



Christmas Spirits

TOMORROW'S
GIFTS

LISABET SARAI



Tomorrow's Gifts
by Lisabet Sarai

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Tomorrow's Gifts
by Lisabet Sarai

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Tomorrow's Gifts

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Warning: This book contains sexually explicit content which is only suitable for mature readers. This story has been rated *Total-e-melting*.

Christmas Spirits:

Ghost of Christmas Future

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TOMORROW'S GIFTS

Lisabet Sarai

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Dedication

To GCS

For all your lessons

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Volvo: Volvo Car Corporation

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Chapter One

"So, Michael. Have you been a good little boy?" Neil loomed over me, one hand against the wall on either side of my head. "Do you deserve the goodies that Santa's brought for you?"

Leaning forward, he trailed a wet tongue up my neck, from my open collar to just below my earlobe. When I squirmed in response, he flattened his pelvis against the lump growing in my jeans and fastened his mouth on mine. The fake beard got in the way. He ripped it off and resumed kissing me, while his hands slipped around me to cup my ass.

I loved the way Neil kissed with his full body, investing his entire being in the process. I snuggled against his red felt jacket, allowing him to take possession of my mouth. His kisses were deep, wet, full of soul. They made me light-headed. They made me hard. I could taste the beer he had drunk at the party and the peppermint candy cane that we'd shared on the way home, but underneath there was the familiar flavour of Neil, my housemate, friend and lover.

I forced my hand between our bodies and fumbled at his zipper. "Oh, are you being a naughty little boy?" he breathed in my ear. "Santa will have to punish you."

His words thrilled me. Oh, if only he would make good on his threats! I knew from experience that he was only teasing, though. But maybe tonight would be different. With the holiday high, the post-party buzz, maybe tonight he'd give me what I craved.

I wrenched his fly open and wriggled through the opening in his briefs until I had what I wanted—the silky sensation of his cock-skin under my fingers. My own cock throbbed as I stroked him, marvelling at the contrast between the rock-hard flesh underneath and the satin-smooth layer that enclosed it.

I wanted to sink to my knees and suck him, right there in the hallway. I wanted him to fuck my mouth until I gagged then drown me in his cum. Instead, he extricated my hand from his trousers and squeezed it affectionately. "Let's go to bed, baby. Let's get naked."

I followed him down the corridor to the back of the flat. By the time I reached the bedroom, the Santa costume was a crumpled scarlet heap in one corner. Neil stood by the side of the bed, hands on his hips, his cock jutting proudly from the black tangle at his groin. He was a fearsome sight, a towering six foot four with thighs like tree trunks and arms that could crush you to a pulp. It's true, there were a few smile lines around his full mouth—he was thirty six, after all—but I thought they gave his face character. He was still the powerful, bear-like guy I'd fallen in love with three years ago.

Before he knew what was happening, I was at his feet. I grabbed his cock and swallowed it whole, burying my nose in the fragrant, curly hair at its root. My balls tightened as I was washed in his scent. He moaned and jerked his hips, ramming the bulb against the back of my throat. My cock surged. When he heard me gag, though, Neil retreated, pulling halfway out of my mouth. I sucked him back in, swirling my tongue around his shaft, trying to make him lose control.

It didn't work. He pumped in and out of my mouth with measured thrusts, careful not to plunge too deep. I reached between his legs, stroked his balls, brushed my finger across his sphincter, urged the tip inside. Neil groaned and clenched his cheeks together, trapping my hand. But he didn't let go the way I wanted him to. He didn't go crazy. He didn't grab my hair and ram his cock down my throat, the way I'd imagined.

He felt wonderful. He tasted great. I knew that I gave him pleasure. My own cock was huge, aching to be let out of my jeans. I felt his love, surrounding me. He was in touch with me—he could read my reactions. He knew when he caused me pain. What he couldn't sense, apparently, was the fact that I didn't want him to stop.

Instead, he pulled out. Perhaps, at some level, he did feel my disappointment. "I'd much rather come in your tight little ass," he told me with a grin as he undressed me, gleeful as a kid unwrapping a Christmas present. He ran his hand over my smooth pecs and down my belly. "God, Michael, you are one hot boy." Grasping my cock in his fist, he smeared my pre-cum over the bulb with his thumb. My hips jerked reflexively. "Yeah, that's right. That's a good little boy. Come for Santa."

"No—don't. Fuck me, the way you said. The way you promised. Please. I want to come with you inside me."

"Well, since you ask so nicely ... On the bed, then. On your hands and knees, with your ass in the air."

I scrambled to follow his instructions. He knew this was my favourite position. To be so vulnerable—it brought me close to

coming just to think about it. I sank down on my elbows, spread my legs and presented my butt to Neil.

I felt the bed shift as he climbed up behind me then the heat coming off his body. He stroked my cheeks. His palm was smooth, his fingertips callused from playing his guitar. I writhed under his gentle touch, loving it but wanting more. I couldn't help imagining the delicious sting if he were to raise his powerful hand and bring it down on my poor, tender ass. My cock jumped at the notion.

Slap me, I broadcast silently. *Spank me*. The message apparently did not get through. Instead, he spread my cheeks and blew lightly on my hole. A flutter of excitement shimmered through me.

I heard the burp of the lube squirting into his palm. I held my breath, waiting for that first shocking invasion.

Neil circled my asshole with one greased fingertip, teasing me. I moaned. "Want something, baby?" He slipped the finger into my entrance, a fraction of an inch. I arched back, forcing him deeper. Ah, that was more like it!

"You nasty little boy," he crooned. I thought about how it would feel, to have him punctuate his mock reproof with a sharp slap. He didn't oblige, but he did slide a second finger into my ass next to the first. My sphincter clenched on his digits. He wiggled them around inside, loosening me.

My cock was hugely swollen, ready to explode at the slightest touch. I wasn't thinking about my cock, though, but about Neil's. It's not particularly long, but it's thick, as broad as an Italian salami. I felt the head brush against my slippery hole and I wanted him like I've never wanted anything.

"Ready, Michael?" He reached around and squeezed my cock. I shook my ass at him, showing how ready I was. Don't ask me, I almost cried out. Don't worry about me. Just take me.

That message, at least, got through. Neil leaned into me, pushing his lubricated organ into my hole.

It didn't matter how much he warmed me up, or how much gunk he slathered on his cock. That first glorious entrance was always fringed with pain—agonising, fiery pain that made me see stars, as the huge, unyielding mass of his cock forced itself into my bowels.

As always, Neil was careful, easing in, steady but inexorable. I was stretched until I was sure my flesh would tear. I savoured the pain, clung to it, then felt it dwindle, overwhelmed by pleasure as Neil began to thrust.

He pulled his cock nearly all the way out, and I felt the guilty delight of being emptied. Then he plunged back in, filling me to bursting. Each entry woke echoes of the original sweet agony.

Gradually, he increased the speed, sliding in and out so quickly that everything became a blur. He still held back, though. I could tell. Why wouldn't he give me everything he had?

My mind drifted to the images I'd culled from the Internet. The young man, blindfolded and gagged, on his knees. A hairless muscleman ramming his oversized prick into the boy's ass. The force had shaken the boy's body. Tears streamed out from under the blindfold. The close-ups showed

the boy's hole, obscenely distorted by the huge prong impaling him, gaping open when the cock was removed.

I edited the scene, putting Neil in the role of the head-shaven giant in the video. I saw my own ass, reamed by Neil's implacable cock. I heard myself moaning and crying, saw myself twisting in Neil's iron grip, unable to escape the fierce thrusts splitting me open.

It seemed so real. My asshole was on fire. Neil's fingernails dug into my flesh as he held my cheeks apart. Then I felt his hand pumping my cock, rough and urgent, demanding that I come.

My cum erupted all over his fingers. A tornado of sensation seized me, pain and pleasure twisting together. As it carried me off, Neil slammed his cock into me one last time and exploded in my bowels.

Neil's touch brought me back. He lay beside me on the bed, stroking my hair and planting little kisses on my forehead, my nose, my chin. My cheeks were wet with tears. "Ah, baby," he sighed. "That was incredible." He circled one of my nipples with a delicate fingertip. I felt my cock twitch, coming to life. "I hope I didn't hurt you."

Tell him, a voice in my mind urged. *Tell him that you like it rough. Tell him about your fantasies.* I couldn't, though. I felt too embarrassed, and too guilty. How would he feel, if he knew that I spent my time when he wasn't around watching sleazy BDSM porn? If I told him that he was too considerate, too gentle, for me?

I knew that he'd be devastated by the notion that he didn't completely satisfy me. He might even be shocked to learn what a deviant his sweet little boy really was.

"No, I'm fine, really. That was amazing."

He pulled me to his chest and held me tight. "I love you, Michael. Merry Christmas, baby."

"I love you, too."

Neil drifted off to sleep, still holding me. I lay awake in his arms, filled with doubts.

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Chapter Two

I did love Neil. But I had to admit, sexually, I needed something he just didn't seem equipped to provide. Maybe that wasn't fair, though. I couldn't expect him to read my mind. I should talk to him. Be honest. I just couldn't bring myself to do it. I had purchased a special Christmas present, something to give him a hint. So far, though, I hadn't had the guts to wrap it and put it under the tree.

So, if I was too scared and hung up to talk to Neil, what did that say about our relationship? Maybe I needed a change. Maybe we both did. Three years was a long time, and, to be honest, we seemed to be in something of a rut. When we first met, we had talked about escaping from the miserable weather and puritanical attitudes of New England and moving somewhere that was sunnier and more gay-friendly. Yet here we were, still renting this flat in Somerville. Neil was still on guard to make sure none of his students or fellow teachers found out about his sexual preferences. We'd celebrated exactly the same way last Christmas Eve—a party at Glen and Harry's, both of us drinking too much. Neil playing Santa Claus, me flirting with the younger guys to make him jealous. Woozy sex afterwards.

Fun, but not very exciting. I was only twenty-seven. Maybe I was too young to settle down.

I did care for Neil, though. How could I think about leaving him? He'd be devastated.

But if we weren't good for each other, if we weren't satisfied, wouldn't it be better for us to split?

Conflicted thoughts whirled in my foggy brain. My head ached, probably from the five glasses of wine I'd drunk. I thought about getting up to take an aspirin. I considered whether it might feel good to take a shower and wash off some of the cum.

I didn't have the energy. I dozed off into uneasy dreams, my head throbbing in the background.

* * * *

I woke with a start, not knowing why. Neil had rolled over; he lay on his side of the bed with his back to me. All at once I felt terribly alone.

Golden light filtered up the hallway from the living room. I shook my head, trying to clear the fog. Had we forgotten to turn off the Christmas tree? But no, I remembered flipping the switch before we left for the party. Neil was always concerned about the danger of fire.

What was it then? Something on the street in front of the building, an emergency vehicle or something? Those lights would be red, wouldn't they?

Trying not to wake Neil, I crawled out of bed and tiptoed, barefoot, down the hall. The closer I got to the living room, the brighter the light became.

The tree was, in fact, lit, the multicoloured bulbs twinkling in a spiral pattern. Someone had kindled the candles on the mantle, as well. However, these were not the source of the golden glow.

A young man sprawled on the sofa—an exceptionally handsome man. His flawless skin was bronzed as if he spent most of his time in the sun. His ragged, honey-coloured hair hung down over one eye. He had high cheekbones, a prominent nose, ripe lips with a slightly cruel cast. Despite his fair hair, his eyebrows were dark. They arched gracefully over eyes that held me transfixed—brilliant, wise, all-seeing eyes.

The man wore leather, so supple and tight that it showed every well-sculpted muscle of his powerful body.

This exotic stranger was emitting the strange illumination. The light surrounded him like a halo. When he moved, it ebbed and flowed as though it were alive.

I must be dreaming, I concluded. But who would have believed that I could dream up such a gorgeous guy?

"Good evening, Michael." His voice was like honey, too, sweet and smooth flowing. It made my mouth water. I realised I was naked and half-erect. I didn't care. Wonder and arousal overwhelmed me.

"Um—good evening ... Who are you? How do you know my name?"

The stranger swung his long legs off the couch and stood up. The light shimmered around him. My eyes were drawn to the bulge at his groin.

"I'm your lover."

A stab of guilt shredded my sense of well-being. "Uh—I have a lover. He's asleep in the other room."

"I'm your future lover."

"My future lover?" I felt stupid, parroting him, but I didn't know what to say.

"I've come from the future, to give you a glimpse of your life with me. To help you decide."

