

# SUMMER

D. J. MANLY



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Summer

By

D.J. Manly

## Dedication

*To anyone who has ever fallen in love in the  
summer time.*

## Chapter One

I could recall the way the sunlight lit up his hair as he lay back in the field that day, a piece of straw sticking out of his mouth. "I'm never going back to that place," he announced, his teeth gritted. "I told mother as much this morning."

"You did not," I accused, plucking some grass and throwing it at him. But I'd hoped it was true, because I'd missed him so much that year.

"Hey," he laughed, throwing it back at me, "Steven. I did tell her. I swear to you." He sat up, still laughing. He looked at me, and for the first time, it felt as if he was really seeing me.

I looked away, my heart racing. Maybe he saw too much. "Come on," I said, jumping to my feet, "we have to get back. You need to get cleaned up for dinner, and I did promise my mother to bring in some wood for the fireplace."

"Race you," Darren called out, scrambling after me. It was like we were children again, running across that field. Darren would always beat me because of those damned long legs of his, but I

really didn't mind. The long, sprawling estate, made from grey slate with its rustic round balconies and hunter green shutters, loomed before us. We both arrived at the house breathless. Darren reached the wall just a few seconds before I did. We were both bent double, not enough breath in our bodies to even laugh, our faces red.

Grady, the handyman, was standing outside smoking a cigarette. He put it out when he saw us approach and shook his head like he always did when he figured we weren't behaving properly. "Better get on inside, Master Evans," he grumbled, "there are guests coming tonight. Your mother is fretting already. You know how she gets. Now scam. You, too, Steven."

I straightened up, wiped the sweat off my face. "That was pretty close," I told Darren. "I almost had you that time."

"Never," Darren called out. He threw his arms over his head and danced around like a prizefighter. "You'll never have me, Stevie, never!"

He was right. I'd never have him, at least not really. And from the first time I saw him, I wanted to have him, even though at the tender age of six, hiding in my mother's skirt, I didn't know it then. The true longing showed up with puberty, and then it never went away.

As I scampered around to the side of the house and went in through the kitchen door that day, I remember feeling almost dizzy with happiness. Darren had come home from that boarding school, and he was determined not to go back again. And even if I didn't believe he'd get very far defying his parents, it was nice to think they might give in.

For the last three years, the time we'd spent together was relegated to the summers and holidays. Darren's father had decided that although the tutor was plenty good enough for Darren's sister and me, it wasn't adequate for the education of his only son. Darren needed to be properly prepared, because one day he would run the family empire.

I'd been so scattered the day Darren finally came home from that stupid school that my mother had to scream at me three times to complete the tasks I had to do. I existed only for Darren and only to be with Darren, and now that school was over, he'd be mine the entire summer, just the two of us. That's all I could think about.

We'd come to the Evans estate, my mother and I, nine years before. My father had suddenly up and left us, and we were one month away from living on the streets. Finally, the unemployment

bureau found my mother a domestic position at the Evans' estate.

Theodore Evans was the wealthiest industrialist in North America. Originally from England, his family had settled in the countryside near Boston, just after that Theodore, and his well positioned wife, Angelic were married.

I remember how nervous mother was the day we arrived. "Stevie," she said to me, unnecessarily fiddling with my hair, "we need this job. We'll have a roof over our heads and an income. You must be on your best behavior today."

I understood her words. I'd had to grow up pretty fast back then. Mother got the job. She worked enormously hard, and within a year due to the head housekeeper's failing health, my mother was promoted. Suddenly, we had our own two-bedroom apartment in the left wing of the great house, instead of the one room where my mother and I had to share the bed. Also, Theodore Evans offered to educate me along with his son, Darren, and his daughter, Cecile.

Darren and I were inseparable from day one, playing hide and seek in the great house and terrorizing the house staff. We were like brothers, constantly thinking up ways to get away from Darren's bothersome little sister.

We made up plays about pirates and had sleepovers in Darren's huge bed. I'm sure that I



slept more in Darren's bed than I did in my own. His parents didn't seem to mind our closeness. In fact, they encouraged it. Theodore Evans was rarely there, traveling constantly to Europe, and his wife was forever going to what she called functions and involved in various charities. They felt that it was good for Darren to have another boy around, rather than always being forced to play with his whiny little sister.

Then Darren was sent away to boarding school, and I was beside myself. Sure, I had school and the chores I was required to do in order to help my mother, but it wasn't the same. Cecile and I grew closer, however, as there were no other children to play with, and to tell you the truth, at times I was grateful for her company, even if she always wanted to play house.

I guess my story should begin when Darren graduated from that snooty boy's school that his father had sent him to. His determination not to go back to that place again was played out each summer, but still, when August came around, I was standing in front of the house, waving goodbye to him, desperately counting the days over and over in my head until Thanksgiving.

But someone was calling me now, interrupting that image I had in my mind of a disgruntled and rebellious Darren, grudgingly getting into the car,

while I stood there, practically in tears, watching the car drive away.

Tonight, over a decade later, I would come face to face with Darren Evans, the man I'd sacrificed so much for, the man who told me I'd never have him, the man I still loved.

"Steve?"

I looked up to see Andrew standing there, looking a little worse for wear. He was stressed. He'd been fiddling with his hair again, and his tie was all crooked. I got up, shook my head, smiled at him. I started straightening his tie. He looked handsome in his suit, tall, dark, broodingly handsome. He could have had practically any man he wanted. He wanted me. "Don't be so nervous," I told him. "He's just a man."

"Just a man? Darren Evans is a god. Don't you realize that with this contract, we're set? I don't want anything to go wrong tonight."

"Breathe. Take a breath. Nothing will go wrong. We already have the contract. The papers are signed. This is a celebration. Darren is nothing to worry about."

"Steve, you haven't seen Darren Evans since you were nineteen years old for Christ's sakes. People change."

I looked away. Did people change? Eleven years and the way I felt about Darren hadn't changed the least little bit. I still dreamt about

him, and every time the snow left the ground and the summer came around again, I felt that familiar longing.

Darren had no way of knowing that I was actually the owner of Techno Innovation. Andrew had managed the company for me for the last five years while I indulged my love of traveling and music. In fact, Darren would never have guessed I'd come so far, not because Darren ever thought me stupid, but because of what had happened, how my life had gone completely off track because of him. I couldn't help wondering if we would have gotten the contract at all if he'd known whose company it was.

Andrew was studying me now in that way that he had, curious to know what I was thinking. Poor Andrew, he wanted so much more, and I gave him so very little. I slept with whom I wanted, when I wanted and promised him nothing and told him to do exactly the same. Although I knew that this wasn't the way he wanted it to be, he seemed content to hang on. I have to say that I had no idea why he stuck around.

"I need to meet with the board before the dinner," he was saying suddenly, checking his nails.

I nodded. "Of course. Go ahead." I had built this company from the ground up, never suspecting that my ideas would be worth billions.

I loved the inventive stuff, could spend hours playing with computer programs, but the business side bored the hell out of me. I was due at a board meeting, however. I hadn't gone in months and again not today.

"Care to come along?" Andrew looked hopeful.

I walked to the window. "No. It's a beautiful summer day. I think I'll take a walk in the park."

"Okay," he said coming over and kissing my cheek, "see you later at the dinner. I'll tell the board members you're coming after all. What made you change your mind? Last week you said you weren't interested."

I didn't answer for a second, but I knew what the answer was. It was summer, and Darren was coming home. I looked at Andrew. "I do have to see my staff once in awhile, don't I?"

He laughed faintly. "Yeah. They like to see who signs their paychecks."

"I suppose there will be a lot of press there tonight," I murmured.

"You take a marvelous picture."

I rolled my eyes. I had an aversion to having my picture taken. It always reminded me of that night, that night my life seemed to have gone down the drain.

I watched Andrew through the window as he hopped into his new sports car and whizzed away, and suddenly, I was eighteen again,

standing up in the front seat of Darren's new convertible as he roared down the highway, radio blasting out some hard rock tune.

"You're a freaking nut," he called out, his dark hair flying around his face, "sit down. You're going to kill yourself."

I felt so free that night, so ecstatic. Darren was home. We had the entire summer in front of us and nothing could ruin it. I remembered waiting for him to arrive that afternoon, my heart racing as he stepped out of the limo his father had sent for him. He'd changed or it seemed so. He was no longer that gangly boy. He was muscular and broad shouldered and so tall, his black hair longer, layered around his face. He smiled when he saw me, raised a hand. I wanted to run out to the car and throw myself into his arms, but his mother and sister were already doing that for me.

When we were finally able to talk, we didn't. We just looked at each other. My mouth was dry. He reached over and squeezed my arm. No words.

Later that night as I was sweeping up around the kitchen, he burst in and said, "Come on, asshole, I'm taking you for a ride."

I threw down the broom and followed him outside, reaching up and slapping him on the head. "Asshole, eh? That snooty boy's school is making you more and more arrogant, as if you

weren't arrogant enough already, Mr. Darren Evans."

He stuck his finger under his nose and put on a heavy British accent. "Where is your homework, Mr. Evans? Don't you know, at St. James Academy, good boys do their homework?"

I laughed as I always did when he pranced around pretending to be the headmaster.

As we got to the curb, Darren suddenly threw out his hand and indicted his brand new car. "What do you think?"

"Pretty fancy," I replied, running my hand over the shiny blue paint. "Is it a graduation gift or a bribe for you to behave yourself this summer?"

"I got accepted to Harvard," he said. "My father went there."

My heart sunk. He was leaving again. Boston was at least four hours away. What did I expect? We were grownups now. We couldn't be together forever. I shook off the disappointment, quickly forgetting about it as we got into his new car.

I could still hear us howling like wolves at the moon as we drove. The moon had been full that night, but it was no match for Darren who was so beautiful, he had put the moon to shame.

We stopped at the only bar in town. Almost every girl in the place hit on Darren, and it got worse once they discovered he was the son of Theodore Evans.

I sat in the corner while Darren danced the night away and swilled down beer. I watched him silently, my gaze slipping over the definition in his chest and his arms as the shirt he wore became plastered to his body with sweat. The girls didn't miss the way those faded jeans hugged his ass either, and neither did I. I wasn't really that shocked that I was concentrating on a man's ass, God knows, I'd spent enough time late at night ogling men's bodies in the magazines I'd hidden under my bed, but I was a little uneasy about the fact that the ass I was concentrating on belonged to Darren. It was one thing to want to be with Darren, to notice how beautiful his eyes were or how silky his hair was, but this took that attraction to an entirely new level.

Then there was his cock. I'd always known Darren was hung. We'd gone skinny dipping enough and stood beside each other taking a leak, but something about the way those jeans emphasized that fact was making me feel a little off balance. I wished I could have had a drink to take the edge off, but Darren was already wasted, and I knew I'd end up driving home.

There was kind of an unspoken agreement between Darren's parents and myself. I was to look after him. After all, he was the golden child, the heir to the Evans' empire. I was just the son of the housekeeper. And I really didn't mind at all. I

would have looked after him even if it wasn't kind of an obligation. I loved him.

That night, however, as I thought back on it, my love for him was stretched to the limit. He was loaded, falling all over the place and not easy to get to the car, being six feet tall. Then when I asked for his keys, he got stubborn on me and didn't want to hand them over. I was at the end of my patience.

"Okay, Mr. Evans, that's it. You're giving me your keys right now."

"Fuck Mr. Evans and fuck you," he said, staggering over to the driver's side.

I was on him trying to get to the pockets of his pants. He fought me. "Don't get fresh," he said, giggling.

