me so tightly I fear he'll crack a rib or two, but I respond just as fiercely, feeding off the silent questions that hang between us. I remember the story of his need to be in control. Of sleeping with everyone and anyone to get to a position of power.

Hunter had never really truly loved anyone, or seen anyone as anything more than a pawn in his game. Like Lee said, I was the first to mind fuck him, to throw him off kilter, to show him that not everything had to be so brutally constructed and regimented to his design. I had learned it the hard way in my teens, but I wouldn't change a thing now.

Love, Always

When he begins to peel me out of my clothes, I'm hardly aware of it. His lips suck gently on my neck, causing me arch into him as he tugs off my dress shirt to let it float in the pool. My pants are hardly a restriction as he makes quick work of the belt, zipper and boxers until cool water brushes against my skin like a lover's caress.

"Beautiful," he murmurs against my nipple, making me blush as I remember him calling me that so many years ago. When he nips it gently, I bite my lower lip, stopping myself from screaming out my pleasure as my toes curl in response. I feel his hand on my cock, stroking, rubbing, caressing the swollen tip, up and down, to my balls, tugging, and playing with my organ like it's an instrument for his wicked playtime. Eager hands tug restlessly at his shirt, and he pulls back a little to give me room. Our heated gazes meet, our shallow breathing almost getting lost within the roar of the waterfall beside us. He kicks away his pants and we're now mercifully naked, our bodies straining against each other as if angry that its owners had kept them apart for so long. He kisses me again, hands upon my waist as he pushes me up to sit on the edge of the pool. My feet dangle on either side of his head as he releases me, my hooded gaze trained on the thick curl of hair at the nape of his neck he moves down to...

Aaaah...fuck!

He's never gone down on me before. So, this is what I was missing. I lie back on the wet cobbled stones, whimpering and squirming with each sucking motion on my stiff cock. He takes all of me in, so far down that a part of me worries he might choke on it, but I shouldn't doubt Hunter's skills. He definitely knows what he's doing.

"Aaaah....com...coming," I pant, bucking off the lip of the fountain as I feel the familiar rush of heat begin from the tip of my toes. There's the sudden rush of blood to the head, like a volcano about to erupt—the breathless sensation of air being sucked out of my lungs, the world spinning out of control, sight, sound, and color all merging into one to produce total but blissful darkness. My cry of satiation is thankfully drowned out by the sounds of our inanimate companion, and I can only watch through glazed depths as Hunter licks his lips, even going as far as showing me my thick release before leaving the pool to claim my lips again in a kiss that tastes of him and my semen. I lick every inch of his tongue, whimpering as he reaches for my hand to lead it towards his ass.

"I took you last time," he pants against my lips. He moves my

Love, Always

fingers into his mouth, sucking hard enough to coat them with his saliva before moving them towards the tight orifice of his rectum. I stare into his eyes, questioning, needing to know if it's okay. I can still remember his quiet statement the day I had forced him into having sex with me. *I've never fucked anyone before. I was always the one taking it in the ass.'*

It's warm...hot. I dig deeper, his harsh intake of breath like music to my ears. My cock is already twitching in anticipation, my hand reaching to hold his—to squeeze it gently as I widen and prepare his hole for my invasion. I withdraw slowly. He sighs and buries his face against my neck, urging me on with a light nip to my neck. I bury my fingers, two this time, groaning as he moves against me in time to my thrusts. I can feel the tight muscles resisting at first, until they become loose and moist around my flesh. Deeper still, until he cries out against my neck, his body trembling as I hit that sensitive organ deep within him.

"Ah...hah...hah...now, Daniel," he breathes. "Now, goddamn it."

Great. The enforcer to the end, isn't he? But smiling at his impatience, I withdraw my fingers and with hardly a warning, I push my aching cock slowly in, almost delirious at how tight those muscles grip and try to hold it prisoner. Hunter tries to help by lowering himself upon me as slowly as he can, adjusting to my thick flesh as he sits up and reaches for my hands to hold on tight.

"Been a while," he admits, unable to look me in the eye as he says this. "Ah...so...good. So damn good." When I'm completely in, he stiffens and then rotates his hips, causing me to cry out at the incredible sensation. He smirks as if knowing it would drive me crazy and does it again, leaning down to seize my gasp within his mouth in another searing kiss.

"Harder," he mutters, and I willingly oblige. I release our hands and place them on his hips, thrusting harder into him as low guttural sounds of pleasure begin to escape his throat. Watching Hunter like this is incredible. Gone is the scowling and sometimes impassive facade, before me is a man alive, vulnerable, and downright sexy—not that he wasn't before.

Seeing that toned body in relief, each muscles clenching and unclenching as he responds to me, or the flushed look on his face, or those blue eyes blaze with a passion I have longed to see all these years, has tears springing to my eyes. And when I hit his prostate again, his loud cry almost overshadows the thunderous waterfall. His body quivers like an arrow released from a taut bow, and the tears that spill down

Love, Always

his cheeks are my undoing.

I pull him closer to me, holding him tight as he comes hard and fast against my stomach. I taste the salt of his tears, kissing them away gently just as I feel the second rush of my orgasm's fast approach. The wicked bastard has one last trick up his sleeve as he tightens his inner muscles to prevent me from coming so soon. It heightens the pleasure, builds up the pressure and just when I think I'm going to go insane, he releases me and I come in a flood, sighing into his lips as I feel the thick seed coating his inner walls, trickling down my cock and down my thighs.