This time I knew what he meant. He was talking about leaving Neil. This was just a guilt dream, based on my musings before I fell asleep.

"You're not real."

"Of course I'm real. Touch me."

Slowly, as if I were in a dream—but then of course, I was—I reached for him. His jacket was so tight that I could see the shape of his nipples. I stroked one with a fingertip. The brief contact sent electric sparks through my body, as if he had touched me instead. Fascinated, I circled the leather-covered nub, only to feel my own nipples tingle. My balls ached, and I could feel my cock rising.

"You see?" he said half-mocking. "I'm your destiny, the lover who will fulfil your secret desires. You shouldn't doubt me."

All at once, he had my wrist in a vise-like grip. "I'm not just your lover, Michael. I am your Master."

It was a line out of some cheap S&M porn flick. That didn't stop me from reacting. A sweet, scary chill raced down my spine. Blood and cum surged into my cock, jerking it towards the ceiling. It brushed against the butter-soft leather encasing the man's thigh. Without releasing my wrist, he grabbed my aching rod with his other hand.

"Hey, I don't want your spunk on my leathers!" I wasn't quite ready to come, but the sharp bite of his fingernails brought me close.

"Why don't you take them off, then?" I teased him, deliberately cheeky. Trying to provoke him. At the same time, I was dying to see him in the buff. It was my dream, after all.

His slap made my head spin. "Don't tell me what to do, boy!" I could feel the imprint of his palm on my cheek, growing hotter with each instant. My cock wept pre-cum onto the carpet. "I'm the one who gives the orders in this relationship." He tore open the zipper at his crotch. His cock sprang out, nearly as thick as Neil's and twice as long. "Suck it, slave."

I don't know which was more exciting, his words or the way he grabbed my hair, pushed me onto my knees, and forced my mouth down onto his rod. I opened wide, determined to take him all. He rammed his impossible length into my throat. I couldn't help gagging, and he pulled out, but only for an instant. The next thing I knew, he plunged back in, slamming the bulb against my palate. I choked. Saliva streamed from the corners of my mouth. I tried to accommodate him, relaxing my jaw muscles, angling my head so that he had a clear path for his thrusts. The pain subsided, though it was still difficult to breathe.

He fucked my mouth without mercy, fast and hard. His cock was a jackhammer, rattling my whole body. I loved every minute of it. Determined to please him, I sucked for all I was worth. I stroked my tongue along his shaft and flicked the underside of his glans whenever he pulled back. That always drove Neil crazy.

The thought of my real-life lover lying asleep in the next room distracted me. How could I let this other man use me

this way? But it was only a dream, damn it. If Neil would do this to me, I'd never even look at another guy. Neil didn't understand, though. He loved me, and that should be enough, but I had to admit it wasn't. I needed this, the force, the power, the illusion of cruelty. I needed someone to take me over and make me his.

A vicious tug on my hair brought me back to my present task. "Pay attention, slave! Pay attention to me! You have exactly thirty seconds to make me come. And if you don't succeed, I'll whip your ass until you won't be able to sit for a week."

I knew that he sounded corny and stereotyped. It didn't matter; I reacted anyway. My cock jerked, swelling to the point of pain. I clamped down on his rod, bobbing up and down and stroking furiously. The stranger pummelled my mouth, thrusting in time with me. He dug his nails into my scalp. The pain only turned up the volume on my arousal. Each jerk of his hips mashed his pelvis against my nose. The earthy scent of his sweat mingled with the ripe perfume of the leather. His flesh swelled under my tongue. He was close.

"Five seconds," he gasped. I gave him everything, tried to swallow him whole. A tremor shook his engorged flesh. I forgot my own hungry cock as triumph swept through me. Then I was gagging again, as he flooded my mouth with his bitter cum.

I drank it all, grateful for his gifts. Then I sank down onto the rug, aching, exhausted, overwhelmed. Some dream!

"Michael." His voice dragged me out of my lustful haze. "Stand up."

Wearily, I obeyed. He grabbed my chin and pulled my mouth to his. Despite their fullness, his lips were hard on mine, demanding, unyielding. His tongue invaded my mouth, as though probing to confirm that I really had consumed all his spunk. I opened to him, tried to relax into him as I did with Neil, but his body felt unyielding as well. Never mind. I wanted him more than ever.

"Do you believe me?" he asked, finally letting me go.

"Does it matter?" I almost laughed. Dreams rarely argued their own reality.

"More than anything." For the first time, I saw some vulnerability in his face, echoes of some sorrow I didn't understand. "Never mind. I'll convince you. Go get that evil little present that you bought for your ex-lover."

Ex-lover? Cold dread washed through me. The golden aura surrounding him had faded, but, with his bronzed skin and sun-streaked hair, he glowed from within. He stood there in my living room, lean and dangerous, full of youth and power—the ultimate, forbidden object of desire.

"Michael, don't make me wait..." His ominous tone kindled the same, sick, addictive thrill I'd felt during the blow job. I tiptoed into the bedroom to retrieve the object he requested, my rigid cock leading the way.

I had bought the crop on my lunch hour, at a tack store in Carlisle, an upscale town where it wasn't uncommon for people to own a horse or two. I could hardly breathe, as the balding but well-built clerk showed me different models and colours, discoursing on the relative merits of leather versus rubber and fibreglass versus plastic. Cheeks burning with

embarrassment, I explained that I was about to begin riding lessons.

"Maybe what you really need is a dressage whip," he offered with a friendly smile. My cock strained uncomfortably inside my briefs.

"No—um—my riding instructor recommended a crop." I'd visited a few adult stores in the past, bought a few gay porn flicks, but I'd never felt this uncomfortable—or this turned on.

I had come home early one afternoon, when I knew Neil had a staff meeting, and hidden the implement in my bottom drawer under my sweatshirts. I'd looked at it a few times since, thinking I should wrap it, wondering what Neil would think when he opened it on Christmas morning. *If* he opened it, that is. I wasn't sure I had the courage to give it to him.

Every time I touched it, I got hard.

After the brightness in the living room, I found myself blind in the bedroom. I groped around in the dark, trying not to wake Neil. I could hear his breathing, deep and even. The room was full of our warm, ripe smell—beer, sweat, cum. I had a sudden, intense urge to crawl in beside him, to snuggle up against his burly form and forget the weird dream that was dragging me along. But my throbbing cock wouldn't let me.

Working mainly by feel, I slowly slid open the wooden drawer. I groped around, tangling the previously folded garments. My fingers brushed the smooth fibreglass shaft. My cock leaped against my belly.

In the dark, I could smell the oiled leather of the handle. It reminded me of the man waiting for me. I shut the drawer,

still careful not to rouse Neil, and hastened back down the hall.

The stranger had removed his jacket. I let my eyes wander hungrily over his bare chest and linger on his prominent nipples, deep maroon contrasting with his tanned, golden skin. He was more slender than Neil but clearly strong. His shoulders, especially, showed well-defined muscle that rippled, ominously, when he reached for the crop.

"Good boy," he murmured, and I felt absurdly pleased. The shaft whistled through the air. The leather tip of the crop snapped loudly against the sofa. My heart jumped into my throat. "Lucky for you, I know just how to use this." He gestured towards the armchair in the corner, where Neil normally sat to read the paper. "Bend over. You know what I want, Michael."

It was the first time he'd used my name in a while. That calmed me, a bit, taking the edge off my terror without diminishing my lust. I did know what he wanted, as if I could read his mind—or he could read mine.

I placed my hands on the padded arms, leaning over so my back was nearly horizontal. My naked ass was presented to his view, at a most convenient height. I spread my thighs, knowing without being told that this was appropriate. My balls dangled in the gap, easily accessible. Vulnerable. On the Web, I'd occasionally watched videos of testicle torture, horrified but unable to stop myself. I didn't want that, I'd told myself, trying to ignore the throbbing in my cock. If this dream-man tried something like that, would I stop him? Could I?

My mind whirled, full of filthy images and unspeakable desires. For a long while, though, my so-called master did nothing. I could tell he was behind me; I felt the air move when he stepped into position. But he didn't touch me. Gradually my chaotic emotions subsided, leaving nothing but the ache of lust. I tried to relax, to ready myself for what I knew was coming. The longer I waited, the more I craved the blond man's attention, even if it hurt.

His hand hovered above my bare buttocks. I felt the heat emanating from his palm. He didn't touch me, but I felt a ghostly caress as he trailed his fingers millimetres from my bare skin. *Touch me*, I wanted to beg. Somehow I knew that I was not supposed to speak. The spectral hand moved away, leaving my flesh crying for contact.

A whoosh. A snap. A line of fire laced across my butt and burned into my soul. I screamed then choked back my cry, as another stroke seared the opposite cheek. A third blow sliced crosswise across both sides, triggering a howl of pain that I couldn't suppress. God, what if Neil heard? What if he woke and saw me, bent over like a slut, offering my ass to this stranger?

"Don't worry, he can't hear you." The blows paused. I gasped, feeling the fiery tracks across my flesh die down to a pleasurable heat. "We're in a different time locus. You can scream all you want. He'll never know." He lashed out again. The crop danced across my skin, striking sparks wherever it landed. I yelled as each blow landed, free at last.

I was high on the fantasy. Finally, I was being beaten by a gorgeous man, who knew exactly what I needed. The abstract

wonder fled quickly, however, replaced by the physical realities—intense pain and equally overwhelming pleasure. I dreaded each stroke, yet as soon as it arrived, even before the agony faded, I craved another. My new master had apparently inexhaustible energy. Again and again he slashed at my ass. He laid new welts on top of the old ones. My flesh screamed, sensitised to the point where the gentlest touch would wake painful echoes. And he was far from gentle.

I was beyond screaming. All I could do now was whimper, tears leaking out from under my closed eyelids, fluid dripping from my rock-hard cock. Yet I didn't want him to stop. I was floating on a cloud of sensation, borne up by the knowledge that I pleased him.

"Had enough, boy?" he asked, breaking his rhythm to catch his breath. I could smell his sweat.

"More..." I croaked, hoarse from my yelling. "Give me more, sir."

"I don't think so. I don't think you can take it. Anyway, we've got to get going."

"Please..." My aching cock suddenly took centre stage, throbbing in time with the stripes on my ass. One touch from him, and I knew I'd explode.

"You are greedy, aren't you, slave?" He grabbed my butt cheeks, one in each hand, and pulled me open. I screamed once more as his fingers bit into my tenderised flesh. A blaze of sensation raced through me to settle in my cock, kindling the final conflagration.

I was already coming when he pushed the handle of the crop into my well-stretched anus.

Tomorrow's Gifts
by Lisabet Sarai

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Chapter Three

No one expects continuity from a dream. The next thing I knew, I was sitting on a stool in a dim bar. Trying to sit, that is. Every time I settled my full weight onto the seat, my ass screamed in protest. Every time I felt that pain, my cock hardened. I leaned against the edge of the stool and tried to get comfortable.

The stranger sat across from me. His eyes were in shadow. "This is where we'll meet," he told me, his lips twisting into a half smile. "This is where you'll give yourself to me."

"What?" I looked around at the suits and the leather boys. I knew this place. "Hugo's?"

"Right. A week after you split with Neil, I'll see you here, across the room, staring glumly into your drink. I'll claim you as mine."

His proprietary tone thrilled me, but that didn't quite dispel the anxiety caused by his statement. "Neil and I are going to break up?"

"New Year's Eve, you'll have the worst fight ever. New Year's Day, you'll move out."

I didn't like to think about this. Even though I'd already been considering the question.

"Hey, cheer up. You wanted some excitement in your life. You told me so." He stood up and claimed my mouth. The welts on my ass throbbed. My swollen penis pressed painfully against the zipper of my jeans. "I'm it," he laughed when he finally released me. "The lover you need. The lover you

deserve." He settled back onto his stool and sipped his scotch. When he spoke again, his voice was sober. "You and I are destined for each other, Michael. We'll be together for the rest of our lives."

I was ready to admit I lusted after this guy in a big way, especially since he seemed to understand my craving to be dominated. Somehow, though, I couldn't imagine spending a lifetime in his company.

"What's your name? I can't go around calling you 'Master' in public."

"I'm Thorne. Thorne Wilder, at your service." He chuckled. "Well, actually, you're going to be at my service, but I know you wouldn't have it any other way..."

I laughed with him, nervous, embarrassed, turned on. "Thorne Wilder?" The name was familiar. I remembered a B-grade action flick, with a lanky, sexy villain. "Aren't you in films?"