At the moment, getting fresh was the last thing on my mind. "Come on, Dare, please. I can't let you drive like this. You'll kill yourself and me, too."

"Goodbye, cruel world," he called out.

Again, I fished for the keys, and finally, I pulled them out of his pants. He was pissed but I could handle his temper. "Get in the car, and stop acting like a big jerk." I opened the passenger side and pushed him in, slamming the car door. "And put on your seatbelt, I don't want to be picking your ass up off the road."



"Where do you get off?" he muttered. "I could just fucking well leave you here in the middle of town. It's my car. You can't tell me what to do; you're just the servant."

I started the engine. "Fine, all right, I'm just the servant. You've told me that before. I know who I am, Dare."

He was quiet while I drove. For a moment, I thought he'd passed out. That would come later. "I'm sorry," he said.

I glanced at him. He didn't need to apologize. I would have forgiven him anything. And it wasn't in his nature anyway. "Don't worry about it."

"No, I didn't mean what I said. It wasn't true. You mean more to me than..."

I looked at him. I almost went off the road. I turned the wheel just in time and kept my eyes straight ahead. He'd stopped talking. I said, "What?" a few times, but he'd passed out.

When I rolled into the driveway at the estate, I cast a hesitant glance toward the front door. I couldn't take him in that way. He'd be in deep shit. His father didn't approve of drinking. Instead, I took him to my room in back of the kitchen, figuring he could sleep it off, and I'd wake him before dawn so that he could get back to his own bed before anyone was the wiser. I remember half carrying him to my room and practically dumping him on my bed. He reeked of

beer, his shirt half off his shoulder. I reached over, pulled off his shoes and undid the rest of his shirt, fearing he'd strangle himself. As I did, Darren's head fell to the side, his dark hair falling over his perfect face. I opened his shirt with shaking fingers, inhaling the beauty of his chest, a chest I'd seen a million times before but suddenly wanted to press my lips against it.

I let my eyes move to his groin, and I licked my lips. I felt guilty as hell, but I couldn't help it. Something came over me, and I told myself that removing his pants would make him more comfortable, but it was more for me than him.

I undid the button on his jeans, pulled the zipper down, reached behind him and pulled his pants down. He groaned a little, thrashed as if trying to shoo me away, but then he lay quiet again as I pulled off the jeans and took as long as I could folding them neatly on the chair. He was wearing a simple pair of dark-colored briefs, hard to tell in the dim light of my room. I turned my hand over and moved my knuckles over the bulge there. I wanted to rip them down, stand there and take possession of his cock with my mouth, but I couldn't. I didn't have the guts, and if he came to and caught me, there was no way to explain what I was doing. So I took off my clothes and climbed into bed beside him, leaving on my underwear. He was turned on his side now so I put my arm

around his waist and snuggled up to his shoulder. I gave it the tiniest of kisses before I closed my eyes, and I was the happiest guy in the world.

The sun coming through the window woke me, and I checked the alarm. It was after seven. "Shit! Dare." I moaned, shaking him, "Dare, you got to wake up."

"Um, don't, want to sleep," he mumbled.

"It's seven o'clock. You got to get back to your own bed before..." I was still shaking him.

He rolled over and looked at me with one eye open. "Whose bed am I in then?"

"Mine. I brought you here because...look, there's no time to explain it all. You got to get out of here."

He stretched, yawned, looking like he wasn't in a hurry to go anywhere. "Don't panic, Steve. My father has left for the airport already, and mother is still sleeping. She was starting with one of her migraines yesterday. She'll be in her room all day. Has to stay where it's dark, no sound, you know."

"But the staff, they'll—"

"I don't give a rat's ass about the staff. It's Sunday, relax. Oh man, how much did I drink last night? I feel as if my head was used for a bowling ball."

"A lot," I said, settling back down on my pillow. I placed my hand under my head and

stared at the ceiling, trying not to let my gaze trail over to him. In the morning light, it was all there to see, and it was just a little too much. Darren had an early morning erection, and the head of his cock was peeking out over the top of his shorts. It was the sexiest thing I'd ever seen, and my own cock was beginning to respond.

"Oh God, I'm hard," Darren said suddenly. "The booze didn't do a damn thing to put a damper on that."

"Do you wake up hard every morning?" I managed, my breathing sounded weird, even to me.

"Yeah," he said, suddenly glancing over at me, "and from the looks of it," he laughed slightly, "so do you."

And now, all those years later, I think of that moment, of the way his gaze met mine, of the sultry quality of his deep, male voice, and my body reacts in the exact same way. Hard. I was intending to go outside to walk in the park, but the most I could do was sit. My thoughts wouldn't release me. And I knew that now I had started it, I couldn't stop.

We were looking into each others eyes, the way we had when he'd first arrived, both of us knowing what it was all about but not quite sure

what to do about it, or if we should do anything about it at all. I reached out to him, my hand shaking like a drunk needing a drink. I touched his chest with my fingertips. I saw him swallow then grab my hand and hold it there for a second. "What are we doing?" I asked.

"What we've been wanting to do from the moment I arrived," he said softly.

"You've done this before," I said, rather than asked. I knew he had. I was hurt. I was really hurt.

As if sensing my reaction or maybe it just showed in my face, he said, "It was nothing. It wasn't all the way. Just this guy, he..." He looked down at his own cock. "Well, he..."

I didn't wait for him to finish. I could do that. I could do that just fine, better than any little snot-nosed preppie at St. James Academy. I did what I'd been dying to do all night. I whipped down those briefs and took his cock between my fingers.

Darren gasped, surprised I guess. He gave off a little cry as I greedily fondled his shaft and took his balls in my hand. And although it was the first time I'd handled a man in this way, there was no awkwardness, no holding back. I'd been waiting for this moment from the time I first saw him. I knew Darren better than anyone else, and he knew me. There could be no shyness between us.

His head went back into the pillow, his hips lifted, giving me access to him. I almost cried with

joy. I lowered my head ,took his cock into my mouth and sucked him until he came with his body thrashing and a deep, satisfied moan.

I sat back, licking his essence from my lips, my eyes closed. And suddenly he sat up and grabbed my forearms. He pulled me down on top of him and kissed me, really kissed me, and I couldn't get enough. "I want to do everything with you," I told him. "Put your hands on me Darren, touch me. Oh shit, touch me everywhere."

The tears now ran down my face, and I didn't bother to wipe them away. We did it all in that bed that morning. We touched each other everywhere, explored every crevice, and I wanted him inside me. I found some Vaseline, and I rubbed it into his cock, ejaculating before he was even inside of me. It hurt like hell, but it felt like heaven, and I knew it would get better, easier...totally addictive. I read every thing I could get my hands on about two guys fucking, and suddenly that's all we seemed to want to do. We couldn't wait to be alone, couldn't wait to tear each other's clothes off and touch each other all over. We did it in my room, in the field, down by the creek and in the stables. And by the time Darren was getting ready to head off to his first semester at Harvard, we were pros.

Darren always had this really detached way of talking about our lovemaking, even though when we were doing it, there was certainly nothing detached about it. It was his way to take the gay out of it, to make it seem like we did it for fun, we did it because we were two guys, and guys got to fuck. There was nothing really romantic about it.

The last time we did it before he left for Harvard was fresh in my mind. It seemed like yesterday, and we couldn't believe our good fortune when, except for the servants, who wouldn't have said boo if their lives depended on it, the main part of the house was empty. Darren came to get me. I was absently reading some nameless book on one of the benches in the garden, trying to give myself something to do so that I didn't lose my mind. I was a little miffed with him. I was really hurting, and he acted like leaving me was nothing. He hadn't said anything except going on and on about what a great town Boston was.

I didn't even realize that he was standing there until he said my name. I looked up, dropping my book in a puddle of water near my feet and swore. "Look what you made me do," I sighed, picking up the wet book and trying to shake it dry.

He smiled at me and gave me a rather sheepish grin. "We're alone."

"Huh?"

"The house, my bedroom, five minutes." He walked off, just expecting I'd follow him, and of course, I did just that. When I got to his room, he was there, reclining naked on his huge bed, his erection on display, lube lying beside him. "I want you to fuck me," he said, watching me as I stripped off my clothes and practically broke my neck stumbling to the bed. I crawled onto the bed on my knees between his open thighs. I began stroking his cock, licking the head of it, reaching out to stimulate one nipple then the other.

"My ass," he groaned, "lube it, use it. I've been dreaming about you fucking me for hours."

"You want me to fuck you for hours," I teased, leaning over him and kissing his mouth, "or you've been dreaming for hours?"

"Um, stop," he groaned, my hand still on his cock, my lips capturing one of his nipples. "You know what I mean. He pushed my hand away, rolled over onto his stomach, and flashed me a smile. "Lube is there. Move to the side, and I'll play with your cock a bit while you lube my ass."

I moved around making my cock accessible to him, biting my lip while he handled me. I was moaning and so was he as I inserted my finger into his ass and moved the lube around.

"Um," he grunted, "let me suck it. Keep fucking me with your finger. Damn, that feels incredible."



I lay down with my feet pointing past his head. He took my erection into his mouth, and I put another finger up inside of him, thrusting in and out. I came in his mouth, and he swallowed it all, grinning at me with my come on his lips. "You can't fuck me now, stud," he teased.

"Get me hard again," I told him. "It's easy, believe me. Move your hips up and down like I'm fucking you. Oh yeah, Darren, like that." Darren acted like a porn star, humping the mattress, roughly handling my cock, while I continued to fuck him with my fingers. It didn't take long to replace my fingers with my cock. I fucked him with a frantic degree of desperation that day. I pulled him back in my arms and pinched his nipples, squeezed his cock and pummeled his ass. I was so afraid of losing him. We were two bodies covered in sweat and come, our hair plastered to our heads, clinging to each other like we were on a boat that was threatening to capsize. We humped like two maniacs, rested then went into each other again, gulping our kisses and bruising our flesh with our caresses. When darkness fell, neither one of us had the strength or the will to move. We laid there in each other's arms, saying nothing. I wanted to tell him I loved him, but I knew he'd laugh it off, and I couldn't bear it.

Finally, he said, "Well, I guess this is it then."

I turned away from him determined not to cry. We both heard the car arrive. Darren's parents were home. I got up, put on my clothes. "See you," I said, not looking at him. Then I felt him behind me, his hand on my arm. He pulled me back against him and for a moment, his head pressed against mine. He didn't say anything. I could hear his breathing in my ear. He squeezed my arm suddenly, releasing me, and I left his room.

I didn't go outside to see him off in the morning. I deliberately stayed in bed. Only after he was gone did I run outside, studying the tire tracks miserably. It was raining, and I stood there like a statue for at least ten minutes, the rain running down my face, drenching my clothes. Finally, my mother appeared with an umbrella and hustled me back inside.

That same evening, Theodore Evans asked to see me. I walked into his study, perplexed, apprehensive. I searched my brain frantically, trying to remember if I could have done something to displease him. Theodore Evans didn't call someone into his study for nothing.

"Steven," he said, looking up from his desk. He was a tall man, well built, with the same dark hair as his son. He smiled at me and told me to sit.

I took the chair opposite his desk. It was leather and very comfortable. I'd never sat in that chair. In

fact, that had been the first time I'd ever been in his office. I nodded at him, waiting.

"Steven, I want to congratulate you for passing all your government exams. Mr. Marshall gave me the results last week, but what with Darren getting accepted at Harvard, and all that, I didn't get the chance to convey the news."