He moans against me, neither of us in a rush to release the other just yet. My body feels languid and delightfully satiated. I can remain here forever...if it wasn't for my back now killing me from lying on the uneven pavement for so long.

"Get off me," I grunt, watching him lift his head to eye me warily. "Trust me, as much as I want to remain inside of you, I have to get off this ground. It's killing me."

He laughs a little, as if uncertain, and then pulls away, both of us wincing at the loss of warmth and I'm sure a slight soreness on his part. If he hasn't done this in a while, I'm betting he's going to be walking funny tomorrow morning...

"Do you still hate me?" he asks as he makes himself comfortable beside me, even as I try to sit up. Of course this stumps me, and I look at him, meeting those dark eyes that are trained on me as if needing to know the answer. I lower my gaze to the greenish blue pool before us, sparkling every now and then thanks to the lights around it.

"You know I don't," I finally whisper. "Although I should, but damn it, I don't. There. Happy now?"

I shake my head and run fingers through my hair, when...

"Oooofff!" I find myself lying on top of him, his arm around my waist, the other, cupping my cheek gently.

"Stay with me," he demands quietly. He clears his throat, his cheeks darkening as he tries his request again. "Please. I...I would like you to stay with me."

My heart is thumping wildly in my chest, but I continue to play dumb, perhaps hoping he will be clearer with his offer. "In the hotel room? For tonight?"

"For always," he whispers, a thumb reaching out to caress my lips gently. "Let me make it up to you, Daniel. I know...I know I did some

Love, Always

things you should hate me for, but...I think I'm ready now. I want to give us...I want you to give me another chance."

Ah, shit. Why do I suddenly feel this emotional again? It's not supposed to end this way, is it? I'm supposed to be watching him walk away from me, smirking or laughing over his shoulder. I'm supposed to be left here feeling miserable and alone and...oh, God.

"Please don't be upset," he says quickly, as if hoping he hasn't said something to make me mad. What a stupid lug. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have asked you when you still clearly...mmmmm...."

My lips silencing his should be enough of a reply for him. It should be enough for him to know that I will follow him wherever he goes. It should be enough to show just how much I have always loved him. From the first time our eyes met on that basketball court, through the humiliation and hurt he put me through, until he said his goodbyes the first time around.

"Never stopped loving you, Hunter," I whisper with a smile, our hands clasped tightly, refusing to let go. "I never stopped loving you."

Six

Hunter and I had sneaked—like two naughty teens—dripping wet with clothes that clung to our bodies, back into the apartment, hardly able to keep our hands off each other on the ride up. Geez, I’m still blushing at what happened in the elevator. We spent Sunday touring the city after all...with Enkidu, Hikari, Brad, Jack, Lee and some girl he had met. It was a boisterous affair all around, and although I would have loved to have spent it alone with Hunter, it was fun to take pictures with everyone—and boy, did we have the most ridiculous poses going.

“I’ll mail a copy to everyone once I have them developed,” Brad’s saying as his and Jack’s luggage is loaded into the limousine. We are all standing in the main lobby of the hotel, and I’m feeling a bit melancholy at all the farewells around me. I hate to see them leave. It was a magical weekend—even though it started off on the wrong foot. A light drizzle begins just as Brad places a kiss on my cheek and Hunter’s as well. Jack follows with a firm handshake.

“Glad to see you two worked things out. Don’t forget to invite us to the wedding now.”

“There’s no wedding!” I sputter, blushing in embarrassment as everyone cracks up at the insinuation. Hunter smiles, but I can see the wheels turning in his head. He had better not be...

“I can’t believe you two are actually a couple,” Hikari’s saying as she too prepares to leave with Enkidu. I think my best friend is still in shock at the announcement, but he’ll get over it in due time. I’m sure a part of him is jealous that I get to have the Hunter Yates all to myself. Tough.

Love, Always

“You will both come to our wedding, yes?” She looks at Hunter and me with hope, and I nod, Hunter replying with a, “We wouldn’t miss it for the world.”

Phone numbers are exchanged, emails punched into portable devices and cell phones. I blush again as Lee approaches with his luggage. If it wasn’t for him...

“Thanks,” I say with a small bow of respect, which is greeted with a light knock on my head.

“Geez, we’re not in high school anymore.” He laughs and gives us both quick hugs before moving towards his waiting car. “When are you two leaving?”

“In about an hour,” Hunter says, eyeing his watch. “My private jet should be waiting.”

Oh yeah, forgot the bastard is richer than me. Show off.

“I wish you both the best,” Lee says as he waves and gets into his waiting sedan. Nice ride. I wave and wave and wave until I see nothing but a spec in the distance. I think of waving some more, but Hunter tugs me impatiently, and I can’t help giggling at how animated he looks.

“We’re alone now,” he whispers in my ear, as we quicken our footsteps to get to the elevator. “Finally. I thought they’d never leave.”

My laughter is louder, earning a few curious glances, but I’m too happy to worry. We didn’t dare share the same bedroom last night for fear—and I guess common decency—we’d disturb the others.

The cab stops—I wonder what the elevator crew must be thinking by now—as Hunter growls and pins me in the corner.

“In here...again?” I say with a smirk, hands already tugging his shirt impatiently.

“Might as well,” he replies in a husky whisper as he pushes me to the floor with a kiss hot enough to melt steel.

Aah, bliss. Maybe if I’m lucky, I can convince him to stay another night here. I’m in no rush to go back to my empty apartment, and the knowledge that this man still wants me is a heady feeling. I cannot predict what the future holds for us, but believe me, if it’s already starting out this way, I think we might be in for a fun and enjoyable ride.

Love, Always