"Actually, my father's in films—he's CEO of Magellan Entertainment. But yeah, I've acted in a couple of movies. It's something to do when I get bored."

"So what were you doing in a local gay bar in Somerville, a week after New Year's? I'd expect somebody like you would have been partying in the Caribbean. Or gambling on the Riviera."

"Looking for a new slave." His eyes burned right through me. My nipples tightened into hungry knots. "Actually, my father sent me to Boston to scout out some locations for an upcoming film."

"And you say you saw me—you will see me—here?"

"You'll be sitting all alone in that booth in the corner. Drunk and depressed. I'll buy you a beer. Then I'll take you into the bathroom stall and fuck you so hard that you'll cry."

My throat was suddenly dry. He reached over to squeeze the bulge in my crotch.

"You'll love every minute of it."

I didn't doubt him for an instant. "I want to see. Can you show me?"

He looked unaccustomedly flustered. "We don't have time. Anyway, we have much more intense adventures coming up in the future. Drink up. We've got to go."

The dream was becoming increasingly strange, but it had some kind of bizarre logic.

"Look, Thorne. How do I know that this isn't just a dream? Why in the world should I believe that you've come to me from the future?"

"I knew about the riding crop."

"I knew about the crop. If this is my dream, it could contain any of my knowledge or feelings."

He pinched my cock. I sat down hard on my battered butt. Pain and excitement lanced through me. "Does that feel like a dream?"

I waited for my heartbeat to slow before answering. "I've had some pretty vivid dreams in my life."

He sighed. "Michael, I'm your Master. You should trust me. However, I knew that you'd be hard to convince." He struggled to pull something from the pocket of his tight leather trousers. "Here. Proof."

It was a full page newspaper clipping, from the *Los Angeles Times*. 'Celebs strut at the Oscars' read the headline. I scanned the grainy photos of women in glittering gowns and men in tuxedos.

"Look here." Thorne pointed to a picture near the middle of the spread. Two men, one with his arm around the other. "Look more closely."

It was tough to see in the dim bar. I pulled out my key chain, which held an LED flashlight. It shone like a spotlight on the photo. Now, I could easily recognise Thorne, dressed in black, a big grin on his handsome face. And the man beside him, the one Thorne held so possessively? He had a different, trendy haircut and wore a tailored white suit I'd never seen before. However, it was unquestionably me.

"What the hell...?" I searched for the date. February twenty-third. February twenty-third, 2009.

A chill crept over me, a dull, aching cold quite different from the delicious shivers that Thorne usually produced. "It can't be." I knew my mind could have manufactured even this detailed pseudo-evidence, but it seemed increasingly unlikely that a dream could have such coherence. I didn't know exactly when next year's Academy Awards were scheduled, but I recalled that they were usually in the depths of winter. I remembered curling up with Neil to watch last year, while a miserable freezing rain slicked the sidewalks outside our triple-decker.

I searched Thorne's face. "It can't be true. Can it?"

The other man stroked my cheek with uncharacteristic gentleness. "How else would I know how much you enjoy being beaten? Or how much you can take?"

"And you've come from the future—why?"

"To show you what lies in store for you if you listen to your instincts and give up Neil. To prove you won't be lonely. That, in fact, all your desires, hidden so long, will be fulfilled."

"If you know Neil and I are going to split up, why all the bother?" A hint of bitterness crept into my voice. "You could just wait for me to come to you."

"Time isn't like you imagine, Michael. There are a million possible paths from the past to the future. Sometimes they run parallel. Sometimes they intersect. Soon, you'll stand at a crossroads. I'm trying to make sure that you take the correct fork, the one that brings you to me."

Thorne grabbed my shoulders and pulled me into another kiss. His lips were softer this time. He opened his mouth and let me taste him. Marijuana and expensive single malt. His leather-sheathed erection jostled with mine. "I want you, Michael. I need you. And you need me." He reached behind and gathered a fistful of my wounded butt-flesh. Pain flashed through my body, settling heavily in my aching groin. "You see? I'll fulfil your every fantasy. Hell, I'll take you places that even you haven't imagined."

Lust overcame reason. "Let's go," I growled. "Let's find somewhere private."

Thorne gave a wicked laugh as he threw some bills down on the bar. "Soon, boy. You'll just have to be patient."

He marched me out to the sidewalk in front of the bar, where a couple of guys were smoking. A light, lazy snow drifted down from the midnight sky. By the curb, a huge black motorcycle, dripping with chrome, gleamed in the city lights. Thorne swung one long leg over the saddle. The engine roared in my ears. "Climb on. We've got a plane to catch."

I struggled onto the seat behind him and fastened my arms around his waist. I could feel his abs rippling under the supple leather as he wrestled the bike into traffic and raced away. He shot through two red lights then spiralled up a ramp and onto Route 2.

"Hey, be careful!" I yelled, trying to make him hear me. Thorne just laughed. Our speed turned the flurrying snowflakes into tiny knives that pricked at my face. Thorne wasn't wearing a helmet, and he hadn't offered me one. The winter wind rushed past us, stealing my breath, but somehow I wasn't cold. Fierce excitement burned in my chest as I allowed him to take me away, into the dark.

The powerful bike hummed between my thighs. The vibration made me harder than ever. My chest was mashed against Thorne's back as I held on for dear life. Through the whole frantic ride, I was certain I would come at any minute. Thorne would punish me, I knew, for soiling his bike, for climaxing without his permission. That thought only brought me closer to the edge of the precipice.

The engine roar shifted to a lower register. Thorne swung wide around a curve and tore through the open gate in a chain link fence. He waved to the security guard, who seemed to know him.

'Hanscom Field' read the sign. Thorne pointed to an elegant little jet, parked on the tarmac.

"There's our ride, Michael. I don't think we could get more private."

Thorne had his own plane. Well, it probably belonged to his father. Nevertheless, I couldn't help but be impressed. Inside, everything was red leather and dark polished wood. Thorne pointed to one of the sumptuously upholstered seats. "Settle down and strap yourself in. We'll be taking off in about five minutes."

An athletic-looking middle aged man stuck his head through the door at the front of the cabin. "Ready whenever you are, Mr. Wilder."

"Let's go, Jim."

"Right away, sir."

"Oh—and Jim..."

"Yes, sir?"

"Don't worry if you hear some strange noises coming from back here. Screams or wails or whatever."

"Of course. Whatever you say, sir."

I swallowed a lump the size of a baseball. My cock threatened to burst the seams of my trousers. What had I got myself into?

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Chapter Four

Thorne put on his seatbelt until we were airborne. I was surprised—I had already concluded he had a reckless streak. As soon as the icon went dark, though, he unbuckled. I started to do the same.

"Not so fast. I think I want to keep you there, restrained. In fact, your seat is specially equipped for that purpose." He stretched my forearms out along the padded rests then pressed a button on the side of the chair. Semicircles of metal emerged from the arms, arched over my wrists, and fastened themselves on the other side with an ominous "snick".

"What the hell?" I tried to pull my wrists free from the high tech shackles. The steel edges bit into my flesh. I really couldn't escape. Terror and excitement washed over me in alternating waves.

Thorne brushed a lock of hair off my forehead. His touch calmed me a little. "Shh. Don't fight me, Michael. You know you want this. You've dreamed of being helpless and at my mercy." He crouched down and positioned my legs near the outer edges of the chair then apparently pressed another button. Another pair of restraints shot out to capture my ankles.

I could wriggle around in the chair, but not much. Thorne fiddled with the chair at chest level and pulled out a secondary seat belt. He fastened it across my chest, just above my nipples. I felt them throb under my shirt when he touched me.

He was right. I did want this, or some part of me did. It was overwhelming, knowing he could do whatever he wanted to me. My cock surged, trapped uncomfortably in my pants.

"Don't come yet, boy. I'll let you come, don't worry. But I want to play with you first."

I heard a click. Something glittered in the subdued cabin lights. My eyes followed the gleam as Thorne waved it back and forth in front of my face. A switchblade.

"Thorne ... what..."

"Call me Master."

"Master..." I could barely get the words out, I was so choked with terror. "What are you going to do?"

"Only what you want, boy. Only what you crave. Don't you trust me?" Something glittered in his eyes, bright and dangerous as the knife.

Did I trust him? I hardly knew him. Yet I had to admit, he seemed to know me, as though our time together had been months rather than hours. It was almost as if he could read my mind. He could see the awful, enticing images there—the ones Neil was blind to.

"I won't hurt you—or no more than you want, anyway. Look, I'll give you a safe word. If it's too much, if you want me to stop, say 'Santa'."

Why had he chosen that word? My stomach clenched with guilt. Images of Neil rose before me, powerful, virile Neil, with his big hands and his furry chest and his thick, rich cock. I could see him in his costume, all belly laughs and good spirits, with hugs for everyone. I could see him naked, licking

his lips, slathering lube all over his erection to get it ready for me.

Thorne jerked my chin up, raising my eyes to meet his angry glare.. "Forget about him! You're with me now! He was a wimp, a weak, stupid man who couldn't see who you are. Who couldn't satisfy you." When he saw my tears gathering, he softened his tone. "Look, Michael. Give me a chance. Let me show you how things can be, how they will be, between us. Then you can decide."

He brought the blade close to my chest. I held my breath, seeing red, imagining the pain of steel slicing through skin. Instead, he flicked his wrist, and one of my shirt buttons flew across the cabin. Several others followed, before he grew impatient. He pocketed the knife, grabbed my shirt, and tore it open, scattering the rest of the buttons.

My nipples perked up like eager children. He circled one with his fingertip, and I remembered the first time I touched him, when I'd thought he was a dream. The same electric thrill shot down my spine. My cock jerked futilely. Pre-cum made a damp spot on my trousers. He held my gaze while he used both hands in a symmetrical caress, lulling me into a haze of pleasure. My sigh of delight turned to a yelp as he pinched both nubs as hard as he could.

He grinned. "Don't expect gentleness from me, slave. I know that's not what you need." I squirmed, instinctively trying to get away even as I savoured the fierce bite of his fingernails digging into my flesh. I loved the way he used those elegant, graceful, cruel hands of his. My cock craved his attention, ached for an assault from those sharp nails.

When he released my swollen nipples, the pain echoed on. But he had his knife out again, and was crouched between my thighs, pointing it at my erection. "Be very still, now," he said. "We wouldn't want an accident."

I sucked in my breath as he began to cut away the fabric of my trousers, inches from my cock. The vicious blade met no resistance as it sliced through the garment. He made an incision from my waist down to the seam at my groin, then a matching one on the other side. Finally he cut across the seam, right over my balls. I shrank into the chair, terrified yet more turned on than I'd ever been in my life.

He lifted the flap he'd created, baring my straining cock. "Didn't think that I could get your zipper down, with that monster inside," he laughed. He clutched my scrotum and squeezed. I gasped. "Anyway, this gives me better access."

"Now, what should I do with you? I've got some toys in the overhead bin. I could whip your cock, or truss up your balls until they turn blue. Maybe some nipple clamps? Much sharper than my fingernails, I guarantee." He pinched the bulb of my penis, just as I'd imagined. I almost fainted from the sensation.

"But maybe something simple is best. I'll tell you what. I'm going to suck your cock. And no matter what I do, you are forbidden to come. If you spurt before I give my permission, I'll whisk you back to your sorry little flat and your impotent old boyfriend, and you'll never see me again."

I should have been pissed off by his nasty tone. But I was too far gone. He'd managed to get under my skin. I wanted to please him, to prove to him that I could be the perfect slave.

"Understand, boy?"

"Yes, Master."

"Good." Thorne stepped back and stripped off his jacket. His muscles rippled as he tossed it onto the seat. He crouched back down between my legs and clenched his fist around the base of my penis. "Enjoy."

The first hot, wet instant almost undid me. My cock is average-sized, though I felt hugely swollen after his long teasing. He swallowed my whole length, sweeping his tongue along the shaft as he engulfed me. It was all pleasure, not a hint of pain, but so intense that I knew I couldn't stand it. I felt the explosion starting, deep in my gut. He clamped down on my balls, wringing a scream from my lips and stopping my cum in its tracks.

"Don't disappoint me. I'm planning to suck you for a long time."

He forced his mouth down onto my rod, raking me with his teeth on the way. I moaned. My hips jerked. He backed away, deliberately frustrating me, then lunged and swallowed me again.