"Thank you, sir." In any other circumstances, I would have been happy about that, but Darren was gone, and everything else seemed insignificant, meaningless.

"I spoke to your mother earlier, and she's in agreement. I want to send you to a good technical school. I want you to learn a trade. I'll pay for all your tuition and lodging on the condition that you get a part-time job to pay for other expenses. What do you say?"

"Where is this school, sir?"

"A few hours' drive from here, right outside of Boston. I know the director, and I've taken the liberty of contacting him on your behalf. You can start next week."

I heard only the word, Boston. "How far is that from Harvard, sir?" I asked.

He looked at me. "A good two hours' drive."

I nodded.

"You want to explore the big city, eh?" He chuckled. "I was your age once." He stood up. The meeting was over. "There are a variety of

programs to choose from. I left the brochure with your mother."

I shook his hand. "Thank you for the opportunity, sir."

"It's an investment," he said. "There's not much for you to do around here anymore." Which confirmed my suspicions that my main purpose was that I had been expected to look out for Darren. "You have to be able to support yourself, help your mother out in her golden years." He pointed at me. "I do expect straight A's, and I will be checking."

I told him I'd do my best.

My mother was excited, of course, and she went on and on about how Mr. Evans had been so good to us. For the first time in my life, I had no confusion over who I was. I wasn't going to Harvard with Darren, not that I ever expected to. I was the son of the servant, and my future was completely at the mercy of my master. Benevolent or not, it wasn't a big sacrifice for Theodore Evans to send me off to technical school. The money he wouldn't even miss, most likely a tax write off anyway. I was a charity case, and I was supposed to feel good about that. When I acted out in front of my mother, saying that I didn't owe Evans anything, she was outraged at my lack of gratitude, but she didn't understand that I was losing everything. True, we'd been saved from

starvation, taken off the streets, but we'd worked for it. Evans hadn't given us a damn thing. I'm sure my mother would have slapped me that day if I'd been standing closer, and perhaps I would have deserved it, but Darren was moving further and further away from me, and even if everyone would have been all right with us being two men, our class backgrounds would have kept us apart. We weren't two little boys playing hide and seek anymore. The world couldn't touch us then, but now, it felt as if it was closing in.

The first day I was at my new school, I almost turned around and went back to the estate. The furthest I'd ever been was the small town three miles away from where I lived. The school was located in a mid-sized town called Carsonville, and Theodore Evans had already arranged for me to work part time in a diner, washing dishes. The town would have been considered small by most people's standards, but for me, it seemed overwhelming with all the people and stores and traffic. It was the late 1980s, but a lot of people still wore bell-bottom jeans and flowered shirts with peace signs on them, old hippies who were stuck in time. I learned later that there was a commune nearby. I couldn't believe how sheltered I'd been back then. I knew nothing about the world. I'd hardly even watched television, except for the few

times I snuck a peek at the television set that the Evans kept in the family room. All my mother had in her quarters was an old radio with bad reception.

I had decided to take computer programming, which meant in this program, I was the only guy. The program was mainly data entry, and it was filled with secretaries.

I bit the bullet so to speak and attended the courses, going dutifully each day to Dave's Diner to wash piles of dishes with crusted-on food.

When I was bored at nighttime, I'd go to the computer lab and fiddle with the computer.

One morning I arrived to find Mr. Adams, my teacher, in the lab, literally tearing his hair out. "Sir?" I said.

He looked at me, and then went back to tapping frantically on the computer. "I don't know what happened. The entire system seems to have shut down."

"Oh," I said, walking over. "Allow me." I touched a few keys, leaned over and put in a few codes. Immediately, the computer came back up.

He stared at me. "How did you do that?"

"I don't know," I said, "I was fiddling with it last night, and I figured out a few things. I'm sorry. I forgot to put it back online."

"But you went into the computer language and redid some commands."

"I'm sorry."

"No, no, I mean, Steven, you're a natural. Even I couldn't have done that. What are you doing here? You should be making computer programs, not learning how to enter data."

I laughed it off, never realizing that one day I would invent a software program that would make me a billionaire.

Mr. Adams was truly an inspiration. He taught me to believe in myself, fostered my natural curiosity and technical savvy. And although I didn't know it at the time, Tom Adams would one day work for me.

Needless to say, I'd heard nothing from Darren since he'd left for Harvard, but I thought about him every night. I didn't go home for Thanksgiving or Christmas that first year. I was trying to save my money to buy a car, and even though my mother tearfully said on the phone that Mr. Evans would send the car, I told her to forget it. I was just a little hurt that Darren hadn't bothered to call me. It was easy enough to find out my phone number from his folks. True, I hadn't tried to contact him either. So, when Darren finally did call me in January, I just about fell through the floor.

"I'm sorry I didn't call before," he said, "I didn't have the number. I thought you'd be home at Christmas."

"I'm saving for a car," I said. When I think back now, I'm sure I did it out of spite.

"Dad said he offered to have the driver come and pick you up. I almost drove down myself."

"Why didn't you then?"

"I figured you didn't want to see me. You didn't call."

"You didn't either."

"God damn it, Stevie," he said.

I sighed. "So, how's it going? How's school?"

"Good, you?"

I gripped the phone. I wanted to tell him how much I'd missed him, how much it had killed me to stay here over the holidays when I knew we could have been together. I loved him, but I didn't say that, of course.

"It's a lot of work. I'm swamped. Listen, I was thinking that maybe you'd like to come down for a visit next weekend. I could come down there and pick you up. I have the car now."

My heart thudded in my chest. "Yeah? Okay. Sure. When can I expect you?"

"Friday sometime."

"I'll be working until seven."

"Okay, I'll find you."

I rattled off the name and address of the diner, but he seemed to know exactly where to go.



## Chapter Two

My cell phone was ringing, skyrocketing me back to the present. I took the phone out of my pocket and flipped it open. I checked the caller ID. It was my mother. "Hello, Mom."

"Stevie?"

She was practically the only one who called me Stevie anymore. "What's up?"

"I haven't seen you in weeks. When are you and that nice young man coming for dinner again?" She still referred to Andrew as "that nice young man."

"Andrew is really busy right now, but we'll come soon. Is everything okay at the house? Is the patio finished? My accountant told me the bill had been paid."

"Yes, it's all done, and Bill says to tell you that those men you sent to do the patio were fantastic. He wants to get a hot tub now, but I don't know about that. What do you think?"

"It would be good for your arthritis. You could enclose it so that you could use it all year round."

"That would cost a lot of money."

"Mother, I told you not to worry about money."

"Okay, but you don't think it's too much? What would the neighbors say? We don't want to come off as snobs."

"You don't want people to think you're the Evans family." I laughed suddenly.

"Shame on you," my mother scolded me. "The Evans family was nothing but nice to us...well, with the exception of Mr. Evans, that time back there, I mean, when all that nasty business happened..."

"Mom," I said sharply, "I don't want to talk about that, okay? Did you and Bill book your vacation yet?" My mother had met a nice man a few years after she'd come to Boston, a retired army captain, who treated her like a queen.

"I'm not going back to Mexico, too dangerous."

"Go to Jamaica then."

"Um, maybe. You want to come this time? You could bring your boyfriend."

"Andrew is not really my boyfriend, Mom." I sighed. "We'll see. I'll be by soon. I have a dinner tonight for the company. We've just landed another huge contract." I didn't tell her with whom.

"Oh, well, that's good dear. You have a good time," she said. "I love you."

"I love you, too," I said and hung up. There was no point of getting into details about this new deal. My mother understood nothing of business and showed absolutely no interest in it. Sometimes, I believed that she didn't even know what it was that had made me this rich. I bought her a huge computer for her birthday, and she was still afraid to touch it. But it didn't matter. My mother now wanted for nothing.

The minute I began to make more money than I knew what to do with, I drove out to the Evans estate to get my mother. I had put a down payment on a beautiful old Victorian-style house on the south side of Boston that I thought she'd like. I was determined that she would never again have to be anyone's slave.

I was hesitant when I arrived in front of the house. I sat there for the longest time in my brand new Lincoln Continental, wondering if I'd be thrown off the property the moment I got out. I fingered my cell phone, thinking about calling the house and asking for my mother, but instead, I swallowed my anxiety and got out of the car. I buttoned my blue suit, straightened my tie, and went up and rang the front door bell. I hadn't been back to this place for six years.

When the door opened, a stranger stood there, or what appeared to be a stranger. Suddenly, I recognized Cecile. She had dyed her hair blond, and she looked very sophisticated in her navy blue dress with the cut-off sleeves. "Steven? Is that you?" She was surprised, but at least she didn't slam the door in my face.

"Hello, Cecile," I said. "I came to see my mother."

She leaned back on the door, smiling. "Wow, you've come a long way. Your name is everywhere now. Who would have guessed you'd be that successful. That your car?" She looked around me at the vehicle in the driveway.

I nodded.

"Well, you've come at a bad time if you wanted to see my brother. He's not around."

"No, I..." I bit my bottom lip. I wanted to ask her how he was, where he was, but I didn't. "It's my mother I came to see actually."

"Father's here." She moved her head in the direction of the hallway.

"It's okay," I said, "it's probably better that I just go and see my mother."

"I never believed it was you, you know. I always suspected that you covered up for Darren. I never understood what it was between you two."

I said nothing, just looked around uncomfortably. "Can you get my mother, please? I'll wait by the car."

"Steven," she said, reaching out and touching my arm, "I've missed you. I've missed the old days."

I nodded at her and gave her a brief smile. I headed back to the car and waited there. A few minutes later, my mother came outside. Although we'd been in touch by phone, I hadn't seen her since she'd come by the prison that one time. She looked older. And although she had just turned fifty, the arthritis in her bones had gotten worse.

She threw her arms around me and cried. I held her, holding back the tears myself. "Mom," I said, holding her away from me, "pack your things now. I'm taking you back to Boston with me. I bought you a house. You don't have to work for these people anymore."

It took awhile for what I was saying to sink in. She had remained in the Evans family's employ grudgingly after what had happened, not having had much of a choice. She never quite forgave Theodore Evans for washing his hands of me.

I waited while she packed and went to inform her employer that she was leaving. She told me that she didn't feel as if she needed to give him any notice. I knew that this was my mother's

payback for how he'd treated her son. It was a brave thing for someone like my mother to do.

I caught a glimpse of Theodore Evans watching out the window as I put my mother's suitcase into the trunk. He never came out to say goodbye, but Cecile did. She ran out at the last minute and hugged me, and she gave my mother a tearful kiss.

"Poor child," my mother said as I drove off down the road, casting one look back at that house in my rearview mirror, "I think I was like her mother. Mrs. Evans was always gone. And Cecile loved you."

"Yes, she was like a sister to me."

"No," my mother said, looking at me, "she loved you but not like a sister. You were too blind to see it, wrapped up with Darren the way you were."

I sucked in some breath. "So, ah, where is Darren now?"

"He's running one of the big companies in New York City. He got married last year."

I swallowed.

"To a Tiffany Price, her daddy is some rich oil tycoon in Dallas. They invited me to go, but I decided not to. I didn't really have the right clothes, you know?"

"You didn't mention it on the phone." My eyes remained on the road.

"No. I didn't think...well, you had enough on your plate last year what with all that business stuff you were into. I didn't think that it was..."

"You thought it would hurt me." My mother knew a lot more than I thought she did. This was her way of letting me know.

She reached over and squeezed his hand. "I know you protected him, Stevie. You went to jail for him because you couldn't let all that stuff ruin his career. I never believed it was you. He was always the wild one...had everything so he was always looking for the next thrill. I knew one day that boy would break your heart. But there was no separating you. If I had tried, I would have lost you. It was always him."