I've always thought of giving head as an act of submission. You're worshipping a guy's cock, letting him use your mouth to get himself off. This blow-job was different. Thorne was claiming me. He owned my cock, owned my cum, and was going to prove it. He was as rough as I could have dreamed, slamming my knob against his palate, nipping my flesh, using my balls as a handle to work me in and out of his mouth.

He kept me teetering on the edge, jazzed by the pleasure and the pain, but he wouldn't let me topple over. Whenever I

got close, he did something so agonising it pulled me back. After a while, I stopped worrying about disobeying his orders. I relaxed and let him ravage me.

It went on and on. The sensations peaked, faded then crystallised back into focus. I watched Thorne's tawny head as he worried my cock like a hound with a juicy bone. I could do this forever, I thought dreamily.

All at once, he pulled away. The shock was nearly enough to trigger my climax. I clenched my fists, ignoring the bite of the shackles, struggling for control.

Thorne stood watching me wrestle with my lust, grinning maliciously.

"That's right, slave. Hold it in. You can't come until I do."

He ripped open his fly and released his own huge, glorious cock.

I watched, transfixed, as he jerked away, inches from my captive form. I could feel every stroke. With each grunt, each squeeze, I came closer.

His eyes closed. His muscular form went rigid. "Now, boy!" he yelled, as creamy jets of his cum arced through the air and splattered on my chest.

I didn't need him to tell me. The first drops landing on my skin were enough to shatter my control. I swore my cock was literally bursting open. My semen flooded up in painful, exquisite waves, one after another, an endless cycle of release that left me dazed and weak.

When I opened my eyes, he was wiping my cum off his leather-clad thighs. "Now," he said, "you are really in trouble." His mouth was stern. But his eyes were smiling.

Tomorrow's Gifts
by Lisabet Sarai

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Chapter Five

Thorne reached for my cock. I didn't have time to wonder what he was planning. The plane lurched. The floor dropped away. Reality dissolved and reassembled itself.

Brilliant sunlight danced on the turquoise surface of an enormous swimming pool. Emerald palm trees swayed overhead. Everything seemed brighter than normal, the colours so pure and intense they hurt my eyes. The sun-warmed air was hyper-clear, a lens that magnified and transformed the world into some kind of fairyland.

I was naked, half-prone on a comfortable lounge chair. Thorne reclined next to me, on his side, also nude, gripping my erection with one hand and his own with the other.

This was the first time I'd seen him completely naked. His body was flawless. His skin was golden all over, completely smooth except for the blond fuzz at the base of his rampant cock. His taut thighs were corded with muscle; his calves swelled gracefully; even his feet were perfect, like the work of some Renaissance sculptor. I felt a sudden urge to kneel and worship them, to suck his toes and prove my devotion.

I wasn't going anywhere, though. Thorne's iron grip made that clear.

"Welcome to paradise," he said. He squeezed harder. I choked back a whimper of pain, relishing the familiar agony.

"Where are we?"

"This is my place—our place—in the Hollywood Hills. You're going to be very happy here, Michael. I've got the pool,

sauna, gym, tennis courts, and, of course, a well-equipped dungeon." His thumbnail traced the length of my rod. "All the creature comforts."

Without releasing either of our organs, he whistled. A striking young Asian man with straight black hair nearly to his waist appeared at the foot of the chaise. He also was completely naked. "Two margaritas, Tim."

"Right away, sir."

"And who's he?"

"Just one of my boys. Look."

I sat up, with some difficulty given Thorne's hand, and looked around the redwood-planked deck. Half a dozen men lounged around the pool. Their skin colours and builds varied from the hefty, African muscleman standing in the shower to the ethereal blond cherub massaging the feet of a lanky brunette. Everyone was naked—and well-hung. Quite a few of them, I noticed, sported erections.

"You seem to be quite a connoisseur," I commented, jealous in spite of the arousing scene in front of me.

"I'll send them away if you want me to, Michael." Thorne finally released me in order to take the drinks from Tim.

"They're just toys."

"And what about me? Aren't I just your toy, too?"

"No—you're my lover. I might play with you, but I'll never discard you."

I stared at him, surprised by his intensity. It was hard for me to believe he was serious.

He handed me an oversized frosted goblet. The scent of lime tickled my nostrils. "To us," he intoned, clicking his glass against mine. I didn't speak. "To pleasure—and pain."

His honeyed voice worked its magic. My annoyance and uncertainty evaporated. All I wanted was to be on my knees in front of him, offering him my mouth or my ass.

"Drink, boy." I took a sip of the tart green concoction. "What do you think?"

"Delicious. Though I usually don't drink cocktails."

"Tim's a skilled bartender. But he has other entertaining talents as well."

Thorne gestured in the direction of the shower. The tableau unfolding there made my cock ache in sympathy. It was as lewd as any porn clip I'd ever downloaded.

Tim knelt on one of the chaises across the pool. The dark-skinned giant I'd noticed before stood behind him, gripping Tim's flowing hair like a horse's reins. Meanwhile, he repeatedly rammed his cock into the Asian man's ass. The force was obvious. The victim's body shook with each thrust. Yet Tim seemed to be enjoying himself. He arched back each time the black man impaled him, urging him on.

Meanwhile, the blond and another Hispanic-looking man I hadn't previously noted stood in front of Tim, jerking off. It was pretty clear that in a matter of minutes, the bartender was going to be bathed in cum.

"Wow." I really didn't know what to say. I'd never imagined I'd see scenes like this in the real world.

"Life in the fast lane, baby," said Thorne with a smirk. "You like that, don't you?"

"Yeah," I admitted. "It's really hot." The black man's hips jerked; Tim wailed. My own sphincter clenched in sympathy. The muscled giant pulled out, his cock still mostly erect. He was even larger than Thorne. Lust flooded through me as I watched the bronzed Latin guy circle around and plunge his rod into Tim's ass without any preliminaries.

"Drink up," Thorne urged. I gulped down the tart liquid, hardly tasting it. I couldn't take my eyes off the gang bang in progress only a few yards from our chairs. The blond surfer boy was now taking his place behind the Asian's raised butt.

"You'd like to be Tim, wouldn't you, slave?" Thorne's commanding voice dragged my attention away from the lewd tableau. "What?"

"You'd like to be butt-fucked by a bunch of guys. One fat cock after another, forcing their way into your hole."

I blushed. "Well, I've imagined it."

"I know you have. Stick with me. I'll make sure that you get to do every dirty thing that you've ever dreamed of."

I watched Tim being reamed, appalled and aroused, wondering what he was feeling. Wanting to know.

The sunlight flickered. The scene wavered. *We're off to sample another of our joint memories*, I thought, expecting an abrupt change of environment. The pool did not vanish, though. I felt a bit dizzy. Everything around me pulsed and flowed. At the same time, a kind of giddy delirium seized me. I began to laugh. I couldn't stop, even though my stomach hurt.

"Ah, you're getting off," said Thorne.

"What are you talking about?" Weird pleasure stabbed through my limbs. Nothing felt normal.

"Tequila. It's made from desert cactus. It has a mildly hallucinogenic effect. And I told Tim to make you a double."

"Hallucinogenic?" The tiled deck seemed to ripple underneath us. I bolted upright, alarmed despite my continued sense of euphoria.

"Yeah. Thought you'd enjoy it." Thorne's sweet voice was close to my ear. He was behind me, caressing my chest. His swollen cock poked at my butt. He felt wonderful. All I wanted was to bend over, open my butt cheeks and invite him in.

"Makes sex incredible."

His fingers slithered into my crack and delicately circled my rear hole. A wave of pleasure swamped me. It was ten seconds before I could breathe again. I pressed my hips back, trying to impale myself on his hand. "More," I moaned.

The sun wheeled dizzily in impossibly blue sky. My cock was an enormous red balloon, stretched tight, bobbing in the breeze, ready to fly away.

Thorne pressed the tip of one long finger into my anus. The world wavered around me like a funhouse mirror. A second finger joined the first. I was reeling, falling, floating. I clenched down on the invading digits, trying to pull them inside. Laughing, he removed his fingers but quickly replaced them with the bulb of his outrageous cock.

Even the tip felt huge. I knew that full penetration would be agony. Oh, how I craved that! Somehow, though, with the tequila singing through my veins, I couldn't imagine anything but sweet, voluptuous delight.

He rubbed his flesh against mine. Sparks flew. I was torn. One part of me wanted to give in, to just let the sensations take me. I felt so light, so joyous. I loved Thorne; he loved me. All he wanted was to give me pleasure.

Some part of me, though, didn't want this artificial bliss. I wasn't used to hard liquor; I was a beer and wine guy. How could I trust someone who would get me this smashed without asking me? That wasn't love. That was pure irresponsibility.

Neil would never have done something like that. Never.

"Stop it," I told him, as everything whirled around me. "Make it go away."

"I can't." Thorne sounded less confident than usual. "This is our future. This is what is going to happen."

"You're controlling where we go, what you show me. I know you are. Take me somewhere else. Now!"

Thorne was reluctant. I could tell. But I wasn't going to take no for an answer.

"Thorne, if you care about me at all, show me some other scenes from our future. Or take me back home to spend Christmas Eve with Neil."

"Oh, yeah, and your Christmas Eve was so much fun, wasn't it? A boring party with the same old crowd of fags then frustration because your old man won't beat you the way you want."

Thorne could be incredibly cruel. Yet I did want him, in spite of everything. I wanted a lover who saw who I really was, what I really wanted.

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"Okay then, show me how we'll spend Christmas Eve. Convince me that it will be more exciting than being with Neil."

Thorne held me tight. The world began to shift. "You bet your ass, boy."

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Chapter Six

The redwood deck shook under my bare feet. Thorne gripped my arm hard enough to leave a bruise. An earthquake, I thought, giggling, still dizzy from the drink my so-called lover had fed me. I felt myself spinning, head over heels, as the glaring sun winked out of existence.

A wall of velvety blackness rose before us. I sensed Thorne's presence by my side and was glad. I didn't want to be alone in this impenetrable darkness. I was lost, disoriented and confused. Then Thorne parted the curtains, and my mind clicked back into total clarity.

We stood in an arched entryway at the top of a curving, black marble stairway. A vast dark space spread out before us. A vaulted ceiling hung above, traversed by strands of Christmas bulbs. They scarcely made a dent in the gloom. Their cheery twinkling seemed incongruous, given the sense of menace and power that pervaded this place. What light there was came from artificial torches fixed to the walls. Scattered around the floor, I saw pedestals of the same gleaming marble as the staircase. Each held a human figure, bound in some position of painful immobility. One man stood, bent double with his wrists fastened to his ankles and his ass in the air. A second was stretched out on a most convincing-looking rack, complete with spoked wheel to adjust the tension. Another man was suspended from a chain that dangled from the ceiling. Even across the room, I could see

the sweat glistening on his straining shoulders and chest. A shiver ran through me—half fear, half desire.

Not every man was bound. Some were being paddled or whipped. Some, I could see, were being fucked. There were many couples, clearly engrossed in their private play. Here and there, though, I'd see two or three powerful, muscular men, all focused on torturing one poor slave.

Directly across from the entrance there was a small stage, empty except for a Saint Andrew's Cross.

"Welcome to The Pit," said Thorne. "And Merry Christmas." He leaned towards me to bite my earlobe. I gasped as pain and pleasure twined through my body.

I looked at my guide in the flickering light. He was dressed in red leather, a tight jerkin open in a wide V that bared his chest. A wide black belt cinched his waist. Below, he wore some sort of red leather codpiece that jutted obscenely from his groin, decorated with silver studs. His corded, golden thighs were bare. Tall black boots completed his outfit. One hand still clenched my upper arm. In the other, he carried a vicious-looking whip.

I swallowed hard. My nipples peaked into aching spikes. I realised I was wearing some sort of cape, but underneath, my chest was bare. I felt cold marble under my bare feet. In fact, I was completely naked, except for a web of leather straps that encased my cock and balls, biting cruelly into the aching flesh. I shrank back into the shelter of the cloak as the various denizens of the place looked up at us, curiously.

Thorne grabbed my elbow. "Come, Michael. They've been waiting for us to start the show." He took my cloak, exposing

me to dozens of hungry eyes. "Stand tall, slave. Make me proud."

My heart slammed against my ribs. My legs felt like jelly. I had read about S&M clubs, dreamed about visiting one some day, but the reality was almost too much for me.

"I can't," I whispered. "I just can't."

Thorne jerked on the straps caging my penis. Agony shot up my spine. "What do you mean? You wanted this. You practically begged me to bring you here."