The tears lit my eyes. I blinked them away so that I could see the road. One rolled down my cheek.

"And what did you get out of it? He turned his back on you, did exactly what his daddy wanted, stepped into his father's shoes and married the little rich girl."

I brushed the tear away.

My mother stopped talking then. She actually fell off to sleep before we reached Boston. I was grateful.

Shortly after I settled my mother into her new house in Boston, a reporter for some big business

magazine who wanted some kind of rags to riches story approached me. I put him off for the longest time, burying myself in my new company.

The company was expanding by leaps and bounds, and I decided to move my office, claiming an entire floor in a prominent high-rise office tower in downtown Boston.

By the time I hired Andrew, I was just about worn out, getting less than four hours of sleep a night. I figured if I kept moving, I wouldn't have time to think about Darren, and when he invaded my dreams, I cut down on the sleep I was getting, too.

Andrew saved my life really. He told me that if I didn't slow down and pace myself, I'd end up in the hospital. I called him "my angel" after we began sleeping together. He was just the distraction I needed. I remember he asked me one time, "Steven, you really don't even like running your company, do you?"

"No. I like tinkering the best. I enjoy working in the invention area, the rest, well, I'm going to leave that up to you."

Andrew kept his own house, and I kept mine. And every time he hinted that we should move in together, I put him off. He'd tell me he loved me, and I'd tell him not to. It's a wonder he was still around. I knew it wasn't just the job.



Although you really couldn't call me a promiscuous guy, I had slept with a variety of men throughout the years, especially with those that bore a resemblance to Darren Evans.

And if I did get some relief from my lament of Darren, it was very inconsistent. There were always articles in the paper or his picture was on the news, always something around to remind me.

That reporter from *Business World* was relentless, and finally after months of trying to get me to agree to an interview, I did.

He was a seasoned veteran, and I appreciated his discretion. We met for a drink in a downtown pub prior to the interview. "I have to ask you, Steven. Do you want to talk about the time you did?"

"Kind of hard not to," I said. "Prison is where I worked on the software program. I had the time, you know?" I laughed slightly at the joke.

"I know but the actual circumstances around it?"

"The arrest?"

He nodded, looking at me with his sincere grey eyes.

"I was young, foolish. I knew drugs were bad. I just wasn't thinking."

"How about if we say you had a brief brush with the law then turned your life around?"

I nodded. "Sounds good."

"And the Evans family, where you grew up. How do you want me to..."

"I was the son of the housekeeper," I shrugged.

"Do you think that your experience there taught you anything, led up to you becoming the innovator you are today?"

I thought about that. I learned a lot of things. Learn your place, don't fall in love, people generally do what's expected of them in the end. Appearance is everything. None of that would have been helpful here. "No, absolutely nothing."

In spite of that reporter's professionalism, the one thing that he did do was to drag all of it to the surface again. I was depressed for days after. Maybe it was like a kind of therapy without the high price tag.

Now, years later, I would walk into a room filled with people, and one of those people would be Darren Evans. I stood, walked to the window. It was a beautiful summer day. I decided to go for that walk before coming back here and putting on my black suit and white shirt.

I fingered my keys in my pocket and left by the front door of my modest townhouse. I nodded to some of my neighbors and headed for the park. As I walked, I recalled that Friday evening that

Darren walked into Dave's Diner. We had so much to say to each other, both of us talking at the same time, then laughing like two fools. I wanted to kiss him, I wanted to hold him and touch him and fuck him, and I wondered if he still wanted to do the same.

We walked in a park, not unlike the one I was in now, trees and benches, and a little stream with ducks. We'd calmed down some, Darren telling me about his law program. "It's really tough," he said, "sometimes, I want to give up. There is so much work."

"I'm sure you're doing great. You're really bright."

"Tell me about you now."

I was really excited to tell him about what my teacher had said. Once I began, I couldn't stop. "And he says I have a gift for computers. Like, I'm working on a new program, it's simple, but if I can get the computer language to co-operate, it would make surfing the internet so much faster and also more efficient." I went on babbling while he listened patiently. Finally, I stopped. "Oh my god, I'm sorry, Darren, I've been talking for an hour."

"No, it's okay. I'm happy to see you so hyped about something."

We were standing in the shadow of a big tree. He reached out and touched my shoulder. "I've missed you so much."

"You didn't call me."

"Law school has kept me busy, and...I don't know, maybe I thought you wouldn't want to hear from me."

"Why in hell wouldn't I want to hear from you?"

"I don't know. Back then it was different, you know?"

"It can be like that again, here," I insisted.

He pulled me against him and kissed me passionately. I ran my fingers through his hair, moved my hands over his ribs and then massaged his ass through his jeans. He held me even closer in his arms, kissing my neck, rubbing my erection through my pants. We were breathing heavy. We'd undone each other's zipper. It was getting pretty intense. I didn't care if anyone saw. I would have had him right there in that park if he hadn't have put a stop to it. Truly, I felt as if I'd died when he pulled away. "Do you have a place we can go?"

"I have a room," I said, my hand caressing his face, "but people would hear us."

"There's a small motel at the edge of town," he said, "we'll go there." He walked across the park back to the main street. His stride was determined. He didn't say anything, and he didn't look at me.

My heart hammered against my ribs. I could hardly see straight. I scrambled into his car, and

Darren drove at breakneck speed, the way he'd done when he first got that new car after graduation. I prayed we didn't get stopped.

The motel was a little skuzzy, but it didn't matter. I waited outside while Darren got the key. We got back into the car and drove up to the last cabin at the end of the road. There was no one else at the motel.

"Now," he said, smiling at me, "you can scream all you want."

"Me scream," I scoffed, reaching over and kissing his mouth feverishly, "you're the one who's going to screaming, stud."

We ran to the door like two kids. Darren had difficulty sticking the key into the hole, and of course, I couldn't resist a joke. He punched me in the arm when I said, "Hope you're not going to have that much problem finding it in the room."

As it turned out, he had no trouble at all. I knew as soon as we were naked and in each other's arms that Darren's sexual experience had developed far beyond just blow jobs with snooty boys at St. James. I was grateful in one way, yet at the same time, I was resentful, not being able to stop myself from wondering who'd taught him so much about pleasure. The way he was touching me with his hands, his tongue, his lips were driving me out of my mind, forcing me to stop thinking about how many men he'd possibly been

with. I was moaning within minutes, scrambling to absorb as much of him as I possibly could. When he rolled me onto my stomach and began to lick that place just above the opening to my ass, I lost it completely. I pummeled the mattress and begged for mercy. He teased my opening with his tongue, darting it in and out while pulling me to my knees and stroking my cock slowly. My hips rocked back and forth, and I wanted to feel him inside of me so much, I was well prepared to beg. As it turned out, I didn't have to. Darren positioned himself between my thighs and worked his cock into my ass, his arms coming around me, and his lips covering the surface of my shoulder. He fucked me not only with glaring expertise but with the riveting emotion we both felt. He'd missed me. I'd missed him.

When Darren came, his body trembled quite violently. He seemed to gasp for breath then he lowered his face into my neck, holding me in his arms, almost rocking me before he released me, and I lowered myself to the mattress.

We lay there, side by side, much like we'd done that first time in my room back at the estate. Neither one of us spoke for a long time. I think we actually dozed for a while. When I opened my eyes again, it was dawn and Darren was perched on one elbow looking down at me. I smiled at him. How could I not? He was so beautiful, so still, and

I think sad. I was never sure why there was that sadness on his face then, but it seemed to disappear as soon as I noticed. He smiled, drew back from me. "So," he said, "want to go into Boston?"

I would have gone anywhere, as long as he was going there, too. I think he knew that. "Yeah, why not? Got a place for me to sleep?"

"Sure, in my dorm." He crawled out of bed and walked naked to the window.

My gaze followed him, blinded with desire.

"It's study week. Campus is quiet. I want to take you to this great place."

"Will you drive me back Sunday?"

"Sure. It will have to be early though. I have to study."

"Okay."

He went into the bathroom. A few minutes later, I heard the shower. I wanted to join him, if for nothing else but to just watch the water run off his naked body, but I stayed put. If we were going to get to Boston, we'd have to take off soon, or it wouldn't be worth going.

We arrived in Boston around noon. Darren took me to lunch at some fancy lawyers' club. It was overpriced and the portions were small, but none of that mattered. I was looking into his blue eyes across the table, and he was talking about his

courses. I hung on his every word until he stopped talking and just sat there looking at me.

"What?"

"You haven't said a word."

"You haven't let me," I laughed. "And I did this to you last night, remember?"

"It wasn't all you did to me," he smirked.

"Ha, you mean...all you did to me, don't you?"

He laughed and suddenly stood up. "Want the tour of Boston?"

I shook my head. All I wanted was a tour of his room on campus. I didn't have to say it. He read my expression. After a second of silence, he nodded and winked at me.

We wanted the same thing.

I was taking off his clothes the moment he closed the door. I pushed him back against the wall, stepping over the pile on the floor and let myself look at him. I caught my breath.

"What are you doing?" he asked me, laughing.

"Looking at you." I flopped on the bed on my back, propped up on my elbows. I smiled at him. "Put your hands over your head and push your hips out. Pose for me. Turn me on."

"You're already turned on," he laughed, indicating the substantial bulge between my legs.

I placed my hand on my own cock and rubbed. I licked my lips, closed my eyes, and with shaking



fingers, pulled down my zipper. "Pose, let me masturbate awhile."

He shook his head but smiled at me, lifting his arms and placing his hands behind his head. He pushed out his hips, his erection a sight to see, standing straight out, his balls, full and high.

"Play with yourself."

"I'd rather play with you," he said.

"Indulge me, and then you can have me." I took my cock out, felt it in my hand, stroked the firm shaft as Darren ran one hand over his chest, pulling at his nipple and then down to his stomach where he lifted his cock in his hand and smoothed his thumb over the head.

I murmured my pleasure, licked my lips again, smelt the sex, spotted the wet cream, which coated his cockhead. He began to get into it, indulging my senses. He let his head go back while he masturbated, punished his own nipples, handled his balls. He moaned softly then said my name. "Stevie, fuck me."

I pushed off the bed and came around behind him. I squeezed his delightful, round cheeks then seized his ass like a man on fire. I sliced into his beautiful body, yanking his head back, kissing his neck, one hand touching those delectable nipples as I rutted into him like a prize bull. For that time, he was completely mine, and I had no qualms about claiming my prize. A short time after that, I

was on the floor sucking his cock, a cock that had already been erect, once before. When he came, he called me baby, and I discovered that I liked it when he said that in his deep, male voice. It was very sexy.

That night, he told me he was taking me to a very special place. How can I describe what I felt when I entered that club? It was underground, hidden, and the first thing I noticed were the beautiful men taking drugs. I tried not to be shocked, but when Darren pulled a little vile of white powder from his coat pocket, I was speechless.

The music blared and half-naked men danced together or engaged in sex acts in the corners. I followed Darren into a back room, and he laid things on the table, a mirror, a knife. "Have a little," he said, "gets you so horny. Then you can have whoever you want."

I didn't want anyone but him. And I certainly didn't want any drugs. "It's cocaine?"

"It's fine," he waved that away.

"You've been taking cocaine?"

"It helps me to relax when I take a break from studying," he said.

"And you fuck these guys here?"

"Steven! Stop acting like we're married." He laughed at me, about to sprinkle the powder on the table when we heard a crash.