"Yes, but..." The other Doms huddled together, clearly discussing me. My cheeks burned with embarrassment. I wanted to sink through the floor.

A stinging palm landed on my buttocks. "I'm warning you! Don't make me lose face. On your knees! Crawl to the feet of those Masters and kiss their boots. Show them how well I've trained you—what a good little slave you can be."

As scared and embarrassed as I was, his words excited me. I let him push me to the floor, and discovered he had me on a leash. A thrill ripped through me. This was real. This was not a dream. I could finally let go and admit the shameful things I wanted. Thorne, and these other men—they understood.

The cold stone battered my knees as I clambered down the stairs, with Thorne following close behind. I was hardly graceful, though I did my best. The descent seemed to take forever. I could hear the murmuring of the Doms against the pulsing electronic music in the background. I felt their eyes burning into my naked flesh. My cock bobbed between my thighs, every motion triggering echoes of delicious pain.

Finally, I reached the bottom. My knees bloodied, my heart racing, I collapsed in front of them. Thorne's tug on the leash dragged me up to a high kneel.

"Kiss their feet. Do it."

I bent to obey. The scent of mink oil mingled with the reek of my own sweat. The bitter taste left my cock even more swollen than before. My senses reeled. I thought for a moment that I'd pass out from excitement and exhaustion.

"Hang on, boy." I didn't recognise the deep voice. I looked up, into the craggy face of an older man, with thick black hair and heavy eyebrows. He was big but not fat. In fact, he was built quite a lot like Neil.

I pushed that thought away as I tried to focus on the Dom's face.

"Thorne tells us that you're a born slave. That you're a real slut for pain. Is that true, boy?"

His words seared me. Even in its painful confinement, I was sure that my cock would explode. Shame and embarrassment pushed me to new levels of arousal. How could I admit that this perversion was what I really wanted?

I couldn't speak. The Dom nudged me with the sharp toe of his boot. "Well?"

"Yes, sir," I finally managed to croak. "Yes, it's true."

"Shall I beat you, then?" I looked around for Thorne, suddenly terrified. Would he really give me to someone else?

Thorne stroked my hair as if he were petting his dog. "I'd like you to try him, Damon. I think you'll enjoy it. He can take a lot—we're still exploring his limits."

"Master, no..." Thorne I knew and thought I could trust, at least to some extent. But a stranger...?

"Are you going to disobey me, boy?"

"But..."

"Are you my slave or not? Isn't this what you wanted? Isn't this why you left that pathetic school teacher? To experience the life of your guilty dreams?"

I couldn't answer. I wanted to please Thorne. I wanted to be made to do unspeakable things, against my will. I wanted to be forced. But how could I voluntarily consent to such treatment?

I nodded, finally, unable to get out the words. For Thorne, that was enough.

Two burly men grabbed me by the arms and hustled me onto the stage. They pressed my belly against the cross and fastened my wrists and ankles with braided leather restraints. My engorged cock was trapped between my body and the polished wood of the frame. I wriggled a bit, trying for some friction to relieve the pressure. Thorne's palm laid a stinging track across my ass. Then he ground his studded codpiece into my flesh.

"Be still. Forget about your own pleasure. You exist only to please your Masters."

The music had changed, had become louder and more urgent, though still dominated by the eerie strains of a synthesiser. Thorne slipped a velvet blindfold over my eyes and suckled my earlobe for an instant. His hot, wet mouth left me gasping. "Enjoy," he whispered.

He had scarcely moved away when I heard the crack of a whip. A track of fire blazed across my back, more painful than anything I'd ever felt. Before I could scream, or even breathe, the leather tongue whistled through the air again, slicing into my ass. Was it Thorne after all? Or the huge, menacing Master Damon?

I yelled out the pain, forcing it away from me before the next stroke sizzled across my skin. It sounded like a whip, but it felt like knives, flaying me alive. How could I have wanted this? How could I bear it? And yet—if the man whipping me paused for more than an instant, I found myself craving another burning kiss from his infernal instrument. When he didn't beat me, I felt abandoned. When it danced its painful way across my body, I was beloved.

"What's your safe word, boy?"

Damon's voice, coming out of a stinging red haze.

I searched my mind. What did he mean?

"Santa," I heard Thorne say, coming as if from a long distance. "Remember?"

I remembered. Suddenly in the darkness behind the blindfold, I saw Neil, still in his costume, watching me as I gave my body to these strangers. Tears welled in my eyes. He looked shocked and miserable.

"He's too far gone to use it. Enough of the whip, for now."

"Oh, just a little more," Thorne wheedled. "Let me have a few strokes. Just so he remembers who his Master is."

I didn't care what he did. I hung on the cross, numb, burnt out from excesses of pain and pleasure.

"No! You'll do serious damage."

"Ah, well ... then let's fuck him." Something in me stirred. My trapped penis jumped eagerly. "He's always fantasised about being gang banged..."

I heard the sounds—lube squirting, condom wrappers tearing. I felt Thorne behind me, gripping my stinging butt cheeks, holding me open. He drove his monstrous cock into me without any preliminaries, burying himself in my body. I jerked around him, impaled, dangling once again between the pinnacles of agony and ecstasy.

He fucked me hard and fast. The force scattered the tears that had gathered in my eyes. Before I could begin to adapt to his thrusts, he exploded, forcing his hot seed into my bowels. Before I could breathe again, he had pulled out, leaving me stretched wide..

I was empty for mere moments. Another cock rammed into my ass, longer even than Thorne's though not as thick. "God, boy, you're tight," groaned Damon as he pistoned in and out of my hole. I hung limp on the cross, letting him take what he wanted. He pulled out suddenly, tore off the condom and sprayed his cum all over my back. His bitter scent filled the air.

My stretched sphincter twitched. I felt the heat of another body behind me, the invasion of yet another engorged dick. Tears leaked from beneath the blindfold. The salt flavour revived me slightly as I was skewered once again. I thought I couldn't bear any more. Yet, when the man slipped out and left me gaping, I wanted to be full again.

Where was Thorne? I needed him, needed him to tell me he was pleased with my obedience. That I was his beloved

slave. I listened for his warm, seductive voice, but all I could hear were the grunts and groans of the man behind me, getting himself off in my ass.

The physical sensations still buzzed through my body, pleasure and pain so mingled that I couldn't tell them apart. My fantasies were coming true. I should have felt exhilaration, but instead, I was acutely lonely.

In the end, I don't know how many of the Doms had me. I sagged in my bonds, open, available, a willing receptacle for the lusts of innumerable strangers.

I had never felt more empty.

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Chapter Seven

I woke to a kiss. Thorne was nibbling gently at my lips, playing his tongue along the edges. He knelt beside me, stroking my hair back from my eyes, watching my expressions as I struggled back to consciousness. I read anxiety and relief on his handsome face.

"Hey, Michael. Welcome back!" My cock had been released from the torture device in which it had been trapped. It rose gratefully under Thorne's hand.

"What happened?" I tried to sit up. The welts on my back convinced me to give up on this notion.

We were still in The Pit, but it seemed that we were alone. The music had been silenced. The torches had been extinguished. The holiday lights twinkled absurdly in the dark vault above us.

I was lying on a pile of velvet that I guessed was my cloak. The soft fabric soothed the pain in my back and buttocks, as long as I didn't move. My anus felt stretched and tender. The velvet was soaked under my ass, where all the Doms' cum leaked out of me.

"What happened? Your wildest dreams came true, boy! You were whipped and then fucked by six different guys. Just like you imagined."

I was astonished to find that his words could still kindle a flicker of excitement.

"It was amazing, Michael. You were so hot! I'm so proud of you." Thorne kissed me again, deeply. I couldn't help but

respond. There was something about him, his smell, his aura that I just couldn't resist.

"Wasn't it great?" Thorne was effervescent, full of energy. All I wanted was to rest.

"It was—intense. Exciting. But not like I imagined. It was as if I wasn't really there."

"You were in sub-space."

"Maybe. I don't know." How could I explain how lost and alone I had felt? How I knew that nobody cared at all who I was, or what I was feeling. I was just a piece of meat for those guys, a way to get their rocks off. I was no one. But that was what it meant to be a slave, wasn't it?

"You were in sub-space. Believe me, if anyone should know, it's me!" Thorne giggled incongruously. I looked him over.

His eyes were dilated and his face was more flushed than usual. He kept licking his lips.

"Are you high, Thorne?"

"Well, yeah. I felt like flying, after such a great evening. But I didn't give you anything. I learned my lesson, Michael." The pleading in his voice was definitely not normal. He bent down and swirled his tongue over the head of my cock. He was desperate to please me. Tired as I was, that didn't stop me from bobbing eagerly up into his face. "Wasn't it a fabulous night? What a way to spend Christmas Eve, huh?"

"How will we spend Christmas Day?" All I wanted was to curl up with him and sleep. I'd had enough excitement to last me for a while. "Can we have a nice, quiet day at home? Just lie around the pool and relax?" Thorne looked frightened. I

supposed that it must be drug-induced paranoia. "You've convinced me our Christmas Eve was something else. Show me what we'll do tomorrow."

"I can't."

"Why not? Really, I'd like to see whether we can have peaceful, loving times occasionally, instead of constant excitement."

"It's not possible. I don't have the power."

"What do you mean?" I sat up. The wounds on my back seemed to be healing with magical speed. "Aren't you Thorne Wilder, the rich playboy?" I couldn't keep the sarcasm out of my voice. "Aren't you my Master? The one who'll fulfil all my dreams?"

"Yes, of course. You know I am, Michael." He stood up, looming over me. A shimmer of desire swept through me then faded away. "But there are certain things that are just not impossible. Prohibited by the rules of physics. The nature of reality."

"Reality? You're a supernatural visitor from the future, or so you've told me! How unreal can you get?"

Thorne looked acutely miserable. I felt a bit guilty. "Everything that I've shown you, Michael—it's all real. It will all happen. All that wonderful pleasure. All that overwhelming lust. All the love I'll shower you with for the rest of our lives."

I wondered whether Thorne understood what love was. Then again, did I?

"Okay, if you can't show me our Christmas, I've got another request. Show me how Neil will spend next Christmas Day if I break up with him this New Year's."

"No...!"

"That's impossible, too?" Anger rose in me, making me cruel. "You're a pretty pitiful excuse for a supernatural being, I must say."

"No, it's possible, it's just..."

"What?"

"You don't really want to see that. Do you? Why worry about Neil when we're together?"

"I want to know." I clambered to my feet, amazed at how the pain had evaporated. We stood eye-to-eye. He might have a huge cock, but Thorne was no taller than I was. "I want to see if he'll be happy after our split."

"You'll be sorry..." said Thorne ominously.

"No, you'll be sorry, if you don't take me to him this instant."

Thorne sighed and enfolded me in his arms. "Hold on," he murmured.

The Pit vanished.

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Chapter Eight

This time there was no giddiness, no sense of disorientation. One moment, we were in the S&M club. The next, we were standing in the doorway of my kitchen in Somerville. A cold white light filtered in the windows. I guessed that there was snow outside. The clock above the stove told me it was just after eleven in the morning. Neil sat at the table with his back to us, staring out.

My heart leaped at the sight of him. I know that's a cliché, but it felt as though my chest was filled with helium, and my heart was dancing around inside like a kid's balloon.

He looked so solid, so reassuringly familiar, though I did have the impression he'd lost some weight. Maybe he'd found a new boy who'd convinced him to go work out. I wasn't sure I wanted to be with Thorne, but if that was what I chose, I hoped Neil would not be alone.

I tiptoed closer. "Can he see us?"

"No, we're in an incompatible dimension. As far as he's concerned, we're like ghosts."

I wanted to see his face, to reassure myself he was happy. Then I noticed the sticky glass next to his elbow and the mostly empty bottle of whisky.

"Neil? What are you doing?" I spoke out of shock, forgetting he couldn't hear. Before, Neil would never have been drinking so early. He was the sober one in our relationship; I was the party boy, and even I didn't usually touch whisky.

Thorne grabbed my sleeve. "No, Michael! Don't touch him."

"Why not? You said we were invisible."

"He might sense something. You might upset him."

I pulled out of Thorne's grasp and stood behind Neil. Placing my hands on his shoulders, I buried my nose in his curly black locks. I breathed in his familiar warmth, but also a stale odour of cigarettes and booze. "I've missed you, Neil," I couldn't help but whisper.

"Michael? Oh, Michael! Why did you leave?" For a moment I thought that he could see me, or at least feel my presence. I circled his chest and hugged him. Then I realised he was crying.