Someone cried out, "Cops!"

"Oh no," Darren said quite desperately, searching around for an exit, "I have to get out of here. This will ruin me. My father will..." He was looking for a place to dump the vile when the door burst open and two cops stood there. Darren lowered the vile down to his side. I discretely reached out with my hand behind his leg and took it from him.

We were arrested, of course. I counseled Darren to plead ignorance. He had no drugs, and thankfully due to the timing, hadn't taken any either. I told the police that he was there to pick me up. "He warned me against this place. I didn't listen," I said, looking at Darren who nodded silently.

There were underage boys in there as well, something else Darren neglected to tell me. Darren claimed he didn't know.

Theodore Evans was livid. He came to Boston to pick up his son from the police station, convincing the authorities not to charge him with anything. After all, he was Darren Evans. Darren received a dirty look, but I got blasted in front of everyone.

"You ungrateful little piece of shit," he hollered at me. "After all I've done for you. And you drag my son into your vice. I knew you were no good. Once trash, always trash. Don't count on me for

anything, Steven. You're on your own. And stay away from my son."

Darren stood there, his head down. He said nothing. Then again, I didn't expect him to.

So, Darren got off with a tongue lashing from his old man. As you can guess, I didn't fare as well. First of all, I'd been caught with cocaine in my possession, and I couldn't tell the cops what dealer I'd gotten it from, because I had no idea where Darren had gotten it. They told me that they'd go easier on me if I cooperated. Secondly, I'd never have the money to finish school now. Evans had made it clear he was abandoning me. I feared for my mother as well. This wasn't her fault, and she could end up losing her job. Then of course, I discovered through my overworked and inexperienced legal-aid lawyer that I was going to prison for cocaine possession.

I went to prison. It was bad but nothing could compare with how much I missed Darren. I didn't blame him for this. After all, I took the cocaine, because he had so much more to lose than I did, and because I couldn't bear to see him in ruins. That's how much I loved him. And I guess I didn't even expect him to visit me in prison, but I have to admit that I was disappointed that he didn't.

Prison gave me time. There were computers there, and I was allowed to take courses. I developed my ideas for the new software inside,

and when I got out, I went to see my old teacher. Adams told me it was brilliant. He showed me where to go with it, and the rest was history.

When the company came into existence, I gave him a super job working for me. He still works for me to this day, although I wasn't sure what he did now, something to do with marketing. Andrew would know.

I was back at my townhouse now, feeling kind of shaky. The walk seemed to exhaust me, although it made no sense. I was in top physical condition. I noticed as I walked back inside that my mood had darkened considerably. I checked the clock. The time was going quickly, too quickly, and yet not quite fast enough. Soon I'd be in a room surrounded by people, but the only person I'd really see would be Darren. It was insane to be in love all this time with a man I hadn't even touched in over ten years, but there was no way to change that. I'd love him until my last breath.

I had no idea how it would feel to be face to face with Darren again, or what affect that would have on me...or him. I only knew that it was time, and there was no turning back.

I walked into the bathroom and turned on the shower. I took off all my clothes and stepped under the spray. I closed my eyes and said his name, stroking my cock. For a second, it felt as if

he was here with me in the shower, but of course, he wasn't. It was only my memories and me.

The contract I'd signed a few months back was with Techno Innovation, who'd developed a software program, which would greatly promote efficiency in computer communication, especially in conglomerate enterprises like Evans Inc. I told myself that it didn't matter that Techno Innovation was owned by Stevie. It was easy to convince myself that it was a complete surprise. I wasn't even present when the contract was negotiated. When I signed the contract, it was with a man called Andrew Devine, a very handsome man, whom I met with only once. I just assumed that Andrew Devine was Techno Innovation.

Of course, I knew Stevie had made himself rich in computer software technology, but there were many companies out there, weren't there? I guess I had to admit that deep down I suspected that Techno Innovation belonged to Stevie. My Stevie. Of course, I had no right to call him that anymore. Maybe I never did have that right, but he sure as hell felt like mine at one time.

I glanced over at the phone on the nightstand. I'd taken it off the hook. The phone hadn't stopped ringing since I'd arrived in Boston. Evans Inc. had offices all over the place now, even in Europe, and I didn't really live anywhere in

particular, except in an array of hotel rooms. I moved out of the house, of course. My ex got it in the divorce settlement, and I really didn't care. I'd always hated that house. It was big and rambling, empty really, much like our marriage was. Anyway, it wasn't her fault. And there was no reason why I should be thinking about those five years I spent in a relationship I never wanted, except that I missed Stevie more in those few years than I ever had, even more than when I was sent away to boarding school as a teenager.

I sunk down onto the bed now, ran my fingers through my hair, which seemed a little too long. I glanced at myself in the mirror. I still looked pretty good. I'd stayed in shape. I wasn't grey, although it was a wonder I wasn't, what with the hours I worked. I saw myself looking back at me, a self that actually smiled for a change, something I wasn't prone to do according to the public's general impression of me.

I closed my eyes and lay down on the bed. I still had a little time. I didn't want to show up too early. I'd already told my driver I'd call him when I was ready. *Stevie*. I laughed out loud when I began to remember the things we did back at the estate.

The first day I met him, he looked like a frightened little twerp, hiding his face close to his mother's skirt. I said something to my sister about

him looking like a big baby, and he looked at me and stuck out his tongue. I thought that was hilarious. I stuck out mine as well, and we then engaged in a kind of a battle with our tongues while his mother and my father discussed business. By the end of it, we were both giggling, which earned a reprimand from both our parents.

Once Stevie and his mother had settled in, I wandered over to their quarters and invited him to play ball. He readily agreed and we went outside and played. I never suspected at that age what Stevie would come to mean to me or how my feelings for him would make me so miserable.

As we got older, I became more and more aware of how different we were. I envied Stevie. He never knew how much. He was free while I felt as if my life would never be my own. I knew what I would be doing years before I did it. There was no escape. I would run my father's business, marry a properly connected princess and produce an heir for the empire. It didn't matter what I wanted, what I felt or what I needed. I was the Evans heir. It was my entire identity. The only time I ever felt free was when Stevie and I were alone. We talked about everything. I could dream out loud with him, tell him that I was going to do this and that. Sometimes he'd laugh. He knew it was impossible. But there were times when he'd



just let it be and let me rant on, letting me feel as if I were the king of the world.

Then he shattered my entire world, which both devastated and fulfilled me in a way I never thought possible. When I was in his arms, all the baggage that encased me was stripped away. I was naked in a way he could have never understood, and I was completely in love.

That first time stunned me. I'd engaged in some petty sexual stuff at the Academy. It was a boys' school after all with no girls for miles. Even the most conservative among us fell prey to the more adventuresome boys. Blow jobs, clumsy kisses, slaps on the ass in the shower rooms, a nipple twist or two. It was just enough to cause me to lie in bed at night and wonder what it would feel like to kiss Stevie, to suck his cock.

When I came home that summer, Stevie was standing there at the gate, watching me. He looked incredible, so sweet, tanned and fit, and he was looking at me in a way that instantly stiffened my cock.

I took him for a ride in my new car that night and danced all night with a bunch of stupid girls, while Stevie sat watching me. I was aware of his eyes on me, and it stirred my passion for him, a passion I tried to calm by copping a feel or two with the girls. It didn't work so I drank, hoping the liquor would calm it.

I was almost angry with him when we left. He wanted my car keys, which made sense. I was loaded. But I was really irritated at him for making me feel all needy and hot.

When I woke up in his bed the next morning, there was no way to stop the flow. I wanted him. I wanted him in a way I hadn't even imagined wanting someone back at St. James. It was our initiation in his lumpy old bed behind the kitchen. And when I left his bed that morning, I was a wreck.

I paced my room, trying to put my rational side in the driver's seat. My rational side lost. In fact, the moment I saw Stevie from my window coming out of the house from the servants' quarter, my rational side disappeared. I watched him as he walked down the road to collect the mail, and I licked my lips, running a hand down to my cock, wanting him. In fact, as an Evans, I usually got what I wanted, and I had no intention of waiting. It had been no more than five hours since I'd been inside of him, and I intended to be inside of him again.

I ran down the stairs, ignoring my sister who sat outside on the porch swing reading a book. I jaunted down the road, lifting a hand to him as he walked toward me, the mail in his hand.

He smiled at me. It was sunshine.

I paused, a little out of breath, my chest heaving, but not entirely from the exertion. "Meet me down by the river," I said, my gaze meeting his. He had to want me again. If he didn't, I'd just curl up and die.

"Okay." He laughed a little, grinned. "What for?"

"You're teasing," I said, moving closer. I looked back over my shoulder to check to see if my sister were spying on us. She had gone inside. "That's okay," I murmured, reaching out and brushing my hand over the bulge in his shorts, "you can tease, as long as you let me have you."

"We'll see," he threw back at me and walked by.

"Ten minutes," I called to him, my eyes on his ass in those tight shorts of his.

"Make it twenty," he called back.

My heart gave a little leap, and I continued down the road, heading to the river. There was a little wooded path, which led down a slope by the water. It was private. No one came there. I'd be able to do whatever I wanted, look at him naked in the sunlight.

I was so horny by the time he arrived, my cock was as hard as rock. I lay there on the grass, my shirt off, my cock standing erect in my shorts.

Stevie looked at me for a moment. "You are so beautiful," he said.

I smiled. I might have blushed. "Take off your clothes," I urged.

He hesitated a moment then pulled his t-shirt over his head. With his hair all tasseled, he looked at me. "Now you. I want to see what's holding your pants up."

"Very funny," I accused.

"Come on, Darren," he said softly, pleading. He licked his lips, came closer, hand on the band of his shorts. "I will if you will."

I laughed, lifted my hips, pulled down the shorts. Stevie went to his knees beside me. He reached out and touched my cock, and I almost had a seizure. "Yes," I said, meeting his gaze.

Stevie smiled, lowered his head, licked the head of my cock. I shuddered, my head going back. I wanted to be his slut. And I didn't feel at all embarrassed about that. Stevie's hand reached up to one of my nipples as he took my cock into his mouth. I trembled all over, struggling to hold on to my erection. I placed my hand in his golden hair. I think I said some kind of a prayer as I came in his mouth. It didn't last long. Of course, as time went on, I got better at staying hard, but it was never easy with Stevie. The moment I was inside of him, I'd have to really focus. My cock loved Stevie's ass. It just wanted to flood it every time it buried itself inside of him.

Stevie was laughing when he leaned back, wiping my come from his mouth.

"Well," I sputtered, "I wouldn't have come so fast if you hadn't kept me waiting here so long. I was thinking about some hot guy in a magazine and..."

"Hot guy in a magazine, eh?" He lifted an eyebrow then jumped on me and started tickling me.

We laughed and rolled on the grass, and within minutes, my cock was hard again. I practically ripped the shorts off of him. I pushed his hands up over his head and allowed myself the luxury of soaking in his beauty. He kept his hands over his head, lifted his hips to me, wanting me. I sat up on my knees, raping him with my gaze, settling my palms on his thigh, brushing his cock, moving up over his stomach to his chest. I played with his nipples until he whimpered, then stroked his cock, sucked his balls into my mouth.

Stevie grabbed onto a rock with his arms as I lifted his legs wide and high and fucked him like that. Oh what a sight he was, naked, sprawled apart like that, his hands over his head, nipples hard like diamonds. We fucked, gasping, moaning, and I managed to stay hard for longer that time. When I came, I lowered my head and sucked him to orgasm. He called out my name,

and I kissed him all over as his body, pumping out his come.