"Neil, it's okay. I love you. I've always loved you. It's just that Thorne—well, he and I share something that you and I just didn't have. I had to find out what it would be like..." I glanced back at Thorne, hanging back near the door. He was as outrageously handsome as ever, dressed in jeans that hugged his butt and a tight black T-shirt. His eyes blazed, but the rest of him looked somehow vague—blurry. Predictably, the sight of him stiffened my cock. It was like an addiction.

Neil buried his face in his hands. I came around to face him, seating myself in the other dinette chair. "Neil," I whispered. "Don't cry, hon."

He looked up then—looked right through me. His tear-streaked, pain-ravaged face nearly broke my heart.

I noticed something on the table, a sheet of paper. I leaned in, trying to read it.

"Stop," hissed Thorne, close to my ear. "Don't!"

I brushed him away like a buzzing mosquito, squinting, working to make sense of the words.

It was a print-out from the Internet. An article from the Los Angeles Times web site, as far as I could tell. There was a grainy photo at the top, a tractor-trailer truck lying on its side, and a horribly crumpled sports car. 'Christmas Crash Kills Three', read the headline.

I grabbed the page, not bothering to wonder how that was possible. The ink blurred where the tears had soaked in, but most of the text was still legible.

A horrible premonition seized me. I skimmed through, looking for details. I-405. Four AM Christmas morning. Roadster jumped the median and slammed headlong into the truck. Driver, passenger and the trucker all killed instantly. Drugs found in the car and in the bloodstream of the driver. Finally, there near the end of the article, the information that I was dreading, and expecting. The names of the victims.

"Oh, God!" I turned to Thorne, fists clenched. "You snake! No wonder you couldn't show me our Christmas morning." I grabbed his shoulders and shook him until his teeth chattered. He sagged in my grasp.

"Michael! Baby! You weren't supposed to know. We were supposed to have our one, fabulous year together. Then go out in a blaze of glory."

"Glory? You reckless idiot! You killed three people. Stole three souls."

"For love. It was all for love." Thorne looked pathetic, ashamed, and very young. How could I have ever thought he

was wise and powerful? "Please, Michael. I love you. I always will."

"You don't have a clue as to what you're talking about. Get out of here."

"Give me a chance, baby. Let me show you some more ... maybe the dungeon..."

"I gave you a chance, fool that I was. You had me bewitched, with all your talk about masters and slaves. But no more. Go back to the pit that you came from."

"Please..." Thorne was beginning to fade, but his hand felt solid as he reached for my cock. I felt myself swell involuntarily. Then I glanced back at the broken figure of my lover, huddled drunk and miserable over the report of my death, and my flesh shrivelled.

"Be gone." I said firmly. The glorious golden figure of my fantasies wavered for a moment then disappeared.

The walls of the kitchen folded in upon themselves like a house of cards collapsing. I was whisked into a black tunnel, speeding into emptiness. Maybe it's too late, I thought, terror seizing me. Maybe I stayed with him too long. Maybe I'm already dead.

Darkness closed in. The last thing I heard was Neil's anguished sob.

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Chapter Nine

Light teased me, inviting me to open my eyes. It was futile. My eyelids were glued shut, and I was so very tired. My body felt like stone. My arms and legs were lead bars. I struggled against the lethargy that threatened to overwhelm me, somehow knowing I had to awaken.

I finally managed to raise my heavy lids and discovered I was in bed. Neil's and my comfortable bed, in our cosy apartment, in convenient Somerville. Dawn filtered through the Venetian blinds. Neil stretched out beside me, handsome, powerful, naked. I started to reach for him then remembered. There was something I had to do first.

Careful not to wake my sleeping lover, I rose and went over to the bureau. The crop lay where I had hidden it, under my sweats. Had it all been a dream, then? When I tiptoed into the living room, though, I saw the Christmas tree was still alight, and the candles on the mantle had burned down to twisted lumps of wax.

I reached back and tentatively touched my butt. I didn't feel any welts or wounds. But my fingertips still seemed to waken some echo of pain. I recalled the sweet, terrible bite of the whip.

No, it wasn't a dream. But it was a lesson.

I didn't have the patience to wrap my gift. I grabbed a sheet from the notepad by the telephone. What should I say? How could I best reveal my secret? I could only hope that the artefact itself would speak to him.

"To Neil," I finally wrote. "In devotion and desire, from your boy Michael."

I attached the note to the crop with a stray piece of tinsel. Then I positioned the slender shaft so that it was behind the pile of gaily wrapped packages, leaning against the tree trunk.

My heart pounded furiously when I crawled back into bed. My cock was half-erect. It was done. Whatever happened now, I couldn't take it back. For better or worse, Neil would learn the truth.

Neil stirred as I settled beside his warm body. "Michael, baby?" His arms gathered me to his chest. I rubbed my cheek against his wonderful fur as he nuzzled my hair. He raised my face to his and licked at my lips, his eyes still closed. He smelled of sweat and sleep.

I opened my mouth to his probing tongue and let him sweep me away into one of his voluptuous kisses. Joy bubbled up in my chest. This was right. This was where I belonged. Thank God I'd escaped from Thorne's insidious web of half-truths.

Neil reached down between our bodies to tickle my swelling cock. "Mmm," he murmured sleepily into my open mouth. "Nice." I could feel him hardening, too, his bulk pressing deliciously against my belly. Our bodies pressed together, our tongues twined, we moved together, each of us sliding our slick-tipped cocks back and forth across the other's skin.

There was no urgency, only a long, lazy climb towards release. Everything about him felt incredible, his sharp teeth

nibbling on my lip, his fingertips tracing leisurely circles around my nipples, the wiry hair at his groin brushing against my thighs, and of course his rigid cock, so ripe and fat, jousting with mine, teasing, tempting. I closed my eyes, letting the sensations flood through me.

With slow, steady friction, with the murmurs and moans of inarticulate pleasure, we urged each other on. We came together, smoothly, almost without effort. Our cum rose as powerful and irresistible as the tide, spilling across our joined flesh.

As the waves of pleasure finally ebbed, I lay in my lover's arms, sticky and blissfully relaxed. No dirty movies played in my head. No unfulfilled fantasies ate away at my satisfaction. I drifted off into sleep, my head on Neil's chest, knowing I was where I belonged.

* * * *

I woke up with my mouth watering. The smell of frying bacon wafted in from the kitchen. I was ravenous, as though I hadn't eaten in a year. I padded naked into the kitchen to find Neil bent over the stove, scrambling eggs.

"Hey, sleepyhead! You're awake!" He was wearing the royal blue terry robe that I'd given to him for Christmas last year. He looked so scrumptious that I was ready to forget about breakfast. "I thought maybe your stomach would finally rouse you. Sit down. It's almost done."

I gave him a hug. He squeezed my butt playfully with one hand, while folding the eggs with the other. "Let me go take a

quick shower. I'm kind of sticky. Somebody came all over me."

Neil grinned. "Yeah, I had the same problem. Anyway, go ahead. But hurry up. We've got to move if we're going to get to my mom's by three like I promised. And we still have to open presents."

The mention of presents tied my empty stomach into a painful knot. As the hot shower washed away the residue of our recent passion, I wondered how Neil would react to my 'gift'.

Christmas dinner with Neil's family was one of our rituals. Neil's mother was only an hour away in Worcester. My parents and my older brother lived in Pittsburgh, where I'd grown up. Neil and I tended to do either Thanksgiving or Easter with them.

My parents liked Neil, but they still weren't completely comfortable with the notion that I had a boyfriend. My mother persisted in hoping this was all a phase, that someday I'd meet the "right girl". Neil's mom, on the other hand, was totally cool. A retired art teacher, she sincerely believed that each person had to follow his own path. Neil's kid sister Gail was equally relaxed about her brother's sexuality.

I'd always enjoyed Neil's family, but today I was nervous about them, too. What if Neil was disgusted by the crop? What if he was hurt? Who was I to be suggesting that our love life wasn't everything I needed? If he and I were at odds, I knew his family would sense something was wrong. His mom was practically psychic about things like that.

I pushed my worries away. There was no going back. I had to be honest with Neil. If that hurt our relationship, I couldn't help it. I couldn't live with my secrets anymore.

Breakfast was every bit as delicious as it smelled. I tried to drag it out, delaying the moment of truth. I insisted on washing the dishes since Neil had cooked. Finally, though, the kitchen was spotless. Neil grabbed my hand and dragged me into the living room.

"Sit," he ordered. He seized the biggest box from under the tree. "I can't wait anymore. This is for you."

The box held a gorgeous black leather motorcycle jacket, chaps and a matching helmet decorated with silver swirls. I shook my head, laughing. "But I don't have a motorcycle, Neil."

"Not yet. But I know you're saving for one. This way, when you finally buy it, you'll be ready to ride on the first day."

I flashed back to my race through the dark on the back of Thorne's bike. Part of me still craved that kind of excitement. "Thanks. They're fabulous."

"I can't wait to see you in that gear. I get hard just thinking about it." I slipped the jacket on over my sweatshirt. Neil lunged for me. I side-stepped him, laughing.

"Hey, I thought you were in a hurry. Here's my main present to you." The box was smaller, but heavy. Neil ripped off the paper and tore the package open, rummaging through the contents.

"Oh, wow! Oh, Michael, thank you! The complete Ealing comedies! A whole collection of Mae West!"

"Also a copy of every film by Orson Welles, all of Marilyn and Bogart, even the three extant films by Josephine Baker." Neil was a serious fan of classic film. I'd spent months combing the web for legal copies of things I knew were missing from his collection. Seeing his radiant smile, I knew it was worth the effort.

"You're amazing!"

"I figured the films would keep us busy through the long New England winter nights..."

"Well, I have some other ideas ... but I guess we don't have time for that now."

We opened the remaining gifts. A new French cookbook for Neil. Ryan Adams and Rolling Stones CDs for me. Silk handkerchiefs for Neil. A new set of free weights for me.

Finally, the space under the tree was empty. Well, almost empty.

Neil reached back and pulled out the riding crop. "What's this?" He looked at me, his eyes dark and his lips pressed into a narrow line. "Is this some kind of joke, Michael?"

"No ... sir. No joke."

"In devotion and desire..." Neil gazed at me, and now he looked lost, even frightened. "What are you trying to say?"

I tried to swallow the lump in my throat. I was acutely aware of the swelling in my groin. I sat cross-legged on the floor, staring down at my hands, not knowing how to begin.

"Michael." The authority in Neil's voice was unmistakable. "Tell me."

I summoned every ounce of courage. I had to speak.

"I want ... I thought that maybe ... it's just that..." I looked up. Neil towered above me. I was astonished to see that his eyes were glistening with unshed tears. "I'm so sorry, but I can't help it. I want you to use me, to hurt me if you like. I want you to be my master."

"Do you really know what you're asking for, boy?"

I remembered Thorne's addictive power. "Yes. Yes, I think so." I laid my forehead on Neil's feet. "Please forgive me. I just had to tell you. I've been holding it inside. I was afraid that it would destroy me. That it would destroy us."

The crop whooshed through the air. I cringed, terribly afraid of Neil's anger. The leather tip snapped against the cushions of Neil's armchair.

"It's been so long," he murmured. "And I've been so blind."

He reached for my hand. "Get up, boy. I have something to tell you, too."

He sat me down on the hassock across from his chair. "Do you remember Joel?"

"Yeah, of course. Your ex. You told me that you'd broken up with him about six months before we met."

"I did. But I never explained why we broke up, did I?"

I shrugged. "The usual, I assumed. Maybe you weren't really compatible. Maybe you got tired of each other. Maybe he found some other guy he wanted more. Look, you don't have to go into detail about your sexual history for me."

"Joel left me because I was too hard on him."

"What? What do you mean, too hard?"

"Michael, Joel was my slave. I was his master."

My jaw hung open. You could have knocked me over with a feather.

"We were together for more than a year. We really clicked. Mutually compatible fantasies. I did what a good Dom should do. I pushed him. I helped him discover his limits and expand them. Devised ever more extreme scenarios, intended to create a stronger connection between us. Deeper trust."

Neil sighed. I heard in that sigh a depth of frustration and pain I'd never known in him. "I figured that I knew him. That I could read him. That I understood how much he could endure.

"But I was wrong."

"What?"

"I pushed him too hard. He couldn't bear the stuff I was dishing out to him, but he was ashamed to admit it. And me, I didn't sense it, when I really should have."

I could see it all in Neil's face, what the loss had cost him. Not just a lover, but his own self-confidence and self-respect.

"Finally, he left me for a vanilla relationship. Ran away in the middle of the night, without even a note. I only found out later, when I bumped into his new boyfriend, how badly I'd screwed things up.

"After that, I didn't trust my own judgement any more. When I met you, I felt that old pull, the desire to dominate you. You were so young and eager and vulnerable. I used to dream of flogging you, of making you scream."

His words sent electric shivers up my spine. Could this be real?

"I didn't dare let you see that side of me. I couldn't bear the notion of damaging you, of frightening you away. You meant so much to me—my affection for Joel seemed trivial by comparison. There was no way that I'd risk losing you. If I had to keep things vanilla, so be it. I could live with that, as long as I could have you with me."

"Neil, I was dreaming, too. That you'd spank me. That you'd restrain me. That you'd use my body for your own pleasure, use me until I was exhausted and writhing in my bonds, full of love for you.

"That's what I want, sir. To be your slave."

"I'm not sure I can still do this. I don't trust myself anymore."

"I trust you." I stood, leaned forward, and kissed him. Simply, boldly, honestly. He opened to me then pulled me into his lap. I snuggled against him, finally free of my burden.

Slipping my hand into his robe, I toyed brazenly with his cock, trying to provoke him.

"Do you really want this, boy?"

"More than anything ... Master."

He suddenly pinched my nipple through my shirt. Blood surged into my cock.

"Very well. I have to think about how to begin. Tonight, I'll make you mine for the first time—really mine."

I'd never felt a thrill like the one that raced through me. Thorne, I realised, was a cheap imitation.

"Meanwhile, get dressed. My mother will have my head if we're late for dinner."

Tomorrow's Gifts
by Lisabet Sarai

"Yes, sir." I scrambled off his lap. It was going to be a long afternoon.

"And boy—wear loose pants, and no briefs, you understand? I want to make sure that you're accessible."

"Whatever you say, sir." I made my way to the bedroom, embarrassed by the way I was grinning.

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Chapter Ten

The visit with Neil's family was like some erotic dream. My cock was hard the whole time. I'd be setting the table, or chatting with Gail's husband about the Red Sox, or playing Clue with her twin girls, and I'd feel Neil's eyes on me. His brows would be knitted in thought. A half smile decorated his full lips. I'd know that he was thinking about what to do with me, and my dick would swell to the point where I was sure it would burst.

It was a good thing I'd worn my baggy jeans. Even so, Neil's mom noticed how awkwardly I was moving. "Are you all right, honey? You look like you're uncomfortable."

"Ah, I just pulled a muscle at the gym last week. I don't think it's anything serious."

"Well, I hope you're right. Here. Have a glass a wine. It will dull the pain."

"Thanks, Miriam." I was so nervous that I drained the glass in three gulps.

"Don't drink too much, boy." I jumped. Neil had come up behind me without my noticing. "I want you awake and alert tonight. For your initiation."

I knew the menace in his voice was deliberate, but I shivered anyway. Then I felt his hand working its way into the back of my pants.

"Neil! Stop it!" I whispered. "Someone will see!"

He grabbed a handful of my butt flesh and squeezed, digging in his nails. My cock nearly exploded. "Are you telling me to stop, boy? I thought you were mine. To use as I wish."

"Well, yes, but..."

"There are no 'buts', boy. There's only obedience." He wriggled a finger into my cleft and pressed the tip into my sphincter. I nearly fainted. "If I wanted to fuck you, right now, you'd drop your pants and offer me your ass, wouldn't you?"

He pushed in deeper. I gritted my teeth, knowing that I'd disappoint him terribly if I came without his permission. I saw Miriam on the other side of the room, gathering the family for the meal. "Is that what you want me to do, sir? Right away, then."

He pulled his fingers from my hungry hole and pinched me one last time before withdrawing his hand. "Cheeky boy. You'll be sorry." His smile balanced his stern tone. "Let's eat. I'll deal with you later."

Later. I couldn't keep from considering the ominous, enticing notion of what would happen later. My experiences with Thorne should have prepared me, but I knew things would be different with Neil. He knew me far better—and loved me more. As for me, I sensed that with Neil, there'd be no holding back. Whatever he asked for, I'd give him.

"Michael! The green beans. Please!" Gail was watching me with a puzzled look on her face. "I've asked three times."

"Oh, um, sorry. I was thinking about something else."

"You and Neil both seem kind of preoccupied tonight. Is there anything wrong?"

"Well, actually, we're contemplating some major life changes," Neil said smoothly.

Was he really going to tell his family about the new nature of our relationship? I was amazed and thrilled by his brash confidence.

"Oh?"

"We're thinking of moving to San Francisco."

San Francisco? I stared at him in disbelief. "I haven't had time to talk to you about it, Michael, but I got a job offer the day before yesterday. Head of the science department in the second-biggest high school in the city."

"Wow!" San Francisco. No snow. Great wine. A community where we wouldn't have to pretend to be just roommates.

"I figure there should be lots of opportunities in the area for an experienced software guy like you. With your background, you can pretty much name your own salary."

I was speechless. It was too much, too fast.

"Of course we don't have to go, baby, if you don't want to." Neil grinned at me, sensing my excitement. "You're the boss."

The boss. Right. At that moment, I loved Neil more than ever. He had known how frustrated I was with our narrow New England existence. He'd been taking steps, making plans, while I sulked and felt sorry for myself.

"It's so far away, honey! Will we still see you for Christmas?"

"Of course, Mom. Or you all could come west."

The excited chatter continued around me. All I could see, all I could think of, was Neil. *Let's go*, I broadcast to him. *I can't wait much longer.*

Finally, after desert and coffee, clearing the table and loading the dishwasher, he seemed to get the message. "Sorry to run off, Mom, but they're predicting more snow. Meanwhile, Michael has to go to work tomorrow, right?" I nodded as he helped me into my coat. "If he can sit down, that is," he whispered for my ears only. I blushed furiously.

As soon as we got into the car, I felt the change. I felt him assuming the mantle of power. He slid the seat back to its furthest extent. "Unzip me," he ordered. "Suck me off."

I rushed to obey. His cock reared up, huge and rigid. I got onto my knees and stretched across the gear shift. It was awkward, painful even. I rejoiced, knowing that this was his intention.

The swollen organ bobbed slightly in time with his pulse. A drop of pre-cum glistened in the slit. I stuck out my tongue and gathered it into my mouth, savouring the salty fluid. Then I swirled my tongue all around the bulb, building the pleasure gradually while I prepared to swallow him.

"Not so delicate, boy." I felt Neil's hand tangle in my hair and tug sharply. The pain sizzled through me. "I said suck." He pushed my face down onto his cock. His flesh filled my mouth. My nose was buried in his hairy groin. I couldn't breathe.

He jerked his hips, slamming the bulb into my palette. I choked and pulled back, trying to find space for the enormous mass he was trying to shove down my throat. He didn't

relent. Still gripping my hair, he worked my head up and down over his rod.

I found a rhythm, sucking hard on the upstroke, then grabbing a fast breath before he rammed my face back into his pubis. My jaws ached. My scalp stung. My thighs were sore from supporting my weight, cantilevered across his lap. I didn't care. It all washed over me. My master was using me for his pleasure. That was the only thing that mattered.

I felt him tremble, sensed the tightening in his balls just before he came. His cum nearly drowned me. I swallowed what I could, but I couldn't help coughing until I was dizzy and the world started to go black.

"Breathe, boy. Breathe."

I gasped, trying to pull air into my burning throat. Neil searched my face anxiously. "That was too much, wasn't it? Too hard, too soon?"

"No, Master," I whispered hoarsely. "That was perfect."

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Chapter Eleven

When we finally arrived at the apartment, Neil made me wait in the car. "I have to make preparations," he told me. "You sit here. Be patient. I'll be back soon."

He looked back over his shoulder as he headed up the front stoop. "And don't you dare touch yourself."

I was woozy with lust, but I knew better than to jack off without my master's permission. I felt as though my cock had been hard for days. It was only the outward sign of an arousal that went far deeper than the physical. I knew that, very soon, Neil would fulfil all my most shameful fantasies. I had no doubts, no fears. In the midst of my buzzing excitement was a strange calm, a willingness to give up all control to the man I loved. Sweet surrender.

It was cold inside the old Volvo. Wet snow splattered itself against the windshield. I sat on my hands to warm them up, enjoying the roughness of my jeans against the palms and the matching friction against my bare ass. If he can sit down, Neil had joked. I remembered Thorne, the ghost of Christmas future. He had given me a glimpse. Neil, I knew, would reveal all.

Finally, Neil returned to open the car door. "Out," he barked. I scrambled to obey, determined to show him how perfect I could be in my submission. He practically pushed me up the stairs to our second floor flat.

Just inside the door, he stopped me. He took my coat. "Close your eyes," he ordered. I felt the cool kiss of silk

against my eyelids, and a small jerk as the knot was tied. "I want you helpless, unable to do anything on your own. You must give yourself to me. Completely."

"I will, sir. That's what I want, too."

"You may find it more difficult than you think. But I'll help you. Come." He pulled my hands behind my back and locked them together in one fist, then propelled me through the darkness. I supposed we must be heading for the bedroom, but I couldn't be sure. I stumbled once. Before I could pitch forward onto the floor, his other arm grabbed me around the waist, supporting me.

"Steady, boy. We're almost there." We stopped. I stood there, blind, in the middle of what felt like a large open space.

"Where are we?" I heard the sputtering of candle flames, smelled sulphur and wax, and something else, ink or perhaps alcohol. Neil didn't answer. Instead, he unzipped my jeans and yanked them down to my ankles. My cock sprang loose, free at last from its confinement.

"You're quite eager, I see. I assume you understand you're not allowed to come."

"Of course not, sir. Not until you give me permission."

"If I give you permission." The threat did not phase me. I was willing to forego my own release, if that would please him. Then I felt his hand massaging my swollen flesh, sliding across the slippery tip, and I nearly exploded, despite my resolve.

At the last minute, I regained control. Neil laughed. "Well done, boy. Step out of your pants." I did. "Now raise your arms." He pulled my sweater over my head, managing to

avoid disturbing the blindfold. A draft that had crept through our weather-stripping danced over my naked flesh. My nipples peaked into hungry knots. Neil noticed, and gave my left breast a vicious pinch. The sensation raced straight to my groin.

"Ow!"

"Keep your arms up," my master directed. I heard the scrape of metal on metal then felt a smooth band that felt like soft leather tightening around one wrist. "What...?"

"Silence. You may speak only when I ask you a direct question." He secured my other wrist in a similar fashion. I wondered what he was using to bind me, but followed his instructions and swallowed my question.

There was that scraping sound again. Something pulled my arms upward, stretching my shoulders just to the borders of pain. My chest was expanded and elevated. My swollen nipples screamed for more attention. My breathing quickened to a pant as I realised I was totally helpless.

"Is that too tight, boy?"

"No, sir. It's fine."

"If your hands begin to feel numb, you must let me know." I felt the air stir as he circled my immobilised form. "Ah, Michael. You have no idea how much I've longed to see you like this. Bound and blindfolded. Naked and accessible. You look beautiful, boy."

All of a sudden, he smacked my ass. The sting made me gasp, blossoming into rich pleasure in the wake of his palm.

"I can do anything that I want with you." Neil's voice was quiet, thoughtful. It thrilled me far more than his spanking. "You're mine."

Yes, *sir*, I wanted to answer, but at the last moment I remembered his orders and held my tongue.

"I'm going to beat you now, using the fine Christmas gift you gave me this morning. I'll keep going until I'm satisfied. You can scream and cry all you want. I won't stop."

I was almost crying already, with joy. My dreams were coming true.

"I'll give you a safe word, though. If it's too much, if you can't bear the pain, you must say the word 'Red'. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir. 'Red'. But I know I can bear it. Whatever you do."

"Every slave believes that," Neil laughed. "Until they're under the whip." I felt him move away from me. "Prepare yourself, boy."

I spread my thighs a bit to stabilise my position and tried to relax my shoulders. I was not suspended—most my weight still rested on my heels—but the pull of the bonds stretched my belly and pecs. My cock was practically vertical. It brushed against my abdomen every time I moved.

I waited, anticipating the first bite of the crop. Nothing. The room was silent. I began to wonder whether Neil was still with me.

The chilly winter air swirled around my ankles. I heard my pulse in my ears, felt it pounding in my cock. Where was he?