We laid in each other's arms, naked, there by the river, kissing slowly, touching each other again. We returned home by the light of the moon, each one of us catching hell for it, but it didn't matter, none of it did except for touching and fucking and kissing.

I opened my eyes now, touched my cheek as I felt the tears. I hadn't cried since the night Stevie went to jail. I was not prone to tears. My father frowned on it, told me real men knew how to hide their emotions. He'd taught me well. Not only could I hide them, I could, at times, completely deny them. When my ex-wife accused me of being one cold bastard, she'd been right. The only time I'd ever felt anything was with Stevie, and of course, that couldn't have been allowed to last.

Now, was it too late for us? My father was dead; my marriage was over. I was so damn rich and powerful, I no longer cared what people thought. But there were too many scars between us. I'd put so much distance between us. I was sure that Stevie had moved on, most likely with that Andrew guy, who I now knew was the guy Stevie had running his company. When I thought about it now, some things that I didn't understand then made sense to me. Devine was so damn good

looking, and the way he'd looked at me during our meeting...well...I could have sworn that Andrew Devine had looked at me as if I was some kind of a rival.

I wondered what Stevie had told him about us, maybe nothing. Maybe it meant nothing to Stevie now.

No. I'd messed everything up. I'd allowed my father to abandon Stevie after what had happened. And although I drove up to that prison at least seven times that year, I always turned around before getting to the gate.

As it turned out, Stevie had made it without my support. And somehow, it didn't surprise me. He was always bright, even brighter than I was in some ways. He just never had the chances I had. Everything had been handed to me, but I really didn't want it. I'd never wanted any of it. I would have been content to be poor all my life, because all I ever wanted was Stevie, and I still did.

Someone was knocking at my door. Privacy was a precious commodity for a man like me. I was grateful for the few minutes I'd had to be alone with my thoughts.

It was Geraldine Phillips, who headed up the Boston office. She was the only female executive on the board and one of my best. She'd come out as a lesbian a few years ago, at first to some of her close, personal friends, and then to me. We'd been

together at Harvard. She already had an MBA before getting her law degree. She broke down in front of me when she told me how she'd kept this secret for so many years. She had always been an overachiever, had a father much like my own, who pushed her relentlessly. She was on the brink of a breakdown.

I told her it didn't matter to me. And what she told me next shook me to the core. She said simply, "Okay, your turn now. When are you going let yourself live, Darren?"

I remember getting angry, livid really.

My anger didn't put her off. She dried her eyes and shook her head. "You've always loved someone else. That's why I wasn't surprised when I heard about the divorce. Who was he?"

I didn't answer for a long time. When I did, the first thing I said was his name aloud. "Stevie."

She didn't comment. She let me talk. And I did. I told her the entire story. I told her how I let him go to jail for me."

I couldn't cry, although my throat ached so badly. I was literally in pain. Geraldine cried for me. And I will always remember that.

She was smiling at me now, holding out her arms. Although we saw each other infrequently, that time we spent together had never been forgotten. I hugged her tight.



She stroked my hair and released me. She looked happy. She had met a beautiful artist a few years back, and they now shared a house. Tawny got pregnant by artificial insemination a year ago and they had a baby girl. Geraldine was now showing me pictures as we sat on the bed together.

"I'd love to see her," I said.

"You're invited to dinner next week. Can you make it?"

"I don't know. I'll try." I got up off the bed, walked to the window.

"Are you going like that, in your jeans?"

I didn't answer for a minute. I was thinking about what a beautiful day it had been and how summers had been so special for Stevie and me.

"Dare?"

I turned around for a moment, smiled at her.

"Where were you just now?"

I took a breath. "Stevie Connors owns Techno Innovation."

"Oh."

## *Chapter Three*

It was after seven. I was already late. I'd fiddled with my damn tie for almost twenty minutes. I'd always hated formal wear. I never had much of an opportunity to wear it growing up, except that time my mother rented a suit for me for my Uncle Bert's funeral. I remember it was too short in the legs and tight in the waist. I couldn't wait to get it off. This one was perfectly tailored, and I still hated it.

I'd seen Darren dressed up often, of course, and it usually meant he was going somewhere or doing something, which totally excluded me. Maybe that's why I didn't like suits.

The limo had pulled up outside the hotel. On the way, I went over it all in my head, all the possible things I could say to Darren when I first saw him. "Nice to see you again, Mr. Evans," I murmured aloud in the back seat. No, calling him Mr. Evans would seem pretentious, wouldn't it? After all, I'd been inside of the man. He'd been

inside of me. "So, where have you been, Darren? I haven't heard from you, not a card, a note, a phone call. Have you had a nice life? Do you miss me at all? Do you still remember holding me...touching me...fucking—" I stopped suddenly noticing that the driver was staring at me as if I'd lost my mind. Maybe I had lost it.

I made a move to get out. The driver stepped round quickly to open the door. "Have a nice evening, Mr. Connors," he said, tipping his hat. He had a silly little grin on his face. Yep. He figured I'd bought the farm.

"It should be interesting," I muttered, looking at the hotel for a moment before slowly moving toward it.

There were people walking in, dressed in their evening attire, women in long dresses with jewels at their neck, men in dark suits and ties. "I hate this stuff," I said under my breath as some reporter snapped my picture.

I snarled at the reporter and hurried inside. I followed the crowd, eyeing a large sign with Evans Inc., written on it in big gold letters. The Logo was an eagle encircled by a globe. It was recognizable everywhere.

I began searching my pockets for my engraved invitation and spotted Andrew coming in my direction. He looked handsome as usual. He waved the invitation away as I took it out of my

pocket and glanced at the door person. "This is Steven Connors," he said.

The door person, a young man with a crooked smile, nodded at me. "Good evening, Mr. Connors," he said. "I love your video games."

"We make video games now?" I looked at Andrew, walking in.

Andrew laughed and clapped a hand on my shoulder, steering me through the crowd. "Don't you remember seeing the demo last year?"

"Oh yeah," I nodded. "We did work out all the kinks on that, didn't we?"

"Part of your component work last March."

"Oh okay, I knew that would be good for something." I glanced around nervously. There were a lot of people. "Where's our table?"

"Up front. I'm taking you there now."

I felt like Andrew's disabled brother suddenly. I was no good at these things. "Are we at Darren's table?"

"Is that a problem?" He eyed me, waiting for my answer.

"No," I lied. After that, I had little time to think about it as Andrew stopped to introduce me to this and that person.

These were the people who worked for Darren, people who worked for me, other people who were contracted by our companies. It never ended. I'd never keep the names straight. The mayor was

there as well and members of the Boston Business Association. People seemed extremely happy to meet me. I found it quite bizarre.

When I first spotted Darren, people surrounded him, but I knew it was him. He stood at least a head taller than most of the people in the room, and I found myself drifting in his direction as if I was a leaf being carried by the wind. I saw his face and my heart skipped a beat. I wrapped my fingers together tightly and set my jaw so that my teeth wouldn't chatter. And as I got closer, he stopped talking. He was staring at me, his gaze seeking mine. I felt my knees go weak, and suddenly Andrew came up beside me and took my arm. I gave him a grateful smile. He was probably the only one who knew what it took for me to walk across that room at this moment. I really don't know if I would have made it without him.

Darren moved away from the others and took a few steps as well, as if trying to prove that he too was making an effort. I couldn't help wondering if it was as difficult for him. If it was, he didn't show it. He just stared at me with those beautiful satiny blue eyes of his. His hair was longer than I'd remembered but still shiny black, and except for a few fine lines around his eyes, he looked exactly the same. I wanted to reach out and touch his face,

just to assure myself that he was real, but I didn't, of course.

"How have you been, Stevie?"

He called me Stevie. I almost did reach out then but not to caress him. I suddenly had the urge to hit him. How dare he call me Stevie, as if it had only been yesterday since we held each other.

I cleared my throat. "Hello, Mr—Darren." I almost called him Mr. Evans but I knew that would be too much. I really did want to punish him suddenly. "I'm great, fantastic. You?" I wasn't very good at disguising the bitterness. It was there in my voice. Andrew heard it, too, because he squeezed my arm, then he walked away.

"Fine, thank you. Congratulations on your success." His words were appropriate, but his gaze was not. It was glued to mine, and I felt as if he was stripping me naked and touching me all over. The heat crept up my face. I wanted to scream at him to stop looking at me like that, beg if I had to, but of course, there was nothing I could do. I was completely in the power of that gaze, just like I'd always been his willing slave.

"Thanks," I managed. Some people approached suddenly. Darren made an attempt to introduce me, but his words were coming out all jumbled. I gave him a strange look, then as Darren began to talk to them, I took the opportunity to move away.

Andrew must have been watching, because after I put some distance between Darren and me, he was suddenly beside me as I found myself in the lobby, looking for a washroom. "I'm getting claustrophobic, I think."

Andrew nodded solemnly. "It was hard seeing him again."

What was the point of lying? I nodded, beginning to breathe normally again.

"You had the same effect on him."

"No, I didn't."

"He hides it better than you but I could tell. He looked as if he was dying when you walked away."

"Don't say that." I felt sick suddenly.

"It's true." Andrew lowered his head.

We just stood there outside the bathroom, neither of us going in. Andrew didn't have to say it. We both knew what we were talking about. I felt pity for Andrew. Tonight was just a confirmation of what he'd known all along. I didn't love him. I couldn't, because I was still in love with Darren.

Then I heard his voice.

"Stevie?"

There he was, right in front of me. His voice seemed to echo in the lobby.

I looked away.

"Can we talk?"

When I looked back at him, it was with defiance, resolve, or as much as I could muster. "Don't you have a speech to give or something?" It came out sharp.

Andrew glanced at Darren. "I think I need to get back in there." He looked at me. "I'll be at the table."

I nodded at him. "I won't be long."

Darren and I watched Andrew disappear.

"So," Darren said, not looking at me, "is he your lover?"

"No, I mean, yes...fuck. What's it to you?"

He laughed a little uneasily. "That's some answer. Is it supposed to be multiple choice?"

"It's none of your business, that's what it's supposed to be."

"You're right. I guess we should..."

"Should what, Darren?" I slammed the palm of my hand onto the bathroom door and swung it open. I walked in, hoping he wouldn't follow, but he did. I leaned on the washbasin and let my head hang down for a moment. "I hate these things," I said abruptly, straightening up and pulling at my tie. It wasn't the first time I'd said that tonight.

"Your tie is all crooked, Stevie, here, let me." He pulled me around to face him and fiddled with my tie for a moment. I thought I was going to die. His face was so close to mine. I almost groaned.



"There," he said, his voice sounding far away. He cleared his throat, smiled at me faintly. "It's better now." He stepped away, giving me room to breathe again. "Stevie," he began. "I—"

"Don't," I almost closed my eyes. "Please, don't call me Stevie."

He nodded. "Okay. I'm sorry."

"Sorry?" I echoed the word.

He backed up some, leaning against the wall. "I need to ask you something. And I guess everything comes down to this one question."

I swallowed, my gaze searching his face. "Ask me then."

"Do you still...is there a chance that you..." He put his face in his hands.

I narrowed my eyes.

He lifted his face. There were tears in his eyes. Or at least what I thought were tears. I could never stand to see him hurt or in pain. Instinctively, the tears rose in mine. "A chance what?"

"That you still feel...something for me?"