Five minutes. Ten. Actually I had no idea how much time had passed. It felt like an eternity.

"Neil?" I finally called, my voice weak and uncertain. "Are you here?"

"Silence," he growled, close to my ear. There was a whistle, and the crop bit into my left buttock.

"Ow!" Before I could even get out a groan, another blow landed on my right, a dart of fire burrowing into the sensitive skin. My swollen dick jerked; I clenched my teeth, fighting to hold on. The crop slashed across the backs of my thighs. Pleasure raced through me, kindled by the pain searing my flesh. "Ay! Ow!"

"Go ahead, boy. Yell. Scream. I want to hear it." Again and again, the fibreglass shaft whooshed through the air, kindling my buttocks, my thighs, and my shoulders into blazing agony. I felt his strength, his power. His fierce blows rained down, unrelenting, on my poor, raw flesh. I was shaking with the force of his assault.

With every stroke, my cock surged, eager for more. My whole body was on fire. I could hear Neil's heavy breathing as he danced around me, seeking new, unmarked flesh to mark as his own. I could sense his excitement as he painted his stripes on my willing body. Every stroke of the crop was a kiss.

Joy filled me. I floated on a rosy cloud of pain, knowing that I pleased him and wanting nothing more. I felt him in my mind, caressing me, even as his whip ravaged me. I was complete.

Then something changed. The cocoon surrounding me split open. The pain twisted and transformed into something frightening. I tried to push it away, to return to that blissful place of pure surrender, but my body rebelled. I couldn't take any more.

My mind groped in the dark, reaching for Neil. I sensed a moment's hesitation before his next blow, as if he felt the change.

"Red," I whispered, hoarse from my yelling.

He stopped immediately. "Good boy," he said. He laid his palm gently on my raw butt. The warmth rekindled the pain, yet was somehow soothing. "Did I hurt you very badly?"

"Just enough, sir," I murmured, understanding that I had permission to speak.

"You should see yourself. Your backside looks as though it's been on a barbecue grill." The image thrilled me. I wanted to see. Then I felt his body pressed against my back, his cock prodding my rear. He hugged me, startling my welts into fresh fire. I didn't care.

"But I think I'd better give your shoulders a rest." The tension on my wrists slackened. He released my wrists and chafed at them to stimulate the circulation. My joints ached; the pain made me proud.

"Thank you, sir."

"Not so fast. I'm not done with you yet, boy." His teasing brought my thoughts back to my aching cock. I heard the scrape of furniture being dragged across the wooden floor.

"Bend over."

Neil guided my hands to the leather-padded arms of a heavy chair. I realised that we must be in the room he used as his office. But the suspension cables? The shackles?

"This was my dungeon," Neil explained, apparently reading my mind. "Before you moved in, when I was with Joel. You probably never noticed the hooks in the ceiling, or along the walls." He came around behind me and squeezed my balls until I gasped. "You might be surprised at the contents of the locked filing cabinet, too."

He was playing with my sore buttocks now, stroking them, running his fingers along the traces left by the crop. "Ah, Michael. I always thought you'd look hot wearing my marks. I used to imagine the different patterns, from the tawse, the paddle, the cat..." He must have seen my cock jump at the notion of all these toys. "Guess I'll have to be patient, though. We've got plenty of time." He spread my cheeks and blew softly on my hole. My whole body clenched—cock and nipples as well as my sphincter.

"Yes, Master."

"Right now, I'm going to ream your ass."

I relaxed, thinking that he'd play some more, loosen me, grease me up as he always did. I didn't expect the sudden flare of pain as he pushed into me, without warning or warm-up. One moment I was empty; the next I was full. I think I screamed. Yet it didn't hurt as much as it should have. Perhaps I was still loose and slippery from my bugging in The Pit. Perhaps Neil has surreptitiously oiled up his rod before impaling me.

It didn't matter. He felt huge, glorious, moving inside me. His nails bit into my crop-lashed skin, kindling bright sparks of pain. The pain of being stretched was darker, fuller, curling deep in my guts until it rose again as startling pleasure. I arched back, opening myself to his relentless cock, silent begging him to ravage me.

He fucked me with the same energy that animated his whipping. Again and again, he slammed his rod into my rectum, taking what he knew was his. Any pain I felt was drowned in the rising tides of my pleasure. His strokes were rough but still aimed to hit my sweet spot. I could feel him becoming harder, fatter, closer to the final explosion.

I writhed under him, grinding my ass against the wiry hair at the base of his cock. "Little slut," he growled, slapping my wounded butt. "Trying to make me come?"

"Yes, sir," I gasped as he drilled deeper than ever. "Please..."

Without removing his cock from my butt, he kicked my legs further apart and pressed my chest down to the chair seat. The position raised my ass even higher, making me more vulnerable. "You know what happens to sluts." He quickened his pace, ramming into me like a jackhammer. He'd pull out, leaving me ragged and empty. Before I could breathe, he'd plunge back in, to the very bottom of my being. Filling me. Consuming me. Taking complete control.

I no longer tried to tease him. I simply lay limp and let him use me. He would come or not come. He was the master. It was his choice. I was nothing.

Finally, though, even with my battered tissues, I felt the unmistakable surge of his cum swelling up his shaft. He roared and rammed in as hard as he could. His cock jerked half a dozen times as he emptied himself into my ass.

I rejoiced.

His shrinking organ slid out of me followed by a cascade of cum. Neil helped me to my feet, and turned me around to face him. I was still blindfolded. All my other senses seemed far more acute. I could feel the stream of cold air leaking in the window. I could smell sweat, semen and the guttering candles. I tasted the salt of my own tears, shed during the beating.

Neil gave my rigid cock a firm squeeze. "What a good boy," he murmured. "You still haven't come." Intent on his pleasure, I'd almost forgotten about my own release. He stroked me gently, reawakening awareness of my painful desire.

"I haven't given you permission yet," he crooned. "So you must hold on." He tickled the underside of my rod with one hand, cupping my balls with the other. "Let me see what an obedient slave you can be." Pre-cum leaked helplessly from my slit. He smeared the liquid over the bulb, making me gasp. I was determined not to disappoint him.

He played with me cruelly, deliciously. I thought about the crop, remembering the pain, trying to blunt the pleasure. I recalled his fierce yell as he exploded inside me. That was what I wanted, what I needed. To serve him.

Finally, he removed his hands. The sudden lack of stimulation was nearly as bad as the previous sensory

overload. He waited three breaths. "Well done, boy," he said finally. "Come now."

Blind and grateful, I let go. Orgasm ripped through my body. My limbs jerked helplessly. Endless surges of cum flung themselves from my shuddering penis into the dark. I felt Neil, close to me, heard him panting with excitement. I imagined my white essence clinging to the black hair on his belly, and convulsed again.

After the storm, I stood quietly, waiting for my next instructions. Neil untied the blindfold. "Relax, boy," he said. "That's enough for tonight."

The next thing I knew, he had me in a bear hug and was nibbling at my neck. Not exactly what I'd expect from a stern and implacable master. But it was what I needed.

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Chapter Twelve

I woke up alone, shackled to the headboard. My first reaction was alarm. Where was Neil? Why had he left me here, by myself? What if there were an emergency? How would I escape? It wasn't like him, to take risks...

My mind whirled crazily for a few minutes, until I discovered I could easily slip out of the cuffs circling my wrists, if I wanted to. Of course, I could trust Neil to take care of me. How could I have been so silly?

I remembered I was supposed to go into work. I thought about getting out of bed, showering and dressing. When I tried to sit up, however, I found I could barely move, I was so sore. I reached behind me and brushed my palm over my butt. The skin didn't feel broken or raised, but it was very tender. I smiled to myself, proud of what I'd endured.

Neil had carried me to bed, I recalled, then rubbed some kind of soothing ointment onto my back and buttocks. He was so gentle, it was difficult to believe he was responsible for my wounds.

Afterwards, we had sat and talked for quite a while. He thanked me for using my safeword. "Some subs think that safewording means they've failed. It's not like that at all. We all like to fantasise about perfect communication, unconditional surrender. But the truth is, the Dom can't really read the sub's mind." I must have looked stricken, because he laughed. "Not all the time, anyway. I have to know that you trust me enough to be honest about your needs, even if it

shatters your illusions." He kissed me with even more passion than usual. "Trust is the real heart of a D/s relationship. Not power or even desire."

Trust. I thought about Thorne. I could never have trusted him. He was too wild, too unpredictable. Too selfish. I wondered what would happen to Thorne, now that I'd chosen to stay with Neil. Would he still be doomed to die a year from now? Or had I saved him? Would he find someone else to love and abuse?

Of course, he was something of a public figure. I could always Google him to see what he was up to...

I stopped that train of thought cold. I'd forget about Thorne or remember him only as a strange and vivid dream. Still, in some sense, he'd given me a gift—the ability to see what I really wanted and the courage to act on that knowledge.

I heard the clatter of the front door unlocking. "Neil?"

He bustled into the room, still wearing his parka, snowflakes melting in his black curls and his cheeks rosy with cold. "Hey, baby! How are you feeling?"

He unfastened the cuffs, making me glad that I'd left them on. Let him think that I believed I was his prisoner.

"Like someone ran over me with a truck. But you've got to help me. I have to get to the office."

"No way. I already called to tell them you're not coming in today."

"But we've got a release in two weeks..."

"Asking you to work on the day after Christmas is criminal. Anyway, you won't be there much longer. I told them you were under the weather."

I managed to sit up, moving gingerly. "True. I guess it would be pretty hard for me to sit in front of a computer for eight hours."

"Just like I promised." Neil grinned, his eyes sparkling. He stroked my hair then let his hand slip to my thickening cock. "I see that at least one part of you isn't under the weather."

I groaned. "Please, Master, have mercy..."

Neil stood up and shrugged off his jacket. "I'm the kindest master in the world. You'll see."

"I hope so, sir." I couldn't keep from teasing him.

"Impudent slave! I was going to give you a present, but maybe I should punish you instead."

"Neil, you've already given me everything I wanted."

He picked up his coat and rummaged in the pocket, pulling out flat box about the size of a DVD but two or three times as tall. It was wrapped in green and tied with a red velvet ribbon. "Well, I hope you'll accept this anyway. I didn't want to wait until next Christmas."

I took the box and turned it over in my hands. "Really, Neil, you shouldn't have."

"Open it, boy." I knew from his tone that I'd better obey.

Lying inside the box, on a bed of red velvet, was a black leather collar. I stroked it with the tip of one finger. It was softer than the petals of a rose. My hands trembling, I removed it from the box.

Tomorrow's Gifts
by Lisabet Sarai

It fastened in the back with leather-covered snaps. From the front dangled a silvery circle, like a dog's ID tag. I could barely read the engraving through the tears in my eyes.

"Neil's boy."

I offered it to my master. "Will you put it on for me, sir?"

"You'll accept it then? You know what it means?"

"It means that I'm yours. But that was true already."

The collar fit as though it was made for me. Maybe it was. All I knew was that I was where I belonged, today, tomorrow, and for all the tomorrows to come.

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About the Author

I became addicted to words at an early age. I began reading when I was four. I wrote my first story at five years old and my first poem at seven. Since then, I've written plays, tutorials, marketing brochures, software specifications, self-help books, press releases, a five-hundred page dissertation, and of course, erotica. I'm the author of four erotic novels and two short story collections. I also edited the ground breaking anthology SACRED EXCHANGE, which explores the spiritual aspects of BDSM relationships, and the massive collection CREAM: THE BEST OF THE EROTIC READERS AND WRITERS ASSOCIATION. My short stories have appeared in more than two dozen print collections edited by erotica luminaries such as M. Christian, Maxim Jakubowski, Mitzi Szereto, Rachel Kramer Bussel, and Alison Tyler. In my so-called spare time, I also review books and films for the Erotica Readers and Writers Association and Erotica Revealed, and feature as a Celebrity Author at Custom Erotica Source.

My lifelong interests in sex and the written word became serendipitously entwined nine years ago when I read my first Black Lace book by Portia da Costa. Her work inspired me to take my fantasies out of the closet (and the private email files) and expose them to the world. The rest, as they say, is history (although granted, no more than a minor footnote!)

I've always loved traveling; my husband seduced me in a Burmese restaurant by telling me tales of his foreign

adventures. Since then I have visited every continent except Australia, although I still have a long travel wish list. Currently I live with him and our two exceptional felines in Southeast Asia, where I pursue an alternative career that is completely unrelated to my creative writing.

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