Our gazes locked. My mouth opened a little, went dry. "Why...how can you ask me that? How dare you ask me that?" I could hardly get the words out. "I hear nothing from you for years. You don't even come and visit me at prison, and you got married. Married, Dare. And you stand there and ask me if..."

"I came to the prison several times. I couldn't bring myself to go in. I couldn't face you. I should have owned up to what I did. I shouldn't have let you take the wrap, because somehow you thought your life was worth less than mine. Oh, Stevie, that's not true. It was never true," he came closer. "You were always twice the man I was, and you always will be. That's the reason I loved you so, the reason I can't stop loving you. I deserve all of your wrath. I deserve the hell I've lived without you these years. I wouldn't blame you if you..."

I was crying like a baby now. I moved into his arms and held him, stroking that hair that was still so silky soft. He wrapped his strong arms around me and lowered his face onto my shoulder. We cried together. We cried for all the pain and hurt and unspoken things. We cried for the years we'd spent apart, the loneliness.

It was I who finally had enough strength to move out of his arms. I took toilet paper from one of the stalls and wiped the tears tenderly from his face. He just looked at me quite helplessly. I smiled at him, moved back. "We need to get in there."

"I know. Even if it's not possible that we can...you do forgive me?"

"Yes."

"Good. I want to make things right, Stevie. I want to go to the authorities, tell them what I did, that it was me with the drugs, clear your name."

"No," I said. "It's all over now, baby." That endearment came to my lips quite easily. I was embarrassed suddenly.

Darren smiled.

"I didn't mean..."

"I liked it," he whispered

I blushed. "Don't like it too much."

He nodded gravely. "I need to know about Andrew."

"What about Andrew?"

"Well, he's gorgeous, he's intelligent, talented, and he's obviously in love with you."

"He's all those things, but he's not you." I met his gaze, sobering.

Darren reached out his hand. "We can be together now. I don't want to live without you anymore, Stevie."

Was it possible? Was it possible that there was nothing standing in our way? No Mr. Evans, no wife, no endless months waiting for the summer. "Summer is here," I said almost to myself.

He grabbed my hand, grinned down at me. "What?"

I looked up into those blue eyes.

He bent his head carefully, slowly, wanting to kiss me, waiting for a sign.

I licked my lips and he laughed. He had his sign. I always did that when I thought about the pleasure of kissing him.

He pressed his lips to mine, pulled me up against his chest. It was a rather sweet kiss, tender, filled with unspoken words, but also cautious. He released me. "My room is 645," he said, then left me there in the bathroom.

It took me awhile to recover, from his words, from that kiss. I finally found my table and sat down beside Andrew. I was stunned, unable to do much of anything except stare at Darren, who sat at the far end of the same table. He was engrossed in conversation, looking as if nothing had happened. I envied his ability to do that. Whether I could actually go to his room later was another story. Could I open myself to all of this again? It wasn't that I didn't believe he loved me. I just had a hard time believing that we could finally be together. I couldn't relive the past. It would kill me.

People were speaking to me, but I was having a hard time following them. I felt like I'd been spilt in two. The outside was calm and collected, a well-dressed business tycoon gesturing and articulating correctly. Inside, I was a mess. I was sweating, trembling, my heart in shambles. I was so afraid to lose him again. I'd get on my knees if he wanted.

I'd beg. I watched him now sitting there beside Andrew Devine, and I felt totally unworthy of Stevie's love. Andrew was clearly the better man. And he'd never abandon him, let him be punished for his own crimes. How could Stevie want me anymore? How could he still feel love for me?

It was my time to talk. I stood up, already having memorized the speech I had to give. I welcomed Techno Innovation as a new contractor to Evans Inc., and got Stevie to stand up and take a bow. He got a standing ovation, and I stood back and gave him the spotlight, encouraging him to come up and say a few words. He did so reluctantly, thanking everyone, shaking my hand. I waited until he sat back down, said a few more words about some of the charity work Evans Inc. was now doing in third worlds and stepped down.

Dinner was served after that, but I had no appetite. I kept asking myself if Stevie would come to me tonight. I wanted so much to hold him. I sought him out with my gaze, but he did his best to ignore me. And for some time after dinner, we remained on opposite sides of the room. If he wanted revenge, it was working. The punishment was more than I could bear.

Eventually, I left whatever group of people were rambling on around me and went looking for him. I found Andrew Devine standing outside

the hotel, smoking a cigarette. He glanced at me when I came out. "You have this disgusting habit as well?"

"No," I said. "I gave it up in my teens. It was just a passing fancy with me."

"Like Steven was?"

His words caught me off guard. I looked at him. "No, not like Stevie was. Stevie was never that."

"You hurt him much more than you know, and you've ruined any chance he could have been happy with me. I love him."

I didn't say anything.

Andrew turned and looked at me. "He's miserable without you, just like I'll be miserable without him. I wouldn't tell you that except I can't stand to see him this unhappy. If I thought there was a chance..." He raised a hand then let it drop. "There is no chance. Make him happy, Evans, but if you ever hurt him like that again, I swear..." He stopped, looked away.

I clapped a hand on his shoulder. "Where is he?"

"He left awhile ago, went back to the townhouse he keeps here in Boston, 67 Dorchester Avenue, Apartment 3."

"Sixty-seven Dorchester," I muttered. I raced to the parking lot and got my rental from the parking

valet. I knew these Boston streets. Dorchester was less than ten blocks from the hotel.

The night was quiet. I sped through every traffic light, and I found his block easily. I parked the car and put on the alarm, standing outside the townhouse for a few minutes then walking up the path and buzzing number three. My heart stood still when there was no answer. I pressed my forehead against the glass door and groaned. The waiting was torture. Where in the hell was he?

Then I heard him say my name. I turned around and saw him coming up the path. "Stevie?"

"What are you doing here?"

"Andrew told me where to find you. Where were you?"

"I decided to walk. I wanted to think."

"Oh." I came down the path to meet him. "And did you?"

Stevie nodded. "Yeah. Some."

"And what...what did you de—" I never got a chance to finish. He grabbed my neck and pulled me in for a kiss, long, passionate, determined. When he released me, I was breathless.

He smiled. "That. I decided...that."

I gave him a confused look.

"I don't know what's going to happen after tonight," he said, looking at me. "I only know that I deserve to have you. I want your body. I want to

feel it next to me. I want to fuck you. And you owe me that, Darren, if nothing else. After that, we'll see."

I should have been ecstatic. There was nothing more I wanted to do right now with Stevie than make love. But, what if tonight was the only night he was willing to give me? Would I survive it? I bit my lip as he brushed past me, his key dangling from his fist. It was the risk I'd have to take. I had no choice, no choice whatsoever.

I'd put a lot of thought into what I was going to do while I was walking that distance between the hotel and this building. From my vantage point, I had a couple of choices where Darren was concerned. I could have walked away completely tonight, made a decision never to see him again. I considered that and then immediately rejected it. It wasn't possible for me. My heart wouldn't allow it. That left two options. I could throw myself into his arms and immediately hop onto that rollercoaster ride called Darren Evans again, but I was no longer that naive little boy. I was no longer Stevie, the boy who hung on his every word and put his happiness on hold until summer rolled around and Darren came home. What I was, was a man, with the grownup desires of a man. I wanted Darren. There was no debate in my heart about that. And by the time I was halfway home, I'd



decided that I would shower, change and take a cab ride back to that hotel and go up to his room.

As it turned out, he had come to me. That was even better. Tonight, I would have him. I would do everything I wanted to his body. I would allow the pure lust I still felt for this man to seize me, to stop me from thinking, to temporarily make my heart forget how much I adored him, how much Stevie was still there, longing for the summer.

I unlocked the door. I could feel his hot breath on my neck. My cock was hard. I told myself to stop thinking this was Darren, the love of my life. I walked into the bedroom, turned on the light, threw my keys on the nightstand and turned to look at him. I held up a hand as he went to speak. I didn't want to hear his voice. "Listen to me," I said. "Tonight, you are mine. You will do everything I ask you to do. There will be no words of love between us."

He was about to protest, but he saw the look on my face. He knew I was serious. He nodded a little uncertainly. "Okay. Whatever you want."

"Take off your clothes," I told him. I tried my hardest to keep my voice steady, strong, while I removed my own.

Darren pulled his tie loose from his neck. He took it off, threw it aside. He shrugged out of his jacket, started to unbutton his shirt.

I was already halfway there, and he hadn't even showed me any skin yet. I swallowed, sat down in case my legs decided not to support my weight any more.

The shirt came next, honey-bronzed skin, luscious toned chest, pert dark nipples. His stomach was a wave of muscle, his biceps well defined. He'd kept himself in great shape. There was no boy left in his body now.

The shirt hit the floor.

I leaned back on the pillow, my elbows supporting my weight. I was sweating, but it wasn't hot in the room. I watched his fingers undo the button on his pants, move the zipper down. He kicked off his shoes at the same time he stepped out of his pants, pulling off the black dress socks.

He looked up at me. He was hard, too, as hard as I was, his cock jutting out of his white briefs. His legs were long and well muscled, and I had an image of us running in the field. I pushed it away. "Stop," I told him as he grabbed the waistband of his underwear. "Come here."

He walked over to me, looked down at me with those blue eyes. "Stevie," he groaned. "Please."

A shiver ran up my spine. I reached my hand out, fingered his erection through his shorts.

He shuddered. "Um, yes, Stevie." His eyes closed, his head went back.

I swung my legs over the side of the bed and resisted touching his cock for as long as I could. Instead, I ran my hands up his thighs, skipping his cock, which brushed my cheek as I rubbed my thumbs over his nipples. The need in me was intense. It was all I could do not to turn his ass to me and fuck him right there. I placed my hands on his hips and pushed. He stumbled back a few steps, his eyes pleading. I pulled the waistband of his shorts down over his cock and watched his cock bob upwards. The shorts fell to his feet. I stayed sitting on the edge of the bed, let my gaze move over his body. The head of his cock was already coated with come. I trailed my finger up his shaft and then around the helmet.

He groaned. "Suck me."

I wanted to, but this was for me. "Turn around," I said.

He turned, his entire body shaking. His ass was beautiful, hard, round, his back smoothing up into a perfect V. I ran my hand over his ass, parted the cheeks and dug my finger up into his entrance. He grunted, his balls reacting to my invasion. I reached between his legs and fondled them, perfect sacks that I fully intended to feast on.

He moaned softly, murmuring his agonized pleasure.

I removed my finger, pulled him around to face me again. "Get on your knees and suck my cock."

I spread my legs, giving him access, and he sunk to his knees. He lowered his face between my legs for a moment, letting his cheek rest against my cock. I almost fell apart, my gaze on his dark hair, his lips now pressed against my shaft.

"I love you," he groaned. "Oh fuck, Steven, I love you."

"No, don't. Just take it into your mouth, don't talk. Don't say anything. Please." I gasped as he clutched the base of my shaft in one hand and then slid his mouth onto the head. Within seconds, I was gasping, lifting my hips, fucking his beautiful mouth. "Stay still. Let me fuck your face," I told him.

He looked up at me from time to time, his mouth full of my cock, his fingers indented into the flesh of my thighs.

I came in his mouth within minutes.

He swallowed it, my cream coating his chin, dripping onto his chest. He didn't give me a chance to recover. He got off his knees and pressed his body down on top of me, driving me down to the mattress on my back. "I've got to fuck you," he said, his gaze penetrating mine. He lifted my legs, positioning my feet on his shoulders then he lowered one hand and began to fondle my cock, my balls. "I want to be inside you so badly."

I wanted that, too, but I wasn't about to let him have me yet. I pushed him off. He almost tumbled

off the bed, catching himself just in time. I leaned over to the drawer and got the lube. "Get on the bed. You said you'd do what I want." My cock was ready again.

"Stevie, what kind of game..."

"It's not a game. It's what I want. Get on the god damned bed."

He shrugged but he didn't look pleased.

"Face the wall and get on your knees. Put your hands behind your head."

He glanced at me but did my bidding.

I got off the bed, walked around to look at him from the front. His cock was so hard, his balls more than willing to shoot. I reached out and played with his nipples a few minutes, brushed his cock with my hand.

He grunted.

"You're so hot," I told him, squeezing lube on my hand. I rubbed his nipples with it, telling him twice to keep his hands locked behind his head. He did, but he was suffering as I played with his nipples. "They've always been sensitive, connected to your balls I think," I smiled, enjoyed the effect I was having.

He grunted, moaned now as his head went back. There was nothing more erotic than that. His cock jutting straight out at me, his nipples shiny and so hard, they looked like diamonds. I cuffed his cock and he let out a low hiss.

I crawled on the bed behind him and slapped his fine ass a few times then reached around and cuffed his cock again, which was now dripping come. I pulled his hair back and played roughly with his balls. "I'd love to take them into my mouth," I teased. "You have a fine cock, so thick, so big. Um. I've dreamt about it for years."

"Let me..."

"Not yet." I slapped his ass again and pushed him forward. "On all fours, open your legs, baby."

I forgot who he was for a moment. I was filled with my own need. I touched him, licked him and sucked him in everyway I wanted. I lubed his ass and went into his body without hesitation, but the minute I was inside of him I knew. I started moving in and out of him while he pressed his palms into the mattress, taking all I had to give and the tears flowed. I was home. This was my summer, my winter, my everything. I came then lowered my head on his back and sobbed out my despair.

He didn't say or do anything. He stayed in position, allowing me to cry all over his back then finally he lowered himself to the mattress onto his stomach. I moved away from him, hovering at the bottom of the bed, wiping my tears and accepting that it was hopeless. I was Stevie again. He'd reduced me to that. I thought by controlling him, I could save myself. It wasn't going to happen.

He had rolled onto his back. He lay there silently, just looking at me. After awhile, he said. "God, how I've hurt you."

"I wish I could hate you," I said, but there was no malice in it.

"But you love me." He met my gaze. "I don't deserve it."

"No, you don't."

For a while, we stayed our distance, he with his thoughts, and me with mine. Eventually, he held out his hand. I crawled over to him and took it. He pulled me down beside him and held it. He didn't make a move to touch me except for that. We fell asleep.

That morning, the sun streamed through the window, and I was alone.

I moved around the apartment like a zombie. Maybe it had just been too intense last night, too intense for both of us. And I'd treated him like a piece of meat, thinking somehow that was going to take care of everything. It had taken care of nothing. I'd wanted to hold him, to kiss him. I hadn't kissed his mouth once, and now sitting there with my coffee in hand, that's all I could think of, not his beautiful cock, not his gorgeous ass, not even those killer blue eyes of his, but his mouth, his lips, his kiss.

The coffee cup shattered to the floor and I swore. I cleaned it up, hopped into the shower and then got dressed. I grabbed a cab to the hotel. If I was going to stay in Boston, I should have someone drive my car up from New York. It was where my house was with the underground garage. I kept all my cars there.

When I got to the hotel, I was informed that Mr. Evans had checked out early that morning. He'd abandoned me again. I sat down on a park bench across from the hotel and stayed there until noon.

I eventually made it back to the apartment on foot. When I got in, my answering machine was flashing. I clicked on the messages. I paused when I heard the word police. "Mr. Connors, this is Detective Ken Paltrov of the Boston Police. Can you give me a call at this number, at your earliest convenience?"

*Police.* I dialed the number immediately and sat listening, stunned as the detective spoke. After saying goodbye, I let the phone drop to the floor. Darren had confessed to the crime I did time for over ten years ago. My record was clean.

I got on the phone and tried to find out where Darren was. I finally turned on the six o'clock news, and there he was. He'd been charged and released on bail. I saw him being led out of the police station. The media was all over it. The conclusion was that he wouldn't go to jail. His



high-priced lawyer told the media that “Mr. Evans will probably have to pay a fine. It’s doubtful he’ll see any jail time given his willingness to confess to a crime committed years before.”

“And Mr. Connors, who originally did time for this crime?” the reporter asked, shoving the microphone in the lawyer’s face. “Is he entitled to any compensation? Is there any news on why Mr. Connors confessed to a crime he didn’t commit?”

“Because he was in love,” a voice said suddenly, causing me to practically jump out of my skin.

Darren stood there at the door of the living room.

“How did you get in?”

“The door was unlocked.”

“I must have forgotten to...” I paused. “Dare,” I said, running to him and wrapping my arms around him, “thank God you’re okay. I was worried sick.”

He stood there holding me for a second then released me. “I’m fine.”

“Why did you do it?” I shook my head. “After all this time, it wasn’t important.”

“It was important to me.”

I met his gaze.

“It was the right thing to do, Stevie.”

“I’m so sorry about last night.”

He shook his head. "It's okay. You have nothing to be sorry about."

"The way I treated you." I hung my head. "I thought I could..."

He lifted my chin. "You thought if you reduced what you felt for me to just desire, it would hurt less."

I rested my cheek against his chest. "Yes." I looked at him. "It didn't work."

He nodded. "I noticed." He walked in, shrugged out of his coat, took a seat on the sofa. "Can we start over?"

"I don't know."

He looked at me. "Do you want to?"

I nodded. "I want you."

"Good," he smiled, "because I want you, too." He held out his hand, and I went to sit beside him. "Steven?"

I smiled. "Yeah?"

"I'll never take you for granted again. And I'll never let anything or anyone stand in the way of our love. This, I promise you."

I nodded. "I'll hold you to it."

"Do that. And do something else for me, will you?"

"Sure. I'd do anything for you."

"Kiss me."

I laughed.

"That's funny?" He lifted an eyebrow.

"Um, yes it is, because you must have read my mind." I took his face between my hands and kissed him, long and deep. We stayed there on that sofa some time just kissing until the need in us grew so desperate; we were tearing at each other's clothes.

We were both naked when we reached the bedroom. Darren took me into his arms and kissed me again. He didn't seem to be in a hurry, and neither was I. We had all night, and if the stars were aligned properly in the sky, we should have our entire lives.

I moaned as he touched me, running his hands down my flanks, squeezing my ass cheeks, kissing my neck, my chest, tonguing my nipples. When he sunk to his knees and kissed my cock and my balls, I knew I was going to come.

Darren laughed softly, stood up, and led me to the bed. "Want to make me work, eh? I got to get you hard again."

He kissed me all over, stroked my cock into standing at attention, and this time when he lifted my legs and started lubing my ass, I didn't push him away. He went into me slowly, with great tenderness, his body shaking with his unspent need. He looked into my eyes and began to move in and out of me, all the time, holding my hand and stroking my hair.

I gulped out my orgasm, gasping my pleasure as he came inside of me and drained the last of my come with his fist. I held him, rubbing his back, kissing his shoulder. And I heard him say, "Steven, don't leave me."

Somehow, I'd become Steven. And now, it was him who needed me. But what he didn't realize is that I still needed him, too. I'd never stopped. I was never that strong. I didn't even want to be.

## *Chapter Four*

The estate was deserted now, except for one caretaker and his wife. Darren's mother had moved to Florida when Mr. Evans had died, and Cecile now lived in Europe with her husband, who was a diplomat.

"I didn't even know you still owned it," I said to Darren as he pulled up in the driveway.

"I bought it from my mother a few years ago when she decided it was too isolated out here."

"I never realized that you were so attached to it." I got out after him, staring at the monstrosity where I'd grown up.

He looked at me, those blue eyes smiling. "I'm extremely attached to it." He pointed up to his old bedroom window. "I remember making love to you in that room." He walked around to the side door. "And this is where I first saw you hiding behind your mother."

I punched him for that.

"Mommy's boy," he teased.

I tried to hit him again, but he ducked out of the way. "Race you," he said, running off down the road.

I groaned. I could never compete with those long legs of his. He slowed eventually, waiting at the end of the road. "Let's go down by the river."

I nodded enthusiastically.

He took my hand.

The river was beautiful, and yes, I could picture us there, two boys in love.

Darren pulled me into his arms. "I want to live here with you."

I looked at him in surprise. "Really?"

"How do you feel about that?"

"I...I love it!" I hugged his neck.

"I want this to be your house, too." He reached in his pocket and took out a paper. "I've put the house in both our names."

I looked at it, feeling too emotional for my own good. "Thank you, baby," I said, kissing his mouth.

The kissing got intense so I pushed him away. "There's no way I'm getting naked down here by the river now."

"Why not?" he teased, undoing his shirt.

"Darren, that's why not," I smirked.

There was an old man in a rowboat directly in front of them.

"Oh," Darren laughed, leaving his shirt on. He raised a hand to the old man. "Hello, Mr. Grady?"

"Is that you, Evans?"

"I haven't seen him for years," I said.

"Yes, it's me," Darren said. "Remember Stevie?"

"Of course. How are you, Steven?"

"Fine," I called out, rushing over to help him out of the boat.

"How's your wife?"

"Just fine. She'll be cooking up a storm if she knows you boys are home. How's your mother doing, Steven?"

"Great. She loves the city."

"Good cook, your mom, better than Irene. Don't you say nothing."

Both Darren and I laughed.

Later, we ate supper with Grady and his wife, Irene. Darren had kept them on here all these years, paying their salary. They'd always been like family.

That evening we took a walk. It was so quiet there. Yes, I could live here. I'd live anywhere with Darren.

"I've appointed a new C.E.O.," Darren said, wrapping me in his arms.

"Oh? What was wrong with the old one?"

"He's got better things to do now," he smirked.

"You're too young to retire."

"I'm not retiring," he said. "We're going to travel. You're going to set up a computer lab here where you can invent whatever comes into your head, and I'm going to paint."

"Paint?" My eyes widened. I remembered that Darren loved drawing little comic book pictures as a kid, but paint?

He nodded, releasing him. "I always wanted to paint, but my dad wouldn't hear of it. I know of this teacher in town. She's agreed to come out here and live for several months and give me painting lessons."

"That's wonderful. And what do you want to paint?"

"You," he said, looking at me, "portraits of you everywhere."

"Oh my God," I laughed. "Give me a break."

"Indulge me," he said. "Where would you like to go with me, our very first voyage?"

"Um," I said, studying him, "where would I like to go with you?" I turned to look at the house. "Right there," I pointed.

"That's my old bedroom."

"Precisely," I said, giving him a meaningful look.

He grinned. "Race you," he teased.

I started off before he had a chance to. I ran for all my life. When he arrived at the door, I was



waiting there, my arms across my chest. "I won," I said triumphantly.

"You got me this time," he lowered his head, pretending defeat.

I lifted his chin, looked into his beautiful face, which was now complete with a huge smirk, and sighed. "Yes, baby, I did," I said. "I got you." And this time, I really did.

## *About the Author*

I write not only for my own pleasure, but for the pleasure of my readers. I can't remember a time in my life when I haven't written and told stories. When I'm not writing, I'm dreaming about writing, doing something wild and adventurous, or trying to make the world a better and more open minded place to live in. I adore beautiful men, and I know I'm not alone in this! Eroticism between consenting adults, in all its many forms is the icing on the cake of life!

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